



# Employability Guide

**Why should we focus on  
employability?**

# Employability

Essentially, your time at university should be well-spread out between your course, hobbies, responsibilities and activities. The prime purpose of university is to guide you towards employability and enhance your skillset in order for it to be used in the practical environment.

Some students may be receiving support from their departments in providing a more catered approach towards employability and the process of finding a job. Some may also be getting work experience as part of their curriculum, which makes applications for graduate positions more straightforward. However, most students are faced by the difficulty of adapting to the working environment and preparing for it, as a result of its uncertainty.

This is where StrathUnion would like to come in in order to help our students translate their experience and activities into skills that are useful to their professional futures. This employability guide will provide an overview of how you can make the most out of your years at university by engaging with us and, essentially, how this can help you find catered positions that are suitable for your skills, interests and ambitions.



Employability means the quality of being suitable for paid work.

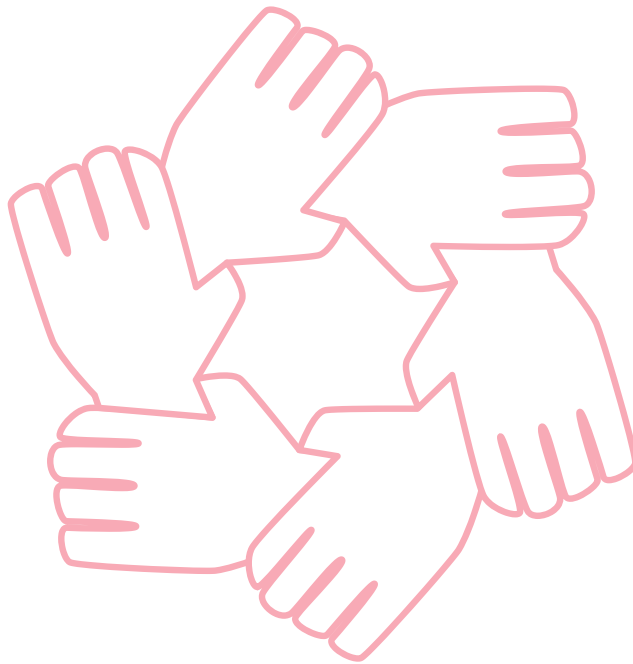
**Why are extra-curricular activities important?**

## Extra-curricular activities

The volunteering activities you have done can be extremely important especially if you haven't had any prior experience in your field. This experience therefore proves to employers that you have the necessary skills regardless of whether you have worked previously or not.

You can find various clubs & societies to join, or even affiliate a new society if you don't find the one you want. You can also join various volunteering initiatives and gain experience through working with them. StrathUnion has also recently launched its JobShop to help students find fair working opportunities while they study. All these platforms are created to help you get a better experience at university and also become more employable.

Working in a team, managing a society, or liaising between staff and students as a course rep are invaluable skills that come in handy at any interview. Furthermore, other volunteering activities such as being part of a charity, an NGO, or being a caretaker show traits such as integrity and community service, ones that are extremely valued within and beyond university.



Find out more about what you can do  
outside your course!

**How can StrathUnion  
help?**

# Volunteering and Skills

As part of your time at Strathclyde, you are likely to have taken part in various volunteering activities, ranging from being a course rep, to attending workshops, being part of a student society, or being a part of a team that worked on enhancing student or community life.

These involvements would have helped you gain and develop some important skills that will be of interest to employers and may increase your chances of getting the jobs you want. These activities diversify your experience and skillset and show employers that you are adaptable, reliable and responsible.

Furthermore, if you have logged your hours and skills, this transcript will be made available to you and can be used in your job applications. This represents the responsibilities you have had at university and the experience you have gained.

Once you have distinguished what experience and skills you have acquired, it is important that you articulate them through your CV, cover letter, LinkedIn profile, or your interviews. Examples are given in the next section of the guide.

It is important to note that our team has recently amended the skills section of the website, so we would be really keen to get your feedback on what we could do better!

You can add additional skills that are not available in our list from Personal Development > Other.

## Logging your skills

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### Leadership

Management, team work, problem-solving, adaptability, communication

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### Administration

Punctuality, report writing, minute taking, chairing meetings, social media, communication

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### Professional

Creativity, data analysis, translation, marketing, presentations, academic

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### Personal Development

Campaigning, fundraising, barista, other

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### Retail

Cash handling, till operation, stock management, customer support

**What can I do to  
prepare?**



## CV & cover letter

Your CV and cover letter give employers a good overview of your education, experience, skills and interests. Most CVs and letters will need to be catered based on what particular employers are looking for.

There are two types of CVs, chronological or skills-based and each one is useful for a particular type of application, or position. You may thus outline your involvements through the skills section, or within your experience section. You can further expand on that through your cover letter. You can also use your skills record as a tool to help your cover letters. If you describe your skills extensively, you could paste or reword them when collating your letters to employers.

Strathclyde students can find more information and support for CVs and cover letters through Careers Service at: <https://www.strath.ac.uk/professionalservices/careers/forstudentsandgraduates/>.



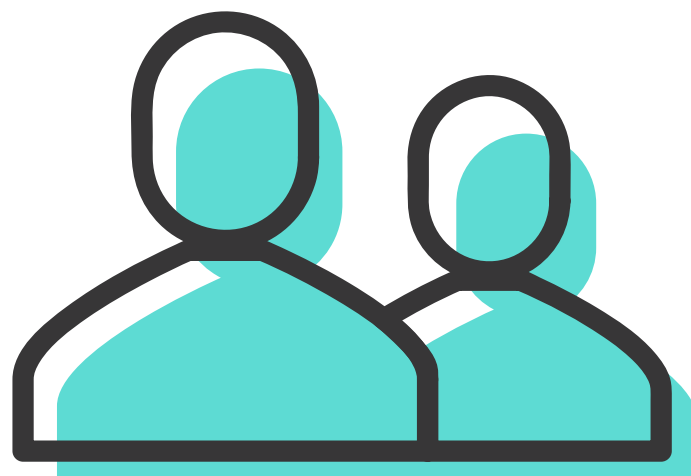
Have a look at Strathclyde Careers Service!

# LinkedIn

Having a LinkedIn profile can be extremely useful in certain fields and will allow colleagues and employers to get in touch with you via social media. LinkedIn is also a useful way of finding people and discovering what they're involved in.

In order to provide our students with the proper support for using this platform, StrathUnion will be hosting LinkedIn training sessions, where you will get to know more about how to create a successful LinkedIn profile to serve your particular career and interest path, as well as create a good image of yourself to prospective employers.

Keep an eye out for our LinkedIn workshop on our website!



Connect with people and find opportunities through LinkedIn.

# Training and workshops

The training and workshop sessions provided by StrathUnion can be helpful means of developing new skills and learning about the various opportunities we provide. You can sign up for workshops through the Training and Workshops section of our website.

Class Rep Training

Barista Training

Unconscious Bias Workshop

Consent Workshop

Introduction to campaigns

SafeTALK: Suicide alertness for everyone

Student Congress

Bystander Training

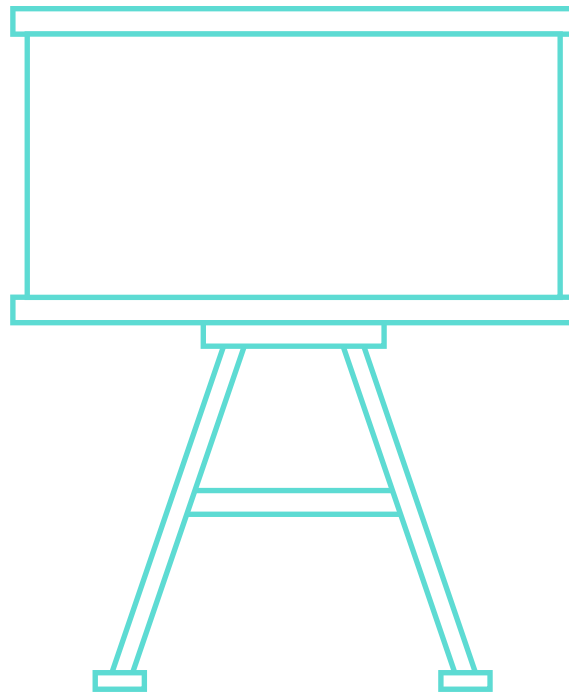
Bar Training

Student Congress

Clubs and Societies General Meetings

How to be an ally

Natural Hair Workshop



Come along to some of our workshops  
and training sessions

# Interview preparation

Preparing for an interview can be a daunting experience because of the uncertainty it brings along with itself. However, good preparation and research can make it inherently easier.

Some interviews ask competency based questions, for which you need to come up with very specific examples of how you have demonstrated a certain skill. You can prepare these examples in advance through your volunteering profile in StrathUnion's website. Just as you can log your volunteering hours, you can also log skills under certain sections and record your specific examples along with them.

This record will be made available to you and can be used in your interview preparation, making it much easier for you to come up with appropriate answers on the spot.

## Example of Skills Record

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### Professional Presentations

Example 1: Presentation with other executive members to our course cohort. This included preparing the presentation and presenting it to approximately 400 people. The purpose was to increase the interest in our society's program and invite more members or committee members

Example 2: Hosting lecture series discourse. Through hosting the first lecture of our lecture series, I developed both y presentation and mediator skills. This included mediating a debate between two-student led initiatives and inviting the crowd for conversations.

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### Leadership Management

At the start of the year, I made sure the society was separated into committees and each committee had an appropriate number of people who can work to their strengths and develop their skills within their team.

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### Professional Academic

Through attending and organizing various course related lectures, I have developed a better understanding of my course through a wider and more interdisciplinary perspective. This has further increased my knowledge of the profession beyond academics.

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### Administration Chairing Meetings

Through chairing our society committee meetings I have developed my administration skills and learned how to structure the meetings logically and take notes of the important and relevant decisions our team was making.

## Example Interview Questions

Below we will show you how you can use your skills record as a method for preparing for a competency-based interview:

Tell me about a time you were in a leadership position.

Being president of a student society has helped immensely in developing my leadership skills through managing the team and ensuring that all tasks have been delegated appropriately.

Give me an example of a time you had to be creative.

Working on creating the graphics for our society posters has helped me improve my creativity skills and ability to use various types of software such as Adobe Suite, Canva and CorelDRAW.


How have you developed your academic skills beyond university?

Through attending and organizing various course related lectures, I have developed a better understanding of my course through a wider and more interdisciplinary perspective. This has further increased my knowledge of the profession beyond academics.

# For more information:


## Clubs and Societies

 [strathunion.clubs@strath.ac.uk](mailto:strathunion.clubs@strath.ac.uk)

 0141 567 5000

## Volunteering

 [strathunion.volunteers@strath.ac.uk](mailto:strathunion.volunteers@strath.ac.uk)

 0141 567 5056