Careers at Trinity

AM I WORK READY?

Year 10 – 20/21

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EMPLOYABILITY

As well as having the relevant qualifications or subject knowledge for a job, employers will also look at the employability of a potential employee. Employability refers to the "job-readiness" skills that are essential for every employee to be successful in the workplace. These are called Employability Skills.

What are Employability Skills?

Employability skills are the core skills and traits needed in nearly every job. These are the general skills that make someone desirable to an employer.

Employability skills include skills that allow you to work well with others, apply knowledge to solve problems, and to fit into any work environment, these are called **soft skills**.

Soft skills are personality traits and behaviours. Unlike technical skills or "hard" skills, soft skills are not about the knowledge you possess but rather the behaviours you display in different situations. They also include the professional skills that enable you to be successful in the workplace. These are also considered as transferable skills because you can apply them to a job in any industry.

You will already possess several marketable employability skills that will help you get and be successful in a job. These skills can also be learned and developed with practice and experience

By developing your employability skills you will improve your chances of getting a job, securing an Apprenticeship and thriving in your career.

Employability skills include *Teamwork, Communication, Problem Solving, Self-Management, Adaptability* and a *Positive Attitude*.

Teamwork

Teamwork skills are essential to succeed at work, no matter the industry or job title. Working well with others during conversations, projects, meetings or other collaborations in the workplace can help you complete tasks efficiently while creating an enjoyable environment both for yourself and others. Having teamwork skills is dependent on your ability to communicate well, actively listen, and be responsible and honest.

Team work is one of the most valuable employability 'soft' skills that you can develop while you're still at school. Whether you have worked in a small group on a project, part of a sports team like netball or football or involved in a group challenge, working as an effective team is essential to get good results.

Think of situations when you have worked effectively in a group and demonstrated strong teamwork skills that you can use as an example in an interview or on an application.

(For example, you are playing a game online with friends, how did you decide what mission to do, who was the leader, deal with any disagreements?)

Communication

Effective communication skills are essential for the work place and highly sought after by employers. Communicating is a two-way process, involving both sending and receiving information, allowing you to understand and be understood by others. Communicating at work can include sharing ideas with others, actively listening in conversations, giving and receiving feedback and public speaking.

Communication skills involve listening, speaking, observing and empathizing. It is important to know how to communicate effectively through face-to-face interactions, phone or video conversations and digital communications, like email and social media

At work you'll be communicating with a range of different people from a variety of backgrounds, ages, experiences and professions. It is important that you are able to adapt your communication style to suit the audience that you are engaging with.

Either at home, at school or with friends, can you think of examples when you have demonstrated good communication? List the skills you used to communicate effectively.
(For example, you were doing homework online but the internet connection crashed. The next day how did explain to your teacher what happened and why you could not complete the work on time?)

Problem Solving

In every job, problems are inevitable and will unexpectedly arise in one form or another as you go about your day-to-day duties. Employers highly value people who can resolve problems quickly and effectively and is a valuable employability 'soft' skills. Most jobs require an element of problem solving; in fact, you could argue that some roles consist of nothing but solving problems (engineering, customer service, project managing and the police to name just a few).

We face potential problems from the moment we wake up. This may include finding an alternative way of getting to school if your bus breaks down or resolving a conflict or argument between groups of friends so that no-one loses face. This is problem solving!

Can you think of a time that you have used problem solving skills in your everyday life? What was the situation, how to you resolve the problem and what did you learn from the experience?
(For example, you have ordered something online but it did not arrive, what did you do?)

Self- Management

Self-management is all about showing that you can prioritise, work efficiently, productively and manage your time well. It's important to be able to show employers how you decide what is important to focus on and get done, as well as how you go about meeting deadlines.

Self-management skills focus on personal responsibility in the following areas:

Organisation: If you are well-organized, you're able to plan, prioritize and execute important activities, helping you self-manage your essential workplace responsibilities.

Goal Setting: Setting goals determines what you want to achieve in a clear and well-defined manner. Goal setting in the workplace helps you to decide what's important and to create an action plan that will help you meet these goals. This skill is necessary to maintain productivity and enables you to manage your time and actions effectively.

Time Management: Strong time management allows you to prioritize tasks, avoid distractions and maintain focus. Effective time management in the workplace helps with setting and meeting deadlines,

Self-motivation is the ability to take initiative and finish tasks you know should be completed. Good self-management allows you to work productivity, improve your workplace performance and achieve professional goals.

You will have used self-management skills at school, planning your time; to revise for exams, complete homework, work on your projects and fit in your extra-curricular activities.

Give an examples when you have demonstrated good self-management. How did this help to complete your tasks and goals?
(For example, preparing a revision timetable or cooking a meal, how to you organise and manage these tasks?)

Positive Attitude

Having a positive attitude and demonstrating the ability to adapt to new tasks and changing circumstances are valued skills in the workplace. Employers look for the following skills:

- Willing to take part in unfamiliar activities
- Being open to new ideas and concepts
- The ability to accept constructive criticism without being offended
- Having a desire to achieve
- Taking responsibility for your own actions
- Be able to recover quickly from disappointment (Resilience)

We all face potential problems from the moment we wake up. If you have a positive attitude you will not let any of these issues impact negatively on you or your day. Employers are keen to employ people who are positive because it helps create a positive work environment, where staff are happy and productive.

Think of a time when you have kept a positive attitude during changing circumstances?
(Example – you had a disappointing exam result, how did you stay positive and what actions did you take to improve your grade in the next exam?)

Work Preperation

So the exams have finished and you are about to step into the **world of work, but are you prepared?**

Give yourself the best chance of getting the job you want by learning the essential skills you will need to enter the workplace and build a successful career in your chosen field. This includes how to correctly write a CV (Curriculum Vitae), a Cover Letter and a Personal Statement. Once you have successfully applied for a job you will also have to prepare for an interview, whether in person or online. It is important you learn the skills necessary for a successful interview and make yourself stand out from the other candidates.

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Writing a CV

What is a CV?

When applying for a job you will have to write a CV. A CV tells employers what you're good at, what you are interested in and what you've achieved so far. You hand it out when you are looking for jobs. They are great to take to careers fairs, and can be upload when applying for a job online. If an employer likes your CV they might ask you to come to a job interview.

When you are a student or school leaver and about to write your first CV, you may feel you have no experience to put in it, but you can still write a great CV that demonstrates your strengths and skills.

When writing a CV, your information needs to be included in the following structure:

Profile - This section should be a short summary of your experience, skills and abilities and be contained to between four and six lines of text.

Education – List the qualifications you have achieved. List your most recent, and therefore highest level qualifications, first. You can then work backwards down your educational career

Experience - List your work experience, starting with your most recent job first and then work backwards through your career. State the name of the company you worked for, the start and end dates of your employment, as well as the job title you held. You should also provide a list of your main responsibilities and achievements for each position held.

Hobbies / Interests - List the things you enjoy doing in your spare time. Keep it fairly brief, but make sure you list any current positions of responsibility you hold, such as editor of the school paper or captain of a sports team. By providing information about your hobbies and interests, an employer can gain an insight into your lifestyle and the transferable skills that can be applied to the role you are applying for.

Other Information / Interests – Include any additional qualifications, information or activities that may interest an employer, such as software you are proficient in using, any civic activities or volunteering and cultural skills such as additional languages.

References - When you apply for a job, you will usually be required to supply two references before you can be employed by the company. Typically this will include your last employer, however if you are still at school or haven't had a job, you can ask for as reference from your school or from a work experience employer. Importantly, remember to ask politely before you use someone as a reference.

Writing your Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Use the template below to draft your own CV, then complete the CV in your **Trinity Character Charter** booklet (page 19)

Personal Details:

Your Name:	
Address:	
Phone Number:	
Email:	

Profile:

Education:

School:				
Start:	End:	Qualification:	Subject:	Grade:

Work Experience:

Name of Company:	
Start Date:	End Date:
Main Duties:	

Hobbies / Interests:

Other Information / Interests:

References:

Personal Statement

A personal statement is a brief personal summary, around 200 words, given to prospective employers to help you stand apart from the competition. It gives you a chance to sell yourself by summing up the specific skills and experience you have to prove your suitability for the position. A well written personal statement can make you stand out from the crowd.

When applying for a job, a personal statement should be tailored to the role you're applying for. Think about why you want the job? What skills make you right for the role (hint: use the job description)? And where do you want to go in your career? When leaving school focus on the knowledge and skills gained through education, rather than employment history. Include the **soft skills** you have developed.

For more information on writing a personal statement, please see your **Trinity Character Charter booklet** (page 21 – 22).

Draft your personal statement below:
(*Tip – think of a job you would like to do, an engineer, programmer or doctor for example, then think of the personal skills you have that are needed for that specific role*)

Writing A Cover Letter

A **Cover Letter** is a document sent alongside your CV when applying for jobs. It acts as a personal introduction and helps to sell your application. A cover letter gives you the chance to explain to an employer why you're the best candidate for the job, highlighting relevant skills and experience; therefore always write your cover letter with the position you're applying for in mind.

Keep your cover letter brief, while making sure it emphasises your suitability for the job. It can be broken down into the following sections:

Addressing your letter – If you know the name of the person you need to write to, start the letter with the person's name, for example, "Dear Mrs Jones", you must then end the letter with "Yours sincerely". If you don't know the name of the contact, start your letter with "Dear Sir / Madam", and end it with "Yours faithfully."
First paragraph - The opening statement should set out why you're writing the letter. Begin by stating the position you're applying for, where you saw it advertised and when you are available to start
Second paragraph - State why you're suitable for the job, what you like about this type of work, why you're interested in working for the company and what you can offer the organisation.
Third paragraph - Highlight relevant experience and demonstrate how your skills match the specific requirements of the job description. Summarise any additional strengths you have and explain how these could benefit the company.
Last paragraph - Use the closing paragraph to round up your letter. Reiterate your interest in the role and indicate your desire for a personal interview. Now is the time to mention any unavailable dates. Finish by thanking the employer and say how you are looking forward to receiving a response.
Signing Off – If you started the letter with the person's name, for example, "Dear Mrs Jones", you must then end the letter with "Yours sincerely". If you started your letter with "Dear Sir / Madam", then end it with "Yours faithfully." End the letter with your signature and then print your name underneath.

Cover letter Example

<div style="border:1px solid black;">

Your Name

Your Address

The Manager
The Office
London
SE16AA

19th November 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in response to your advertisement for the above post and am attaching my CV for your information and I am able to start work straight away.

Having just left school I am starting out in my career but I have a wide range of skills and experience to offer you. I was captain of my school netball team for the past four years, which has enabled me to develop strong leadership skills and the ability to think quickly on my feet. I also participated in the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme where I took part in a range of activities including teaching children to swim and supporting elderly residents at a local care home.

I get on well with others and have always excelled at team based activities, although I am also able to work on my own initiative with minimal supervision. I really enjoy new challenges and am a fast learner with good problem solving skills.

I am very keen to develop a career working with an organisation such as yours and I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my skills with you in more detail.

Yours Faithfully

Your Name

</div>

Cover Letter Challenge

Think of a job you would like to do, maybe a game designer, a vet or an architect. Imagine you have seen a job advertised online that you would like to apply for. In the space below practise writing our own cover letter.

Preparing for an Inteview

You need to be prepared for your interview in order to perform at your best. You will need to clearly ask and answer questions that present you in the best possible light. It is vital that you know your CV, yourself and the company you are applying for. You will need to be prepared for the following:

Dress code - Decide what you are going to wear the night before your interview. Suits and business-wear are always a safe option, but if you aren't told what to wear, you really should ask. Contact the person who is organising your interview and ask them if there is a dress code for the day. Even if you are told the dress code is informal you still need to make sure your outfit is clean and ironed.

Arriving for an interview - Arrive in good time - between ten and fifteen minutes early is a good target to aim for. Work out the route you will take to your interview, think about how long it will take and take into account the time of day you will be travelling - will it be rush hour? Will you have to pass through particularly busy areas like schools at closing time, or notorious local busy areas?

Interview conduct - No matter how nervous you may be you have to present yourself with energy, enthusiasm and a general sense of wanting to be there. Greet your interviewer with a smile and a firm handshake. Try to make small talk between the walk from reception to the interview room, as this will help create a relaxed atmosphere and also bring out your personality in a natural way.

Ask your own questions - Asking questions shows you are interested in the job and in the company you could be working for. Prepare a few questions in advance, but don't feel that you have to wait until the end of the interview to ask anything. If a question pops into your head in the course of the interview, ask it. The interview is essentially a conversation and questions and answers form a large part of it.

End it positively - Ending the interview on a positive note is vitally important. Good interviews can be completely dismissed by a poor finish, but equally so, bad interviews can be turned around with a strong finish. Allow the interview to follow its course and end.

Interview Checklist

It is important that you are organised before an interview and are fully prepared ahead of time. Make a checklist of what you need to do before an interview and when it needs to be done.

Imagine you have been asked to attend an interview at a media company in London. Think about how you would prepare for the interview and add the actions below into the correct interview timetable column:

Actions:

Research the company	Know your CV	Understand the Job profile	Make sure your clothes are washed and ironed
Bring your CV	Practise answering questions	Keep Calm	Think of questions to ask in the Interview
Decide what to wear – Check the Dress Code?	Plan your route – how long does it take?	Arrive at least 15 minutes early	Switch of your mobile phone

Interview Timetable:

The Week Before	The Night Before	The Morning of Interview	Before the Interview

Interview Tip

The "STAR" Intereview Technique

Increasing many employers are asking job candidates to use the **STAR** method in interviews, a structured manner of responding to interview questions by discussing a specific situation, task, action, and result. Using this technique will help you give a concise response to an interviewers question using real-life examples to highlight your skills and qualities. The **STAR** method can be used to answers interview questions and to show your skills and experience on a CV or application form. Examples of typical interview questions where you would answer using the STAR technique are "*Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to achieve it*", or *"Tell me about a mistake you've made and how did you handle it?"*

What does STAR stand for?

S	T	A	R
Situation	Task	Action	Result
Set the scene and describe the situation you had to deal with, the here and when.	Describe your responsibility or role in the task or challenge, what you needed to do.	Explain the specific action you took and what you did to complete the task or challenge.	Detail the results and impact of your actions and what you learned from the experience.

Here is an example of an interview question answered using the **STAR Technique**.

Give an example of a time when you faced a difficult problem at work. How did you solve this problem?

SITUATION: *While working as a retail manager at a department store, a customer purchased a dress online and had it delivered to the store. One of my associates accidentally put the dress out on the sales floor, where another customer immediately purchased it.*

TASK: *I had to resolve this problem to keep the customer happy, to meet my own customer service standards and to uphold the reputation of the company.*

ACTION: *Before calling the customer to let her know about the mistake, I located the same dress at another store location nearby. I ordered the replacement dress to be delivered to her home, along with a gift card to thank her for her understanding.*

RESULT: *The customer received the dress that she had ordered and was happy with the level of customer service, posting a positive review online. The company's reputation for online sales was also maintained.*

Try answering the following interview question using the **STAR Technique**:

Tell me about a time when you performed well under pressure?
(For example – during exams, in a competition or playing a sport.)
Situation:
Task:
Action:
Result:

A Guide to Video Interviews

Video interviews are an increasingly popular way for organisations to assess potential candidates and with the current social distancing restrictions in place more and more employers will be using *video interviews* as part of their recruitment process. So whether your applying for further education, an apprenticeship or your first job it's now more important than ever to make sure that your video interview skills are up to scratch.

What is a Video Interview?

Put simply, a video interview is an interview conducted via a video, rather than over the phone or in person. Video interviews are often used in the early stages of the interview process to filter out large numbers of candidates. They can vary in style and length. The obvious benefits are the money and time savings for both you and the company or organisation. It also means that the recruiter and their colleagues can watch the interview again rather than just relying on notes.

The format isn't without its challenges though - the main ones being connectivity problems and time delays. Not everyone is comfortable on camera and this may put some candidates at a disadvantage. However, with some preparation these issues can be overcome and help you move on to the next stage of the process.

Top Video Interview Tips

Research the Format

It's vital that you know in advance what format the video interview will take, as the two main types are very different experiences.

Live - this is similar to a regular face-to-face interview. You'll speak to the interviewer (or panel of interviewers) in real-time over a video connection using a service such as Zoom, Teams. Skype or Google Hangouts. This enable employers to recreate the traditional interview format without requiring the candidate to travel to their office, meaning they can recruit from anywhere in world. Try to treat the conversation as you would an interview at the employer's offices and build a rapport with the interviewer.

Pre-recorded - this is a much less personal experience as you won't be speaking to a real person. You'll be presented with pre-recorded or written questions on screen, and then you'll have to record your answer on video, often to a time limit. This helps employers who have lots of candidates, as they can watch your answers later at a time that suits them. It can be awkward if you aren't used to recording yourself, making practice important. On the plus side, you can do the interview at a time of your choosing up to a set deadline.

Choose the Right Location

Plan well in advance where you're going to do the video interview. Use a quiet location, where you won't be disturbed by noises and people. Make sure the room you choose is tidy and use a clean and simple background so that the recruiter focuses on you.

You need to think about the lighting as it won't be a great interview if you can't be properly seen. To ensure you don't get a shadow either use natural light from a window or put a lamp in front of the camera and adjust the distance to get the best result.

Close any software on your computer that might play notification sounds, and switch your phone to silent to guarantee you won't be distracted. Also, let everyone in the house know you're about to start the interview so they don't interrupt.

Dress Appropriately

You may be at home but it's still a job interview and this is your opportunity to give a professional first impression - this means dressing appropriately. You should wear the same outfit you would have chosen for a face-to-face meeting with the employer. Think about how your clothes will look on screen and avoid busy patterns and stripes.
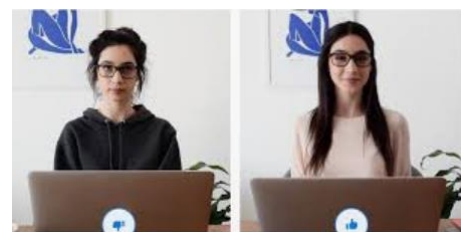
Body Language

Use positive body language. It's best to avoid slouching, moving too much or touching your face. Instead employers will be looking for you to make good eye contact, smile, listen and take an interest in what they're saying. To help you do this your camera should be at eye level and you should look into it rather than at the screen.

For pre-recorded interviews, try to imagine you're speaking to a real person, maintaining your enthusiasm and positive body language. This can be harder to do when you're simply recording your answers.

If you're nervous it can be easy to rush what you're saying but remember that the employer wants to hear your answers. Speak clearly, and be careful not to interrupt as this is more easily done with the slight delay over the internet than during a face-to-face meeting.

Get Technical

A few days before the interview you should test the computer, camera and any software that you've been asked to use. Make sure the picture is clear and the sound quality is good. It's also worth checking your internet connection.

 On the day of the video interview ensure everything is fully charged or plugged in as you don't want the battery to run down. Switch everything on at least half an hour before the interview and sign in to any software that you'll need. If there are any technical hitches, for example if you can't hear the questions very well, don't struggle through as you won't put in your best performance. If it's a live video interview, mention the problem. It may easily be fixed, or the interviewer may be happy to end the call and redial.

For pre-recorded video interviews, check beforehand whether you're allowed to stop and restart in case of technical issues.

Think about where and how you could hold a video interview?

A Guide to Working From Home

Increasingly, companies and organisations are asking their employees and students to work or study from home and in the current environment this working arrangement is likely to become more common, if not the new normal.

What is working from home?

Working from home simply means when an employee or student works remotely from their house, apartment or place of residence, rather than working from their employer's office or attending lectures. Working from home is a method of working which is increasingly relevant to many jobs and courses.

If you are starting at college or beginning your first job, you may have never worked from your home before and could have trouble adjusting to this new working environment. While it may inevitably take some time getting used to, there are some simple steps you can take to make working from home a productive and rewarding experience.

Establish a routine

Structure your day like you would in the office or classroom. If you're employed by a company, you'll probably have set hours of work, and it's important to stick to these when you're working from home. Start your day at the same time as you would normally arrive in your office or college, and finish your day at the same time, keep clearly defined working hours.

Get Dressed

For some people, the prospect of staying in their pyjamas all day is the most tantalising aspect of working from home. But washing and getting dressed will not only improve your state of mind, it will psychologically prepare you to start work. Whether you need to change into business attire depends on the type of person you are and the nature of the job you have. Some people find that dressing formally is helpful, and also useful if they need to dial into a video call.

Create a workspace

Not everyone has a designated home office, but it's critical to have a private, quiet space for your work or study. Try to separate your work area from your personal spaces and use it just for work, not for other activities. This will help you separate home and work in your mind, and boost focus when you're in your designated space. Be conscious of your surroundings, make sure your background is appropriate for the workplace and it's a good idea to invest in a pair of headphones with a decent microphone if your role involves frequent video meetings.

Get out and about

Working from home shouldn't mean you stay cooped up indoors all day. While you might not miss your daily commute, it does guarantee that you leave the house at least once during the day. So get your shoes on, get outside and enjoy that fresh air. A different perspective will also help undo mental blocks and give you a fresh pair of eyes for any tasks you're struggling with.

Take regular breaks
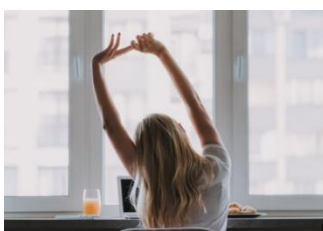
It's good to have a routine when you're working from home, but work shouldn't become monotonous, and you shouldn't stay glued to your screen all day. It's important to take regular screen breaks and get up from your desk and move around just as you would in an office.

Have a real conservation

If you're working from home, the chances are you'll be spending more time alone. When you're at work or college you're more likely to engage with colleagues and friends, but when you're working from home, you could spend the whole day without speaking to anyone which can be isolating. Make some time to pick up the phone or video message and have a real conversation, rather than relying on email and messaging. Socialising is also important so why not schedule a virtual lunch and catch up with friends and colleagues.

Beware social media

Social media is designed to make it easy to open and browse quickly, but while working from home this convenience can become an increasing distraction and detrimental to your productivity. Avoid the lure of spending too much time on social media, ration your usage to breaks and non-working hours and turn of alerts and notifications to avoid any temptation.

Prepare your lunch the night before

When working in an office or studying at college it's easy to grab your lunch on the commute in or during your lunch break, but this is often not possible when you're working from your own home. It can be tempting to spend work time preparing a really nice breakfast or lunch for yourself. Don't use precious minutes making your food the day of work, cook it the night before. Preparing food ahead of time ensures you can actually use your lunch time to eat, away from your desk rather than rushing your meals during meetings or lectures.

Think about the positives and negatives of working from home?	
Positive: (*Example – No commuting***)**	**Negative:** (*Example – Many distractions*)

Employability Action Plan

Create an **Employability Action Plan** to help develop your employability skills and set yourself goals to achieve and a completion date, so you have everything you need to be work ready.

For example, create a work ready CV, write an effective personal statement or understand what skills are important to an employer and why.

Employability Action Plan:

Goal:	Completion Date:
Goal:	Completion Date:
Goal:	Completion Date:
Goal:	Completion Date: