Professional Development
Topic 1: Professionalism

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Course Objectives

1. To instil a professional attitude toward the application of computer technology
2. To introduce methods for the rational resolution of ethical problems
3. To provide an appreciation of the law as it relates to computing
4. To ensure awareness and encourage deliberation of the relationship between technology and society

Coursework

- Coursework for this course consists of researching and presenting a case for one side (assigned, not chosen) of a debate on a topical issue
- All students are expected to familiarise themselves with all of the issues
- Research can start as soon as the topics are announced
- Presentation preparation should not start until after the lectures on ethics (after Topic 2)
- Presentations will be assessed by the Tutor, who will provide feedback, as will all other students

Careers

- The following slides have been produced by Alan Smith of the Careers Service at Heriot-Watt University specifically for students studying degree courses in the Department of Computer Science

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Effective Applications

CVs and Application Forms
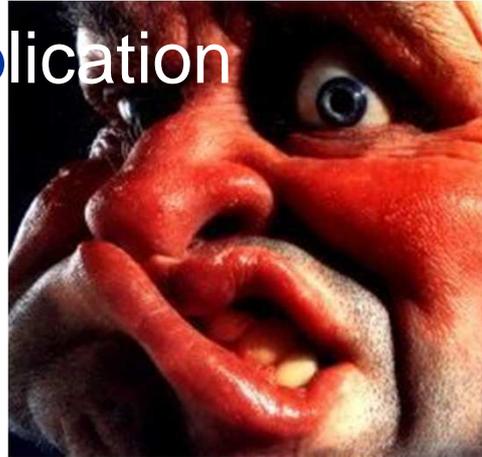
You only ever get one chance to make a first impression!

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CVs/Applications

Employers use them because they:

• Paint a picture of your overall academic career

• reveal your skills, abilities and experience

• highlight your individuality

• provide a basis for interviews

• need to get rid of 'unsuccessful' candidates!!

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Applications

Your Initial Thoughts?

– "It's obvious what to write!"

– "I'll definitely get an interview"

– "My predicted 2:1 will enable me to sail through"

– "I don't need to get my CV or application form checked – my mum did it"

Applications

- **Facts**

– It can't be that straightforward!!

– Last year around **70%** students failed at application stage!

– CVs and AFs are prioritised and ranked. The best applications have the first chance to attend interview (and therefore get selected).

– Competencies are key, actual academic attainment is only required as a <u>minimum</u>

Do's and Don'ts

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DO…..

- research the company, and what it is looking for
- remember to use paragraphs
- perform a spell check
- get someone else to proof-read
- sell yourself - how have **you** make a difference?
- 'rest' your application and complete it over a few visits

Do's and Don'ts

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DON'T…

- Use the same CV for every job/company
- Automatically assume you can copy and paste answers between application forms
- Lie at any stage of the process
- Leave any gaps
- Elevate presentation over content

CVs

CVs

…looking good on paper

What's in yours?

Contact Details

IN
- Address
- Tel
- Email (be careful!)
- Nationality (if relevant)

OUT
- Sex
- Date of Birth
- Marital Status
- Number of Children
- State of Health
- Place of Birth
- Anything else!!

Personal Profile

- This content is best included in covering letter!
- If used – keep short and relevant

Education

- Institution, location, degree title and actual/expected class

- Outline your individuality

- Highlight academic strengths, key subjects and interests

- Give most advanced school qualifications and grades

- Summarise earlier school qualifications

- Give details of major project work

- Mention any awards and scholarships

Work Experience

- Dates; organisation; job title

- Outline main duties and responsibilities

- Segregate into 'Relevant Professional Experience' and 'Other Work Experience' if necessary

- Focus on skills developed

- Highlight knowledge gained

- Any work experience is better than none!

Skills Profile

- **Must match the employer's criteria!!**

- List 4-5 skills as headings

- Give concrete examples of having demonstrated that skill

- Use university; part-time work; placements; leisure pursuits as sources of evidence

- Most important part of CV!

Effective Applications

"While a technology background would be helpful, it is by no means essential; in fact, you could have a degree in any analytical or numerate discipline. More important to us are the intellectual ability, communication skills and business insight to work successfully with experts across a variety of fields".

Bank Of England: IT Graduate Vacancy

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Effective Applications

Skills and Aptitudes

Java, C++ , VB.Net, CSS for all platforms

PHP, HTML, XML, JavaScript/Ajax, MySQL

Thirst for knowledge & passion for developing software

Strong communicator, self motivated with a flexible approach & team player

Software Developer Vacancy

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Example Competencies

- Demonstrating business awareness
- Communicating effectively
- Resolving problems
- Presenting new ideas persuasively
- Utilising information technology
- Displaying leadership qualities
- Performing under pressure
- Evaluating your performance

Additional Information

- Use to cover anything other <u>relevant</u> information
- Must add value to your application
- Avoid just listing 'Hobbies' and 'Interests'
- Useful to highlight:
  - Language skills
  - Driving licence
  - Computer proficiency etc.

References

No real need to take up space with referees – you'll be asked for referees when made a job offer!

Covering Letter

- One side of A4
- Address to an individual
- 4 main paragraphs:
1. Why you are applying and brief current overview
2. Why you want to work for that company
3. Why you want to pursue a career in…..
4. Summary of your skills and qualities

Careers Advisory Service

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Any Questions?

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Careers Advisory Service

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Application Forms

- Competencies
  - Get to the point as quickily as you can
  - Answer the question!!
- Achievements/Responsibilities
  - Keep as current as possible!
- Additional Information
  - Use to highlight skills and achievements
- Career Choice
  - Demonstrate suitability and motivation

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Career Choice Question

- Research the company/organisation

- Reflect the 'Job Specification'

- Reflect the 'Person Specification'

- Use work experience

- Demonstrate motivation

- Highlight academic strengths

Competency Questions

- "Give us an example when *you*…."
- "What did *you* do?"
- "How did *you* make a difference?"
- "How did *you* bring the rest of the team along with you?"

     … in other words, *it's all about you!!!!*

Demonstrating Competencies

- Situation

- Objective

- Action

- Results

Key Elements?

"Describe a time when you successfully influenced a team or group to change the status quo?"

Key Elements?

"Tell me about a time when you failed to complete a task or project on time, despite intending to do so?"

Key Elements?

"Give an example of a problem you have solved that required analysis. What methods did you use and what conclusions did you reach?"

- Ability
- Achieved
- Effected
- Engineered
- Analysed
- Established
- Produced
- Built
- Expanded
- Repaired
- Completed

- Initiated
- Created
- Facilitated
- Resourced
- Communicated
- Implemented
- Sold
- Controlled
- Improved
- Specialised
- Co-ordinated

- Tutored
- Succeeded
- Led
- Supervised
- Designed
- Managed
- Trained
- Developed
- Monitored
- Directed
- Organised
- Targeted

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Use diverse examples, e.g.
  - Sport
  - Societies (especially if you sit on a committee)
  - Travel
  - Languages
  - Arts
  - Personal achievements: what are you most proud of?

Effective Applications

How to Avoid Rejection

Your CV is not <u>just</u> about you!

Prioritise relevant information

Avoid irrelevant information

Be different – stand out

Give unique examples of skills

Place skills in context

Give them what they want!!

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Course Content

- Professionalism
  - British Computer Society
- Rights & Wrongs
  - Codes & Standards
  - Computer Law
  - Ethical Decision Making
- Risks & Threats
  - Computer Crime
  - Privacy & Security
- Dependence & Change
  - Technology & Society
  - Safety Critical Systems
- Brave New Worlds
  - Co-operative Computing
  - *e*Life

Professionalism

- What is a professional?
- Competence-Responsibility-Trust
- When do you become one?
- What is a profession?
- Guarantor of C-R-T
- British Computer Society

British Computer Society

www.bcs.org

- *The Chartered Institute for IT*
  - Established 1957
  - Professional body for those working in IT
  - 70,000 members in over 100 countries
- What the BCS does
  - *The essential requirement for professional competence coupled with appropriate professional standards lies at the heart of almost all BCS activity and the services that it provides*
- Royal Charter 1984
  - *To promote the study and practice of Computing and to advance knowledge therein for the benefit of the public*