



ABE Level 3 Award in Employability Skills: Putting Your Skills to Work

Qualification Syllabus

www.abeuk.com



Introduction to ABE Level 3 Short Award in Employability: putting your skills to work

Starting a new job can be challenging. While getting to know your new work colleagues and working environment, you are also wanting to prove your worth to your new employer. At this time, your employer is looking to maximise your value to the organisation and ensure you are able to deliver effectively. This challenge is true for all jobs, but even more so for first-time employees. This short award has been designed to raise awareness of what employers are looking for from their new employees in terms of 'employability skills', and what individuals can do to help ensure they are 'work ready'.

The qualification is aimed at new employees who have recently found employment and are looking to build on their career. The qualification considers a range of generic skills and capabilities that are valued by employers, which have been shown to make employees more successful within their roles over and above technical qualifications and experience. Employability skills include a range of behavioural and interpersonal skills that candidates can use to interact and work effectively with others at work. These employability skills also allow employees to be more successful at job retention and career development.

As well as reviewing a range of employability skills, the qualification enables you to assess your own skillset in terms of employability. The course culminates with a requirement for you to develop their own personal development plan and a reflective log of learning.

This course could be used as part of a coordinated work induction programme or simply be part of on-going personal and professional development for employees.

What You'll Learn

Learning Outcomes

On completing the ABE Level 3 Award in Employability Skills, you will be able to:

1. Explain what employability skills employers are looking for in new staff and why these skills are valuable to organisations.
2. Assess your skillset to make a positive impression and add value to your organisation.
3. Describe how employability skills can help you integrate and establish yourself as part of a team.
4. Discuss techniques to gather feedback and to aid reflection to enhance your value to an employer.

Alongside academic learning and development, ABE's qualifications have been designed to develop your practical skills and capabilities. These capabilities are highlighted as certain values, knowledge, skills and behaviours that will help you in your professional development.

Below is an overview of the key capabilities that learners will develop during the course of this qualification:

Elements of Learning		Key Capabilities Developed
Element 1	Employability skills and their value to organisations	Identify the key employability skills that employers are looking for and show why they are valuable and important to business organisations. <i>Initiative; being proactive; showing an interest</i>
Element 2	Making a positive impression	Self-assessing your own skillset to show how you can make a positive impression and add value to the organisation. <i>Punctuality; personal presentation; confidence; enthusiasm; respect; communication; listening; willingness to learn; team working; collaboration; planning and organising; respecting diversity</i>
Element 3	Establishing yourself in a new job	Establishing your own employability skills and integrating into a business organisation and associated teams. <i>Integrity; reliability; trust; initiative; flexibility; commitment; hard working; collaboration; developing positive working relationships; ability to cope with pressure; time management and prioritisation; commercial acumen; balancing work and home; negotiation; accountability; getting things right the first time; taking ownership and following tasks through to completion; tailoring your message to meet the needs of your audience; decision making</i>
Element 4	Maintaining your value as an employee	Respond to feedback and performance review mechanisms to maintain and increase your value as an employee. <i>Self-development; keeping skills up to date; drive, determination and getting things done</i>

Localisation – How to take on board the local working environment in learning and assessment

It is really important for learners to appreciate the implications of employability skills within the context of their own local working environment, wherever that might be in the world. In addition, learners should remember that many of these skills, capabilities and practices have been established globally-accepted business practices and promoted through global media, such as the internet.

The emphasis of the qualification is, however, primarily to maintain and develop employment within the learner's local environment. Learners should therefore take into account the following when preparing for their assessment:

- Local practices and customs in relation to work
- Local organisational culture and business practices
- The influence of local culture and socialisation on employability and business practices
- Learning and development opportunities within the learner's organisation, such as: induction, staff handbooks, company literature, company internet/intranet information, coaching, mentoring, shadowing, online learning, face-to-face training opportunities, job rotation
- Learning and development opportunities outside of the learner's organisation, such as: training courses, additional qualifications, online education, coaching

Description of the programme (Regulatory characteristics)

1. Aligned to the Ofqual RQF at Level 3
2. A single unit qualification with four elements of learning:
 - Element 1: Employability skills and their value to organisations
 - Element 2: Making a positive impression
 - Element 3: Establishing yourself in a new job
 - Element 4: Maintaining your value as an employee
3. Open entry for those who are 16 years of age and above
4. 6 credits (a credit being worth 10 hours of learning)
5. 60 hours Total Qualification Time (TQT) of which there is expected to be 50 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) (approximately 15 hours each for Elements 1 and 4, and 10 hours each for Elements 2 and 3). The remaining 10 hours can be unsupervised based on a series of self-study and supported study elements, including assessment preparation, and will be specified in guidance terms by ABE.
6. The assessment approach is designed to help candidates assess their own personal skillset in relation to employability, so that they can improve the success of their career development and overall employability. Many candidates will have already started this process, however, the qualification provides structure to these approaches and enhances the value of individual employees.

As part of the summative assessment, you could be asked to do the following:

- Task 1 Assess own strengths, weaknesses and personal preferences in terms of employability skills
- Task 2 Undertake a gap analysis in relation to your current skillset and desirable skillset for a specific aspirational job role
- Task 3 Develop a personal development plan (PDP) that describes the learning and development opportunities you will pursue over the next 12 months of employment to help improve your personal employability skills and your value to an employing organisation

Element 1: Employability skills and their value to organisations (Weighting 30%)

Employability skills are practical behavioural and interpersonal skills that employers value in their employees. They are not associated with specific technical skills, qualifications or previous work experience, and can usually be transferred from one job to another. Employers value these generic skills as they help to distinguish between employees and serve to highlight those that are most likely to succeed in a new role. This Element outlines the main employability skills that are favoured by employers as the employee starts a new role and helps candidates to appreciate why these skills are just as important as any other technical skill or qualification.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<p>1. Explain what employability skills employers are looking for in new staff and why these skills are valuable to organisations.</p>	<p>1.1 Explain the employability skills most frequently desired by employers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The concept and definitions of employability ▪ Key employability skills, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-management skills, such as: punctuality, time management, planning and organising, self-confidence, honesty, integrity, reliability, 'can do' approach, enthusiasm, commitment, good personal presentation, coping with pressure, emotional intelligence; - Thinking and problem solving skills, such as: attention to detail, negotiation, decision-making, initiative, achievement, drive, analysis; - Working together and communication skills, such as: collaboration, cooperation, flexibility, involving others, equality and inclusion, responsiveness, willingness to learn, taking responsibility, being accountable, tact and diplomacy, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, active listening, giving and receiving feedback, presentation skills, trustworthiness, conflict resolution; - Business skills, such as: commercial awareness, customer focus, service orientation, on-time delivery; - Functional skills, such as: numeracy, language, communication and ICT.

- 1.2 Discuss the value of employability skills to employers and how they 'add value' to organisations.
- Benefits of 'soft skills' as a differentiator between employees in the same roles undertaking the same tasks.
 - Importance of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, control and expression of own emotions, resilience, ability to handle interpersonal relationships effectively and appropriately, empathy)
 - Contribution of behavioural and interpersonal skills to effective and efficient business working practices and corporate culture:
 - Doing things right the first time
 - Best use of resources to meet market needs
 - Transferrable skills between jobs roles and tasks

Element 2: Making a positive impression (Weighting 20%)

Having identified and explained a range of generic employability skills, this Element focuses on an individual's personal skills inventory to make a positive impression and build effective relationships with colleagues. Through a realistic assessment of their own strengths, weaknesses and personal preferences they will be able to use their skills to their advantage as well as adding value to the organisation. Personal Development planning enables the candidate to understand their own capabilities and highlight any skills 'gaps' and opportunities for development.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<p>2. Assess your skillset to make a positive impression and add value to your organisation.</p>	<p>2.1 Describe the employability skills required to make a positive impression in a new job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Making a positive impression during the initial period of your employment, including: personal presentation, punctuality, being informed, showing interest, enthusiasm, retaining information ▪ Developing effective relationships with work colleagues through the use of good communication, effective team-working, collaboration, mutual respect, professionalism. <p>2.2 Assess your own skillset in terms of employability and provide examples to support your strengths, weaknesses and personal preferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessing your own skillset to identify transferrable skills, strengths, weaknesses and personal preferences and establish a personal baseline of employability skills ▪ Identify specific qualities and skills required for professional development, perhaps for specific employment positions, and develop a 'gap analysis' of personal strengths and weaknesses, prioritising personal development needs to fulfil aspirations ▪ Closing the gap with development opportunities, such as shadowing, training courses, additional study, books, blogs, free seminars ▪ Commitment to on-going personal development and life-long learning.

Element 3: Establishing yourself in a new job (Weighting 20%)

Despite possessing good qualifications and technical skills, many new recruits find it challenging to integrate and establish themselves in an existing team. This can have an adverse impact on their productivity during the early stages of their employment. This Element builds on the first two elements by considering what it takes for new employees to become fully established and highly effective in their team roles. It focuses on the use of interpersonal skills and teamwork, as key enablers of effective employment.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<p>3. Describe how employability skills can help you integrate and establish yourself as part of a team.</p>	<p>3.1 Describe how employability skills can help you integrate and establish yourself into a work-based team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective use of own interpersonal skills to integrate into a work-based team such as problem-solving, being accountable, developing an eye for detail, checking work, reporting on progress ▪ Balancing personal confidence with a willingness to learn ▪ Valuing diversity and how effective teams are made up of people with different skillsets ▪ Understanding the nature of different team roles and your own personal contribution within a work-based team. ▪ Resolving interpersonal conflict and working with others collaboratively. <p>3.2 Describe learning opportunities that can be used to establish you in a new job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of formal and informal inductions ▪ Apprenticeships and development agreements ▪ Making the most of development opportunities through listening, observing, asking questions, on-the-job training, making notes, learning-by-doing, reading, personal research

Element 4: Maintaining your value as an employee (Weighting 30%)

Getting through the door of recruitment into employment is just the starting point of your career. Employability skills are required throughout your working life to enhance your value as an employee and to develop your career progression. This requires an element of on-going personal and professional development – not just ‘growing with the job’ – but also building up your personal skills so that you can take on additional responsibilities and ultimately be ready for promotion. The concluding Element of this qualification focuses on the concept of lifelong learning and personal development planning. This includes building a personal development plan (PDP) that proactively maps out the skills development opportunities required in the foreseeable future. This is a practical element that, if successfully executed, will have lasting implications for each learner’s employability and future career development

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<p>4. Discuss techniques to gather feedback and to aid reflection to enhance your value to an employer.</p>	<p>4.1 Explain methods of proactively seeking feedback on personal levels of performance and interpersonal behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting personal goals and targets at work (professional and personal) ▪ Probationary reviews for new recruits ▪ Formal performance reviews and feedback ▪ Informal feedback mechanisms ▪ Personal experience and lessons learned ▪ Offering helpful feedback to others <p>4.2 Describe techniques to improve your value as an employee through professional and personal development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting achievable and realistic development targets and timescales ▪ Building a personal development plan (PDP) with specific objectives for each learning and development opportunity ▪ Gaining organisational support for your PDP ▪ Tracking progress on your PDP and updating it over time ▪ Developing a reflective log that details personal experience, lessons learned and your specific responses to feedback ▪ Understanding the longer term implications of action or non-action

Glossary of Terms

To assist you in your understanding of the qualification, ABE has defined the following terms:

Assessment criteria	these appear within each of the elements and like the learning outcomes they determine the knowledge and understanding of your learning and assessment.
Element	An element represents a segment of learning within the ABE Level 3 Money Management for Small Businesses. Each individual element has its own rationale and content.
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	is an element of the Total Qualification Time (TQT) and is an estimate of the number of hours during which the learner is given specific guidance by their tutor towards the achievement of the qualification, for example: face to face teaching, e-learning, mentoring etc.
Indicative content	The indicative content is the scope of knowledge required in order to fulfil the assessment requirements and achieve the learning outcome; it also outlines the technical components of the programme.
Learning outcomes	The learning outcome within an element lays down the expectations of the learner and defines the level of knowledge and understanding required to complete the ABE assessment.
Qualification	For the purpose of this qualification, upon passing your assessment, you will be awarded the ABE Level 3 Award in Money Management for Small Businesses.
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	It is an estimate of the total amount of time a learner could reasonably be expected to take to achieve the qualification.
Weighting	The weightings indicate the level of emphasis on the different parts of the syllabus in terms of teaching, learner effort and emphasis in assessment.

Recommended Resources

Core text:

- ABE Study Guide for ABE Level 3 Short Award – Employability Skills – putting your skills to work.

Supplementary text:

- Cottrell, D (2015) *Skills for Success: Personal Development and Employability* (Palgrave Study Skills), 3rd Ed, ISBN: 9781137426529
- Hind, D W G, Moss, S (2011) *Employability Skills*, 2nd Ed, Business Education Publishers, ISBN: 9781901888997
- Sumner, R. (2012) *How to use your degree to secure a job: Kaplan's Guide to Core Skills and Employability*, Wokingham: Kaplan Publishing. ISBN: 978-0-85732-486-3

Online resources:

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/top-ten-skills.htm>

<http://www.skillsyouneed.com/general/employability-skills.html>

<http://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/1515/employability-what-are-employers-looking-for>

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training_skills/publicationbs_resources/profiles/employability_skills_for_the_future.htm

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/career-planning/273051-the-top-10-skills-thatll-get-you-a-job-when-you-graduate>

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/skills-and-competencies>

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity>

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/168823-the-ocr-guide-to-employability.pdf>

www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/time.htm



www.abeuk.com



ABE's offices are located in New Malden, Greater London, UK.
5th Floor, CI Tower, St. George's Square, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4TE, UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 8329 2930 Fax: +44 (0)20 8329 2945

