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Embedding employability skills across the curriculum and beyond

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The competition for graduate level jobs will undoubtedly intensify over the next years due to rising living costs and a concerning trend towards higher unemployment. Key to winning a graduate job interview is a “well-crafted” application that meets the essential criteria, followed by an exceptional interview performance. For the module BR35620 Environmental Regulation and Consultancy we have fully integrated these elements into part of our module assessment. This presentation will focus on the process of interview preparation and the realisation that most questions asked can surely be predicted. These will include generic questions plus those that target skills and competencies sought and highlighted in the advert. For the assessment, students are tasked to write scripted answers to knowledge-based / skills questions written as they would say them in an interview. The aim in the future is that they embrace this high-level strategy, writing scripted answers and memorising them in preparation for interview. Our four key aims are:

* To highlight the very high level of preparedness needed to ‘win’ in a job interview.
* To develop and test their capacity to understand, engage with and describe a particular topic in a clear, concise, and informed manner.
* To help them understand their own relationship with a topic, explaining what they know, and any experiences of engaging with the topic or skill, evidenced by examples.
* To win that job!

The questions have been developed in collaboration with stakeholders and are typical of what the students might experience in a future interview. They are also marked in an identical way to an interview based on a scale of 1-5. Student performance on the assessment is typically strong because they see the high future value of this exercise. However, they are told the reality that they would need to consistently score 4/5 (i.e. 80%) to be close to being appointed. This assessment occurs in Semester 2 of their final year providing ‘real world’ insight into what may be ahead. The assessment model developed could potentially be adapted for any subject.

