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Business Imperial

Introduction

Whether as a unique edge in job interviews or to enhance your understanding of the world in which you live, Business Imperial’s innovative series of master-classes offers you a convenient and exciting opportunity to learn about the core skills and attributes that you possess that will enable you to succeed in your chosen career of the future. The Professional Skills for Employability course has been designed by the Careers Service to enable you to reflect on some of the key components for success and to enable you to start building a portfolio of skills for your future.

Professional Skills for Employability

Programme overview and learning objectives

Developing skills and self-awareness alongside your degree course will stand you in good stead for your future employment or study options. The Professional Skills for Employability module will enable you to understand your strengths and weaknesses and how to apply these to the world of work. You will develop a key set of skills, that combined with your academic studies will give you greater self-awareness as well as confidence to succeed in your chosen career or further study path in the future. The module consists of a series of practical exercises that can be directly translated into increasing your future employability.

Learning objectives

By completing the Professional Skills for Employability programme you will develop a set of transferable skills and understanding which include:

- Communication skills
- Presentation skills
- Negotiation skills
- Self-awareness
- Group working
- Business etiquette
- Business acumen
- Action planning

These attributes will assist you as you move through your College career and start to consider your options for the future.
Contract of Responsibilities

Attendance

- I will endeavour to attend every session of this course and understand that I must attend at least six of the eight sessions including the final assessed presentation to pass
- If I am unavoidably absent, I will inform my tutor of the reason before the session, or at the latest by midday on the following day
- I will arrive at the lecture session promptly and understand that being late is discourteous to the tutor and is not acceptable
- I will discuss any problems with attendance or punctuality with my course tutor at the earliest opportunity

Group Working

- I will be a productive member of my class
- I will be attentive during all sessions and will ask questions or participate in discussions and tasks set
- I will actively participate in all activities for the duration of the course

Blackboard

- I will use Blackboard Learn to continue and document my independent learning and to collaborate and demonstrate good team working with other members of my discussion/presentation group

Assessment

- I understand that I will be assessed during the module. This will take the form of timely completion of my work book and includes a final assessed group presentation

Signed:...................................................................... Date:...........................................................................
Group working Guidelines

Group working is an important aspect of the Professional Skills for Employability course. It is a skill that you will use throughout your studies at Imperial College and beyond into your professional life. Below are some key aspects of group working for you to understand and consider.

Every member of the group should -

- Contribute their ideas and opinions to the discussion / task
- Respect the ideas and opinions of other group members
- Avoid interrupting other group members when they are speaking
- Try not to dominate the discussion – give other group members the opportunity to speak and contribute
- Constructively criticise other peoples arguments but don’t directly criticise individuals
- Listen to other members of the group and respond when appropriate
- Agree that there are no stupid contributions or questions – everybody will have different knowledge and experience and this must be respected
- Prepare between classes and agree actions and deadlines amongst your group

Student Representative

To enable student feedback a student representative will be sought for this course. The role will involve arranging feedback from other students and feeding this back to the Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication via a representative committee. Arrangements for electing a rep will be discussed in the 1st session.
# Course Schedule – Autumn Term 2015

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<th>Date</th>
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<td><strong>Tuesday 27 October</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Session 8</strong>: Presentation Assessment</td>
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Session 1: Programme Introduction: Professional Skills for Employability

**Description:** Students will gain an introduction to employability and key professional skills sought by employers. They will share ideas on what they can be doing whilst at Imperial to take advantage of opportunities on offer and develop themselves further.

**Learning Outcomes:** By end of the session, you will be able to:
1. Understand what the programme offers and what is meant by employability
2. Identify key professional skills for employability sought by employers
3. Recognise the role that self-awareness plays in career planning process
4. Consider what activities you can do during your time at Imperial as well as the skills that these activities will enable you to develop
5. Begin to audit your skills and make a plan to develop yourself further whilst at Imperial

**Assessment – written task (25 marks):**
The task is to audit your professional skills for employability and produce a plan to show how you will develop your skills this year at Imperial.

Skills audit – see hand out / also on Blackboard  (15 marks)
- Your skills audit should demonstrate how competent you feel currently in skills related to employability and what evidence you can provide for this
- The best evidence is specific things you’ve done and achieved; specific outcomes / results / evaluation received

Personal development plan  (10 marks)
- A piece of writing (300 - 500 words, no more than this), outlining
- The extra-curricular activities you will undertake this year, why you’ve chosen to do them and what you hope to gain from them; any work experience, volunteering or internships you plan to do and why you wish to do them
- The professional skills for employability you will develop or improve in as a result of the above
- What you aim to achieve in these activities; try to specify particular goals or SMART targets you have in mind and how you will be able to tell that you’re making progress.

Your tutor will give you a hand-out with further details which will also be available on blackboard.

**Further Reading:**
1. Imperial College London Careers Service – [www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/exploring-your-options/first](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/exploring-your-options/first)
2. [www.cihe.co.uk/global-graduates-into-global-leaders](http://www.cihe.co.uk/global-graduates-into-global-leaders)
   See Executive Summary of CIHE report ‘Global Graduates into Global Leaders’
4. Computer aided careers guidance tools (based on your assessment of yourself) that matches your profile to graduate jobs -
   - *Prospects Planner – What jobs and courses would suit me?*  [www.prospects.ac.uk/myprospects_planner.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/myprospects_planner.htm)
   - *Target Careers Report* - [http://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-report](http://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-report)
Session 2: Team Working and Group Dynamics

**Description:** Through group exercises and exploring group theory, students will gain an insight into what makes teams effective. They will be reflecting on their own experiences, as well as looking at the processes successful teams go through, and exploring theory of group dynamics. Through increased self-awareness and understanding of group behaviour the workshop will assist the students in maximising the productivity and experience of team situations in the future.

**Learning Outcomes:**
- To develop an understanding of the stages a successful team goes through
- To gain knowledge of team dynamics and the different roles team members fulfil in a productive team
- To experience working in small teams in differing scenarios
- To start thinking about steps you can take to improve your contribution in teams

**Assessment (500 word maximum):**
- Describe a time where you worked as part of a team which worked together successfully.
- How did you contribute?
- What did you learn, and how will you use these skills in the future?

**Further reading:**

[www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/application-process/assessment-centres](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/application-process/assessment-centres)
[www.belbin.com](http://www.belbin.com)

*Team roles at work* - R. M. Belbin
**Session 3: Communicating and networking with employers**

**Description:**
Students will gain an introduction to the importance of professional communication and networking skills when interacting with potential future employers. Students will consider the importance of their digital footprint and how to use LinkedIn effectively. Students will consider how best to prepare for discussions with employers. They will become aware of the need to keep abreast of current affairs / business news to develop their commercial awareness. Students will have the chance to practise promoting themselves positively, which will be useful when networking with employers.

**Learning Outcomes:**
- Understand the importance of professional verbal and written communication skills in the workplace
- Be aware of the importance of your digital footprint and how to use LinkedIn effectively
- Consider how to create and make the most of opportunities to interact with employers
- Appreciate the importance of showing a genuine interest in organisations by researching online beforehand and keeping abreast of current affairs / global trends
- Practise introducing yourself to an employer and communicating positively your achievements and interest

**Assessment: (See Page 27 for marking schemes):**

**1st Task** In no more than 500 words (15 marks) –

- Give an example of a specific organisation / employer that you are interested in working for in the future (e.g. summer vacation work, internship or graduate employment). How could you find opportunities to interact with this employer?

- Explain how you will prepare for an informal discussion with a representative from this organisation e.g. at a careers event?
  - How could you introduce yourself to him / her, highlighting some interesting things about you?
  - What questions do you have for this person?
  - How will you ensure a positive discussion takes place?

**2nd Task** In no more than 250 words (10 marks) –

Describe a time when you communicated effectively with another person or a group of people who initially disagreed with you but you managed to persuade him/her or them to your point of view.
Session 4: Presenting with IMPACT

Description:
Students will gain an introduction to effective presentation skills and an awareness of the different techniques to enable them to structure a presentation, delivering content that is engaging and appropriate to the audience. This practical session will enable students to try out what they learn and receive feedback on their performance.

Learning Outcomes:
• Understand the wider application of presentation skills
• Learn aspects of a good presentation in terms of content, structure and delivery
• Design and deliver a presentation and receive feedback.

Assessment:
In the final session you will be expected to give a short group presentation (8 minutes with 4 minutes for questions). You will be able to choose from 6 topics, which will be given to you in session 4.

Further Reading:


Session 5: Introduction to Understanding Yourself and Others

Description:
Students will gain an insight into the purpose of an Assessment Centre and what might be involved at the event. It will provide an opportunity to learn more about yourself through self-assessment and an understanding of personality tests as well as appropriate behaviours and skills that may be required to succeed and assessment centres.

It is an interactive workshop that will enable you to get some hands on experience of working in groups and learn about the importance of team work and reflective practice.

Learning Outcomes:
Attendance at the course will enable you to:

- Gain an insight into the use of some psychometric tools especially the personality inventories to better understand yourself
- Understand the purpose of Assessment Centres and why employers use them to select candidates.
- Identify the different types of activities used at assessment centres by employers
- Gain greater awareness of your own skills through some typical interactive exercises and receive feedback on your performance

Assessment:
This part of the Horizons programme will not have any assessed work

Further Reading:
- Relevant Hand-outs and lists of useful resources including websites will be provided
- A number of worksheets and materials will be provided for use during the workshop.
Session 6: Effective Applications and Demonstrating Commercial Awareness

**Description:**
This session will review the key areas that you need to be aware of to be successful in the application stages of your job seeking. It is a key employability skill and will draw on the previous sessions in the Professional Skills for Employability course.

**Learning Outcomes:**
- Find out how to show your ‘motivation’ in Cover Letters and Applications, and how to convince a company that you understand what a career with them would involve
- Understand the meaning of commercial awareness and how to evidence it in the application process
- Generate ideas for examples of skills and how to use them effectively in application questions
- Understand how the skills, knowledge and other factors employers’ require impact on the content of CVs and Cover Letters
- Identify the key factors that make a CV and Covering Letter

**Assessment:**
This session is not formally assessed.
**Session 7: Developing Interview Skills**

**Description:**
Students will gain an introduction to successful competency based interviewing skills and an awareness of how to communicate effectively at an interview, cope with nerves and come across as a well-informed and capable candidate in future interviews. This practical session will enable students to try out interview questions through a practise interview and receive feedback on their performance.

**Learning Outcomes:**
- Understand what employers are looking for in the selection process
- Improve your understanding of the interview process, different interview styles and how to prepare for a successful interview
- Identify the evidence for the skills that you have gained to date and your own unique selling points.
- Clarify the difference between competency based and other types of interviews
- Improve interview performance through practice and feedback

**Assessment:**
This session is not formally assessed.

**Further reading:**
- “Quick Guide to Interviews”; Plus “Making an Impact” & “Assessment Centres”, “Selection Success In One” on-line from Careers Service: [www.imperial.ac.uk/careers](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers)
- Hand-outs – “Develop your interviews skills”; & “Interviews”
- D et al Charlton (Author) 2000 - “How to succeed at Interviews & other selection methods”
Session 8: Presentation Assessment

**Description:**
Groups will have been allocated and a choice of topics discussed in session 4. This final session will be an assessed Group Presentation. The audience will be your fellow students plus your tutor who will assess your group presentation with another assessor.

You will have **40 minutes** at the start of the session to work with your group on final preparation and practice.

**Assessment:**
Your group will deliver an 8 minute presentation and have up to 4 minutes to answer questions. Time will be strictly monitored.

*Topics for the presentation will be given in session 4*

*Details of the assessment criteria can be found on page 28*
Assessment Details

Attendance

To pass this course you must attend at least six out of the eight sessions. You must attend the final assessed presentation session on session 8. Please note it is not acceptable to miss sessions due to excessive workload – you are expected to manage your workload appropriately.

In case of absence, it is your responsibility to contact your tutor with the reason for your absence at the earliest opportunity. You will be given your tutor’s full contact details during the programme introduction in session one and they are listed in appendix 1 of this workbook. It is preferable to notify your tutor before the session you are due to miss. Therefore if you wake up unwell on Tuesday morning, you should email your tutor and let them know in the morning. If there is an acceptable reason for your absence, such as illness, your tutor may mark your absence as authorised and you will not be penalised. Your tutor has the right to ask for evidence of the reason for your absence, such as a doctor’s note.

If you are not able to contact your tutor in advance of the session, you must contact them before midday on the following day to explain your absence; otherwise you will automatically be marked with an unauthorised absence. If you have more than two unauthorised absences you will fail the course.

Your overall Grade

The assessments have been designed to enable you to reflect on the sessions, to apply what you learn practically and consider how to develop yourself for the future. The word counts have been deliberately kept low as this reflects the common length of response required when filling in applications for employment and internships.

N.B. Further reading is suggested however this is not required to complete the assignments which are reflective and practical in nature.

Your final grade for the Professional Skills for Employability course is calculated from two different elements. You will get a mark for completion of your workbook exercises and a second mark for your Group Presentation in session 8.

The weighting of these different components is as follows:

**Workbook Exercises – 75%**

**Group Presentation – 25%**
Deadlines and late penalties

Please note that the deadline is the latest that you can hand your work in. You may submit earlier if you wish. In accordance with College policy, work submitted late will not be marked and will receive a zero grade.

Your Workbook exercises should be submitted with a deadline of **Wednesday 16th December 2015 at 17.00hrs.** Week 8 is the final session of the course and is the Group Presentation session. You are welcome to complete your workbook exercises prior to the deadline.

Marks and feedback will be issued early in the Spring Term 2016, week commencing **Monday 9th January, 2016.** Workbook Exercises Mark Schemes are available in **appendix 1**

Extensions

Managing workload is an important skill for employability and you must meet course deadlines. Extensions are not usually granted unless students have verifiable mitigating circumstances. To apply for an extension for coursework you must fill out a coursework extension request form (on the Imperial Horizons website) before the deadline. The Centre for Languages Culture and Communication will then liaise with your home department in deciding whether to grant an extension. ‘Pressure of other work’ is not a valid reason for an extension.

Is it your own work?

Whilst it is acceptable to discuss your ideas with others and to ask for assistance with the English, any assignment for which you are receiving an individual mark must be entirely your own work.

Grading

All assignments will receive a grade. There are 3 outcomes for your work:

- **Fail:** 0 – 39%
- **Pass:** 40 – 59%
- **Merit:** 60 – 69%
- **Distinction:** 70 – 100%

All passes and distinctions will be recorded on your degree transcript. Any fails will **NOT** be recorded on transcripts. You therefore have everything to gain from taking the Professional Skills for Employability course which aims to be enjoyable and rewarding.
Imperial Horizons Student Responsibilities

By registering for this course you are expected to familiarise yourself with the guidelines on the Imperial Horizons webpages – Imperial Horizons Student responsibilities:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/horizons/manage-your-course/your-responsibilities/

Workbook Exercises – Sessions 1/2/3 (75% weighting)

Throughout the course you will be required to reflect on the sessions undertaken and write a short response to a question in sessions 1, 2 and 3. The word count for your reflection and practical application is deliberately short as this will help you to be concise with responses which are typically required on application forms for employment or internships. You will be expected to produce clear answers in no more than 500 words. Please do not exceed 5% of any word count given. Use a font that is easy to read.

Please complete the exercises in Word or scan diagrams and upload these through the Turnitin portal on the Blackboard site for your course. Please note the Turnitin Portal can only accept ONE document. If you have more than one you will be required to amalgamate them into one prior to uploading. Help with Blackboard can be found here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/teaching-learning/elearning-services/blackboard/

N.B. Please refer to the next section Appendix 1 for workbook exercise marking schemes for sessions 1, 2 and 3. In all written assignments, students are expected to ensure their use of spelling and grammar is correct and marks will be deducted for poor spelling or grammar.

Group Presentation – Session 8 (25% weighting)

In the final session you will be expected to give a short group presentation (8 minutes with 4 minutes for questions). You will be able to choose from 6 topics. The presentation will form part of your overall mark and will be assessed as a group so all them members of your group will receive the same mark. It is therefore essential that you work together and all team members should have input into the presentation. You should draw on aspects that have been covered throughout the Professional Skills for Employability course. You will be penalised for going over time. Forty minutes will be allowed at the start of the session in week 8 to make final adjustments and enable you to run through your presentation as a group prior to being assessed. Play to your groups strengths and this is up to you as a group to organise. While other groups are presenting you should show them respect and support by being attentive and asking them questions at the end.

Explanation of the criteria
 Appropriately pitched for the Audience and kept to time?
The time does not exceed 8 minutes and the presentation is paced well. The content is geared appropriately to the audience in terms of learning points/key messages being clear.

 Performance: was the presentation clear and concise?
The presenters used good eye contact and positive body language as well as demonstrating vocal clarity and an engaging tone.

 Structure: Was the presentation easy to follow?
The team used a clear structure including a beginning, middle and conclusion e.g. WHY_HOW_WHAT and incorporated good use of signposting the audience through the presentation. The presentation included use of metaphor or anecdotes to bring it to life.

 Attention keepers: Did the presentation hold your attention?
The presenters used techniques to hold the attention of the audience e.g. and memorable slides with appropriate use of images and text, a quiz, questions, demonstration, role play....

 Commercial awareness. Does the presentation show an awareness of different commercial aspects e.g. costs, benefits, impact?
Does the presentation contain information on impact and outcomes?
Do the proposals/ideas contain evidence of benefits/costs?
Appendix 1: Assessment marking schemes.

Session 1: Programme Overview – Professional Skills for Employability

Assessors insert brief feedback comments as appropriate.

| Task: Produce a skills audit that demonstrates how competent you feel currently in skills related to employability and provide evidence for the self-assessments you’ve made. The best evidence is specific things you’ve done and achieved; specific outcomes / results / evaluation received |
| Marks: 0 - 15% |
| Marks (out of 15) and comments |

| Task: Produce a written personal development plan (300 - 500 words) outlining |
| • the extra-curricular activities you will undertake this year, why you’ve chosen to do them and what you hope to gain from them; any work experience, volunteering or internships you plan to do and why you wish to do them |
| • the professional skills for employability you will develop or improve in as a result of the above |
| • what you aim to achieve in these activities; try to specify particular goals or SMART targets you have in mind and how you will be able to tell that you’re making progress. |
| Marks: 0 - 10% |
| Marks (out of 10) and comments |

Total (out of 25)
Session 2: Team working and group Dynamics

Marks will be awarded according to the following scale: 1 = Poor | 2 = Satisfactory | 3 = Good | 4 = Very Good | 5 = Excellent

Assessors insert brief feedback comments as appropriate.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria:</th>
<th>Appropriate use of English language, spelling and grammar</th>
<th>Articulates a clear, thorough and structured example of working in a successful team</th>
<th>Identifies personal contributions to the team they feel helped make it successful</th>
<th>Reflects on their example showing areas in which they could improve their personal effectiveness</th>
<th>Expands on how they could do this citing possible examples or approaches</th>
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Assessment: (500 word maximum)

Describe a time where you worked as part of a team which worked together successfully. How did you contribute? With relation to your employability how might you approach a similar scenario differently in the future?
### Session 3: Communicating and Networking with Employers

**Marking scheme (25%) –**

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<td>1 – 15%</td>
<td>Gives examples of opportunities to interact with an organisation. Explains how s/he will prepare for an informal discussion with a representative from the organisation including -</td>
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<td>• how s/he would introduce her/himself and highlight some interesting things about her/himself.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• examples of questions s/he could ask the representative/employer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• mentions how s/he will communicate positively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>2nd Task</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 10%</td>
<td>Describes an example of effectively communicating with and persuading another person / other people to his/her point of view.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Session 8: Group Presentation**

You will be allocated to your presentation group in Session 4.

Please mark the presentation according to the following scale: 1 = Poor | 2 = Satisfactory | 3 = Good | 4 = Very Good | 5 = Excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score out of 5</th>
<th>Feedback comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Appropriately pitched for the Audience, key messages clear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation is appropriately pitched and keeps to time. Time does not exceed 8 minutes, presentation is paced well. Content is geared appropriately to the audience in terms of clear learning points / key messages.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Structure: Was the presentation easy to follow?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structure of presentation is easy to follow. The team use a clear structure with beginning, middle and conclusion e.g. Why, How, What? The team clearly signpost the audience through the presentation. Presentation includes use of metaphor or anecdotes to bring it to life.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Performance: was the presentation clear and concise?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation performance is clear and engaging. The presenters use good eye contact and positive body language and demonstrate vocal clarity and an engaging tone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Attention keepers: Did the presentation hold your attention?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation holds attention of audience. The presenters use techniques to hold the attention of the audience e.g. memorable slides with appropriate use of, for example, images and text, a quiz, questions, demonstration, role play.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Commercial awareness. Does the presentation show an awareness of different commercial aspects e.g. costs, benefits, impact?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the presentation contain information on impact and outcomes? Do the proposals/ideas contain evidence of benefits/costs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Selected Further Reading and Resources

Session 1: Programme Introduction, Professional Skills for Employability

1. www.cihe.co.uk/global-graduates-into-global-leaders See Executive Summary of CIHE report ‘Global Graduates into Global Leaders’
2. NUS CBI Guide to Employability ‘Working towards your future – Making the most of your time in higher education’ - www.nus.org.uk/Global/CBI_NUS_Employability%20report_May%202011.pdf
3. Careers Service resources – www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/exploring-your-options/first - Get the most out of university life by getting involved; www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/exploring-your-options/career/know ‘All about You’ – a starting point to develop self-awareness
4. If only I’d known: making the most of higher education, a guide for students and parents – www.agr.org.uk/write/Documents/Reports/If_Only_I'd_Known.pdf Association of Graduate Recruiters publication 2002
5. Computer aided careers guidance tools (based on your assessment of what factors motivate you and your skills) that match your profile to graduate jobs -
   - Prospects Planner – What jobs and courses would suit me? www.prospects.ac.uk/myprospects_planner.htm
   - Target Careers Report - http://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-report

Session 3: Communicating and Networking with Employers


Keep yourself update by getting into the habit of reading in-depth analysis of current affairs and business news in reputable media (e.g. Guardian, Independent, Times, Financial Times, or periodicals such as The Economist, New Statesman as well as www.bbc.co.uk/news)
**Session 4: Presenting with IMPACT**


Appendix 3: Tutor Contacts

Mark Allen – m.allen@imperial.ac.uk

Rich Carruthers – r.carruthers@imperial.ac.uk

Shahida Osman – s.osman@imperial.ac.uk

Jane Pooler – j.pooler@imperial.ac.uk

Rachel Power – r.power@imperial.ac.uk
Appendix 4

The Careers Service. Services for students.

Imperial College London Careers Service offers a range of services and support:

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- 40 Minute Consultations
- CV pop ups
- Seminars & workshops
- Careers fairs, forums, talks & workshops
- Online information
- Careers libraries... and much more!

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