PSYCHOLOGY SPECIFIC AND TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

- IT & data management
- Enterprise & Entrepreneurship
- Career Management skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Networking
- Social & cultural awareness
- Self-awareness & self-management
- Using initiative
- Creativity & innovation
- Leadership & decision making
- Business/ Commercial Awareness
- Numerical & Statistical Skills
- Teamwork & Collaboration
- Project management/ Planning & Organising
- Communication: Verbal, Non-verbal & Written
- Problem solving/ Analysis/ Critical thinking
- Qualitative & Quantitative research

SKILLS
GUIDE

NEW GRADS

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on finishing your Psychology Degree. In that time, you have developed a wealth of Psychology-specific and transferable skills to support you in the next chapter of your career progression.

Within this booklet we refer to 2 different types of skill sets: Psychology specific and Futures Ready (Transferable) skills. The Psychology specific skills are named in the QAA benchmark for Psychology, which guides the development of the curriculum to equip students with the required standard of knowledge and skills. The Future ready skills are from the Queens CES Career Readiness Framework, which was developed in conjunction with employers and what they need from graduates.

These are:

Psychology Specific skills	Future Ready (transferable) skills
IT and data Management	Business/ Commercial Awareness
Qualitative & Quantitative research skills	Leadership & decision making
Teamwork & Collaboration	Creativity & innovation
Numerical & Statistical skills	Using initiative
Project management/ planning & organising/ meeting deadlines	Self-awareness & self- management
	Social and cultural awareness
Problem solving, Evidence-based reasoning, Analysis, Critical thinking	Networking
	Interpersonal skills
Communication skills: verbal, non-verbal, written, presentation	Career Management skills
	Enterprise & Entrepreneurship

The excellent news is you have developed all of these through your time on the course. This booklet is a summary of all the tasks you have completed to develop these skills and gives examples of how to write about them on application forms and speak about them in interviews.

⚠️ *A word of warning though: in using these examples, please do not copy them word-for-word. It is important to personalise these with other examples and add in your own personality and flair. Also include examples from volunteering, part-time or full-time jobs to show how you can use your skills in a range of settings.*

If you would like further help with Career Guidance, applying for jobs or preparing for interviews, you are entitled to 2 years post-graduation support from our Careers, Employability and Skills team. Please contact them through MyFuture.

Good Luck!
Paul Wilson, Director of Undergraduate Education

PSYCHOLOGY-SPECIFIC SKILLS

| SKILLS | **IT and data Management** |

| HOW | Lab classes, Group projects, assignments, placement |

| EXAMPLES | I have excellent IT and data management skills. I am proficient in all Microsoft packages having used word for writing report, excel for collecting data and producing graphical analysis to support interpretation of data and decision-making, PowerPoint for producing presentations, academic posters and facilitated group meetings and collaborative projects via Teams. I also have extensive experience of using SPSS for data entry, scale calculation and analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. |

(If applicable) On Placement I learned to work with (name of company)'s operating system for (?).

For my group project/final year thesis I gained experience in using the Qualtrics platform to design online surveys to collect data.

| SKILLS | **Qualitative and Quantitative research skills** |

| HOW | Group projects, assignments, labs, placement |

| EXAMPLES | I have experience of research design using quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. After an extensive literature review, I designed a study investigating (insert details of final year thesis/group project). I collected data using (insert detail on method used), analysed using the data using SPSS (or insert alternative platform;for qualitative projects name the analysis and any computer packages used to code themes etc.), interpreted the results and presented in a written report. |

I have also developed skills in conducting focus groups and interviews through a study to evaluate the effectiveness of reducing racism for a lab report. I have learned methods of interpreting qualitative information to support decision-making.

(If applicable) Whilst in placement with (name organisation) I carried our research on (what), collected data (how) and the results showed (what?).

SKILLS	**Problem solving, Evidence-based reasoning, Analysis, Critical thinking**
HOW	Getting a place in University, carrying out literature reviews, designing experiments, carrying out group projects, writing essays, placement, thesis project
EXAMPLES	I have utilised problem solving in many ways whilst applying for and completing my degree

On the course specifically, I used problem solving and critical thinking when reviewing the evidence base as part of designing and conducting experiments and for all coursework and assignments. I also used evidence-based reasoning and analytical skills when solving both technical (e.g., when to select ANOVAs vs regression analysis, parametric vs non parametric tests etc.) and general (e.g., making inferences about a population given a sample) problems.

Whilst carrying out a group project I had to problem solve (what), which resulted in (what) outcome for the group.

(If applicable) On placement I worked on a project which involved (what) which impacted on (what).

For my dissertation, I identified a topic which required further research, I chose suitable methods to conduct research and analyse results and I used that analysis to make recommendations (give examples if possible).

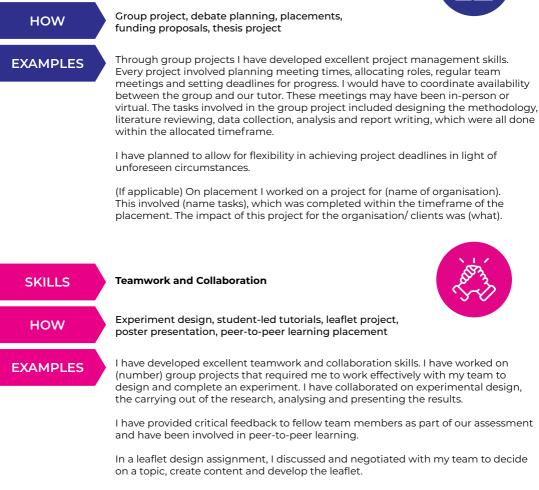| SKILLS	**Communication skills: verbal, non-verbal, written, presentation**
HOW	Group projects, verbal debates, flipped classroom, presentations, class discussions, placement
EXAMPLES	I have excellent writing and presentation skills which have been developed through participation in classes such as small group tutorials, and in academic assessments of essays, research reports and presentations. All of these require clear and concise communication and I have achieved marks up to (include mark) for high quality work.

In group projects I was able to communicate effectively with my peers, ensuring I spoke clearly, agreeing a plan, roles and a timeline for updates to ensure the group stayed on plan. I have also successfully delivered oral presentations, for example on (insert detail of topic) for (insert module name).

When conducting research with participants, I have provided clear instructions, ensured understanding, put people at ease.

(If applicable) During a visit from a primary school class I ensured I communicated effectively with the children by speaking clearly, using smiles and open body language to make them feel welcome, and being aware of my presence when working with them on an experiment, eg sitting beside them, rather than standing over them. (If Applicable) On placement I worked with (who) ensuring a communicated clearly about (what), including awareness of body language which was keen to (what).

Remember you can include other forms of communication here too, for example, if you had a debate task to complete as part of a tutorial or level three module you studied.

| **SKILLS** | **Project management/ planning and organising/ meeting deadlines** |

| **HOW** | Group project, debate planning, placements, funding proposals, thesis project |

| **EXAMPLES** | Through group projects I have developed excellent project management skills. Every project involved planning meeting times, allocating roles, regular team meetings and setting deadlines for progress. I would have to coordinate availability between the group and our tutor. These meetings may have been in-person or virtual. The tasks involved in the group project included designing the methodology, literature reviewing, data collection, analysis and report writing, which were all done within the allocated timeframe.

I have planned to allow for flexibility in achieving project deadlines in light of unforeseen circumstances.

(If applicable) On placement I worked on a project for (name of organisation). This involved (name tasks), which was completed within the timeframe of the placement. The impact of this project for the organisation/ clients was (what). |

| **SKILLS** | **Teamwork and Collaboration** |

| **HOW** | Experiment design, student-led tutorials, leaflet project, poster presentation, peer-to-peer learning placement |

| **EXAMPLES** | I have developed excellent teamwork and collaboration skills. I have worked on (number) group projects that required me to work effectively with my team to design and complete an experiment. I have collaborated on experimental design, the carrying out of the research, analysing and presenting the results.

I have provided critical feedback to fellow team members as part of our assessment and have been involved in peer-to-peer learning.

In a leaflet design assignment, I discussed and negotiated with my team to decide on a topic, create content and develop the leaflet.

(If applicable) I worked collaboratively with a team of (how many) when on placement in (organisation). My role involved (2/3 duties) which contributed to the team achieving (what?). |

| SKILLS | Numerical and Statistical skills |

Numerical and Statistical skills

| HOW | Labs, group projects, Thesis |

| EXAMPLES |

I have developed excellent numerical and statistical skills. Through lab classes I have developed skills in performing and interpreting descriptive statistics, visualisation of data, and inferential statistical tests (e.g. correlations, chi-square, t-tests, ANOVA, linear regression). I understand when and how to use each to support interpretation and decision-making. I also have practical skills associated with data preparation (e.g. coding, scale calculation) and psychometric analysis (e.g. reliability, validity and factor analysis).

In my final year project I used (insert analyses used here).

FUTURE READY SKILLS
(TRANSFERABLE SKILLS)

| SKILLS | Business/ Commercial Awareness |

| HOW | Employability module, funding application, PsychologyAtWork initiatives |

| EXAMPLES |

As part of an employability module, I researched different organisations which gave me an insight into the (insert detail) sector. I learned that my placement organisation operates in the context of (insert detail business environment, competitors, similar organisations etc.).

I have an awareness of the importance of diversity in the workplace and understand issues related to equality at work. For example (insert detail you have learned from, for example, PSY2066 employability strand, level three modules such as PSY3117 or PSY3133; experiences on placement or at PsychologyAtWork sessions)

(If applicable) On the module (insert detail) part of the assessment for a funding application required me to calculate the costs for personnel and equipment required for the project. This has given me an insight into the importance of resourcing requirements and the economic considerations associated with potential interventions.

(If Applicable) I have visited the following organisations as part of the School's PsychologyAtWork programme from which I have learned (what) about (which organisation).

SKILLS | Leadership and decision making

HOW | Student-led tutorials, group projects, group presentation, placement

EXAMPLES | Through a range of group projects I have led on making decisions about the type of experimental design, contacted and met with participants, lead the team at progress meetings, drew all our resources together and communicated effectively to help the decision making process and our final result.

(If applicable) On placement I lead (who) to do (what) and this resulted in (what).

SKILLS | Creativity and innovation

HOW | Research/ experiment design, leaflet design, poster designs, intervention design, placement

EXAMPLES | I have shown innovation in my group project where I (insert example). This was innovative in that the project looked at (what?) and resulted in (insert added benefit due to your innovation). The group achieved a mark of (what?) which recognised originality, creativity and innovation.

(If applicable) Whilst on placement I was tasked with (what). After researching the topic I developed (what) which helped (what) and resulted in (what?).

💡 Creativity, innovation and originality are characteristics of a first class mark in particular, so if you have any first class marks on coursework, you might find examples of creativity and innovative thinking in those assessments – take a look at the feedback you received to see if these aspects were mentioned. Remember creativity can also be shown through design of outputs – e.g. poster presentations, PowerPoint slideshows, leaflets/reports aimed at a specific audience. Review your feedback on such assessments and see if you have received any positive comments on design, layout, accessibility etc. that you could use as examples of how you have demonstrated these skills.

| SKILLS | **Using initiative** |

| HOW | Group projects, research, managing studies, attending extra-curricular events |

| EXAMPLES | During my degree I have used my initiative in undertaking research projects/ attending extra-curricular events/undertaking volunteering roles/work placements such as... (insert relevant examples from your experiences).

(If applicable) On placement I had to use initiative when (doing what – describe the problem/issue and how you overcame it successfully). |

💡 Remember to outline the benefits that resulted from showing initiative.

| SKILLS | **Self-awareness and self- management** |

| HOW | Tutorials with personal tutors, thesis supervisors, STAR tutorials, Psychology Connect events |

| EXAMPLES | I have learned the importance of self-awareness and how reflective practice can help to plan my personal and professional development. For example, I developed my own study timetable to keep up with University work around part-time job/family commitments.

For the module (insert detail) I had to write a reflective statement as part of an assessment which required me to (insert assessment description). This reflection helped me to realise (what additional insight did you get into yourself, or the world around you as a result?).

On placement, I worked (in what type of environment) having to mange a range of responsibilities. I was able to do this calmly and efficiently, managing my own priorities so as not to cause myself stress. (could also be used as an example of managing work/ life/ studies). |

💡 Remember your employability portfolio in Level 2 was a reflective assessment focused on your skills and career aspirations and several level 3 modules also have a reflective component within coursework assignments. You may also have engaged in your own private reflections on your learning, experiences on placement (e.g. reflective diaries) or development at university – all are good examples of where you have thought about yourself and your behaviours and used this insight to develop yourself.

| SKILLS | **Social and cultural awareness** |

HOW — Think difference, act differently training; various social, psychobiology, developmental and cognitive psychology topics covered in modules

EXAMPLES

I have an excellent understanding of different social and cultural issues. Through a range of modules I have explored topics such as: social stereotypes, equality of opportunity in the face of poverty and social disadvantage, addiction, language use, gender and trans issues (tailor this list to your own key experiences from your experiences across the degree). I have also undertaken the QUB module 'Think difference, Act differently' which taught me skills on how to respect others and help maintain positive working relationships and environments that foster equality and inclusion and respect diversity.

I have developed solution ideas to address social and cultural issues and have considered the long term ethical, environmental and social impact of these solutions on research project which was (name) and the results were (what).

(If applicable) On placement the organisation I was working in supported people who experienced (which issues). My role was to (insert detail on role) which helped with (what)/ provided an understanding of (what). This resulted in (what benefits?).

SKILLS — **Networking**

HOW — Psychology Connect, Careers Service, PsychologyAtWork, NI BPS branch events, Peer/Alumni mentoring schemes, Work placements.

EXAMPLES

I have developed important networking skills during my degree, where I have created and maintained important connections with others through (insert detail of networking activity). This has helped me to (describe benefit of networking – have you had an opportunity that you would have missed without making the connection through networking or developed/strengthened a key skill through networking with others?).

Think about meeting other students at social events or interactions with peer mentors, talking to potential employers/practitioner psychologists at careers events. If you participated in the alumni mentoring scheme or undertook a work placement, think about how your contact with your mentor (or others in the placement organisation) has been beneficial to you.

SKILLS
  Interpersonal skills

HOW
  Group project, tutorials, thesis project, work placement, Psychology Connect activities

EXAMPLES
  I have well developed interpersonal skills which I have honed through working with my peers in-class and on group research projects. I have listened to others' ideas, communicated my own ideas and negotiated between the group members effectively. I have motivated others when needed and been empathetic when the group was in difficulty and sought a satisfactory solution to ensure the group goals were met by supporting others (insert specific example from your own experience if you can). I understand the importance of good working relations and how building rapport with others makes it more easy to work collaboratively. I can also act as a critical friend, providing alternative views and suggesting improvements in a respectful and kind manner (state example of this – e.g. in-class debates, discussions with peers during group projects).

  (If applicable) On placement I used my interpersonal skills to get to know other members of the team quickly, to communicate effectively my role and ask questions when needed. (See portfolio to add examples).

SKILLS
  Career Management skills

HOW
  Employability module, career guidance appointments, attendance at careers fairs, workplace visits, employer panels, discussions with tutor/supervisor

EXAMPLES
  I studied the Psychology of Employability in second year of my degree that developed my understanding of psychometric tests used in selection, job analysis, goal-setting, motivation, and interview techniques. It also helped me to reflect on my current skillset and attributes to identify what career pathways I would be most suited to and identify development opportunities to hone key employability skills.

  (If applicable) I undertook a (insert duration) work placement with (insert organisation). On this placement I learned about (insert detail on your learning of the skills required for the role, attributes valued by the placement organisation and learning about your own strengths and development needs).

  💡 What have you done during your degree to enhance your employability and chances of success in the career path you aspire to and what have you learned about yourself as a result. Do you have a career plan for the next 3-5 years or a personal/professional development plan of skills you would like to focus on developing?

SKILLS | **Enterprise and Entrepreneurship**

HOW | Employability module, Placement experience

EXAMPLES | Throughout my course I have developed various entrepreneurial competencies with particular strengths in research, managing data and understanding human decision-making with projects such as (insert outline to show how you developed a solution, or found a new approach to help others).

(PSY3100) I have taken modules which have allowed me to apply these competencies in addressing a real problem for an organisation (describe problem and solution and your role).

I have taken modules through which I've been facilitated in using design thinking to identify current social and cultural issues, develop innovative solutions and consider the impact of implementing those solutions (again give a short example).

(If applicable) I have developed my commercial awareness through undertaking a placement in (what sector – what did you learn about how that organisation/ sector operates or interacts with others).

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