



### The Bolton Award

When considering your own employability, a crucial thing to be aware of is the difference between **hard skills** and **soft skills**.

Hard skills are the skills you will learn while completing your course. These are practical skills such as coding, accounting or artwork. The skills you are assessed on for your degree and are required to do the job you aspire to.

Soft skills are broader skills that apply to anyone in a working environment, like: teamwork, time management and resilience. These skills affect how you navigate a workplace, how you handle difficult situations and generally make you a more rounded and employable individual.

In 2019, LinkedIn surveyed over 5,000 talent professionals in 35 countries, all to bring people insights into current market trends and how to make yourself more employable.

91% of the companies surveyed (including Starbucks, Cisco and Sodexo) said that **soft skills** were among the most important for an applicant to have (*LinkedIn Report: Global talent trends, 2019*, [LinkedIn Report: These 4 Ideas Are Shaping the Future of HR and Hiring](#))

The same survey found that 92% of companies surveyed said soft skills were as important or more so than hard skills gained in university degrees (*LinkedIn Report: Global talent trends, 2019*, [LinkedIn Report: These 4 Ideas Are Shaping the Future of HR and Hiring](#))

The Bolton Award has been designed to help you to improve these soft skills, as well as increasing your industry awareness. You also get a certificate recognising your accomplishments and the award will also appear on your **Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)**.

The award is in three tiers, Silver, Gold and Platinum. The Silver tier is designed to help increase your labour market awareness, with built in self-reflection to encourage you to think more critically about your current skills, the skills you would like to gain and how each activity you engage in within the university and beyond helps to shape these skills.

The Gold tier helps you to focus more on your specific career goal, by:

- Setting targets
- Building experience and enrichment hours to improve a CV
- Attending workshops
- Building a CV and a mock interview

You will also be able to build up skills in an online skills journal, which can you refer back to when the time comes for you to apply for a job and prepare for an interview.

The Platinum tier focuses more on skills for graduate level roles, such as; psychometric testing, self-presentation and honest self-reflection on the journey and the skills gained and lessons learned.

You can start the Bolton Award whenever you like, and have the entirety of your study to complete it. You must complete Silver before progressing to Gold, and you must complete Gold before your final year to begin Platinum. Progression is not mandatory, each stage has a certificate so if you are happy to stop at Silver, you don't have to progress to Gold.

Upon completing the Bolton Award, you will have:

- A CV checked by the careers and employability team
- A SMART target for your next steps towards your career
- An online journal of your skills with examples of activities you completed
- A mock application process from form to interview with feedback on each step
- A certificate to mark your accomplishment
- A recognized award on your HEAR

If you are unsure how to get your enrichment hours for the award? LEAP Live Workshops and LEAP Badges can all be counted! Simply screenshot your evidence and email it [Boltonaward@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:Boltonaward@bolton.ac.uk) after completing the hour log in your workflow.

The Bolton Award is open to all students so sign by visiting the link below:

<https://studenthub.bolton.ac.uk/students/workflows/Detail/57>

Access LEAP Online at: [www.bolton.ac.uk/leaponline](http://www.bolton.ac.uk/leaponline)