Graduate Attributes Matrix for Employability (GAME)

The University of Bolton has developed the Graduate Attributes Matrix for Employability (GAME), which provides an overview of the key skills it expects all graduates to leave University with.

GAME is used by the Careers Team to help you self-assess where you are in terms of employability skills and attributes. This model should be used to assess your professional development during your time at university and provide you with a foundation for the start of your career.

The Graduate attributes are:

- Symbolic of what it means to be a University of Bolton graduate
- Not simply taught in the classroom but fostered through meaningful experiences and as a result of continuous learning and reflection
- Unique to every student – in terms of their starting point, experiences, development and comprehension

The GAME model comprises 10 attributes:

1. Self-aware

To have a clear perception of your personality, strengths, weaknesses, thoughts, beliefs, motivations and emotions, and how these can affect your subsequent decisions and behaviours through self-reflection.

2. Resilient

To utilise effective coping strategies to withstand, learn from or recover quickly from difficult, stressful and challenging situations.

3. Problem solver

To use a range of techniques and consider a number of options in a systematic manner, to find positive solutions to challenging problems posed.

4. Effective Communicator

To actively listen, share information, provide direction and express ideas and feelings effectively through a range of different forms (verbally, visually and written) so that the intended message is successfully delivered, received, understood and responded to.

5. Global Citizen

To understand, respect and embrace diversity, different cultures and different ways of working, and to recognise the global issues that affect us.

6. Enterprising

To demonstrate, creativity, innovation, initiative and resourcefulness, and be ready to act as opportunities present themselves.

7. Adaptable

To be flexible and responsive to change in any given situation or work environment, or in response to the needs, wishes or demands of others.

8. Collaborative

To develop a purposeful relationship/team with two or more people to constructively explore ideas and achieve shared goals.

9. Confident

To be able to demonstrate a firm belief in yourself and your abilities.

10. Lifelong Learner

To evaluate personal performance and independently seek and act upon means of improvement to allow for the advancement of skills and knowledge for personal or professional reasons.

Evidencing your skills

Consider your USP (unique selling point). What are your unique strengths, skills, attributes, attitudes and experiences which will help to distinguish you in the job market? Do you have good, relevant examples for each GAME attribute?

Rather than viewing this as a tick list you will address on one occasion you should make an assessment of where you are at this point in time, set your goals and determine what needs to be done in order to get that dream job. You can find tools on Studenthub that explain each attribute in detail and allow you to decide how you have demonstrated this.

By developing an action plan now to address GAME, you will significantly increase your employability skills which will help you to enter your chosen profession.

So how do employers know I have these skills?

Many employers will assess applicants against a range of criteria. There may be a job specification which will make this explicit. If not, you will need to identify the competencies the employer requires through the advert, job description and your research into the company.

In order to prove that you possess these skills you will need to provide evidence to support your claim: it is not enough to say that you can do something – you have to prove it. Show not tell!

This is where all the work experience you have undertaken reaps its reward. Think about:

- The part time work you have taken on
- The voluntary work you signed up for
- Elements of your academic studies.

All need to be carefully considered.

Evidencing GAME in the recruitment process

Once you have developed your action plan and looked at your examples for each it is a good idea to include these examples during the recruitment process.

One of the best ways to do this is by using the STAR technique. This allows you to think about a **Situation**, the **Task** you had to perform and then the **Actions** you took (be careful to highlight your role rather than that of the group) and finally but importantly the **Result**, where it would be useful if you could give a quantifiable example using numbers (maybe a mark for an assignment) or some qualitative feedback from a line manager.

STAR is detailed within the Application Forms LEAP Online section but it is an excellent way to demonstrate your graduate attributes throughout the recruitment process.

STAR is especially useful on applications and when answering competency-based interview questions such as:

- Tell us about a time you have been an effective team member (Collaborative)
- How did you manage a situation when something did not go to plan? (Problem solver)
- Tell us about a time when you have been innovative (Creativity)
- When and how have you communicated a message effectively? (Effective Communicator)

Hopefully you are now fully familiar with the 10 attributes that employers look for and you can articulate these in the recruitment process.

If you really want to make sure you can demonstrate these attributes, we have a range of tools on Studenthub such as the GAME self-assessment action plan and CV and Interview 360, which will allow you to put your new found knowledge into practice (https://studenthub.bolton.ac.uk).

You can book an appointment with the Careers and Employability Service via Studenthub. You can also email the Careers and Employability Service at studenthub-careers@bolton.ac.uk or call our helpdesk on 01204 903080 or visit us in the Student Centre on the Chancellor's Mall.

Access LEAP Online at: www.bolton.ac.uk/leaponline