

## The Issue

Students need to actively plan their studies and make sure they make the most of their time at university. Universities offer rich and varied opportunities to students. This guide offers advice on how students should own their future and get the most from university.

## Students' questions and what we learnt

### *I hear a lot about employability, is it about how to get a job?*

Employability is much more than that. Employability includes the capabilities needed for a successful life and career. Check out your university's **graduate profile** to see what will be embedded in your courses.

### *If I get good grades I'll get a good job, right?*

Employers give people jobs because they will be **useful**. Your grades are good indicators. But you need to gain and demonstrate useful capabilities. Pick courses that interest you and will help you grow intellectually, personally and professionally. Picking 'easy' courses so you get good grades is just a waste of time and money.

### *Surely I can only build my employability through internships and work experience?*

Work experience is very useful. But all of your courses should help you build powerful capabilities such as how to tackle complicated problems, how to work independently and how to learn quickly and well. Employers value these skills.

### *Are you sure that all my courses help me develop important capabilities?*

If it is not clear what a course will teach you then speak up, ask questions. **If a course is not helping you build the capabilities you want, find another course or programme.**

### *Won't my lecturers know what I need to learn?*

Each lecturer teaches hundreds of students who will follow unique career paths. Additionally, times have changed, lecturers are unlikely to have had the work experiences that you will have. **Do your own research, work out what capabilities you will need.** Seek advice, but make up your own mind.

### *How can I get the most out my courses?*

**Think about the capabilities you are developing and how you might apply them** in your future life and career. This will prepare you for transferring what you know to new situations

## Analysis

Read the questions below to see if you are likely to get the most out of your studies.

## Questions for students

- Do you know what your university promises you in its graduate profile?
- Do you have a vision for the kind of person you want to be and the kind of life you want to lead?
- Do you pick courses that will equip you to become who you want to be and do what you want to do?
- Do you know what you will gain from each course you take?
- Are you able to explain what capabilities you have, why they are useful and how you intend to develop?
- Do you remember to have fun and look after yourself?
- Do you work hard?

## Questions for whanau and friends

- Have you read about your student's programme and seen the capabilities they should develop?
- Do you discuss what it takes to have a safe, happy and successful life and career?
- Do you encourage your student to plan their studies, enjoy their time at university and seek guidance if they need it?
- Do you give them encouragement and respect their choices?

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