



What Makes a Graduate *Employable*?

Today's graduates are entering a competitive and ever-changing job market. While earning a qualification is an important step, employers are increasingly looking for candidates with a combination of technical knowledge, soft skills, experience, and personal attributes. As a parent, your encouragement and interest in your child's development can make a lasting difference in helping them become career ready.

1

Relevant Knowledge & Qualifications

Graduates need to have up-to-date knowledge of their chosen field. Employers expect a solid academic foundation that proves the graduate has studied, understood, and can apply the core principles of their discipline.

Examples:

- A student in accounting should understand basic financial principles, compliance, and bookkeeping
- A computer science student should know programming languages and software development fundamentals

How you can support:

Encourage regular class attendance, keeping up with assignments, and seeking academic help when needed. Support them in choosing majors and electives that align with their career interests.

2

Transferable (Soft) Skills

These are non-technical skills that are useful across all careers. They reflect how a person works with others, solves problems, and adapts to new situations.

Most in-demand soft skills right now include:

- **Communication:** The ability to clearly express ideas, both verbally and in writing, and to listen effectively
- **Collaboration:** Working well with others across diverse teams, both in-person and remotely
- **Problem-solving:** Thinking critically and finding solutions, even under pressure
- **Adaptability:** Staying calm and flexible when things change quickly (as they often do)
- **Emotional Intelligence (EQ):** Understanding your own emotions and empathising with others to build positive relationships
- **Initiative:** Taking action, showing curiosity, and being proactive rather than waiting to be told what to do

In the workplace, tasks often change, and teamwork is essential. Employers want individuals who can communicate clearly, adapt quickly, solve problems independently, and contribute positively to team culture.

How you can support:

- Encourage your child to take part in activities that build these skills: group assignments, student clubs, volunteering, tutoring, or even debating
- Talk about your own experiences with these skills in the workplace
- Praise effort and learning in these areas, especially when they face challenges or setbacks





3

Work Experience

Employers value graduates who have had exposure to the workplace, even in small ways. It shows they understand professional environments and are ready to contribute from day one.

Examples:

- Internships or work-integrated learning programmes
- Part-time jobs on the weekends or during holidays
- Volunteer work, tutoring, or assisting in family businesses
- Industry-related competitions or hackathons

How you can support:

Help your child look for opportunities early, even unpaid ones can offer valuable experience. Discuss what they're learning from each experience and encourage reflection.

5

Professionalism & Work Ethic

Employers want dependable individuals who can be trusted to deliver results, behave ethically, and represent the organisation well.

Examples:

- Being punctual and meeting deadlines
- Maintaining a positive attitude and strong sense of responsibility
- Dressing appropriately and communicating respectfully
- Following through on tasks and staying committed

How you can support:

Model these traits at home and share stories from your own work experience to show how professionalism is valued in real life.

7

A Growth Mindset

Employers want people who are eager to learn, willing to take on new challenges, and resilient when facing setbacks.

Examples:

- Seeing failure as a learning opportunity
- Asking for feedback and applying it
- Continuously learning through short courses, reading, or certifications
- Being open to change and innovation

How you can support:

Reinforce the idea that growth takes time. Celebrate effort, progress, and learning rather than perfection. Remind your child that every professional journey is unique.

4

Digital Literacy

Digital skills are essential in nearly every job. Graduates must be comfortable using technology to communicate, create, and collaborate.

Examples:

- Navigating online platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Google Drive
- Creating spreadsheets, presentations, and reports
- Understanding the basics of data, cybersecurity, or digital communication
- Managing professional online profiles (e.g., LinkedIn)

How you can support:

Encourage your child to complete free or affordable online courses in digital literacy (e.g., LinkedIn Learning, Coursera, Google Skills).

6

Career Readiness & Self-Awareness

Graduates who understand their strengths, goals, and the job market are better prepared to find and secure opportunities.

Examples:

- Identifying what type of work suits their personality and values
- Creating a professional CV and cover letter
- Preparing for job interviews
- Understanding how to look for jobs and network effectively

How you can support:

Encourage them to visit their institution's Career Services office, attend employability workshops, and update their CV and LinkedIn profile regularly.

8

Networking and Relationship-Building

In many fields, opportunities come from who you know—not just what you know. Building professional relationships early can open doors.

Examples:

- Attending career fairs and industry events
- Joining alumni networks or professional bodies
- Connecting with lecturers, mentors, and fellow students
- Engaging with professionals on LinkedIn

How you can support:

Encourage your child to put themselves out there, talk to people in their field of interest, and follow up with connections. If you know someone who can offer guidance, introduce them.

Graduates who are employable are not only knowledgeable, they are adaptable, confident, proactive, and aware of their role in a rapidly evolving world of work. Your involvement, encouragement, and understanding is key. Every conversation, opportunity, and moment of support brings your child one step closer to becoming the kind of graduate employers are looking for.