Appendix 1:
Employability Skills Sought by Employers

Skills sought by employers will vary according to the vacancy. However, general employability skills include the following:

Intellectual skills
- Numeracy
- Problem-solving abilities
- Evaluative and analytical skills
- IT skills
- Ability to relate theory to practice

Communication skills
- Good telephone technique and oral skills
- Ability to listen
- Written communicative skills
- Teamworking – participation without domination
- Managing relationships

Personal qualities and attributes
- Initiative
- Commitment to working hard
- Creativity
- Common sense
- Self-motivation and self-reliance
- Flexibility
- Organisational ability
- Enthusiasm

Attributes relating to personal conduct
- Personal presentation
- Punctuality
- Time management
- Pleasant demeanour

Appendix 2:
An Employers' Guide to Making the Most of the Student

Initial thoughts and actions

▶ Take time to consider how best a student could contribute to your organisation and compile a list of potential tasks to include individual and team projects, backlogs to be cleared, and so on. Try to ensure that there is plenty of variety in the list and that it includes work that will enable the student to use his or her initiative and take personal pride in the outcome.

▶ Identify the key skills you would ideally like the student to possess, together with any specific personal qualities.

▶ Decide upon where the student will work, to whom (s)he will report, the hours and timetable involved, whether or not s(he) will be paid and whether or not expenses will be reimbursed.

▶ Verify that the student is covered by your insurance policy.

▶ Put these thoughts into writing and send a copy to the university work placement tutor as this will help to guard against misunderstandings. Ask for details of the placement to be circulated amongst the students or posted on a notice board to ensure that all potential candidates are aware of the opportunity you are offering.

▶ Check that you are aware of, and can accommodate, the university requirements underpinning the placement. (This may, for example, mean organising the timetable to enable the student to have some free time to gather information about your company whilst on site.)

Meeting students

▶ It is in your interest to interview more than one candidate and, if possible, to see all applicants in a block.

▶ You may wish to ask candidates to bring a sample of their work to the interview.

▶ If possible, include the person who will be supervising the student in the interview process.

▶ Reiterate your expectations in terms of the work to be done and the terms and conditions in case there are unforeseen timetabling or other problems.

▶ When you appoint a candidate, send written confirmation of the terms and conditions, together with your expectations, as this will guard against misunderstandings.

At the start of the placement

▶ Set aside a time for an uninterrupted induction. The time for this will vary according to the nature of the work placement but it should include a tour of the premises, introductions to key personnel, an explanation of the health and safety procedures and an outline of the work to be done. This is also a good opportunity to ascertain that the student is absolutely clear about what is expected in terms of office etiquette – for example, the dress code, the times for starting and finishing work, arrangements for the lunch hour, and the policy about using the office telephone for personal calls.

▶ Make sure that the student knows to whom (s)he should turn in the event of dilemmas or problems.

▶ Make sure that you have details of a contact at the university to whom you can turn in the event of dilemmas or problems.

During the placement

▶ Give the student feedback at regular intervals and ask for his/her thoughts in return. Check that the student understands what is expected and is confident to proceed with the work.

▶ Try to arrange that if the student is engaged in menial work s(he) is not expected to do this all day. Variety will help to maintain the student's interest and enthusiasm.

▶ Introduce periods of 'shadowing' so that the student can get an overview of what others do and how the workforce interacts.

▶ Organise something for the student to do without supervision for times when his/her supervisor may be called away on other duties.

▶ Do give praise where it is deserved as your student may need confirmation that (s)he is on the right track!

After the placement

▶ Have a de-briefing meeting with the student as the feedback you receive may be useful to you for future occasions. If you wish, and particularly if you would like another work placement student from the same university, discuss the placement in detail with the placement tutor.

▶ Be prepared to be asked to supply a reference or to fill in some forms for the university.

Index