

Pre-Requisite Modules code(s)	Co-Requisite Modules code(s)	ECTS Credits	Module Code	Module Title
None	None	5	CMPU1004	Communications and Personal Development

8.1.2. Communications and Personal Development

Module author: School of Computing

Module Description:

This module is designed to equip computing students with the necessary skills to function in a working environment. To do this, students must be good communicators and be able to clearly express their ideas to a range of stakeholders using a range of computer-based technologies. This part of the module covers both traditional media of communications (such as the writing of business documentation, particularly software specifications, graphical presentations and oral communications) and the use of network communication technologies (such as e-mail, threaded discussion boards and on-line chat), plus appropriate netiquette.

Additionally the module will cover the necessary study skills to cope with third-level content areas. To this end topics on this module will include time management, textbook studying, note-taking, library usage, using on-line resources, reducing test anxiety, improving concentration, learning memory strategies, and exam and assessment preparation.

Module aim

The aim of the module is to help students develop an appreciation of the importance of communications in the computing discipline. In most work-based computing environments, the ideas being dealt with are a combination of organisational and technical concepts all of which are often very abstract and complex, therefore the need for clear and concise communication is vital.

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of this module, the learner will be able to

- Apply effective note taking techniques in lectures
- Describe a range of learning theories and learner types
- Develop and apply an effective time management plan
- Apply effective test taking strategies to objective and essay tests
- Assess personal level of test anxiety and select appropriate strategies for dealing with stress
- Describe the importance of good communication and the problems with plagiarism
- Prepare various documentation to an accurate format
- Communicate effectively using oral, written and internet-based technologies
- Work effectively in teams and groups.
- Prepare and deliver a short presentation

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Learning and Teaching Methods:

The module will be delivered primarily through lectures and tutorials. The material will be developed in an informal way during lectures. It is envisaged that the students will assimilate much of the material through exercises. Much emphasis will be placed on worked examples and group discussion of exercises.

Because this is intended to be of practical use to the students, a large emphasis will be placed on allowing the students to try out the approaches described in lectures. Each week, the students will be given a number of exercises that cover material relevant to the implementation of approaches discussed. These exercises get progressively more difficult and will incorporate material learned previously. Tutorials will be used to allow the students to get extra tuition in the more difficult areas. They will also be used to allow the students to ask for any extra help required. The tutorials will incorporate the delivery of additional exercises and examples and provide the student with the opportunity for one-to-one assistance from the supervisor.

Module content:

Introduction to DIT

Importance of Communications; Learning - individually and in groups and teams; Study Skills - individually and in groups and teams

Oral Communication and good presentation skills; Written Communication; Graphical communication; On-Line Communications

Module Assessment

Continuous Assessment - 100%

Three assignments, one in the first term and two scheduled in second term.

An example of the type of assignments is as follows:

Assignment based on company case study

Short research assignment

Oral presentation

Essential Reading: (author, date, title, publisher)

Cottrell, S., 2003, *The Study Skills Handbook*, 2nd ed., UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Paradis, J.G., Zimmerman, M., 1997, *The MIT Guide to Science and Engineering Communication*, MIT Press

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Supplemental Reading: (author, date, title, publisher)

Cottrell, S., 2005, Critical Thinking Skills: Developing Effective Analysis and Argument, UK: Palgrave Macmillan

Tufte, E.R., 1997, Visual Explanations, Graphics Press

Web references, journals and other:

College Life at DIT: <http://www.dit.ie/DIT/prospective/welcome/college-life.html>

Study Tips: Manage Your Own Learning - <http://www.ul.ie/~library/studyskills.html>

What are Key Skills About? - http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/articles/whatare_keyskills.asp

Key Skills Framework - <http://www.action.ncca.ie/ga/key-skills/key-skills-framework>

Further Details:

To be delivered in one semester or year- long.

This is a one semester course with three contact hours per week. Contact hours will consist of a combination of lectures and tutorials.

3 lectures/tutorial

Date of Academic Council approval