

We place great emphasis on constantly developing communication and collaborative work/team work skills during your studies. This is why they matter.

Communication

Accountants need to be good written and verbal communicators. They need to explain accounting advice and ideas to:

- colleagues from accounting and non-accounting backgrounds; and
- clients who may have limited accounting knowledge.

This requires good communication skills. Clients and colleagues may also need to be convinced of the appropriateness of the advice they are given by their accountant. Once again, good communication skills are needed for accountants to achieve this.

Communication skills are an important aspect of students' learning in their Bachelor program. Good written and verbal communication skills are how students demonstrate the other learning outcomes, particularly the 'technical skill' learning outcomes Judgement, Knowledge and Application skills.

Communication skills are highly valued and sought after by the employers of graduates. In recent Graduate Outlook surveys, Accounting employers were asked to rank which skills (apart from relevant qualifications) they consider to be most important when they employ graduates. The most important skills were *Communication (both written and verbal) and interpersonal skills*. Over time, *communication skills consistently rank as the most or one of the most important skills that employers consider when they employ graduates*.

Collaborative work/team work

Group projects provide you with the opportunity to develop skills to work productively and effectively with others. In groups, you need to solve problems, reach consensus, show leadership and deal positively with conflicts which may emerge within the group.

Career benefits: Business is a 'team sport'. Employers seek graduates who can work effectively in teams. The employment advertisements on the Internet and in the weekend press confirm this. Both major and day-to-day projects in business and the accounting profession often require people to work together to achieve objectives and outcomes. Working in teams exposes you to collaborating with others and assists you to acquire and develop the collaborative work skills that employers value.

Learning benefits: Research shows that students who are actively engaged in the learning process learn more and are more successful. Working in groups provides you with the opportunity to work constructively with peers to solve problems, learn from others and reinforce your knowledge and understanding by explaining concepts to others.

Sources: Hancock, P., Freeman, M. and Associates. (2010) Business, Management and Economics Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Statement for Accounting (Strawberry Hills: Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd). Graduate Careers Australia (graduatecareers.com.au). Achievement Matters (achievementmatters.com.au).