1. Career planning
2. Sourcing opportunities for work and study
3. Effective CVs and covering letters
4. Successful applications
5. Preparing for interviews
6. Developing your online presence
7. Developing resilience to cope with setbacks
By the end of this seminar and suggested activities you should understand:

- the range of interview types you might encounter.
- how to prepare for interviews.
- the types of questions you may come across.
- how to use the STARR structure to answer competency-based questions.
- what makes an effective question to ask at interview.

TO DO

- Check the suggested actions at the end of each section.
Range of interview types

In person:
- One-to-one
- Panel
- Group

At a distance:
- Telephone
- Skype
- Video

Example approaches:
- Competency-based
- Strength-based
- Technical

TO DO
- Watch ‘Interview‘ DVD in the Careers Service (if you are located in Aberdeen).
- Look at the Interview stream (video interviews) programme to find out more about video interviews (create your login using your University of Aberdeen email address for free access).

www.abdn.ac.uk/careers
Preparing: The Basics

What to wear

Body language

Getting there

TO DO

- Try out the ‘Dress to Impress’ online tool.
- Read the Careers Service ‘Preparing for Interviews’ leaflet.

www.abdn.ac.uk/careers
Preparing: Your research

Researching employer
• Employer website
• Sector/Industry websites
• Online databases

Researching the sector
• Professional bodies
• Sector Skills Councils
• Sector briefings (e.g. Prospects)
• Newspapers / Internet

Researching the job/role
• Person specification & employer website
• Job profiles (i.e. Prospects, Career player)

TO DO
• Research employers using: search engines such as Google Advanced and LinkedIn.com.
• Research the job/role using: text and video resources.
• Research the sector using: Prospects Job Sectors and Job Market Trends & Sector Skills Council resources.

www.abdn.ac.uk/careers
Preparing: Your Agenda

Your experiences
• Education
• Work – placements and part-time
• Volunteering
• Co-curricular

Your motivations
• For the job
• For the organisation/company
• Longer term career aspirations

Your skills
• How you meet the person specification
• Transferable skills
• Examples/evidence

Your Unique Selling Points (USPs)
• Combination of stand-out experiences, skills and achievements

TO DO
• Check you have prepared thoroughly by booking a practice interview (can be conducted in the Careers Service or by telephone or skype).

www.abdn.ac.uk/careers
Types of questions

**Competency-based**
- Give me an example of a time when you had to solve a complex problem.
- What is the most difficult decision you have had to make?
- What is the best team you have worked within and why?

**Strengths-based**
- When are you at your best?
- What activities energise you?

**About the organisation**
- Why do you want to work for us?
- What do you know about our business plan for the next 5 years?
- What are the key challenges facing our sector?

**Technical**
- Questions related to the technical skills required.
- Describe a time when you were able to improve upon the design that was originally suggested.

**TO DO**
- Explore a range of example interview questions via the [Interview Stream](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/careers) online video interviewing resource.
A team example: The best team I have been a part of was the 6-person Women’s Football Team committee (Situation) . We needed to obtain a sponsor for the team (Task) and my role as treasurer was fundamental to this.

After an initial committee meeting, different tasks were allocated to each member and it was my responsibility to establish a pricing structure, negotiate with interested companies and make recommendations regarding a final decision (Action). The team was successful as each member understood her role, was motivated to meet the goal and we communicated regularly about progress made and any setbacks and problems encountered. In addition to my role, I supported the secretary when she was ill by taking on some of her tasks alongside two other committee members (Action).

Following meetings with three potential sponsors, my recommendations were agreed and a deal was made with the Illicit Still on the basis of their reputation, their financial offer and their commitment to a longer term deal, therefore securing the future of the team for the next three years (Result).

Reflection: be prepared to add what you learned or might have done differently

TO DO

• Prepare your own STARR examples using this resource.
What makes a good question to ask at an interview

• Well researched
• Current affairs related to the business
• Demonstrate interest/enthusiasm for the role
• Show professionalism
• Appropriate to the audience

Questions to avoid

• Salary, Terms & Conditions
• Benefits, car-parking!

TO DO

• Prepare your own questions in advance, based on your research of the organisation and role. These websites may help generate some ideas.

www.abdn.ac.uk/careers
What’s next?

1. Career planning
2. Sourcing opportunities for work and study
3. Effective CVs and covering letters
4. Successful applications
5. Preparing for interviews
6. Developing your online presence
7. Developing resilience to cope with setbacks

Take the next step here:
www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/graduates