



## ACHIEVE GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

### Personal Tutors and Graduate Attributes

In common with many other universities, nationally and internationally, the University of Aberdeen has underpinned the student experience of its curriculum and co-curriculum with a defined set of qualities that all students will have the opportunity to develop and enhance during their time at university. These form the nineteen Graduate Attributes, which students from Aberdeen will take with them into the world of further study, employment or life experience.

#### **What are the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes?**

##### **Academic Excellence**

- In-depth and extensive knowledge, understanding and skills at internationally-recognised levels in their chosen discipline(s);
- A breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills beyond their chosen discipline(s);
- An ability to participate in the creation of new knowledge and understanding through research and inquiry;
- A contextual understanding of past and present knowledge and ideas;
- An intellectual curiosity and a willingness to question accepted wisdom and to be open to new ideas

##### **Critical Thinking and Effective Communication**

- A capacity for independent, conceptual and creative thinking;
- A capacity for problem identification, the collection of evidence, synthesis and dispassionate analysis;
- A capacity for attentive exchange, informed argument and reasoning;
- An ability to communicate effectively for different purposes and in different contexts;
- An ability to work independently and as part of a team;
- A diverse set of transferable and generic skills

##### **Learning and Personal Development**

- An openness to, and an interest in, life-long learning through directed and self-directed study;
- An awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses;
- A capacity for self-reflection, self-discovery and personal development

##### **Active Citizenship**

- An awareness and appreciation of ethical and moral issues;
- An awareness and appreciation of social and cultural diversity;
- An understanding of social and civic responsibilities, and of the rights of individuals and groups;
- An appreciation of the concepts of enterprise and leadership in all aspects of life;
- A readiness for citizenship in an inclusive society

## **Why did the University develop the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes?**

To reflect an increased focus on the breadth of the student experience

To encourage staff and student engagement with a reflective and developmental process that would extend across the curriculum and co-curriculum, at all levels of undergraduate study

To enhance student employability in the global employment market

## **How are they embedded in the student experience?**

Through engaging staff, student and employer awareness and development of the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes

Through stating explicitly in each course how it supports the development of Aberdeen Graduate Attributes and encouraging students to articulate their reflections and development of them

Through establishing ACHIEVE, a central site located in MyAberdeen, which offers undergraduate students resources to assess and reflect upon their skills and development needs in the curriculum and the co-curriculum. ACHIEVE also refers them to relevant support services, including the [Student Learning Service](#) and the [Careers Service](#)

## **How can a Personal Tutor include discussion of the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes in PT meetings?**

### **FIRST YEAR**

#### **September meeting:**

Initial [welcome](#), introduction to [Graduate Attributes](#)

**Before the meeting:** the students could be asked to look through the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes ([www.abdn.ac.uk/graduateattributes](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/graduateattributes)) and come prepared to talk about why they think we have them.

#### **At the meeting:**

- Now that you have had time to look at the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes, let's discuss why we have them.
- Do you have any questions about them?
- Which skills do you think you might seek to develop during year 1 at University?
- How can students reflect upon and develop them during their time at university?
- What is the difference between the curriculum and the co-curriculum?
- Where can students find resources to support them in recognising and developing these attributes?

[ACHIEVE](#)

#### **March meeting:**

Focus on assessments, self-reflection of [Graduate Attributes](#), year to date and considerations for next academic year as well as [co-curricular opportunities](#)

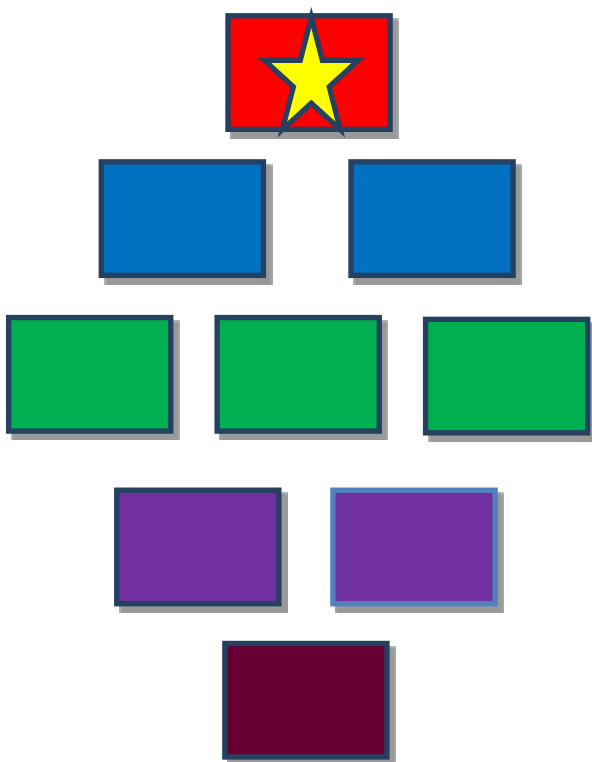
This meeting might include a recap and discussion of the students' thoughts on and experience of the Graduate Attributes thus far.

**Suggested activity:**

**DIAMOND NINE**

This can be done as an individual exercise, or in pairs or small groups.

Explore the pack of 19 Aberdeen Graduate Attributes cards. Arrange your top NINE Aberdeen Graduate Attributes into a diamond hierarchy, in which the top line (only one card) is the most important/relevant, the second line (two cards) features the next most important/relevant, the third line (three cards) the next, and then decrease through two cards to the final one card to complete the diamond. Each can then discuss why and how decisions were made to select and prioritise the final DIAMOND NINE.



Download: [Diamond 9 Quick Guide](#) for Personal Tutors

Download: Graduate Attribute cards - [Active Citizenship](#)

Graduate Attribute cards - [Learning and Personal Development](#)

Graduate Attribute cards - [Academic Excellence](#)

Graduate Attribute cards - [Critical Thinking & Effective Communication](#)

## SECOND YEAR

### September meeting:

Initial [welcome](#), [Graduate Attributes](#) and [co-curriculum](#) development

### Suggested questions to explore with returning students:

- Which of the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes seemed most relevant to you in your Year 1 curriculum and/or co-curriculum? Why? Can you give examples?
- With a thought for the future, which of the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes do you think you might seek to develop or enhance during Year 2 at the university?

### March meeting:

Focus on assessments, honours entry and self-reflection of progress with [Graduate Attributes](#)

### Suggested questions to explore:

- How do you think you have progressed and developed during this academic year?
  - What challenges have you faced or overcome?
  - Can you give examples to evidence this?
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## THIRD YEAR

### September meeting:

Initial [welcome](#) meeting focused on [feedback](#) and [co-curriculum](#)

### Suggested questions to explore:

- How would you identify and articulate your development of Graduate Attributes to potential placement/internship providers and employers?
- How could you evidence or provide examples to support what you say? Remember that the Graduate Attributes will be developed and enhanced through both the curriculum and the co-curriculum

### Suggested activity:

Repeat the **DIAMOND NINE** exercise. Have your priorities changed since Year 1? If so, why?

### March meeting:

Focus on aspects of [employability](#)

Suggested reminder question that could be part of this discussion:

- In what ways could you identify and articulate your development of Graduate Attributes to potential placement/internship providers and employers
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## **FOURTH YEAR / FIFTH YEAR**

**September / January meetings:**

Initial [welcome](#), [Graduate Attributes](#) and [employability](#)

Meeting focus on [exam reflection](#) and [employability](#) (reference prep)

**Suggested questions to explore:**

- How do the challenges of final year dissertations/projects draw on your development of the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes?
- How do the Aberdeen Graduate Attributes relate to the qualities and competencies sought by employers or postgraduate course (academic or professional) recruitment teams?
- What sort of evidence/examples will you be able to give to support your employment/course applications?