

# HOW OUTWARD BOUND® COURSES SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR JOURNEY TO, AND WITHIN, EMPLOYMENT.

Transitioning from education to employment presents a significant challenge for young people today. Employers report weaknesses in young people's employability skills.

In a recent survey of 291 employers, from all sectors of the economy, 61% of the organisations reported that school and college leavers lack the self-management skills/resilience they need to succeed in the workplace; 52% believed that they do not have the required communication skills; and 33% reported that they do

not have the appropriate attitude towards work<sup>1</sup>. These findings, coupled with the high level of youth unemployment, indicate that many young people require help in developing the skills and attributes that employers look for when they recruit.

## THROUGH PARTICIPATING IN ONE OF OUR COURSES, YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP THE SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES THAT EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR.

We conducted a review of employers' and educational institutions' understanding of the term 'employability skills' in the context of young people. Within the definitions we reviewed, there were some recurring themes. Five **skills** and three **attributes** were highlighted most frequently. Employers look for young people who display strong self-management, problem solving, communication and leadership skills, as well as competence in working with others. They also seek young people who demonstrate a positive attitude, emotional intelligence / capabilities and determination (see Table 1).

In addition to these skills and attributes, **knowledge**, **qualifications** and **experiences** are seen to contribute towards young people's 'employability' (see Table 2<sup>3</sup>). Our review has enabled us to develop an 'employability framework', onto which we can map the learning outcomes our courses achieve for young people.

We deliver a range of Education courses for young people who attend schools, colleges or youth groups. We also deliver 8 and 19 day courses for individuals aged 15 to 19 years during the summer months. Our evaluation work provides evidence that, through participating in one of our courses, young people develop the skills and attributes that employers look for in potential employees, and that are likely to enable them to perform at a high level within the workplace (see Table 1<sup>3</sup>).

Although our courses focus on developing young people's skills and attributes, some of the bespoke programmes we deliver also help them to gain the knowledge, qualifications and experiences that contribute to their 'employability' (Table 2 shows the areas for which we have evidence of outcomes).

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1. CBI (2014). Gateway to Growth: CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey 2014.
2. This categorisation has been adapted from New Philanthropy Capital's Journey to Employment (JET) Framework. Copps, J. and Plimmer, D. (2013). Inspiring Impact: the Journey to Employment. A Guide to Understanding and Measuring What Matters for Young People. Featuring the Journey to Employment (JET) Framework. London: New Philanthropy Capital.
3. Most of the evidence we refer to is presented in The Outward Bound Trust's Social Impact Report 2014, which is available at: <http://www.outwardboundtrust.org.uk/social-impact-report-2014.pdf>. Further details can be provided by The Outward Bound Trust's Evaluation team.



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Table 1:

**ASPECTS OF EMPLOYABILITY - SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES**

EMPLOYABILITY DOMAIN	DESCRIPTION	Evidence of learning outcomes in this area from our evaluation of:	
		Education Courses	Courses for Individuals
<b>SKILLS</b>			
<b>WORKING WITH OTHERS</b>	Ability to: work as part of a team; collaborate with others; create and maintain positive relationships with others; consider the needs of others.	✓	✓
<b>SELF-MANAGEMENT</b>	Personal organisation and time-management; readiness to improve own performance; self-motivation; ability to take initiative; resourcefulness; independence.	✓	✓
<b>PROBLEM-SOLVING</b>	Ability to: think creatively to solve a problem; break a problem down and approach it methodically; use a variety of resources to solve a problem.	✓	✓
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	Ability to listen to others and communicate in appropriate ways.	✓	✓
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	Ability to: take initiative; take responsibility; lead others towards achieving a common goal.	✓	✓
<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>			
<b>POSITIVE ATTITUDE</b>	Confidence; self-esteem; optimism; enthusiasm; ambition / aspiration; positive attitude towards work.	✓	✓
<b>EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE / CAPABILITIES</b>	Ability to manage own emotions; honesty; integrity; manners and politeness; empathy.	✓	✓
<b>DETERMINATION</b>	Determination; resilience; perseverance; curiosity; adaptability.	✓	✓

Table 2:

**ASPECTS OF EMPLOYABILITY - KNOWLEDGE, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCES**

<b>EVIDENCE FROM EVALUATION OF BESPOKE PROGRAMMES</b>				
<b>QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>	<b>ACHIEVING QUALIFICATIONS</b>	✓	<b>ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOUR</b>	✓
	<b>LITERACY AND NUMERACY</b>		<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS</b>	
<b>KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCES AND INVOLVEMENT</b>	<b>BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER AWARENESS</b>	✓	<b>WORK EXPERIENCE</b>	
	<b>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT</b>	✓	<b>EXPOSURE TO WIDER NETWORKS</b>	✓
<b>CAREER MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>JOB SEARCH SKILLS</b>	✓	<b>CAREER PLANNING</b>	✓