Feeling

In a world where so many of our interactions are digital/online, employers are increasingly recognising that authentic human qualities such as having an appreciation and understanding for how others are feeling can be vitally important. Being aware and interested in how others are feeling (and recognising that not everyone feels the same way as you) is particularly important in terms of understanding the needs of any customers, clients, pupils or co-workers.

You’ll rarely see the word “feeling” used in a job description; more commonly you’ll see employers refer to “empathy” or “emotional intelligence”. You might also find employers asking for candidates with a “social conscience/awareness” i.e having an awareness and concern for wider societal issues such as the environment, poverty, diversity and inclusion. This can be an important skill or interest that is vital in some career areas.

**How can I develop this skill on my course?**

- Group and team projects offer great opportunities to interact and work alongside other people – take time to get to know the others in your group and to understand their personal challenges, their skills, experience and background. You may find that this helps to ensure that you’re able to work better together.
- Working on presentations and performances within your course with others will give you opportunities to collaborate and work alongside others.
- Areas of study that will require you to consider and write about societal and human issues that may enable you to demonstrate an understanding of human feelings include Psychology/Language and Literature programmes/Historical and Political writing/Marketing and HR.
- Some academic assessments require you to write reflectively on what you have learned or experienced – which may include discussion of these areas.

**How can I develop this skill outside my course?**

- Get involved with things that give you the opportunity to collaborate and work with other people. This could be
  - A [part-time job](#) or [internship](#),
  - Volunteering – either through [Royal Holloway Volunteering](#) or elsewhere.
Being a member of a student society or team - particularly when taking a role or position of responsibility where you actively collaborate with others to organise an event or initiative

o Take a position of responsibility at University, for example an Academic Rep, Peer Guide, Student Ambassador or Hall Life Assistant

How do people use this skill in the workplace?

Royal Holloway graduates have used feeling skills as:

- A Teacher applying sensitivity and empathy to understand if their pupils are exhausted or anxious
- A Solicitor appreciating and understanding the needs and feelings of their client
- Leaders and Managers are respected if their teams feels that they demonstrate empathy and understanding about the challenges and issues that they face
- Patients/clients in care and medical settings feel safe and respond well to professionals that display high levels of empathy

How will employers assess this skill?

If you are applying for a role and the job descriptions states they are looking for someone who is a empathetic, socially aware or emotionally intelligent, make sure you can demonstrate this skill on your CV. You may also be asked specific questions on an application form or in an interview which are designed to assess such skills. Examples of questions that could be asked include:

- Tell me about a time when you've experienced a conflict at work or when in a team or group with others – how did you resolve it?
- What would you do if you noticed that a co-worker was struggling at work?
- Describe a time you had to deliver bad news to somebody – how do you go about it and, would you do it differently next time?

In Assessment Centres for some roles you could be asked to take part in a “group task” where assessors are observing how well you interact with and respond to other people in the group.

If you’d like to get some help with structuring your answers for application forms or interviews, visit the CVs and interviews section of the Careers Moodle site.

ShortListMe, Graduates First and eCareersGrad are available on the Moodle page to help you practice interview skills, case studies and psychometric tests.

For more ideas on how you can ‘sell’ your skills on your CV then please watch our VIDEO CV workshop series, Part 3: Selling your 'Skills' on your CV (panopto.com)

You can also make an appointment to speak with one of our Careers Consultants via the Careers Portal, where we can give feedback on your CV or application or help you to prepare for interview, as well as help you think about your career options.