
Getting Connected to Essential Skills

What do YOU want from your Education?

You must value your learning in order for you to succeed in university. From the first day of classes, you must engage with what you want from your university education. Thinking about what you want to get out of your university education, which of the following is most important to you?

- Acquiring factual knowledge and get a job.
- Learning how to use knowledge in new situations.
- Developing skills to continue learning after you graduate.

All three goals are clearly important. You can't use knowledge without first learning it. You need to work to accomplish these goals – Learning is not a spectator sport. Of these three goals, you can do the first one outside of class on your own through reading and studying. The second one is best achieved in class, working with your fellow students and your instructor. You learn most thoroughly when you are doing things in order to learn and you take an active role:

- When you discuss what you are reading.
- When you practise what you are learning.
- When you apply practices and ideas to new situations.

KPU has identified 12 Essential Skills that are critical to succeeding at University and in your chosen profession.

1. **Creative Thinking and Problem Solving Skills:** Recognizes problems and generates new ideas; devises and implements plan of action.
2. **Oral Skills:** Receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal/non-verbal messages and other cues. Organizes ideas and communicates orally.
3. **Interpersonal Skills:** Works with others effectively.
4. **Teamwork and Leadership Skills:** Participates as member of a team. Contributes to the group effort and success.
5. **Personal Management & Entrepreneurial Skills:** Displays personal ethics, adaptability, sociability, and resource management skills.
6. **Writing Skills:** Communicates written thoughts, ideas and information in appropriate documents.
7. **Reading and Information Skills:** Locates, understands and interprets written information in a variety of formats.
8. **Visual Literacy:** Organizes and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects and other information.
9. **Mathematical Skills:** Performs basic computations. Approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques.
10. **Intercultural Skills:** Works well with people from diverse backgrounds. Respects individual differences.
11. **Technological Skills:** Works with a variety of technologies.
12. **Citizenship and Global Perspective:** Integrates an awareness of how social, organizational, and global issues are interrelated with individual and local concerns.

Both Foundation Competencies and Advancement Competencies for each of these skills are built into every KPU course and all programs so you will be able to apply these skills now and in the future. These **skills, knowledge, and attitudes** (SKAs) are not acquired by being told what they are or that they are important from the instructor's standpoint. You need to use real mental effort, time, and activity to acquire the ability to use them – preparing for class, in the classroom, and all the work that you do after class.

Along with the course related learning objectives and outcomes are all focused on you acquiring and being able to apply a wide range of SKAs that will lead to your future success.

Further reading: http://www.kpu.ca/sites/default/files/Policies/AC9_Essential%20Skills.pdf

