



UniSQ

Career Education

Your Professional Identity

UniSQ Career Education Team

(07) 4631 2372 | careers@unisq.edu.au



Professional Identity

Introduction to Professional Identity



What is "Professional Identity"?

Professional Identity is an alignment of personal attitudes, values, knowledge, beliefs and presentation to your current or desired profession.

It's influenced by your characteristics, personal experiences and professional socialisation, and results in a strong sense of self and belonging in your role. Your professional identity will evolve throughout your life as your lifestyle, career goals, and industry change.

Professional Identity is....

Understanding and aligning yourself to your role

Understanding your industry and aligning with its expectations

Aligning your presentation, conduct and online presence with your role

Building your networks and associations within the industry

Knowing your professional skills & values, and how they apply

Your "elevator pitch"

Why is it important?

Pre-employment, your professional identity is your perception of yourself, and the perception others have of you, in relation to your chosen profession. Having a positive, defined professional identity means you understand your profession and its expectations, and you present and conduct yourself in accordance with it. Having a positive professional identity can significantly affect your job opportunities and career success.

At work, professional identity is knowing your role and adhering to its expectations. It defines practice boundaries and limits role confusion, particularly in multidisciplinary teams.

What if I don't have a Professional Identity



A lack of professional identity can have a significant impact on your confidence, and your perceived value to prospective employers. At an organisational level, unclear professional identity can lead to role ambiguity, where some employees end up 'filling the gaps' of other professions.

Professional Identity

Consider your Industry

Let's reflect!

Consider the questions below to build your knowledge of your ideal role



1. What is your ideal job/career?

2. Can you define the typical duties people undertake in this role?

3. Who might you report to, and who might report to you?

4. Where would your work come from, and where would your work go once you have completed it?

5. Can you list some example organisations that someone in this role would work for?

6. What might these organisations' policies or values be?

7. What might they expect of you as an employee?

Professional Identity

Consider Your Presence



Now that we've explored the industry you'd like to work in, let's consider whether your current practices align with their values and expectations.

Consider the below characteristics, and rate how well you believe you demonstrate these.

Ethical Behaviour	★★★★★★★★★★
Punctuality	★★★★★★★★★★
Respect	★★★★★★★★★★
Physical Presentation	★★★★★★★★★★
Professional Speech	★★★★★★★★★★

If you feel comfortable, ask 3 friends, family members or colleagues to rate how well you demonstrate these characteristics (out of 10).

Ethical Behaviour	Ethical Behaviour	Ethical Behaviour
Punctuality	Punctuality	Punctuality
Respect	Respect	Respect
Physical Presentation	Physical Presentation	Physical Presentation
Professional Speech	Professional Speech	Professional Speech

Do you feel your scores align with the expectations of your ideal role?

Yes	No
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Highlight the characteristics for which your average score was under 7. Identify some opportunities to build these skills.

Ethical Behaviour:	
Punctuality:	
Respect:	
Physical Presentation:	
Professional Speech:	

Professional Identity

Online Presence & Portfolios

What About Your Online Presence?

Take some time to review your social media profiles, including your handles, usernames and profile pictures. **Consider....**

- Are any of your profiles publicly viewable? _____
- Ask a trusted friend to describe their first impression of your profiles with one word.
 - Facebook _____
 - Instagram _____
 - Tiktok _____
 - Other _____
- Are you surprised by these impressions? Why or why not?

- Do your profiles reflect who you are, and the impression you might want your professional network to have of you?



The Benefits of an Online Portfolio

An online portfolio showcases your work, skills and experiences to employers, who might be looking to fill a role without advertising it, or researching your work after you've applied for a position at their organisation. They may find your online portfolio by searching for a certain skill, qualification, article or network.

Which platform does your industry typically use?



LinkedIn



Instagram



WordPress



Adobe



Journo

- ☐ It is an expectation of your industry that you have one?
- ☐ Is your profile picture a recent, clear, professional headshot?
- ☐ Have you customised your URL?
- ☐ Have you completed all sections?
- ☐ Is your language professional?
- ☐ Does your "Bio" section include your "elevator pitch"? (see activity on last page)
- ☐ Do you update your profile regularly?
- ☐ Can you embed a video or recording to boost your profile?
- ☐ Is your external content linked in your profile?

Online Portfolio
Check List



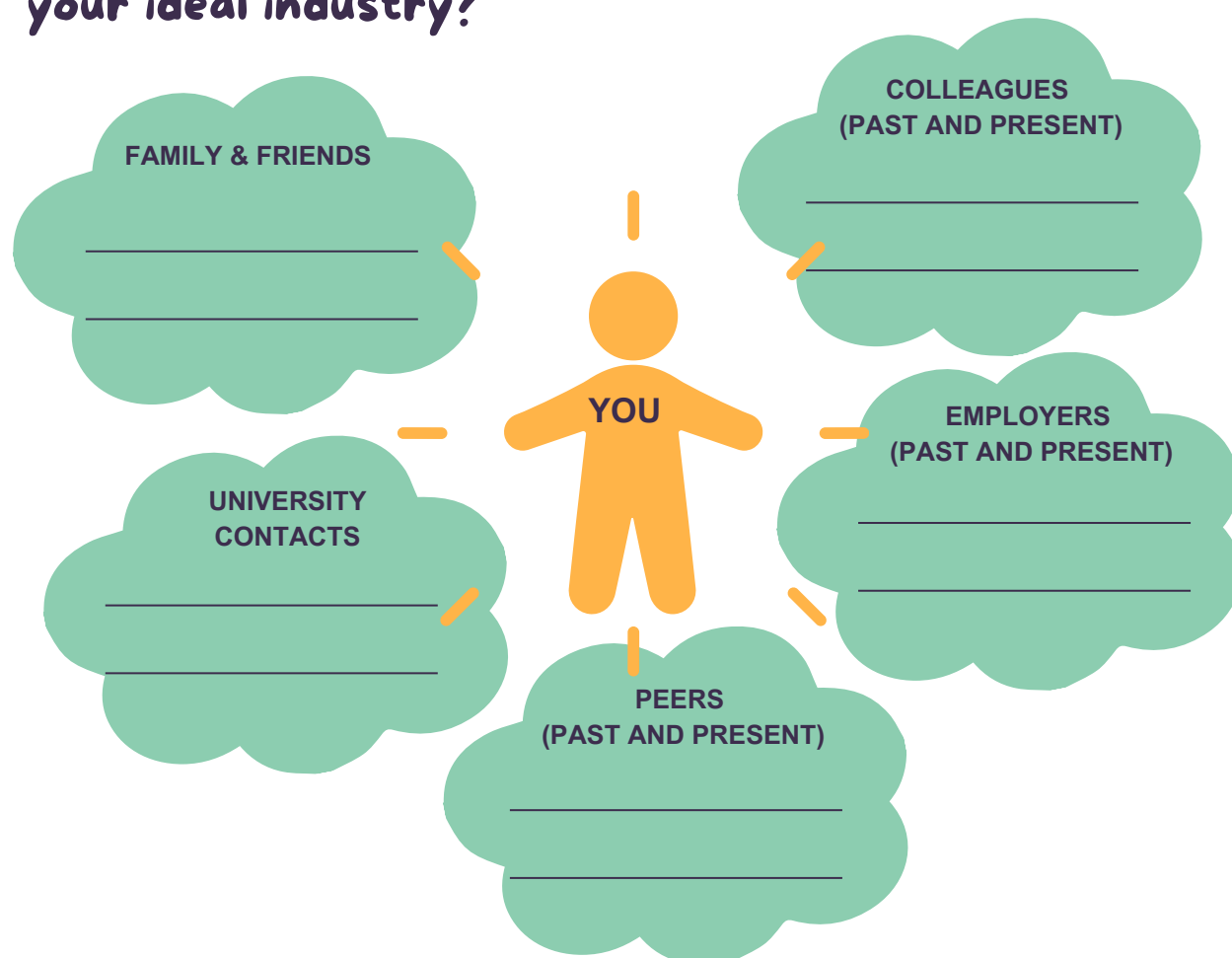
Professional Identity

Networking

The Importance of Networking

Building, nurturing and increasing your network of contacts in your ideal industry can lead to unexpected job opportunities, experienced career advice, new ideas and valuable industry information.

Can you map any networks you already have from your ideal industry?



Reflection...

- Can I build a mentoring relationship with any of my networks? _____
- Is there a professional association I can join as a Student? _____
- Are there any industry-relevant career events I could attend? _____

Professional Identity

Your Elevator Pitch

Your “elevator pitch” is a brief, professional, verbal introduction of yourself that is designed to help you introduce yourself with confidence and form a connection. It can be tailored for verbal introductions, your resume career profile, LinkedIn Bio, or portfolio introduction. It’s called an ‘elevator pitch’ because it lasts about the same amount of time you’d spend with someone in an elevator.



If you were unexpectedly in an elevator with someone who worked at your ideal organisation, what would you say....?



To curate your elevator pitch, consider how you’d answer these questions...

- Who are you?
- What are you qualified to do?
- Where can people see your work?
- What is your unique strength?
- What do you want to do, and why?
- What do you want to be known for?
- What do you want from an employer?

Let’s put it into practice!

My name’s _____ and I’m a _____

You might have seen my work in _____

That work was a really good example of my skills in _____

I’m very passionate about _____

Which is why I’m keen to work as a _____

(your preferred call to action, e.g. “Could I send my resume through to you?”, “Do you have time to catch up to talk about any openings?”) _____

Professional Identity

Let's Re-cap



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Let's go over what we've learned:

- The meaning of Professional Identity, and why it's important
- How to better understand the industry and role you're hoping to break in to
- The importance of aligning your presence and visibility with your industry
- Networking and why it matters
- How to build your 'elevator pitch'



Some activities to take away

- ✓ Join your professional association
- ✓ Set up an online portfolio, or expand your network within your online portfolio by 5 people
- ✓ Set up a LinkedIn account, and link it to your work so it's visible
- ✓ Consider developing a mentoring relationship with an existing network contact
- ✓ Write and refine your 'elevator pitch'
- ✓ And lastly, take time to reflect on...



What do you want to be known for?

What impact could a positive self-concept have on your life and those around you?

How could your positive self-concept influence your career over the course of your life?

How might your professional identity change throughout your life?

Career Education & Employability Resources

DISCOVER your options for gaining work and mentoring experience, job application advice and feedback, and individual support.

VISIT [UniSQ Access | accesshub.usq.edu.au](#)



Interview Support

Search 100's of videos to help you prepare for an interview. Record yourself responding to interview questions for feedback.



Resume Review

Access resources and templates, and upload your resume for professional feedback.



LinkedIn Review

Submit your LinkedIn profile for a review and feedback to ensure you are marketing yourself to your full potential.



Industry Connect Mentoring Program

Designed to connect you with an experienced industry professional to build your employability skills.



Events

Attend upcoming events to maximise your connections and networking opportunities.



Jobs Board

24 hour access to job opportunities for students from a range of employers throughout Australia and overseas.



How the Career Education Team can support you:

Career advice and information

Career conversation appointments

Find work while studying

Increase your employability

Transition to graduate employment



Need individual support?

UniSQ offers one-on-one career planning sessions with qualified Career Practitioners. We can help you understand how your values, attributes and life experiences contribute to your career goals. Appointments are available over the phone, via video, live chat, or email.

Book an appointment where we can help you to:

- Develop career management skills
- Set goals and strategies to help you with your career decisions
- Make sound career decisions and set directions
- Discover resources to support career decisions and actions
- Plan for employment after graduation

**CONTACT THE CAREER
EDUCATION TEAM**

careers@usq.edu.au
07 4631 2372
[usq.edu.au/careers](https://www.usq.edu.au/careers)