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Multidisciplinary study: the value and benefits



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The Open University,

Walton Hall, Milton Keynes

MK7 6AA

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Introduction

You might be studying, or considering learning about, more than one subject as part of your studies. Combining different subjects provides an exciting opportunity to find ways in which those subjects intersect and influence each other, across different subject boundaries. ‘Multidisciplinary’ study at The Open University includes our ‘Open’ qualifications (BA/BSc (Hons) Open degree, Diploma of Higher Education Open and Certificate of Higher Education Open), BSc (Combined STEM), MA/MSc Open (F81) Open masters and the modules Making your learning count, and Advance your independent learning. These all provide you with an opportunity to choose from a range of different subjects, allowing you to learn in different ways. At other universities, multidisciplinary qualifications may also include combined honours, interdisciplinary degrees and themed based modules.

Watch the following video, featuring Peter Taylor and Helen Cooke from The Open University, and Open University students Cherry Day, Kathleen Bruce and Claire Davey, introducing what it’s like to study a multidisciplinary degree with the OU and what the benefits might be as a learner.

Video content is not available in this format.
Studying a multidisciplinary qualification at The Ope University.



The Open University would really appreciate a few minutes of your time to tell us about yourself and your expectations for the course before you begin, in our optional start-of-course survey. Participation will be completely confidential and we will not pass on your details to others.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Define the terms multi, inter, cross and transdisciplinary and explain how they differ
- recognise the benefits of applying different subject approaches or views to different contexts
- explain the skills gained from studying multi-subject qualifications to employers
- describe ‘Wicked Problems’ and ‘Global Challenges’ and explain the importance of interdisciplinarity in finding solutions
- identify potential career pathways from studying a multi-subject qualification.

How to get your badge

While studying this course you have the option to work towards gaining a digital badge.

Badged courses are a key part of The Open University's mission *to promote the educational well-being of the community*. The courses also provide another way of helping you to progress from informal to formal learning.

To complete a course you need to be able to find about 5 hours of study time, over a period of about 2 weeks. However, it is possible to study them at any time, and at a pace to suit you.

Badged courses are all available on The Open University's OpenLearn website and do not cost anything to study. They differ from Open University courses because you do not receive support from a tutor. But you do get useful feedback from the interactive quizzes.

What is a badge?

Digital badges are a new way of demonstrating online that you have gained a skill. Schools, colleges and universities are working with employers and other organisations to develop open badges that help learners gain recognition for their skills, and support employers to identify the right candidate for a job.

Badges demonstrate your work and achievement on the course. You can share your achievement with friends, family and employers, and on social media. Badges are a great motivation, helping you to reach the end of the course. Gaining a badge often boosts confidence in the skills and abilities that underpin successful study. So, completing this course should encourage you to think about taking other courses.

How to get a badge

Getting a badge is straightforward! Here's what you have to do:

- read each section of the course
- score 50% or more in the badge quiz at the end.

For the quiz, you can have three attempts at most of the questions (for true or false type questions you usually only get one attempt). If you get the answer right first time you will get more marks than for a correct answer the second or third time. If one of your answers is incorrect you will often receive helpful feedback and suggestions about how to work out the correct answer.

For the badge quiz, if you're not successful in getting 50% the first time, after 24 hours you can attempt the whole quiz, and come back as many times as you like.

We hope that as many people as possible will gain an Open University badge – so you should see getting a badge as an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned rather than as a test.

If you need more guidance on getting a badge and what you can do with it, take a look at the OpenLearn FAQs. When you gain your badge you will receive an email to notify you and you will be able to view and manage all your badges in My OpenLearn within 24 hours of completing the criteria to gain a badge.

1 Definitions

Understanding the terminology used to describe studying in more than one subject and the differences between them is important, as you will often come across these terms used interchangeably. Academic disciplines (or fields) are viewed as a way of ordering knowledge or the ‘how’ of learning within a subject and are divided into the humanities (including philosophy, history, art, languages, cultural studies) and the sciences (physics, chemistry, biology, maths and computer sciences). Disciplinary knowledge is more than just facts and includes methods, theories, concepts and perspectives too. Nowadays the word ‘discipline’ is used interchangeably with ‘subject’ as you will find throughout this course.

The terms ‘multidisciplinary, ‘interdisciplinary’, ‘cross disciplinary’ and ‘transdisciplinary’ are used to describe the different ways subjects can be combined.

Multidisciplinarity is where two or more academic disciplines collaborate for a specific purpose, for instance, when computer scientists, psychologists and sociologists cooperate in the design of human/computer interfaces. Although a multidisciplinary approach uses the skills and knowledge from more than one academic discipline, the use of knowledge from different disciplines remains *distinct*, even though the differences between the disciplines can be quite subtle. For example, architects, engineers and quantity surveyors commonly work together on construction projects, each applying their specialist knowledge to their own area of expertise. When a project is completed, each of the specialists return to their own area of expertise to start other projects.

A multidisciplinary approach is also often used in healthcare and social work, where patients’ clinical and healthcare needs are met by a multidisciplinary team; for example, nurses, social workers, general practitioners and psychotherapists may work together in multidisciplinary teams to address such problems as the rehabilitation of stroke patients (SIGN, 2002).



Figure 1 An example of a multidisciplinary approach in healthcare

In the context of The Open University, our 'Open' qualifications are considered to be *multidisciplinary*, as you study individual courses independently of each other. There is no formal requirement for students to bring together the knowledge and skills gained from each course, but they can all contribute to their overall qualification).

Interdisciplinarity differs from multidisciplinarity because the different disciplines *work together* to produce new knowledge and understanding. This can yield new understandings that would not have been possible if different experts had worked only in their own discipline area. For example, sociologists may work with psychologists and economists to examine issues affecting women returning to work after having children and the impact of this on society. Researchers from different disciplines therefore bring their own methods and insights to a particular project, or to solve a particular problem.

Studying in this way offers a unique opportunity to understand how this knowledge could be brought together in an *interdisciplinary* way and applied in different contexts, and the importance of this to real-life scenarios. It is therefore important for you to be able to make these connections, even if you are not technically studying in an interdisciplinary way.

Cross disciplinary

This is viewing one discipline from the perspective of another. Often the disciplines are placed side by side. The history of art, for example, is cross disciplinary.

Transdisciplinary describes how knowledge from different disciplines is brought together into intellectual frameworks that go beyond individual disciplines. It is research or learning that is focused on problems which cross two or more boundaries with equal weight being given to each perspective. Sustainability, a 'real-world problem', is often seen as

transdisciplinary because, for example, it needs scientific political, sociological, geographical knowledge to explore ways of resolving it. You will learn a little bit more about ‘real-world problems’ later in the course.

2 Which definition should I use?

Figure 2 shows the wider range of definitions that are used to describe studying more than one subject, each of these has their own place in different circumstances. There are benefits (and challenges) in applying the knowledge and skills gained from more than one subject. You'll cover these in more detail in the following sections.

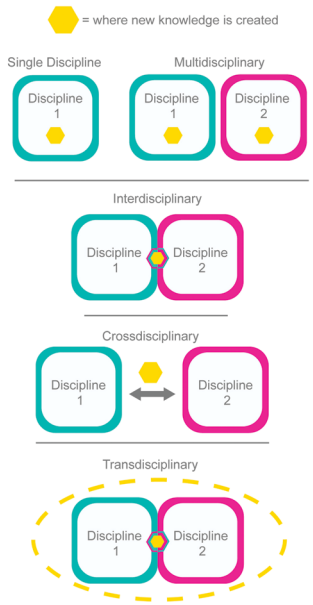


Figure 2 Knowledge creation in relation to studying more than one subject.

Now complete Activity 1 to consolidate your understanding.

Activity 1 Defining multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary learning

Allow about 5 minutes

In your own words, write down what you have understood by the terms 'multidisciplinary' and 'interdisciplinary' learning.

Provide your answer...

Discussion

You might have thought of something along these lines:

Multidisciplinarity is where two or more academic disciplines collaborate for a specific purpose, for instance, when computer scientists, psychologists and sociologists cooperate in the design of human/computer interfaces.

Interdisciplinarity differs from multidisciplinarity because the different disciplines work together to produce new knowledge and understanding.

3 The evolution of interdisciplinary approaches

It can be helpful to understand the long-standing place in history that interdisciplinary studies have. Throughout history, there have been several well-known individuals who have applied a multi-subject approach to their work. For example, the following animation features a few famous people throughout history who have been involved with interdisciplinary study, from Greek philosopherslike Plato and Aristotle, to Abu Rayhan Al-Biruni, a Persian polymath regarded as one of the greatest scholars of the mediaeval Islamic era.

Video content is not available in this format.
Interdisciplinarity through history



Historically, some argue that the term ‘interdisciplinary’ dates right back to the ideas of Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, who have been associated with the term ‘interdisciplinary thinkers’. Others say that it is from the twentieth century, borne from educational reforms, research and the transfer of knowledge across subject boundaries.

Interdisciplinarity in the twentieth century is thought to have emerged from the social sciences and the many problems following the end of the First World War. It is argued that understanding post-war problems, such as population shifts, housing, social welfare, war, labour and crime, needed to be addressed by a range of different disciplines, rather than through the lens of just one, to work towards the ‘unity of knowledge’.

In 1959, the novelist C. P. Snow delivered an influential lecture titled *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* at the University of Cambridge. Snow argued that ‘the intellectual life of the whole of western society’ was split into two cultures – the sciences and the humanities – and that this was a major hindrance to solving the world’s problems. Snow argued that practitioners in both areas should instead build bridges to further the progress of human knowledge and to benefit society.

At a similar time, the mid-twentieth century saw the introduction of ‘general education’, which shaped the way interdisciplinarity is viewed today (Klein, 1990). However, in the UK, it is sometimes argued that children are required to specialise from a relatively early

age. In contrast, some countries allow students to continue studying in an interdisciplinary way throughout their compulsory education. For example, some schools in Finland have included teaching subjects in the context of broader, cross-cutting topics or themes, such as food safety and climate change.

In the following section, you will begin to explore why it can be important to apply different disciplinary learning to a variety of topics.

4 The benefits of studying a multidisciplinary qualification

You are now going to explore the benefits of studying a multidisciplinary qualification, like The Open University's Open qualifications. A multidisciplinary qualification provides you with a unique opportunity to gain a knowledge and understanding of a range of different subjects and their approaches. You can then apply the skills that you gain from a multidisciplinary qualification to help you to understand connections between different subjects and how to transfer that knowledge across subject boundaries.

This approach leads to a deeper learning and understanding, and ultimately interdisciplinary thought and understanding, which can be beneficial in many areas of life, including the workplace. It is that building of knowledge that can allow for deeper understanding and highlight the patterns that are common between different subjects.

Part of the reason some people choose to study single-subject qualifications is to become an 'expert' in that subject and they believe that this will be more valued by employers because many jobs require specific expertise. However, the disadvantage of this is that they join a group of similarly trained experts who are also competing for those roles.

One of the strengths of multidisciplinary study is that *you* choose the subjects that *you* want to study and therefore you become a particular type of expert in your own right. For example, at The Open University, there are very few students studying towards an Open qualification who do the same combinations of courses and therefore each student is unique, with their own set of specialities. You will meet some of these students later in the course. So, rather than being a 'generalist', you become an 'individual specialist'. The challenge of this is to be able to explain your unique expertise to potential employers so that you stand out from the crowd. Again, you will explore this in more detail later.

For now, here are some of the wider benefits of choosing to study more than one subject that apply to a range of personal and career-related contexts:

- **Motivation** – learners are highly motivated as they have a vested interest as they are usually pursuing topics that are of personal interest to them. As a result, the content is often rooted in life experiences, giving an authentic purpose for the learning and connecting it to a real world context. Consequently, this can lead to more meaningful, purposeful and deeper learning experiences.
- **Breadth of knowledge** – students are able to consider the many and varied perspectives across different subjects from which a topic can be explored.
- **Acquiring new knowledge** – exploring topics across a range of subject boundaries motivates students to pursue new knowledge in different subject areas.
- **Creativity** – knowledge and application of different subjects can lead to greater creativity.
- **Making connections** – worthwhile topics of research can fall in the 'spaces' between the traditional academic subject areas.

Activity 2 Identifying the benefits that are important to you

Allow about 10 minutes

In the following space, note down which of these benefits are most important or relevant to your own situation, and why. You may wish to revisit and add to these notes after you have completed the course.

Provide your answer...

Discussion

As is often the case when reflecting on our own situation, there isn't a right or wrong answer but hopefully you have identified what is important to you in terms of the benefits of studying different subjects.

5 Skills developed through multidisciplinary study

What makes multidisciplinary students stand out to employers is the rich view of the world that they develop, the wide range of perspectives they will have encountered during their studies, and the combination of subject areas they have studied that could offer more flexible career choices. In fact, many vacancies don't specify the subject knowledge required for the role; it's the skills you have developed in your studies as well as your other life experiences that employers are interested in. Studying more than one subject, therefore, helps you to develop important transferable skills, which are continually developing at all stages of life (Table 1).

Table 1 Some examples of the transferable skills gained through multidisciplinary study

Skill	Explanation
Critical thinking	Critical thinking skills are used and developed as students look across disciplinary boundaries to consider other viewpoints and also begin to compare and contrast concepts across subject areas.
Self-management	Choosing which subjects to study – and why – can be challenging, and requires students to think carefully about how to identify their priorities and manage their study choices.
Adaptability	Different subjects may need to be viewed through different lenses which means an individual needs to be able to switch to the appropriate lens at the appropriate time for whichever subject they are looking at. It requires careful self-management to be able to do this.
Analysis and problem solving	By studying across different subject boundaries and by studying a wider range of subjects, students develop deeper skills of evaluation as they learn a number of different logical and methodical approaches and are able to select the best one to use for particular circumstances. For example, students can draw on their range of academic or subject knowledge to identify solutions of a practical or technical nature.
Communication and literacy	Students' written and verbal communication skills are well developed amongst multi-subject students as they learn to revert to the appropriate communication style for a particular subject area. For example, multi-subject students might encounter a range of different assessment methods, including essays, laboratory reports, written and oral examinations, as appropriate to different subject areas.
Application of information technology	Using technology across a range of subjects means that students can be more practised in displaying and presenting information in a range of ways.

Flexibility	The ability to adapt to different contexts and environments is a strong skill gained from multi-subject study as you will be switching from one subject to another.
Synthesis of ideas	Students begin to consolidate learning by combining ideas from many perspectives and consider an alternative way of acquiring knowledge.

Building your own multidisciplinary approach to learning and developing these important skills will enable you to study in a way that suits your own style of learning, motivations for study and personal interests.

Having a portfolio of different subjects within your degree profile can therefore be marketed to employers in a very positive light and help you to 'stand out' against other applicants. Your adaptability and versatility in being able to follow very different disciplines successfully, and developing a full range of skills, can be particularly attractive to employers. However, it can seem challenging to work out how to explain these skills to a potential employer. If you are studying for career reasons, you need to consider how you articulate the skills developed and experiences gained in your CV, job application forms and interviews.

Remember too that many employers will also be interested in other life experiences outside of your studies and these can be just as helpful in demonstrating your skills or competencies for a particular job.

Activity 3 Explaining skills to an employer

Allow about 5 minutes

Write down three reasons why an employer might value the skills of a multidisciplinary learner.

Provide your answer...

Discussion

You may have included any of the following in your answer:

1. They can show that they are more flexible and are able to adapt to a variety of different situations with ease. This can be particularly helpful in an organisation where there may be lots of change taking place.
2. They are used to managing different deadlines and categorising what ideas belong where, and therefore are good at managing themselves and their time.
3. They are able to bring together a number of ideas and perspectives from across different subjects, and therefore may be able to offer alternative ways of looking at issues or problems. This can help identify new, innovative solutions to particular situations.
4. They have well-developed communication and literacy skills, having been exposed to different terminology across a number of subjects.
5. They are able to consider and understand different viewpoints and different approaches to tackling a particular problem.

6 ‘Wicked Problems’ and ‘Global Challenges’.

We should encourage arts and science to meet. I studied ancient history not technology, but you can get a long way just by being curious and asking questions.

Martha Lane-Fox, Chancellor of The Open University (Gale, 2016)

It is important to remember that the traditional academic subjects that are referred to today, such as chemistry, music and geography, are simply artificial boxes used to understand the growing awareness of our lives and universe. People have always tried to make sense of our world by trying to organise our knowledge into compartments. Over time, these compartments have changed and multiplied, and as a result, we have ended up with distinct subjects such as history, mathematics and business.

Some subjects have developed so much that they have now been divided up into new areas of knowledge. History, for example, can be broken down into fields such as archaeology, European history and Roman history. Sometimes, new areas of knowledge develop at the boundaries of more than one subject. For example, biochemistry, which applies elements of both chemistry and biology.

When a new subject is created, groups of ‘experts’ form around one area of knowledge, which can lead to a different style of language and specific notations that are unique to that area. These are used by experts in the field, as well as by teachers and students, as a shorthand for discussing a particular subject efficiently. However, this also creates barriers that prevent others from easily understanding the subject and its discussion. Learning the different languages and notations of more than one subject and bringing them together is therefore a key challenge when adopting a multidisciplinary approach to study.

Many people study undergraduate degrees within a single subject area, for example chemistry or history. There are sound reasons for this. Any subject becomes more complex as the body of knowledge accrues over time, therefore, to gain an in-depth understanding, it is necessary to study within the confines of that subject and build up your knowledge of it. However, to get the most out of the different ways each subject looks at an issue, it can often be useful to combine two or more academic subjects, taking elements from each to create a new understanding or insight.

The term Wicked Problem was first coined by design theorists Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber in 1973. They used it as a way of highlighting complexities in relation to planning and social problems. Wicked Problems are often difficult to fix because they’re interconnected. It is argued that inter and transdisciplinary approaches are the key to solving these problems. Global challenges are planetary crises such as rising temperatures, wildfires, floods, droughts, famines, wars, pandemics, and inequality.

The United Nations uses Global Challenges to frame their 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are a call to action for all nations across the globe to end poverty reduce inequality and protect the planet by 2030. They are about protecting the planet, and ensuring that everyone, irrespective of where they live, can enjoy health, prosperity and justice. You can read more about the UNSDGs by visiting the United Nations website.

Although knowledge is often organised into clearly defined, subject-specific ‘boxes’, there is still a lot of knowledge that falls between these discrete categories. It is within these gaps that multidisciplinary experts work as it is clear that many of the world’s greatest challenges cannot be solved by a single subject alone. This is one of the great strengths of studying in this way, because people who have a breadth of knowledge across more than one subject can provide the glue to bring together those subjects and address these challenges. Interdisciplinary research and learning is deemed as essential in an increasingly complex world.

Studying different subjects brings a different perspective to Wicked Problems and Global Challenges. For example, climate change can be examined through a range of different subject ‘lenses’, as shown in Figure 3.

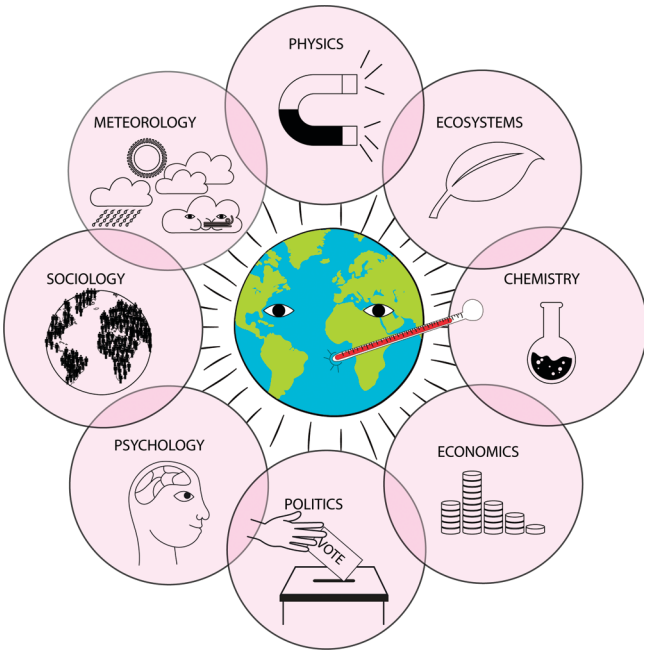


Figure 3 The problem of climate change demands an interdisciplinary approach.

Activity 4 Applying interdisciplinary learning to different contexts

Allow about 10 minutes

What other examples can you think of where studying different subjects could help to answer a global issue? Write down one problem and the subjects that could contribute to investigating this issue further.

Before you start to think about which specific subjects you might be interested in studying as part of your inter/multidisciplinary qualification, it is important to reflect on why studying in a multidisciplinary way might be the right decision for *you* and how you might be able to use this to your advantage when making academic or important life decisions, such as choosing your career.

7 Choosing which subjects to study

So far in this course, you have learned about the terms ‘interdisciplinarity’ and ‘multidisciplinarity’, explored the historical context of these terms, and examined both the differences and many benefits of studying this way. You have also considered a range of skills that multidisciplinary students can develop through the study of different subjects, from critical thinking to adaptability and flexibility. What does this mean to you in terms of the subjects you might choose to study and your personal or career-related interests? In the following video, students who have studied The Open University’s BA/BSc (Hons) Open degree explain which subjects they have chosen to study and why.

Video content is not available in this format.
Why do Open University students choose to study in a multidisciplinary way?



Choose and read through at least one of the following OpenLearn articles to explore how different combinations of subjects can be applied to specific, interdisciplinary contexts:

- The Environment
- What are the benefits of interdisciplinary study?
- Can science make you a better leader?

You can also explore a wide range of other subjects on OpenLearn using audio, videos and interactive content. All of this may help inform the subjects you decide to choose.

Activity 6 Choosing which subjects to study

Allow about 5 minutes

Which subjects have you already chosen, or might choose to study, as part of a multi-subject qualification, and why? For example, are you choosing to study each

of these for personal interest and/or career reasons? Write your preferred subjects in the left-hand column below and then add Yes or No in the other two columns.

Subject	Personal	Career
Provide your answer...	*Provide your answer...*	*Provide your answer...*
Provide your answer...	*Provide your answer...*	*Provide your answer...*
Provide your answer...	*Provide your answer...*	*Provide your answer...*

Discussion

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers here. Reflecting on the reasons you might like to study a subject or the reasons for having chosen a subject can help you to identify your motivation for studying particular subjects and/or may help if/when you might seek employment opportunities in the future.

8 What are my career options with a multi-disciplinary qualification?

Not all students pursue a multidisciplinary qualification for career reasons; many choose this option as a way to build on personal interests and expand their knowledge in a range of different areas. However, multidisciplinary students that are studying for career reasons have the opportunity to pursue a wide range of careers, as a result of their varied personal and professional interests and the wide choice of subjects available to study.

If you are undecided about whether to study courses in science or arts subjects in a career context, it will depend very much on the type of role that you are interested in pursuing. For example, if you want to work in a science-based industry, you may find that employers are more familiar with the content and format of science-related qualifications. It is therefore important that you carry out your research as early as possible to ensure that you are taking the most appropriate subjects.

However, even if you are not currently studying for career reasons, it is important to realise that a multidisciplinary qualification does not limit your career choices in the future. Quite the opposite in fact, as it can prepare you for a range of different careers at any one time, or during your working life. Research reveals that around a third of employers surveyed have no preferred degree subject when recruiting graduates (CBI/Pearson, 2017). This means that multidisciplinary students have the opportunity to consider a wide variety of different careers and are able to choose an approach to work that specifically addresses their interests in a wide range of subject and career options.

Next, you will explore career coach Emilie Wapnick's four work models. In order to appreciate how one or more of these might apply to you, you first need to understand the importance of money, meaning and variety to a multipotentialite, as they can be important factors to consider when thinking about potential careers.

According to Wapnick, some amount of money is necessary to live, whatever your beliefs or issues might be about it. Money can be seen as one ingredient to a happy life, however, on its own money isn't enough. Money can help multitpotentialites to pursue their passions after essential survival needs have been met. Often multipotentialites like to feel like they are doing something that matters. Working out what motivates us, and *why* it motivates us, can help us to identify what activities are those which matter and give us a sense of meaning. And variety, which can be an essential requirement for multi-potentialites when choosing a career. Having enough variety at the right level – not too much and not too little – is really important, however, this can, of course, be different for everyone.

Many multipotentialites use one of the four work models:

- The Group Hug Approach
- The Slash Approach
- The Einstein Approach
- The Phoenix Approach

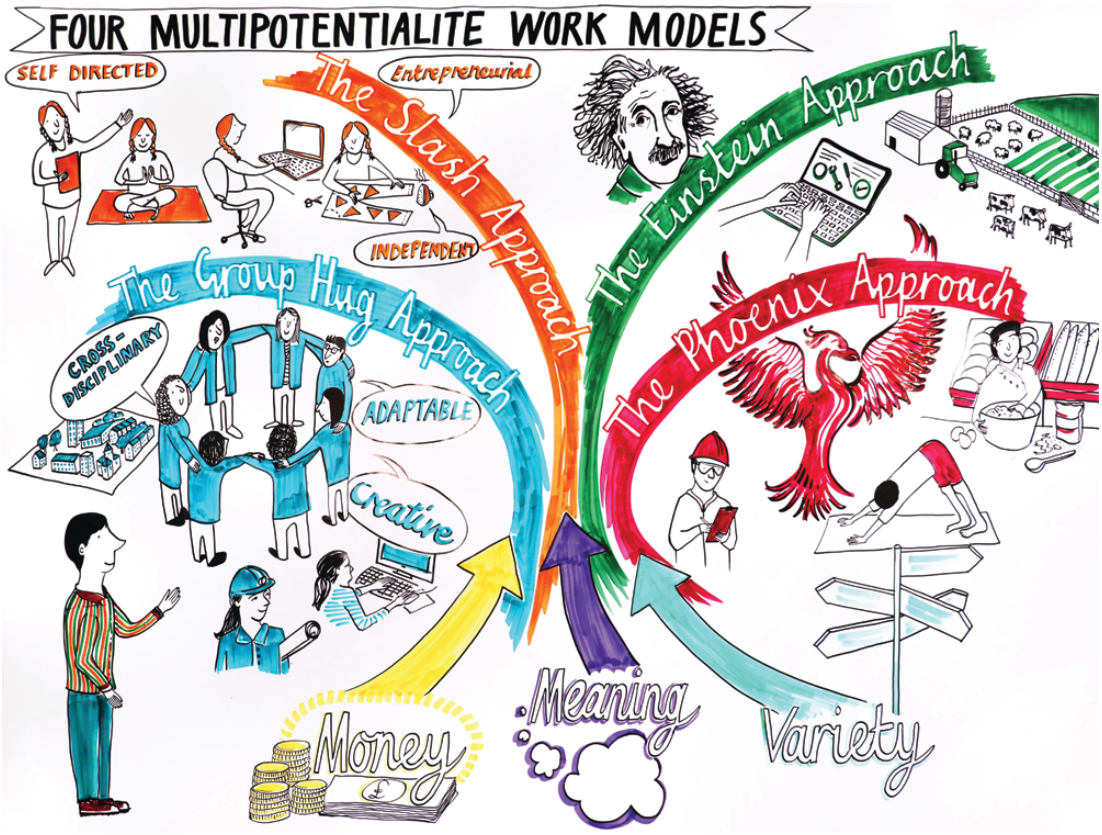


Figure 4 Four multipotentialite work models

Money, meaning and variety needs can be met in a single career with the Group Hug Approach. It is a multifaceted job or business where you do many things. Working in an interdisciplinary field, working for forward-thinking organisations or starting your own business are all ways of creating or finding a group hug career. Buzz words include: ‘creative’, ‘cross-disciplinary’, ‘adaptable’. If running your own business, choose one where multiple subjects can be combined. A trained architect is a good example of this approach as architecture is an interdisciplinary field by nature as it brings together art and science.

The Slash Approach is a great option for multipotentialites who like to juggle lots of projects all at the same time (e.g. Actor/Director/Tutor/Manager/Pianist). This approach is all about having more than one part-time job and/or businesses that you move between fluidly and frequently. Each ‘slash’ is one that you love doing but you wouldn’t want to do any one of them full-time. Boredom and burn-out are avoided with this approach as you work across a range of different specialised fields. Buzz words include: self-directed, independent and entrepreneurial.

If you prefer stability and routine, or involve yourself in your interests for amusement only, then the Einstein Approach might be for you. This is where you have a single job or business that meets your need for money, but also leaves you with enough time to follow your other interests, in your own time. It’s about finding a ‘good enough’ job or business which gives you enough spare time to do the other things you want to. A multipotentialite adopting this approach may find themselves in a career or business for many years, while also following meaningful and unrelated hobbies on the side. An example here might be a multipotentialite who has been a computer programmer all their life while living on a farm where they were able to pursue their personal interests in their own time.

Finally, the Phoenix Approach is ideal for a multipotentialite who can balance variety with the need to submerge themselves in a job or business. This approach may seem like someone has chosen to have a career in one field for a long time and then switches to a different one a few months, or years, later. This model works well for individuals who prefer doing one thing at a time. Quite often the different career paths share a common meaning, even though this may not appear to be obvious. Someone may start out teaching yoga for many years until they change career to work in the sciences and then finally set up their own craft business.

Activity 7 Which is your preferred work model and why?

Allow about 10 minutes

Based on the descriptions provided above, how much do you associate with any one (or more) of these multipotentialite work models, and why? How might you apply this to possible careers?

Provide your answer...

Discussion

Remember that these work models simply provide a starting place to help you make sense of your preferences, and to help you develop your personal and/or professional interests.

9 End-of-course quiz

Now it’s time to complete the compulsory badged quiz.

End-of-course quiz

Remember, this quiz counts towards your badge. If you’re not successful the first time, you can attempt the quiz again in 24 hours.

Open the quiz in a new tab or window then come back here when you’ve finished.

Conclusion

By now, you should be in a good position to articulate the skills and benefits of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study, and become your a modern day Aristotle!

In this course you have explored the different terminology used to describe studying more than one subject and how this can be a strength when examining issues through a range of different subject ‘lenses’. You have also considered the different skills that can be gained from multi-subject study and had the opportunity to reflect on how you might explain these skills to a potential employer. You have also been introduced to the concept of multipotentiality and multipotentialites and their particular work approaches (Wapnick, 2017) as well as having identified potential career pathways.

You should now be able to:

- Define the terms multi, inter, cross and transdisciplinary and explain how they differ
- recognise the benefits of applying different subject approaches or views to different contexts
- explain the skills gained from studying multi-subject qualifications to employers
- describe ‘Wicked Problems’ and ‘Global Challenges’ and explain the importance of interdisciplinarity in finding solutions
- identify potential career pathways from studying a multi-subject qualification.

We hope you feel encouraged to think more deeply about why, and how, studying a multidisciplinary qualification is a good option for you to develop academically, personally and professionally.

Tell us what you think

Now you've come to the end of the course, we would appreciate a few minutes of your time to complete this short end-of-course survey. We'd like to find out a bit about your experience of studying the course and what you plan to do next. We will use this information to provide better online experiences for all our learners and to share our findings with others. Participation will be completely confidential and we will not pass on your details to others.

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Images

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