

# Welcome to NUPAD:

## Personal Development Planning

with

# MyPAD e-portfolio



You may have already experienced ways of keeping track of your progress at school, college or in the workplace – in fact most employees are expected to take note of their development and keep personal records of achievements and goals, so it's a habit worth developing!

Northampton Unified Personal and Academic Development (NUPAD) consists of support and materials designed to help you keep reflective notes and to plan for your next step. It includes activities within your course programme and links to meetings with your personal tutor which help develop essential skills for study and work.

Thinking about what you do makes you better at doing it, so potentially leads to improved grades! Recording your skills and achievements, both from study and other activities, will prove really valuable when you come to apply for jobs or placements – employers like to hear examples you can describe in detail!

### Remember...

**Think it through.**

**Note it down.**

**Make it happen!**

'It has made me think about what my strong points are, how I have grown as a person, and how I can use the skills gained at university within the working world - it has been a very worthwhile process.'

NUPAD consists of a range of activities designed to help you to:

- Become more aware of the skills you already have
- Identify and develop skills you need for academic and future success
- Focus your thinking about possible career options
- Explain your progress on paper e.g. CVs, and verbally e.g. in interviews
- Work out what you want to achieve, and how to go about it
- Become more independent and confident
- Build a source of information and evidence for future job & course applications

You should:

- Attend tutorials and take preparation seriously
- Reflect on comments on marker sheets, and take action as suggested
- Practise making links between academic learning and skills developed elsewhere: placements, part-time jobs, voluntary activities
- Make use of your MyPAD space on NILE which includes links to advice and support materials on the NUPAD web pages <http://pdp.northampton.ac.uk>

# How to make the most of NUPAD & MyPAD e-portfolio

## Getting started...

- Meet your personal tutor, and check out NUPAD arrangements for the year – some NUPAD activities may be included in course tasks / assignments, or special workshops
- Personalise your *MyPAD* space - look at 'Making MyPAD work for you' to help you organise notes, but it's up to you what to include and how to present your ideas in blogs or wikis
- Use the links to the NUPAD web pages (pdp.northampton.ac.uk) where there are exercises and suggestions to prompt your thoughts. Completed documents can be saved and uploaded to your *MyPAD* space
- Note key suggestions for improvement from assignment front sheets and use these as a checklist for future tasks.
- Find a regular routine for updating. It could be once a week, or when you hand assignments in or get them back; *MyPAD* will help you keep sections organised and dated

'I found the application form for this work experience opportunity much easier to complete because all the examples of my skills were already in my PDP.'

**Most employers will ask you to do something similar, so getting into the habit now will give you a head start. What's more, as you keep track of your own progress, you will really be aware of how you're changing and developing, a great confidence boost!**

## What to include:

- Modules studied, assignment descriptions, and grades; attendance on other courses
- Discussions about choices you make and the reasoning behind your decisions
- Meetings with personal tutor, together with any notes or documents
- Leisure / social activities, with details of any positions of responsibility e.g. student rep.
- Work-based experiences – include paid, voluntary and informal roles
- Links to useful contacts, phone numbers, web sites
- Thoughts about career options, and what you need to do to get there
- Interviews, dates, who you talked to, what happened, your reactions
- Don't forget casual chats with friends or relations – that's often how we make up our minds, or sort out problems. If it made a difference, or made you think, jot it down

**Keep track of your plans, develop your CV, improve your chances!**

