

## Ask an expert

Method	Ask an expert
Introduction	
<p>In this method, a subject matter expert from industry or elsewhere is invited to join the class via skype or a similar conferencing software to give a short talk on a specific subject and to respond to questions from the students. The session lasting no more than an hour, should be prepared and hosted by a small team of students, allocating roles such as moderator, recorder, etc. to specified students. It can also be recorded and used to support a discussion amongst the students afterwards.</p>	
Aim	To introduce a degree of external expertise to the lecture; to help students 'situate' the topic under discussion in the 'real' world; to help underscore how simple ICT tools can be used to extend a face-to-face lesson
Target group:	This method can be applied with students at any level and in any discipline.
Intended learning outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deepened knowledge in a specific area,</li> <li>• increased understanding as to how this knowledge is of relevance in the everyday working life of professionals who have studied the same subject as themselves</li> <li>• students are more familiar with concepts, vocabulary and settings in the work context</li> </ul>	
Description	
<p>First identify a suitable expert, check amongst alumni, conference speakers, local entrepreneurs and other contacts for people who may be interested. As the tool proposed (skype) is commonly used throughout society including working life, it is usually quite easy to set up such an appointment.</p> <p>Then prepare for the speaker – this should be done by the staff member and the relevant student group so that issues like the way the expert will be introduced, the topic to be covered and practical issues like whether presentation software is foreseen are all dealt with in a satisfactory way.</p> <p>It's a good idea to prepare the questions to be asked and to use this as a way to review students' ability to make abstractions and other higher order skills. Make sure to run a test session with the expert beforehand in the same setting as planned for the actual intervention. It's also important to agree the exact length of the intervention with everyone before as well as the status of any recordings, checking for example whether the expert is ok with having any resulting recordings, ppts etc made available to the wider public</p> <p>If the students are involved in preparing the expert then they will need to prepare a list of possible questions and other guidance for the expert.</p> <p>As facilitator, you need to ensure the expert stays 'on subject' and be prepared to intervene should the expert veer off topic</p>	

<p>Afterwards students can be asked to prepare short summaries of the talk in order to ensure they remain as focussed as possible.</p>	
Preparation	<p>The staff member needs to find a suitable expert and prepare them and the student group well as described.</p>
Required resources and equipment	<p>Reliable internet connection, suitable hardware to display the image of the expert and to ensure he/she can hear everything including questions asked by the students. Make sure to do a test beforehand with the equipment that you plan to use to be sure everything is working properly, i.e. that everyone can hear and see the expert and that the expert can hear and see the students. .</p>
Success factors	<p>Making sure that everyone can hear clearly what the expert has to say and for the expert to hear clearly what the students have to say is vital for the success of this session, so too is good preparation and selecting an expert who is appropriate, engaging and enthusiastic about the subject.</p>
Advantages	<p>This method can bring very valuable external experience and expertise into the classroom. Organising it with a tool such as Skype also means that the expert can do it without having to give up too much time.</p>
Disadvantages	<p>Remote presentations can sometimes lack the dynamic of direct face-to-face talks.</p>
Additional information	<p>When looking for experts to contribute to a specific lesson, check with the local chamber of commerce who often have lists of companies sorted by sector in the region.</p> <p>When using skype or any other online synchronous tool, make sure that you test the set up beforehand. For skype you will find out how to do a test beforehand <a href="#">here</a>.</p>