Your future at your fingertips

Careers Handbook 2018

Your career starts here
Four steps to career success.

What is a graduate job?
You’ve heard the phrase, but what does it mean?

The perfect job application
How to get hired, from CV to interview.
1 Clueless about your career?
Head to four steps to career success – you might not find your career, but you will find yourself taking the first step towards it. Follow this by connect to a world of expertise and 10 ways to get work experience while studying and you will have a clearer idea in no time.

2 Tired of being asked “what are you planning to do after university?”
Head to your Careers team, here for you and get acquainted with all the lovely people who can help you answer this question. You will find four steps to career success, what exactly is a graduate job? and taking your studies to the next level useful too.

3 Strapped for cash?
Head to fill your CV and wallet if you are struggling to raise funds for your weekly food shop. Then explore get employers to take notice of your CV and six reasons to connect with employers to boost your career.

4 Is your CV bare?
Struggling to get past the A level section on your CV? Head to 10 ways to get work experience while studying. You’ll also find CV-boosting opportunities in start your future with the SU, a distinct Advantage and elevate your skills with overseas opportunities.

5 Have you been bitten by the travel bug?
Itchy feet? Head to elevate your skills with overseas opportunities. You should also investigate six inspiring ways to spend time out and where in the world will your degree take you?

6 Are you harbouring a great idea?
Head to so, you want to be your own boss? to find out how to put that great idea into action. You will also find connect to a world of expertise useful, where you can hear from people who have already walked the path you want to step onto.

7 Do you really want to get that job or internship?
Head to the whole of section four if you have found a great job and want to get ahead in the application process. Standing out is about developing extra skills too, so check out a distinct Advantage.
Your degree will open up a world of career opportunities. Many professions are open to graduates of any discipline, which is fantastic, but can also be a little daunting. Even careers that require a specific degree usually have various specialisms, so you will still be faced with choices to make about your future.

Four steps to career success

We want to shed some light on what you’ll need to consider when deciding what to do after your studies. We’ve identified four steps you can take, but bear in mind there’s no prescribed order in which you should do them.

Find all your careers fairs on MyNottingham

Check out the new careers fair tile, and explore which fairs are happening this term.

- Find all your careers fairs in one place
- Discover which employers will be there
- Explore employer profiles to get fair-ready

Download from your app store
Search: MyNottingham

Get ready for your future
nottingham.ac.uk/careers
**Getting to grips**

### Get involved: explore what’s on offer at Nottingham
- Discover new interests
- Meet more people
- Develop your skill set
- Gain work experience

### All about you: what makes you tick?
- What’s important to you in a job?
- How do others see you?
- How can you build on your strengths?
- What skills do you need to develop?

### Broaden your horizons: find out what’s out there
- Explore the career options for your degree
- Find out what different jobs and sectors involve
- Discover how further study could enhance your job prospects
- Set up your own business

### Achieve your goal: secure a job, PhD, or masters
- Make a successful application
- Create a professional LinkedIn profile
- Navigate psychometric tests
- Ace assessment centres and interviews

### Action you can take
1. Join a Students’ Union society or sports club
2. Search for part-time jobs through Unitemps
3. Explore modules on the Nottingham Advantage Award
4. Ask about Study Abroad
5. Find out about summer internships
6. Speak to the Students’ Union’s Volunteering Team

### Action you can take
1. Talk to a careers adviser
2. Search our website for ‘Profiling for Success’ questionnaires
3. Use Prospects Planner, the career matching quiz
4. Chat to family and friends
5. Build your CV by recording what you’ve been involved in

### Action you can take
1. Chat to recruiters about their vacancies at our fairs
2. Find out more about a sector at Spotlight On events
3. Visit our website to find out about further study
4. Get career insights from a mentor
5. Search for internship and job vacancies on My Career
6. Contact the Ingenuity Lab about setting up your own business

### Action you can take
1. Get advice on your applications from our team
2. Ask us to review your CV or LinkedIn profile
3. Book a place on our interview and assessment centre workshops
4. Get job-hunting tips from a career mentor
5. Talk to recruiters at fairs about what they look for in applicants
6. Use Graduates First to practise psychometric tests
Whether you know where your future lies or are undecided, our team is committed to helping you on your way to a career you love. Our experts can help you make the most of your time at Nottingham.

Talk to us
It’s your future – talk to us about your ideas and we’ll support you to make decisions about the next step.
- We offer regular advice sessions in your school and faculty. Just turn up to one of our drop-in sessions for a chat or book an appointment: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/appointments
- If you’ve got a quick question, tweet us or send a private Facebook message: @UoNCareers or CareersUoN

Find graduate roles and internships
Discover internships and graduate jobs – talk to companies targeting Nottingham students.
- More than 350 employers visit our campuses each year, so that means plenty of occasions for you to talk to recruiters about their opportunities: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/events
- On My Career, you’ll find hundreds of graduate jobs and internships in the UK and overseas. Create your search criteria and get emails alerts when new jobs are advertised: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/login

Sharpen your skills
Make a successful application – hone your skills and get the course or job offer you want.
- We can help your application stand out during the recruitment process for jobs, internships and postgraduate study. Attend our workshops on completing application forms, improving your interview technique and practising psychometric tests: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/skillsworkshops
- Get a head start by going online for top tips from our staff on acing the recruitment process: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/furtherstudy or nottingham.ac.uk/careers/applications

Your Careers team, here for you
Explore your options
Find your passion – explore jobs and sectors in person and online.
- Talk to people in the know at one of our Spotlight On events. Hear from professionals about their jobs: what they do on a daily basis, the highs and the lows: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/spotlighton
- Take your research online – watch videos and get expert advice on our website: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/typesofjobs

Our staff are based on Jubilee, Sutton Bonington and University Park campuses, and at Queen’s Medical Centre.
Fill your CV and wallet

Does your bank balance look dramatically different after the first two weeks of term? Getting a part-time job can do wonders for your wallet; it could even turn your Pot Noodle into a Wagamama. What’s more, it’s great for your CV.

You could get experience in:
- Administration, for example, data entry, reception, and admin support
- Events and hospitality, including working as waiting staff, bar staff and house-keepers
- Ambassador roles at on-campus events, such as Open Days
- Specialist roles such as marketing, design, IT, engineering and web design
- Translation and other roles requiring foreign language skills
- Student helper roles for focus groups, photo and video shoots, promotional work, market research
- … and many more!

Your next steps
1. Register a profile at unitemps.com
2. Upload your CV
3. Apply for vacancies that suit your skills, availability, and interests
4. If you get through the initial application stage, the team will contact you and tell you about the position
5. After further shortlisting, the team will contact you about next steps

“Be reliable. This is really important in generating more opportunities.”

Did you know?
You can use your experience through Unitemps to complete the part time jobs module on the Advantage Award. See page 20.

Unitemps is the University’s recruitment service for part-time, casual and temporary jobs on campus and with local businesses. A service created just for you, it is the ideal place to find work that will fit around your studies and other commitments.

What can you do?
Unitemps advertises vacancies throughout the year, giving you complete flexibility over when you work and what you do. You don’t have to have any previous work experience for some roles, such as Open Day helper.

Spruce up your CV first
We offer weekly CV reviews in the Unitemps office during term time, to help you apply with confidence. Contact the team to find out when they’re happening: nottingham.ac.uk/unitemps

Are you an international student?
Students from outside the European Union are usually permitted to work a maximum of 20 hours per week during term-time and full-time outside term time. For further questions about eligibility to work in the UK, please contact the Visa and Immigration Team: nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/advisers
The graduate dilemma:
You need experience to get a job, but need a job to get experience. Fantastic. Here at Nottingham you’re in a great position. There are so many ways that you can build your CV and stand out from the crowd.

What can you do?
Work experience comes in all shapes and sizes, from a 10-week summer internship to a four-week project solving a problem for a local business. Each one will give you something different. Insights into jobs that appeal, the chance to develop your passion and explore what companies have to offer. One thing is certain, you’ll have a CV to be proud of and plenty to talk about at interviews.

Every sector is different
Some sectors, such as accountancy and finance, law or business may have structured internships and placements, and will be advertised on a company’s website, or student and graduate job boards. While these might be easier to find, and be in greater number, you may find there is a lot of competition.

To get work experience with charities and community organisations, or in marketing and PR roles, you might have to be a little more proactive. Approaching organisations yourself or sending speculative applications are good ways to make your interest known. The same is often true with smaller companies, who aren’t actively looking for someone, but might offer you an opportunity if you can impress them.

How to find internships and placements
- Look for vacancies on My Career, our online job board
- Speak to employers about their opportunities at our recruitment fairs and employer presentations
- Search top student and graduate job boards listed on our website
- Identify companies that interest you and check the jobs sections of their websites
- Send your CV and covering letter to companies to ask about a work placement or work shadowing
- Ask your contacts – including family and friends – about opportunities they may be aware of

10 ways to get work experience while studying

Getting started

1. Gain a position with the Students’ Union

2. Summer internships or year-long placement

3. Apply for the Nottingham Consultancy Challenge

4. Undertake an internship abroad

5. Apply for Postgraduate Placements Nottingham

6. Ask about work shadowing

7. Go on an insight day

8. Talk to the Students’ Union’s Volunteering Team

9. Get a part-time job with Unitemps

10. Apply to the Nottingham Internship Scheme

Your next steps
Explore these opportunities and more on our work experience pages.
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/workexperience
“If you’re thinking about getting some work experience, my advice is to do it! You’ll learn a lot, it will look amazing on your CV and it may even help you find your dream job.

During my final year, I decided to take part in the Digital Marketing Academy, an initiative run by the Careers and Employability Service to help students find out about careers in digital marketing, complete industry-recognised training and secure an insight day with a local company. It was incredible to find a career path that my English degree had perfectly prepared me for. I found that I already had the analytic and writing skills needed to create successful digital marketing campaigns. By taking part in the Academy, I also learned about web marketing techniques, including how results are measured using Google Analytics and how to optimise website design.

The experience showed me how innovative and exciting a career in digital can be. You might be creating a new campaign with the potential to be seen by millions across the world; or giving a local business a publicity boost they never thought possible. Thanks to this, I’ve been able to decide that this is the career for me, launch my own website, bethscleft.com, and secure my dream internship after uni – working in communications and marketing for the children’s charity, Smile Train.”

Beth Angella
BA English

Nottingham Internship Scheme
Amplify your potential

Gain hands-on experience working for local and national businesses

Find out more
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/uoninternships
Do you aspire to be a global graduate? Do you want to enhance your employability while travelling the world? Do you dream of having an international career? If yes, then studying or working abroad during your degree can help you on your way.

Studying or working abroad can make you more employable and give you a competitive advantage when entering the globalised workplace. You will develop increased confidence as you settle into a new culture and make friends, while facing the challenges of studying within a new academic setting and potentially in another language.

Read on for five ways that past students have boosted their employability while abroad.

### Connect with new cultures

“I applied to McGill University in Montreal, Canada, because I was fascinated by its bilingual nature and vibrant student life. I lived in a house with 30 exchange students, each from a different city. It was an intense situation with people from varied cultural backgrounds, meaning we were often unique in our behaviour and way of living. I embraced this variety. For example, we organised ‘potlucks’ where everyone would cook a dish from their native country to share and eat together.

At Christmas, we each chose a tradition we missed from home to create our own holiday, merging cultural customs. I loved mixing with people from all cultures and I do believe this aspect made my semester abroad so much more valuable. It was an unforgettable experience.”

Pia Shafer
BA Culture, Film and Media
Plan your time like a pro

“At university I initially left my planning and organisation to the last minute. Whether it was coursework or revision, I was always still doing it the day it was due. I was still completing tasks, but I often felt unprepared and hurried.

My application for Study Abroad was the first step in altering this pattern. I completed my personal statement early for my personal tutor to read and applying for visas required laborious proof-reading or I would risk delaying my application. While away, the prospect of travelling on the weekend was one of my biggest motivators for completing an assignment early, and they were better quality when I didn’t feel rushed. I started to procrastinate less and set realistic daily goals.

These improved skills benefitted me greatly in my final year, when I managed to balance studies, volunteering, and part-time work – and I graduated with a First!”

Sythey Russell
BSc Psychology

Communicate with confidence

“I decided on Adelaide, Australia for my exchange. At first I thought this would be easy, given that both Australia and the UK share English as their official language. However, being a northern girl from the UK, it was surprising how many people struggled to understand me! I have been asked whether I’m Scottish or Irish because my accent is not stereotypically English.

To improve my communication skills, here’s what I did. I learned a lot about Australian slang and culture through my job and at university, which taught me that these Aussies are usually up for a laugh and like to make light of all situations. So, one tactic I used was purposely trying to pronounce my words in the Queen’s English. However, I couldn’t keep this up for very long, but it broke the ice between me and new people I met!”

Amber Haley
BSc Psychology

Build your resilience

“I chose to go to ITESM in Mexico City in my third year because of the exciting culture and history Mexico offers – and because I wanted to boost my Spanish. Although it was challenging to adapt initially, the university community was really welcoming and made it easier to settle into living in a new city.

Initially, day-to-day tasks, such as figuring out which bus to take was daunting, but by the end of the year it was a lot easier to ‘just go for it’. I had to give presentations in Spanish, which was difficult at first – under pressure I would always mix up English and Spanish. Gaining confidence took help from new friends, both international and native. Study Abroad will make you a more confident, creative and independent person as you work in an unfamiliar environment and with people from a different culture.”

Lawrence Cate
BSc Computer Science

Did you know?
The Nottingham Advantage Award runs two modules for Study Abroad participants to help you reflect on your time away. Unsure how to sell your new skills on your CV? This is a must.

Use your initiative

“During my time at Strasbourg University I decided to make the most of it by taking as many opportunities to develop my language skills as possible.

As well as enhancing my time abroad, I have been able to use this experience in applications and interviews as an example of how I take the initiative by seeking out opportunities that will challenge me to learn and develop my skill set.”

Lorna Airey
BA French Studies

Your next steps
Find out more about Study Abroad: nottingham.ac.uk/studyabroad
Gaining the skills employers want has been made simple with the Nottingham Advantage Award. The scheme fits around your course, can connect you with employers, and is a great opportunity to meet new friends.

Your Advantage, your choice

The Award recognises and rewards your extracurricular activities, and with more than 200 modules to choose from, you are sure to find something that suits your interests. To name just a few opportunities, you could develop leadership skills, learn a language, practise mentoring or volunteer in the local community. It’s also accredited by the University, which means your achievements will be printed on your transcript.

To achieve the full Award, you need to complete 30 credits, and to do this you are expected to lead in your policy area, drive forward, and brings others with you too. It makes sense to be prepared and comfortable with taking responsibility for your own future, and this is a habit worth developing.

The Award empowers you to take responsibility from the outset.

Responsibility

Chances are, your life so far has been guided by a structured ‘programme’ of education. One thing you will learn quickly when you graduate is that you are free to make your own choices. The flip side to this autonomy is you cannot rely on others to make those choices for you. This is what ‘position of responsibility’ means on job adverts! In my current role, I am expected to lead in my policy area, drive it forward, and bring others with me too. It makes sense to be prepared and comfortable with taking responsibility for your own future, and this is a habit worth developing.

The Award empowers you to take responsibility from the outset.

Reflection

You can’t take responsibility effectively without reflecting on your experience. It’s about examining your actions and circumstances to inform your decision-making and boost your confidence in those decisions. Reflection helps me in my career daily: I need to evaluate policy and interpret other’s actions. I also need to consider what I like and what I’m good at to plan my career properly.

Reflection is built into every Award module, helping you to reflect by finding ways to get constructive feedback.

Growth

Yes, it’s good to take responsibility and to reflect, but what for? The growth mindset provides the purpose. It means recognising that we must keep learning to thrive, embracing the idea that you can be better tomorrow than you are today. Curiosity and the genuine desire to learn and improve is in short supply, and employers can easily tell the difference between someone who naturally exhibits the growth mindset and someone who pays it lip service.

The Award offers the opportunity to demonstrate to employers that you took responsibility for your own development early on; reflected on your strengths, weaknesses and interests; and stayed the course to complete the Award.

If you’re able to develop these three mindsets, then you are well prepared to take on the exciting opportunities and challenges ahead of you.”

Leon Man
MSci International Relations and Global Issues

“I made two decisions at Nottingham that made me more attractive to employers: studying abroad and taking the Nottingham Advantage Award. You see and hear that the Award is great for your CV, adds to your transcript, and offers new skills and exciting experiences. But there’s more. I believe the true value lies in helping you to cultivate three mindsets – responsibility, reflection, and growth. And these mentalities will ‘future-proof’ you as a person and serve you for years to come.”

Why should you #gettheAdvantage?

Matt Bird @MarkAB20

#gettheAdvantage @AdvantageAward
The NAA is a great way to gain employability skills that your course might not otherwise teach

Sophie Jacobson @SophieJacobson
I choose to #gettheAdvantage through the UoN @AdvantageAward to help me learn how to connect with employers

Laura Jones @laurajones1997
The @AdvantageAward has helped me improve my interview skills and job applications, securing me my dream grad job! #gettheAdvantage

Adam Street @AdvantageNet
My @AdvantageAward has enabled me to gain confidence, leadership and communication skills – you can #gettheadvantage it’s #amazing!

Martina di Costanzo @Martinaa_95
The @AdvantageAward to help me secure internships with global firms PaperMate and Rolls-Royce. Invest in yourself!

Lee Hong Teo @washangles
@AdvantageAward makes me more competitive in getting a job globally. Come, meet more people! #globalmind #globalgraduate #gettheadvantage

Adnaan Shakur @gettheAdvantage
@AdvantageAward Not only did I travel to Malaysia summer school, I made my best friend through this Award #gettheAdvantage

Adnaan Shakur
@ gettheAdvantage

Did you know?

If you already taking part in extracurricular activities, it could count towards your Award. Talk to one of our team about how.

Your next steps

View the full range of modules online and find out how to apply: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/advantage
Your Students’ Union (SU) is here throughout your degree and beyond, with opportunities to discover your passion, excel at it, and make your CV outstanding.

Whether you’re part of the 200+ societies, 70+ sports clubs and annual Varsity event, or trying your hand at volunteering with one of the many local and national opportunities on offer, your SU has something for you.

Getting started
Start your future with the SU

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Societies
“Taking on the role of Handball President has allowed me to maintain and develop a whole host of transferable skills that I can take into the world beyond university.

Working alongside the club development coordinators has taught me how to find sustainable targets and work towards them in a positive and realistic fashion.

The role has also allowed me to develop my team management and financial management skills, helping to keep my committee organised and communicating well so that various needs are met on time.

The skills I’ve gained while in charge at the club – alongside the time management and creative-thinking skills that my chemistry degree has provided – will allow me to enter whichever field of work I wish to.”

Charlie Swan
Handball president

Societies
“Engaging with the SU has given me many skills, from public speaking to project management.

But above all it’s given me so much confidence in myself and has enabled me to achieve things and run large projects that I would never have thought possible.

It’s also helped me to become much better at organising my time, as well as giving me the opportunity to work with a wide and diverse range of people.

After I graduate I hope to become a clinical scientist in the NHS, and I’ll use these skills on a day-to-day basis.”

Rosy Crawford
First aid society president

Getting involved in your SU can help you:
- work as part of a team
- develop your leadership skills
- organise events of all shapes and sizes
- manage budgets and test your financial skills
- make a positive impact on people and their communities
- discover your hidden talents

Your next steps
Find out more about the SU:
- su.nottingham.ac.uk
- UoNSU
- @UoNSU

Looking for a society? Try the Activity Matchmaker: uon-su-activities.co.uk

Ambassador
“The work I’ve done as a brand and insight ambassador within the SU has been incredibly varied, and it has given me a multitude of examples to draw on for job applications and in interviews.

I’ve learned to write informative reports, analyse data using computational software and run committee training sessions. Working alongside my studies has also massively improved how I manage my time and prioritise tasks.

Next year I’m going on to do an MSc and I’ll be able to transfer the computational and report writing skills I’ve gained being a brand and insight ambassador to my studies and research project.”

Fern Hughes
Brand and insight ambassador

Officer
“Being a Students’ Union officer is the most exciting opportunity I have ever had the pleasure of being involved in.

Being an officer at UoNSU has genuinely been life changing. I’ve learned so much about myself, overcome some difficult challenges, and made some lifelong friends.

It’s great to be able to fight for and represent students to the rest of the University, as well as lobby for change. It really reminds me of how much Nottingham has to offer. I’ve seen so many new groups become affiliated, improvements made and hardships overcome. I can wholeheartedly say being a part of the SU has had an amazing, positive impact on my life and my future.”

Martin Nguyen
Activities officer
Connect to a world of expertise

Career Mentoring offers you the opportunity to be mentored by a member of our alumni community for six months. Mentors can share their experiences of life after university, provide professional and personal insights, as well as practical employability advice.

Our career mentors can help you feel confident and prepared to embark on graduate life.

Getting involved

Jemima, mentee

“My mentor is Sam Higginson, graduate food technologist at Marks and Spencer, who studied nutrition and food science at Nottingham, graduating in 2016.

He has been supportive of my career goals, helping with my CV and giving me advice about placements.

Sam also offered advice on module choices in terms of what employers would find relevant or interesting – helping me tailor my studies to my career aspirations. He even supported me to identify companies that I could approach for work experience. I didn’t know how many different career paths there are, and there are many jobs that I had not even realised existed.

Sam was able to introduce me to these and this has given me a much better understanding of what my future may hold.”

Jemima Willgoss
BSc Food Science

Sam, mentor

“After graduating in 2016, I secured a place on the Marks and Spencer Food Technology Graduate Scheme. So far, I have worked in the groceries and deli departments and I’m loving it.

I became a career mentor to help guide students when looking at their career opportunities as I know how daunting all the different options can be.

Working with Jemima has been great; we’ve spent time talking about different career options within the food industry. I also arranged for Jemima to have a week’s work experience, spending time at Marks and Spencer head office, as well as a few days with one of our suppliers, seeing where our products get made.

I’ve enjoyed helping Jemima during her first year and hope to continue to support her at university.”

Sam Higginson
BSc Nutrition and Food Science

Your next steps
Find out more about the benefits and how to apply: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/mentoring
Whether you are passionate about your subject and want to delve deeper or have a career in mind where a higher level qualification is desired or required, you’ll need the lowdown on postgraduate study.

Your career ambitions
For some career areas, further study is a minimum requirement for entry into a profession, such as a teaching and law. A PhD is now essential if you want to pursue an academic career.

In other career areas, such as journalism, and marketing, a masters – although not essential – can be advantageous. The same is true if you’re looking to become a patent attorney: a PhD is not a requirement but it is desirable.

Developing your expertise
You may be motivated to continue your studies because you have a passion for your subject or want to specialise in a particular area.

Depending on your longer-term career direction, a higher level qualification may be attractive to a future employer – for example, within the scientific or industry fields. A postgraduate diploma in brewing will lead to opportunities within the food and drink industry and a life science PhD will be attractive to employers in the pharmaceutical sector.

Potential financial rewards
Postgraduate study can be an investment in your future. For example:

- The median salary of Nottingham students graduating with a PhD is £30,680, with a maximum salary of £100,000.*
- The average salary for PhD graduates is 36% higher than for first-degree graduates.
- The median salary among those graduating from taught masters courses is £23,000, with a maximum starting salary of £100,000.*

* Known destinations of all full-time UK degree graduates in 2016/17

“Studying in the UK is very different; I’ve been exposed to real-world situations, problem-based learning with practical applications.

During my course, I wanted to build my network of contacts. I enjoyed meeting renowned alumni, which has made me more aware of my options. I also volunteered as a model for a multicultural fashion show organised by student societies, which has made me more aware of my options.

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With the flexibility within my courses, I have worked part-time to generate extra income. I’m not sure what I’m going to do, but I may continue with my studies. I’ve been in contact with the Careers team, so I will talk to them again about my next step.”

Samuel Yemofio
MSc Biotechnology

Your next steps
Check out our website for information about applying for a masters or PhD and funding options: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/furtherstudy

Fact file
PhD

Finding a PhD
- Use websites such as FindAPhD.com
- Check your department’s noticeboard
- Search university job websites

Applying for a PhD
- There is no central admissions system
- Before making an application, talk to a supervisor who has experience in the research area that interests you to discuss opportunities
- Complete an application form including an outline of your research proposal – you are likely to be called for an interview and any offer will be subject to securing funding

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Applying for a course
- For most courses, no central admissions process. Applications close when the places are filled.
- For popular courses, apply before December but for other courses, applications close when the places are filled.
- Courses with central admissions systems include graduate entry into medicine, law and teaching. There will be a specific deadline for applications.

Fact file
Postgraduate taught courses

Finding a course
- Use websites such as FindAMasters.com
- Browse university online prospectuses

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Funding a PhD
- The main UK source is the Government through research councils, charities and industry
- There may be specific awards for international students via research councils
- Departmental funding may be available
- Apply for up to £25,000 Postgraduate Doctoral Loans
- Charities – use the Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding on our website

Funding a course
- £10,000 loans now available
- Professional training bursaries
- Employer-funded scholarships and grants from universities or charities
- Professional and Career Development Loans
- Charities – use the Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding on our website

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Fact file
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Finding a PhD
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- Check your department’s noticeboard
- Search university job websites

Applying for a PhD
- There is no central admissions system
- Before making an application, talk to a supervisor who has experience in the research area that interests you to discuss opportunities
- Complete an application form including an outline of your research proposal – you are likely to be called for an interview and any offer will be subject to securing funding

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- For most courses, no central admissions process. Applications close when the places are filled.
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- Courses with central admissions systems include graduate entry into medicine, law and teaching. There will be a specific deadline for applications.

Funding a PhD
- The main UK source is the Government through research councils, charities and industry
- There may be specific awards for international students via research councils
- Departmental funding may be available
- Apply for up to £25,000 Postgraduate Doctoral Loans
- Charities – use the Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding on our website

Funding a course
- £10,000 loans now available
- Professional training bursaries
- Employer-funded scholarships and grants from universities or charities
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Fact file
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**What exactly is a graduate job?**

You hear it a lot. But what does the phrase a ‘graduate job’ actually mean? A graduate job can be defined in several ways but here are just two: it can be a job for which a degree is the minimum entry requirement or a job that a graduate does.

“It’s easy to put off thinking about your career in your first and second year. But be sure to make the most of the Careers team early and get as much experience as you can, as their help was invaluable in getting me to where I am today.

Almost immediately after finishing my exams, I started looking for jobs. As well as looking online, I also went to an old school and looked in the Nottingham Post, where I found an ad for a research and marketing intern at a digital marketing agency in Beeston. I got the role. Although the internship was only supposed to last three months, I interned for six, before being offered a full-time role. Initially I worked on marketing the agency itself, assisting with PR campaigns, social media and telemarketing, but over time my role evolved into becoming an account executive on the website design and development part of the company. Now I am an account manager in a design agency. Agency life is brilliant as it means working on a variety of projects across different sectors.”

* Catherine Appleby

BA English

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**Fact file**

**The direct entry route**

What is direct entry?
- Often single vacancies with immediate start dates

Who offers them?
- Companies of any size and sector
- Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) recruit significant numbers of graduates. These firms make up 99% of all UK private-sector businesses
- In some sectors SMEs dominate and do direct entry is the route in. For example, within public relations, digital marketing and the environmental sector

When and how to apply?
- Apply after the spring vacation so you could start after your exams
- The recruitment process is likely to involve a CV or application form and an interview

Where to find vacancies?
- Industry body’s job boards, for example Institute of Practitioners in Advertising: ipa.co.uk
- National and specialist press such as the New Scientist: jobs.newscientist.com
- Recruitment agencies such as Gradcracker: gradcracker.com
- LinkedIn, the online professional network: linkedin.com
- Book an appointment with a careers adviser to explore specialist vacancy sources: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/appointments

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**Fact file**

**Graduate training schemes**

What are they?
- A structured period of training lasting between one and three years
- There are general management schemes where you move around the business and then specialise
- There are functional schemes where you specialise from day one, for example HR, IT and supply chain management

Who offers them?
- Companies across a range of sectors including the public sector, accountancy, engineering, IT and telecommunications, retail and pharmaceuticals

When and how to apply?
- Half of the UK’s leading employers now recruit graduates all year round
- For employers with a single deadline, most are either November, December or January
- The recruitment process is likely to include an application form, psychometric tests, interviews and an assessment centre

Where to find vacancies?
- Attend our recruitment fairs and talk to recruiters directly: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/events
- My Career, our vacancy job board: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/login
- Graduate directories such as The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers (available free from our offices)
- Use the vacancy sources listed under the direct entry route

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“I have been incredibly challenged and pushed beyond what I thought I was capable of; which, while daunting at times, has been fantastic for developing my skills.

I’m nine months into the two-year NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme as a general management trainee. I am coming towards the end of my first placement as service manager for several areas relating to hospital discharge at an acute hospital.

I will do two more placements; the first with a non-NHS organisation to learn something different to bring back to the NHS; and the second with a clinical commissioning group. I am also studying for a postgraduate diploma in healthcare leadership at the University of Birmingham. At the end of the scheme, I will be able to apply for permanent NHS roles nationwide. I can already feel a noticeable difference in my confidence and capabilities and I am really looking forward to everything else I will learn and get involved in during the rest of the scheme.”

* Freya Parker
BSc Natural Sciences

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**Fact file**

**Getting involved**

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- Industry body’s job boards, for example Institute of Practitioners in Advertising: ipa.co.uk
- Recruitment agencies such as Gradcracker: gradcracker.com
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For more information, visit our website at nottingham.ac.uk/careers/graduatejobs
Six inspiring ways ... to spend time out

Taking time out can offer great personal and professional opportunities. You might take anything from a couple of months to over year – how long isn’t important, it’s how you spend it.

The developer
An internship could be the career stepping stone you’ve been looking for. Competitive industries like the media often view these short gigs as a rite of passage. Equally, if you keep hearing “great application, but not enough experience,” figure out what experience employers want. Whether it’s developing soft skills or learning something technical, this is a great way to focus your time.

Try thinking differently. You could cultivate project management ability by planning a trip to Everest Base Camp or develop coding ability with a free Codecademy course.

Decide what you want to accomplish.
If you’ve just read Eat, Pray, Love and decided that you too need to “find yourself,” this isn’t the article for you. These are practical ideas to help you make time away work for you, and for your career. You could shape up your skills, try on different professional hats, make the world a better place – and if you plan your time well, you might leap right into your future career.

The linguist
What better way to learn a language than to immerse yourself among native speakers? Travel is one of the most common reasons to take time out – for lots of obvious reasons – just don’t treat it as an extended holiday. Plan your time carefully. If you want to learn a language, why not teach yours while you’re out there too? Teaching English as a Foreign Language is a great way to get to know the locals, contribute to the community, and earn money.

The impact-maker
Volunteering is a great way to give back and gain skills. There are lots of organisations that need your support and commitment, so take some time to think about what cause is close to your heart. Volunteering can be as challenging as it is rewarding, so think about what motivates you. Maybe you want to support your local community? Are you hoping to work in the charity sector? Has a news appeal for help piqued your interest?

The pick-and-mixer
If your response to each suggestion has been yes, yes, and yes, the good news is that you don’t have to just pick one. In fact, by taking a pick and mix approach, you might get more out of your time out than by restricting yourself to just one thing. Think beyond what you want to do. What do you want to achieve? By setting some objectives it could help you decide which ideas to progress with, and what combination.

The adventurer
If you’ve been bitten by the travel bug, backpacking is an exhilarating way to explore the world. You’ll get to put your planning and budgeting skills to work: Consider where you want to go and what you want to learn – think less aimless roamer, more intrepid explorer. Take time to immerse yourself in the local lifestyle and consider picking up some part-time work along the way. If a round-the-world trip isn’t the ticket for you, consider a seasonal job – summer and winter resorts are a way to get experience in a more structured environment.

Plan made and ready to go?
Keep a time-out travelogue – record your experiences, the skills you’ve developed, and the lessons you’ve learned. This will help you reflect later, ensuring you can talk about it effectively with employers when the time comes.

The taster
If you’re not sure what you want to do, work experience is a great way to investigate some options. Dip your toe in the office water cooler and find out if it quenches your thirst. If it doesn’t, at least you’ve ruled something out. Set up a series of short-term internships, try out different sectors, and decide what interests you.

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Do you have an idea for a product or service that could change an industry, society, or the world? Maybe you’ve got an excellent business idea that you’d love to try out. Maybe you want your job to be your passion. If so, the Ingenuity Lab is where you need to be.

The Ingenuity Lab is part of the University of Nottingham and is based in the amazing Ingenuity Centre on Jubilee Campus. Its mission is to create an environment where Nottingham students and graduates can explore ideas and start their own, commercially-viable enterprises.

So, you want to be your own boss?

Join the Ingenuity Lab

We want Venture Members to join our growing network of UoN students, researchers and graduates with ideas for amazing businesses. Membership is free and gives you access to workspace, mentoring, workshops and opportunities that can help make entrepreneurship a viable career choice.

Food at your fingertips

Halalivery is an on-demand delivery application that connects users with halal restaurants, butchers and grocery stores. It was born out of Rawan’s own difficulties finding halal food when she first moved to Nottingham.

“I’ve always wanted to start my own company, and after the internship and experience working with other Lab members, I knew a 9-5 job was not for me. The Ingenuity Lab has such an amazing network, and after clicking with my now co-founders of Halalivery, Amur Anzorov and Tawfiq Abu-Khajil, it seemed a natural progression to launch our own business. The support on offer means that we’re not in it alone, and can always seek help when we have no idea what we need to do next!”

In May 2018, Halalivery won an Ideas Mean Business award from Innovate UK and the Prince’s Trust, which will help accelerate its launch to market.

Rawan Abu Ishira
MSc Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Management
halalivery.co.uk

Real-time engagement

Shrenik joined the Ingenuity Lab in April 2017, founding Proodle, which has created a student-facing app, to enable real-time engagement between universities and prospective international students. It is being trialled by some notable UK universities.

“Starting Walkin was the best decision we ever made. We learned a huge amount from the Ingenuity Lab: from how to create value for customers to learning coding languages, and so much more in a short period of time. Winning Ingenuity18 has meant we’re getting incredible guidance from BDO, Shakespeare Martineau LLP and Potter Clarkson LLP, as well as cash, which is really helping us reach our ambition of getting rid of restaurant queues for good!”

Amos Teshuva
BSc Economics
amos@walkinapp.co.uk

Your next steps

Find out more:
nottingham.ac.uk/ingenuitylab
Get more information about self-employment:
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/selfemployment

200 active businesses operating from the Ingenuity Lab
Getting involved

Six reasons to connect with employers to boost your career

If you’ve started to consider what you will do after your studies, talking to employers and alumni can really help to crystallise your thoughts. Throughout your time at Nottingham, you will have the chance to meet a wide range of professionals through our events and activities.

1. Discover job vacancies
Chat to recruiters about graduate and internship vacancies at our careers fairs and employer presentations. More than 500 employers visit our campuses at least once a year.
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/recruitmentfairs

2. Hear insights into jobs and sectors
If you want to discover the realities of jobs and sectors that interest you, book a place on our Spotlight On events. We invite professionals from a wide range of careers onto campus to talk to you about their role and career journey.
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/spotlighton

3. Get answers to your questions
If you want to find out about a particular role, who better to ask than someone already doing it? Our Career Mentoring scheme allows you to do just that, by introducing you to a member of our alumni community who can share their insight.
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/mentoring

4. Experience real-work situations
There’s nothing like getting an insight into the world of work and you can do this with the Nottingham Advantage Award. For example, Boots has been involved in the PR, branding and marketing module on which students pitch their ideas for new products to Boots’ buying team.
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/advantageaward

5. Demonstrate the skills employers ask for
Consider the scenario: in an interview, you’re asked about a time when you have demonstrated project management, team working, and problem-solving skills. If you’ve taken part in the Nottingham Consultancy Challenge, you’ll be able to answer with confidence.
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/challenge

6. Gain experience in a variety of positions
Is your CV looking a little bare in the work experience section? Registering with Unitemps, our recruitment service, could help you fill the gap. Unitemps offers part-time work opportunities in local businesses – big and small – as well as on campus.
unitemps.com

“I first met Arup at a lunchtime company presentation during my first semester way back in 2014. Little did I know then that I’d be graduating four years later with a job lined up at their Nottingham office.

As a fresher, I had eagerly noted down what they were looking for but surrounded by more knowledgeable third and fourth year students, I was hesitant to ask questions. By second year I was keen to secure myself a summer placement, so I attended the Engineering Internships Fair in October to visit the Arup stand and enquire about their upcoming opportunities.

The following month, I was notified of an available structural engineering placement at Arup in Nottingham. My ideal opportunity!

I visited the Arup stand again at the Civil Engineering Fair to find out more about the application process, then submitted my application. The following April, I was invited for an interview at the Nottingham office and was successful! I spent five weeks there between my second and third year, then an additional six weeks between my third and fourth year of study. My placement finished just as graduate applications were opening, so I could chat with my colleagues about how to best approach applying, and how to get a good referral.

By my final year I was certain that I wanted to apply for a graduate job with Arup. I enjoyed the workplace environment and range of projects that I had worked on, so I quickly put together an application and sent it off before my workload got too heavy.

I kept in touch with my network of contacts throughout my final year and engaged with the recruiters at events, such as a networking breakfast on campus, and the TargetJobs Future Female Engineers Event at Arup’s HQ in London. Soon after, I was invited to an assessment centre and was subsequently offered the job. I’m now looking forward to starting my new journey knowing all the hard work and networking was worthwhile.

Grace Pownall
MEng Civil Engineering

If you’ve started to consider what you will do after your studies, talking to employers and alumni can really help to crystallise your thoughts. Throughout your time at Nottingham, you will have the chance to meet a wide range of professionals through our events and activities.
Thinking about working beyond the UK? Carving out your graduate career path overseas is an adventurous option, providing the chance to earn money while exploring new cultures and places. Whether you’re a UK student considering a career abroad, or an international student returning home or seeking a role in a different country, we’ll help you turn your jet-setting ideas into a reality.

Where in the world will your degree take you?

Getting involved
Explore your options
First thing’s first: do you know where you want to go and what you want to do? Deciding which is more important may be key. If your sights are set on a particular country, you’ll need to adapt to the local job market. Equally, if you want to do a certain role or work for a specific company, find out where the opportunities are.

“I always had the idea that I might like to work abroad, and didn’t want to settle down in the UK before giving it a go. After graduating, it was a ‘now or never’ situation! I had visited Australia before and loved it, plus there was the pull of the beaches and sunshine. Working in a mixed rural practice has also allowed me to use the skills I gained during my degree and become a better vet. I have loved living in a place which is totally different to where I grew up, becoming part of a community off the tourist track and spending weekends camping and horse-riding through the Bush. I’ve had experiences that I would never have had in the UK, both personally and professionally.”

Elizabeth Cresswell, Veterinary Surgeon, Kyabram Veterinary Clinic in Australia, PGCert Veterinary Medicine and Surgery

Become a global graduate
There’s lots you can do at Nottingham to prepare to impress global employers. Getting involved in extracurricular activities will help you grow in confidence and independence, and develop essential skills like adaptability, initiative, and cross-cultural communication.

“I took part in ‘Students in Classrooms’, travelled to Thailand with a University British Council scheme and was a student ambassador. These opportunities were a big part of what made my time at University so amazing.

I was also very attentive to emails from the Careers team, which is how I found my current teaching post. By being open to opportunities provided while studying, I have had an amazing experience that I am sure will only make my CV more attractive to future employers.”

Vanessa Wilson, English Teacher, China University of Mining and Technology, MA Translation Studies

Finding opportunities
There’s no way to gloss over it: finding vacancies in a different country takes effort. Online research is essential, but using or creating networks in your target country can also be a fast-track to opportunities. Consider your skills, experience and selling points, and how they might match opportunities in your target location.

“My first role in France came through my network; I’d kept in touch with my former head of sixth form who was looking for English speakers for teaching roles in Chartres. Making the move to Paris, I concentrated on what I could offer compared to locals – namely my native English skills – and started tutoring within a week of arriving. I found my current role on the website welcometothejungle.co, which is great for opportunities with start-ups in France.

Although my French language skills are essential in day-to-day life, I’m actually doing a job where I don’t need to speak a word of French – writing online content in English for a car-pooling app.”

Mike Winnington, Content Specialist, Paris, BA Modern European Studies

How Passport Career can help
We’ve subscribed to Passport Career, an online global job seeking resource, so that you can access it free of charge. It can help with everything from exploring your options, researching employers, and finding opportunities, to relocating and navigating a new culture.

■ Monthly webinars on a range of international job seeking topics
■ Over one million vacancies in 200 countries, updated daily
■ 80 country profiles including advice on where to find vacancies, top employers, shortage skills, recruitment practices and business etiquette
■ Relocation advice to help ease your transition to a different country, from visa information to cultural norms

Your next steps
Passport Career and other exclusive resources can be found on our continent-specific webpages along with links to job sites, agencies and company listings.

nottingham.ac.uk/careers/workingabroad
Getting employers
to take notice
of your CV

Master your copy
Keeping your CV up-to-date is a task ‘Future-you’ will thank you for. Whether it’s a short assignment through Unitemps or a summer internship, write up your achievements while they are fresh. Use this document as your master copy CV, which you can expand on or retract from depending on what you are applying for.

Focus on your audience
Your CV isn’t for you, it’s for a potential employer. How you highlight your experience is crucial. Take a volunteering project for example, to one employer ‘working with people from different backgrounds’ might be crucial to their vacancy for a graduate management consultant; whereas to another seeking a social media co-ordinator, it’s your ‘experience managing a project’ that will catch their eye. Focus and expand on the experience you think will speak to each individual recruiter.

Make an impact
Consider how you might approach an essay or assignment. If you are purely descriptive, you are not going to bag the big marks, and the same goes for your CV. Avoid listing duties and responsibilities. Concentrate on highlighting the process and results of your actions. What did you bring to the role that someone else might not have?

Profile
What are employers looking for?
A short statement of motivation which establishes a connection between you, the role and the organisation. If you keep writing clichés, leave it out.
- Is it under 100 words?
- Is it relevant to the job, the company and the industry?
- Have you highlighted relevant values?

Example
A final-year modern languages student, keen to pursue a career in French-speaking human resources. My experience as a HI-UP intern in Paris confirmed my interest in and proficiency with the industry, while developing key skills such as written and verbal communication (French and English), time management and attention to detail.

Work experience
What are employers looking for?
The skills and experience that make you a great choice for their job opportunity.
- Have you used active verbs?
- Does every point count?
- Have you evidenced your skills?
- Have you showcased impact? Did your actions deliver results?
- Have you included factual details to highlight outcomes or positive verbal feedback – maybe a testimonial from a customer?

Example
Collated data on fluid flow and bank erosion on the River Don to investigate a hypothesised change in seasonal streamflow. Demonstrated strong project management skills and techniques including Gantt charts to ensure work on the project was carried out to agreed timescales. Produced reports which were used by my manager to present to the project task groups.

Interests
What are employers looking for?
To highlight any interests that relate to the job or hobbies that might offer talking points during an interview.
- Is it succinct?
- Can you make your answer relevant to the opportunity?
- Is it truthful? (You may be asked about it!)

Example
I have a keen interest in theatre, and in my final year co-ordinated promotion and marketing for the University’s student-run theatre for a production of Othello, which led to a four-night sell-out run.
How to write the perfect covering letter

While your CV lists your achievements, skills and interests, your covering letter provides the opportunity to bring them to life and show how they fit the role you’re applying to. If you’re feeling daunted by the blank page, read our tips on what to cover.

1. Get off to the right start
When addressing your letter, use a named contact if you have one – but don’t go too familiar with just a first name. If you’re writing speculatively, research the most suitable person to contact in the organisation. If you can’t find a name, stick to ‘Dear Sir or Madam’.

2. Make your opening pitch
Include the job title or position you’re seeking (if you’re writing a speculative application) and where you found the opportunity. Briefly outline your credentials, and motivations for applying for the role. Make it powerful, punchy and concise. You can expand in more detail in following paragraphs.

3. Demonstrate that you understand the role
Explain how you meet (or exceed) the job criteria, and show that you possess relevant experience and skills based on past experience. Give concrete examples, which echo key words in the job description – the employer will be scanning for these.

4. Bring your CV to life
Refer to your CV or other application documents to provide back-up evidence. You don’t need to say it all, or duplicate your CV, in your covering letter. Your covering letter should animate key points of your experience that are relevant to the job description.

5. State what the employer can offer you
If the organisation’s culture and development opportunities attract you, then say so. This is also your opportunity to demonstrate that you have researched their activities and possess true motivation for the role. Be specific, and link their mission to your own interests.

6. Close on a positive
Make your closing line constructive, not rambling. If you used a named contact, end with ‘Yours sincerely’, otherwise use ‘Yours faithfully’.

Covering letter checklist:
✓ Be word perfect – a covering letter showcases your writing style and attention to detail, so don’t fall down on spelling or grammar
✓ Keep it short and concise; make your case in three to four paragraphs; and don’t go over a side of A4
✓ Show that you understand the company and role, and make a direct, persuasive case that you fit this
✓ Link your narrative to evidence provided in your CV and any other application documents

Your next steps
For more covering letter tips, head to: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/coveringletters

Example of a great covering letter
This gives you an idea of what to include in your covering letter, but don’t follow this word for word! Your covering letter has to reflect your skills and how they relate to the job or role you are applying for – so that means a tailored covering letter for every job you apply for.

Dear Ms Stanley
I am writing in response to the role of Human Resources Officer at Freedom Now, as advertised on your website.

I am a final-year history student committed to building a graduate career in the third sector, with working experience of human resources in a charity. Additionally, for the past year I have been a training officer for Night Owls, a student volunteering society for student safety and wellbeing on nights out.

This role would build on my previous experience as a HR administrator at Barnardo’s, where I quickly learned new processes and procedures including adapting to a recently implemented payroll system. My verbal and written communication skills are excellent, from interpreting data for impact reports for the Board of Trustees to training student volunteers. I am confident in addressing large groups of people, for example when delivering safety awareness talks in lecture theatres during my University’s Welcome Week. Equally, I adapt my communication style to suit individuals, which has been important in my peer-to-peer mentoring for incoming society reps.

As you will see from my CV, I work well within a team both in a professional setting and as a member of my university’s medley swimming team. Equally my degree course also demands the ability to work on my own initiative and complete complex tasks independently, such as researching and writing a 10,000-word dissertation to a non-negotiable deadline.

I understand that Freedom Now is committed to the safety of women in Nottinghamshire, which aligns with my experience around student welfare in the city. I am particularly interested in your current project to promote the safety of women refugees in the area. This opportunity to work at a diverse and progressive charity will build on the experience and skills I have already gained with a national charity and through volunteering.

I hope to be able to demonstrate my suitability for this position further at interview.

Yours sincerely
Jasmine Langley
Succeed at social media in five easy steps...

You’ve probably had a Facebook page for years, sharing photos on Instagram is second nature, and Snapchat is part of your daily routine. But have you spent any time thinking about how these platforms could help you get ahead with your career or, in fact, leave you trailing behind?

Businesses have been busy building a social media presence for quite some time and employers are certainly looking at what potential employees are doing online. This means you need to do two important things: brush up your public presence and protect your privacy.

1. Perform a social media audit
Log out of all your social media accounts and then Google yourself. Use quotation marks to get more relevant search results and if you have a popular name add your location or date of birth. For example: “Joe Thompson” Nottingham. Identify which profiles are yours in the search results. What you see is what potential employers will see.

2. Protect your privacy
You don’t have to use every social media platform professionally. If you want to keep some accounts for personal use, that’s completely fine. Just protect your privacy. If Instagram is your scrap book of nights out, make your account private. Having a social life isn’t a crime, but you don’t need to expose it to potential employers. Same goes if you want to keep Facebook personal. Check your privacy settings are set to ‘Friends only’.

3. Set some clear goals
The next thing to think about is what you want to achieve from social media. Do you want to use it to get a job? Do you want employers to be able to seek you out? Do you want to build an online portfolio to display your photography? Set three goals and plan actions to achieve them.

4. Start with the professional social network
When it comes to your career, your social media presence isn’t complete without a LinkedIn profile. Very basically, it is your digital CV. Like Facebook, you can personalise your profile page, but on LinkedIn it’s all about your professional experience and achievements.

Once you have optimised your profile, you can start to make connections. Search out other students, lecturers, graduate recruiters you’ve met at careers fairs, and work colleagues. This is a great way to develop your networking skills without the pressure of face-to-face interaction.

5. How to execute your goals
You’ve set up on LinkedIn and you’ve set some goals – maybe, you’ve picked one listed below. Below are three of our most common questions, answered.

You can find more help on getting your social media up to scratch at nottingham.ac.uk/careers/onlinenetworking

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### Uni of Nottingham

@UniofNottingham

**How can I find new opportunities online?**

Answers @UniNCareers

- Use LinkedIn Job Search to find vacancies in your desired sector
- Regularly check the LinkedIn page of employers you want to work for
- Search LinkedIn to find key contacts at companies of interest
- Use the Twitter hashtag feature to search for #jobvacancies
- Use ‘advanced search’ on Twitter to combine location and sector keywords

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### Uni of Nottingham

@UniofNottingham

**How can I showcase my skills online?**

Answers @UniNCareers

- Research which social media platforms professionals in your sector of interest use
- Do you dream of becoming a writer? Set up your own blog on WordPress and get writing
- Have a passion for photography? Instagram is a great place to show off your photos
- Headed for a career in banking and finance? Get networking on LinkedIn

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### Uni of Nottingham

@UniofNottingham

**How can I research employers?**

Answers @UniNCareers

- Create a list of employers you are interested in and check them out on LinkedIn and Twitter
- Track multiple employers at the same time by using the ‘private list’ function on Twitter
- Listen to what employers are saying to get a feel for which topics are current in their business
- Get an insight into their company culture on Facebook; find snaps of who’s who in the office
Why have you applied for this role? (100 words)

Taking part in the University of Nottingham’s Consultancy Challenge ensured I developed key skills such as organisational, negotiation and time planning. Working as part of a team with a local third sector organisation, I took time to understand the challenges they faced as clients and how we could best deliver recommendations for their social media campaign.

I gained an internship through the University in a digital agency. Working with clients gave me further insight into the importance of collecting data and ensuring excellent communication throughout the project particularly around legal and contractual operations. This experience has reinforced my desire to work within this field.

As part of the intramural football team I regularly play matches and help to promote the league in collaboration with the MathSoc Society Sports Secretary. Working as part of team has been a key element in my extracurricular and work experience.

Here’s an example of a competency-based question and why it hits the mark:

Describe a time when you have demonstrated excellent presentation skills. (max 150 words)

As part of my module on cultural identity I had to research an individual project and present it to my seminar group during a student conference.

Situation – outline the issue or problem you faced

Task – explain your task

Action – explain your actions sequentially. What did you do?

Result – explain the outcome. Use examples of positive outcomes

Here’s an example of a motivational question and why it hits the mark:

Your next steps

Find more top application tips: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/application-forms

Attend our application form workshops: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/skillsworkshops

Book an appointment to review your form: nottingham.ac.uk/careers/appointments
Getting the job

What are psychometric tests?

Psychometric tests are another way for employers to assess candidates alongside the more traditional methods such as CVs, applications forms, and interviews.

In general, they can be split into four areas:

- Motivation and values: These are used to test your personal values and what motivates you. Again, these questions have no right or wrong answers, but should be answered honestly.
- Personality and interests: These tests are used to judge your personality traits and values. The questions have no right or wrong answers, but it’s important to answer honestly rather than what you think the employer wants to hear.
- Situational judgement: Used to assess your response to given workplace scenarios, these tests will look at your behaviour and competency in that situation.
- Aptitude and ability: You will usually be presented with a numerical, verbal or diagrammatical reasoning scenario. These are the most widely used types of psychometric tests and have definite right or wrong answers.

Psychometric tests might sound scary, but knowing what to expect can be half of the battle and will help you to prepare in advance. It helps to see them as an opportunity to stand out from your fellow candidates.

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*Susie Attwood, University of Nottingham, 2017

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*Price shown for full-time students only, and may vary for other groups. Membership exists on Tuesday 31 July 2017.
Surgeons have recently carried out Britain’s first operation to replace a worn-out heart valve using keyhole surgery. During the operation, a heart valve is carried on a tube, which is passed through the chest wall directly into the heart and then fitted inside the reopened old valve. The operation is less invasive and less risky for certain patients. Previously there was little doctors could do in cases where patients were too ill to undergo open-heart surgery. The breakthrough could benefit thousands of patients a year.

For the following statement answer A: true, B: false or C: cannot say.
1  Keyhole surgery is set to replace open-heart surgery.

Example C: situational judgement

You work as a finance graduate in a large bank and your role has involved you relocating every six months across various departments within your function. Your new assignment requires you to provide a presentation to both senior managers and technical staff, on your ‘risk’ assessment of some new upcoming products. You have received the guidance to conduct the assessments, and have completed this successfully, however you are not entirely confident about the level of detail you should go into during your presentation. What course of action would you take?

Assess each statement to decide which is best/worst:

1. Seek support from your line manager so that s/he may guide you appropriately.
2. Make a judgement call on what would be best and avoid seeking assistance; after all you want to make a good first impression.
3. Develop your presentation at a high level, providing executive summaries with additional handouts that can be referred to by the technically-focused staff as needed.
4. Set up a longer meeting consisting of two parts; the first part covering the high-level findings, and the latter part covering the more detailed technical findings for those who may be interested.
The rules
The good news is that you don’t need any prior gaming experience to play game-based assessment. You will be sent a link by an employer, which gives you access to the game on your mobile or desktop computer. Every game is slightly different, so it’s just a case of following that particular game’s instructions.

It is really difficult to prepare yourself for a game-based assessment as they are designed to assess your abilities in lots of different areas, so don’t overthink it and just play!

New to the game

Game-based assessment has been developed as a more fun and accessible way for employers to assess your aptitude and personality traits. Essentially, it’s an alternative to traditional psychometric tests. They assess your general mental ability, such as reasoning, problem-solving, verbal, and numerical ability. They are also trying to work out if you have key personality traits essential to the role and organisation.

Six game-based assessment tips:

1. Read the instructions carefully
2. If accessing the game via your mobile, remember to set your phone to ‘do not disturb’ to avoid getting a call at a crucial moment
3. Ensure you are in a quiet place where you can focus on playing the game
4. Make sure your device screen is not cracked
5. If you have a disability, make the recruiter aware as this can be accommodated through the system
6. Don’t try to second-guess what they are looking for; be yourself — it’s meant to be fun!
Your three-step guide to interview success

Ask anyone about attending a job interview and most people will say they dread them. It’s the unknown – what will they ask me? Online you will find hundreds of potential questions that an employer might ask. Some will be generic and others will be role-specific. It can be overwhelming. To make it easier, we’ve summarised three key areas that employers assess during the interview process and examples of questions they may ask.

From your point of view, you will need to show that you:

1 WANT the job

Employers will often open an interview with a question to explore your motivation for the job and having a great answer prepared can be a brilliant way to get off to a good start, leaving your interview nerves behind.

Read through the job description and your application form to remind yourself why this job appeals to you. There can be quite a gap between applying for a role and being invited for an interview, so a quick refresh is always advised. Are there two or three points that neatly outline why this is the job for you?

Common questions include:
- Why have you applied for this role?
- Why do you think you’d be a good fit for this position?

2 Can DO the job

Take time to consider your strengths and skills and how you can put them to good use in the role you’ve applied for.

Employers will often ask questions aiming to see how well you understand your strengths and how these fit with the organisational culture and the role. Check the job advert or person specification for the skills the employer is looking for. Have you got some examples of when you have demonstrated those skills?

Typical questions might be:
- What are your three key strengths?
- Please give an example of when you were a member of a team assigned to a project or task. What was your role? What was the outcome?
- Give an example of a problem you have recently solved. What methods and information did you use?
- What energises you more, starting or finishing a task?

3 Will FIT in

Employers are looking for applicants that are keen to work for their company, have similar values and will fit in well with colleagues in the team or department.

Find out as much as you can about the company – facts and figures, their customers and competitors and their values. Has the company been in the news recently and why?

Example questions might include:
- Why do you want to work for our organisation?
- What are the main challenges facing the company in the next two to three years?
- At the end of the interview, there’s usually a chance for you to ask questions. You may have gaps in your knowledge of the job or organisation, or you may be weighing up if this is the right fit for you. Some examples might be:
- Can you give me a fuller picture of the training I would receive?
- What did the previous person in this role go on to do?
- What do you enjoy about working for the company?

Your next steps

Find out more about different types of interviews, and use our simulated video interview resource, Sonru:
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/interviews

Attend an interview skills workshop:
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/skillsworkshops

Book an appointment to discuss preparing for interviews:
nottingham.ac.uk/careers/appointments

Face-to-face strengths-based

- Aimed at finding out about the real you, what you’re good at and what energises you
- You know yourself best, so think about how your experience relates to the job and use real-life examples

Face-to-face competency-based

- Structured to reflect your skills and experiences and how they fit with the employer’s needs
- Look at the job description and person specification and write notes on how your skills fit the requirements of the role

Video

- Used by employers as a first sift
- You will record an answer to a question presented on-screen and are usually given 60 seconds per answer
- It’s a good idea to write down some key points to refer to. They’ll help structure your answer

Telephone

- Generally used as a first sift
- Becoming less common since the introduction of video interviews, but are still a popular method
- Tactics such as smiling and not slouching can help inject expression in your voice and make you more confident and assertive
Invited to an assessment centre?

What happens at an assessment centre?
The activities give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the skills required to be successful in the workplace, for example, communication, teamwork, analytical and problem-solving. The structure of an assessment centre will vary but here are some of the activities that our students and graduates have encountered. Remember, you are not competing against other candidates, you are being assessed against the employer’s criteria.

Welcome and introductions
Listen to the structure and activities for the skills and competencies to be assessed. Make sure to introduce yourself to the organisers and other candidates.

Group activity
You will be assessed on your ability to work as part of a team. Effective communication, creative thinking and working towards achieving the task will be encouraged.

Psychometric tests
You’ll be asked to complete different types of tests: see pages 47-51

Tour of the offices
Pay attention throughout and show your interest by asking questions.

Case study
You will be required to process and analyse information relevant to the role and professionally present your findings and recommendations.

Presentations
You’ll be assessed on analysing the information, tailoring the content and delivering clearly and confidently.

In-tray exercise
Time-restricted simulated business tasks where you need to analyse, prioritise information and make decisions.

Lunch
Your ability to interact with others might be assessed during lunchtime. Remember to speak to several people, smile and be positive.

Interview
You will be assessed on your suitability for the job role: see pages 52-53

Did you know?
You can let employers know about your additional needs. Time and activity amendments can be arranged to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to show their potential.

If you’re just starting to apply for graduate jobs, chances are you haven’t been to an assessment centre before. At first glance they can be quite daunting, but knowing what to expect is half the battle. Plus, you’ve got this far, you deserve to be there.

Top tips for preparing for an assessment centre
“In January 2018, I attended an assessment centre for Think Ahead as part of the recruitment process for their social worker scheme.

The most important thing to remember is: be yourself. They have invited you to the assessment day to show them how right you are for the role. They are already impressed by your application or you wouldn’t have got this far.

1. Make sure you get a good night’s sleep and are refreshed and full of energy for the day ahead.
2. Research the role and the organisation – it is important to show your passion and commitment and it will help to have a few things up your sleeve to talk about that show your particular interest.
3. Book a mock assessment centre workshop with the Careers team – this really helped me to pull my ideas together and to get a sense of how the day would play out.
4. Think of some questions for them – the day is for you to get to know more about the organisation and get a feel for how they work as much as it is for them to interview you!”

Bethany Webb-Strong
BA Law with South East Asian Law

"The most important thing to remember is: be yourself. They have invited you to the assessment day to show them how right you are for the role. They are already impressed by your application or you wouldn’t have got this far.”

Your next steps
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A big thanks to

...our team of Careers Handbook case studies. We loved reading your stories, and can’t wait to share them with your fellow students. With your input we think this is our best Careers Handbook to date – hope you do too.

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