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School of English placements, volunteering and careers
Applying your English degree to a professional environment

www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/careers



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Front cover image:
Two students working on placement at the Manuscripts and Special Collections archive.

Opportunities with English

Our chief role as educators is to ensure that your passion for your academic subject is fulfilled, and that the time spent studying for your degree is intellectually stimulating and rewarding. However, we also recognise that when you graduate, you are entering a very competitive world, and we therefore have a role to play in ensuring that you are well equipped to succeed in it.

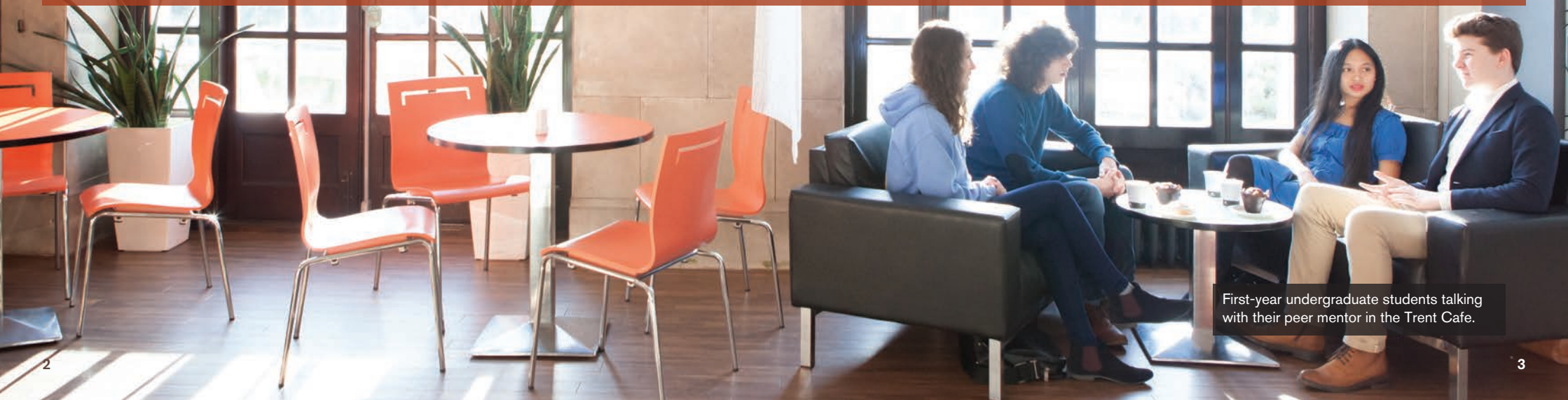
Today's employers, whether in the public or private sector, expect university graduates to be multi-skilled: they look to graduates not only for a subject-specialism, but also for excellent written and communication skills, for an ability to be a leader as well as a good team-player, for creative thinking, as well as for energy and enthusiasm.

Our intellectual commitment to 'Applied Englishes' – helping you to apply the skills learnt on your degree to the professional world – informs our broad-based curriculum which, together with our varied programme of placement and volunteering opportunities, is designed to enable you to develop these all-round skills.

Staff in the School of English work directly with local employers and institutions, building relationships with theatres, museums, schools, libraries and small businesses, to develop placement and volunteering opportunities which are specifically tailored to the skills, knowledge and experience of Nottingham English graduates.

Students who take up these opportunities receive support and mentoring from our full-time staff: it is through this highly personalised approach that we are able to help our students to see how they can make best use of their academic studies, to realise their potential, and fulfil their longer-term ambitions.

Professor Josephine Guy
Head of the School of English



First-year undergraduate students talking with their peer mentor in the Trent Cafe.

An English student undertaking a work placement with the University's Marketing, Communications and Recruitment team.

What transferable skills do employers look for?

You will develop many transferable skills throughout your time at Nottingham. The skills that are built into your modules and those that you obtain during extracurricular activities will be incredibly valuable in your professional life. Here are just a few:

Communication skills

Written and oral communication skills are perhaps the most important transferable skills you will acquire on your course. Nottingham English graduates are highly valued for their ability to communicate effectively through a range of media and to present and articulate differing perspectives succinctly and persuasively.

Interpersonal skills and teamworking

Seminars give you the opportunity to develop interpersonal skills – for example, through handling questions, developing listening skills and undertaking group work. By taking advantage of placement and volunteering opportunities, you will also have experience of working with new people in professional environments.

Research skills

Your studies with us, as well as the additional projects you are involved in, will allow you to use your independent research skills. Seek out opportunities to show initiative and self-motivation, careful organisation and problem-solving abilities.

Presentation skills

The art of knowing your audience and appealing to them is essential, whether they are theatre-goers, business colleagues, potential clients or children learning to read. Make the most of opportunities both within and outside the classroom to practise and hone your presentation skills.

Administrative skills

Almost all graduate jobs involve a good deal of administration, evidence of effective time management and competence in IT. Showing that you can use computer software effectively, and organise and manage your workload will help you stand out to an employer.

“In terms of qualities, I’m looking for someone who’s flexible, who’s a multi-tasker, who’s able to prioritise, who is self-motivated, has great communication skills and who is absolutely passionate about the arts.”

Sofia Nazar-Chadwick
Manager, Nottingham Lakeside Arts

Students on placement at
Nottingham Playhouse.

Making the most of opportunities

The School of English and the University more broadly provide many opportunities for you – both within and outside your studies – to enhance your CV and to make yourself as employable as possible by the time you have completed your degree.

Extracurricular activities and societies

Many of our students are involved in student societies such as University Radio Nottingham – which won 'Best Station' in the 2014 National Student Radio Awards – and the Nottingham New Theatre – the first wholly student-run theatre, which stages a production almost every week.

Writing opportunities abound at Nottingham. A good number of our students write or take up editorial posts for the University's highly renowned and award-winning student magazine, *Impact*. Others get involved in writing student blogs for the school or the University, or submit creative writing or feature articles for student magazines.

Some of our students hold committee positions in a variety of societies including the English Society. A number of others take the opportunity to act as representatives either for their fellow students through our staff-student Learning Community Forum, or for the University and the School of English, through working as student ambassadors at University open days.

Individual research project

During your final year, you will have the opportunity to complete an independent research project of your choice, working on a one-to-one basis with an expert member of academic staff. Your research and production of the final piece of assessment can provide a valuable source of discussion material at interviews and allow scope to demonstrate key transferable skills to employers.

Placements and volunteering

The following pages provide detailed information on our school-specific placement and volunteering projects, offered exclusively to students of English.

Placements

The School of English has established a range of bespoke placement opportunities which are offered throughout the academic year. We source placements that are English-related, specifically applicable to English students and tailored to their skills.

We work closely with current students to find placements that accommodate their varied interests. Our placements generally run for eight to 10 weeks, with students committing to one day per week, which fits well around other University commitments.

Students apply on a competitive basis, submitting an application form and being invited for interview. This provides valuable professional experience as well as feedback that can be used in the future.

Support is provided by dedicated administrative and academic staff in the School of English and students are also invited to attend workshops and drop-in sessions run by the Careers and Employability Service. After completing a placement, students are encouraged to reflect on their experience, skills development and the activities they were involved in.

This evaluation can then be used in developing their CV in preparation for future applications or interview situations.

Placements provide significant benefits:

- Valuable professional experience, adding value to your degree and helping you to stand out from the crowd
- The chance to explore a particular career path
- Opportunities to get more involved in your community and contribute to the work done by local organisations
- Flexible enough to balance with your studies, as well as being rewarding and fun

Postgraduate student on placement
at Bromley House Library.

Do placements make a difference?

Both students and placement providers benefit from this work experience in different ways. Employers value our students' skills and see the tangible impact of their work:

"On a fundamental level [placements] give the candidate insights into business, management and working practice. Our performance arts industry is quite bespoke, but the students' time here has hopefully instilled in them a more general confidence that they can take forward into any given working career."

Magnus Poole

Marketing Manager, Theatre Royal and Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham

"The placements provide real-world experience of professional writers at work in a community participation context. Students gain experience in working with young people, copy editing and creative writing. As well as supporting our school groups with their writing and making a contribution to the creative ethos of the sessions, the students provide valuable role-models for the young participants. They are the perfect bridge between the school groups and the professional writers, demonstrating the value of a university education as well as providing an accessible point of liaison with higher education in action."

Rebecca Goldsmith

First Story Programme Officer
(East Midlands)

Our students also recognise the benefits of their placement experiences:

"Day to day tasks included updating the museum's Facebook and Twitter accounts as well as writing press releases for upcoming events. Other tasks included helping set up the festival exhibition, promoting the festival in Eastwood, taking part in the heritage open days and giving talks on Victorian life. I was given a lot of opportunities to plan and run certain aspects of the festival. I'd definitely recommend the placement scheme! I'm very interested in working in museums, galleries or exhibitions so having this placement has given me hands-on experience of that."

Annie MacArthur

Undergraduate student
Completed her placement with the
DH Lawrence Heritage Centre

"I completed a 10-week placement with the Nottingham Playhouse, working as an Intermediate Youth Theatre Group assistant. I worked closely with one particular group in order to help them develop a short scene for the show. This was presented to parents in the final week. My ability to analyse and pick out key features of text really helped when trying to condense and manipulate the play's plot so that the young performers would understand their roles, the themes of the play and the subtext behind their lines. It was rewarding to see the showcase come together throughout the term and to see members of the youth group overcome their fears."

Holly Gatfield

Undergraduate student
Completed her placement with the
Nottingham Playhouse

Our placement providers

The School of English works with a wide variety of organisations, including marketing companies, charities, theatres, archives, creative writing collectives, independent libraries and community groups. Our placement projects highlight the diversity of our students' interests, as well as the varied career options available to them.

If you would like to find out more about our placement scheme, please visit our website:
www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/careers

Current placement providers include:

- Bromley House Library
- Derby Book Festival
- DH Lawrence Heritage Centre
- Invest in Nottingham
- Manuscripts and Special Collections at The University Of Nottingham
- Marketing, Communications and Recruitment at The University Of Nottingham
- Mouthy Poets
- Nottingham Playhouse
- The Shared Reading Group
- The Stroke Association
- Writing East Midlands

“English students bring a fresh perspective and energy and are a much needed resource. They have adaptable and transferable skills that can be applied perfectly to our inward investment marketing activities.”

Catherine Appleby
Trade and Investment Account Manager, Invest in Nottingham

Undergraduate student completing a work placement with Invest in Nottingham, part of Nottingham City Council.



The Literacy Support Project

The Literacy Support Project is a unique volunteering opportunity for students to get involved in the Nottingham community, working with young people to improve their literacy levels. The School of English works with six schools in the local area and students can volunteer at either primary or secondary school level.

Students volunteer for one morning or one afternoon per week, which can be easily balanced with their studies and university commitments.

There are a number of different roles to choose from, including one-to-one reading coach, classroom assistant or extra-curricular reading club coordinator. This is a chance for our students to obtain teaching experience, develop their leadership potential and enhance their communication skills. Just as importantly, they can play a role in supporting the local community and encouraging young people to enjoy reading and explore their aspirations.



A student working alongside primary school children, as part of an outreach project.

Training is provided for student volunteers, and students can also attend further training in order to accredit their work on the scheme, through the Nottingham Advantage Award (see page 22).

“The Literacy Support Project allowed me to gain recognition for my work while expanding my knowledge at the same time. I gained transferable skills such as confidence, active-listening, and the ability to motivate, encourage and inspire, as well as meeting people that shared the same interests as me along the way.”

Charlotte Moore
Undergraduate student and Literacy Support Project volunteer

“Before participating in the Literacy Support Project I thought that I wanted to go into teaching, and now I know for sure. The entire experience was fantastic. The children were so grateful for the opportunity to practise their reading, and this made every trip a joy. Thanks to this additional support, their abilities progressed rapidly, and many were inspired to apply to university at some point in the future. To be a part of improving kids' opportunities in this way was an absolute privilege. Furthermore, the number of classroom hours that I completed has allowed me to apply for postgraduate teacher training, thus bringing me a step closer to my dream job. None of this would have been possible without the Literacy Support Project, and I encourage anyone (whether interested in teaching or not), to give it a go. It's an experience you'll never forget.”

Joe Jones
Undergraduate student and Literacy Support Project volunteer

For more information about the Literacy Support Project please see www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/outreach/literacysupportproject

A postgraduate student helping local young people to improve their literacy.



Vikings for Schools

The Centre for the Study of the Viking Age (CSVA), a research centre within the School of English, has developed a community project for primary school children. Students develop workshops on Viking culture and society which they then run in local schools.

The programme aims to develop the transferable skills of student volunteers and to enrich the primary school curriculum. Like the Literacy Support Project, this scheme allows students to obtain classroom experience, which is valuable for those considering a career in teaching.

It also allows them to translate their academic interests to appeal to a young audience and develop materials that will have an educational impact on the children they work with, inspiring them to learn more about the Vikings.

"The Vikings for Schools project is a unique opportunity, giving you the chance to connect with children from disadvantaged areas. We teach them about the Vikings and talk to them about the possibilities of studying at university. While the subject matter, coupled with the chance to show off your sword skills, means that most of the children will be fairly engaged from the start, the most rewarding moments are those when you garner the interest and excitement of school

children who are either shy or academically uninspired, witnessing their confidence and interest visibly grow. The project provides a great chance to test out teaching, but developing skills to connect with different people is invaluable in any profession. Vikings for Schools gives you the opportunity to make a genuine difference for children, whilst boosting your employability and CV."

Sam Roach
Postgraduate student and Vikings for Schools volunteer

For more information please visit our webpage:
www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/vikings



Students working with school children during a Vikings for Schools event.

A peer mentor meets with new students to offer advice during their first few weeks at Nottingham.



Peer mentoring

The role of a peer mentor is a voluntary one, and involves providing advice to new students about living and studying at Nottingham. Every new undergraduate and postgraduate student is matched with a peer mentor who has already been studying in the School of English for at least a year, and who can therefore share their own knowledge and experiences. In this way peer mentors provide an invaluable and informal level of support, especially in the first few weeks.

Mentors are available to students before they arrive at university and will arrange to meet up in the first week, as well as being on-hand to provide tips about studying and living in Nottingham. Peer mentors receive training to ensure that they are ready to meet and support new students. Undergraduate students can gain accreditation for their mentoring through the Nottingham Advantage Award. Many students, having benefited from the scheme themselves, are keen to act as mentors to the next group of new students and it is a great way of building the sense of shared community within the school.

"As a fellow joint honours student, my peer mentor was an excellent source of support and advice at the start of my time at university. She regularly checked on how I and a few other students were coping with life as freshers and was always just an email away if we had any issues. Having a peer mentor made settling into my new life as an English student more comfortable; she had advice on hall life, second-year housing arrangements, coursework and the best student nights out. Having a contact such as this is invaluable in that first semester of university."

Sally Hirst

First year undergraduate student in the School of English

"Being a peer mentor has been an amazing experience, and I've loved sharing everything I've learnt with a group of first-year students. The first term of university can be incredibly daunting, and having a mentor to meet up with allows you to ask questions and seek support whenever you need it. I hope my mentees have found first year a little less stressful by having me as a friendly face they can talk to!"

Beth Rowland

Second year undergraduate student and Peer Mentor in the School of English

The Nottingham Advantage Award

The Nottingham Advantage Award is an extra qualification when you graduate. The Award has been designed to ensure employers notice you; it is recorded on your degree transcript and is recognised as an extra achievement.

The modules offered are completely voluntary and taken in addition to your academic studies. The Award is open to all undergraduate students and a range of modules are available to ensure something for everyone.

School of English modules:

Career Planning Skills for English Students

Through this module you will have access to advice and guidance from alumni, postgraduates, the careers team and visiting employers. You will also attend sessions on employability skills, work experience and the job market, as well as receiving input on application forms, CVs, interviews and postgraduate study.

Literacy Volunteers

This module is available to those who volunteer on the School of English Literacy Support Project (see page 15). It provides the opportunity to reflect on your own volunteering practices and to acquire other important transferable skills, including classroom management, lesson planning skills, communication, mentoring and interpersonal skills.

Peer Mentoring for English

Second and final-year undergraduates acting as mentors to new students can take this accompanying module to develop an understanding of the role of a mentor. Through the module you will reflect on your mentoring support experience and personal development in relation to your employability.

Other University-wide modules include:

- Insight into Education
- Internships, Placements and Work Experience
- PR Project Management
- Student Ambassador

To find out more please visit:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/advantageaward



The Careers and Employability Service provides a range of professional development services.

What can you do with an English degree?

A better question might be: what can't you do with an English degree? English graduates can, and do, go into an extraordinarily wide range of careers due to the skills they develop through their degree and you may find yourself faced with a lot of options.

You may have a very clear idea from an early stage about which employment path you wish to pursue or you may need more time to find the role that is right for you.

No matter what your initial choice is, you will find that the skills and knowledge that you have developed during your time in the School of English will have equipped you for the demanding and often highly changeable nature of the workplace.

For examples of career paths taken by some of our graduates, please see our website:
www.nottingham.ac.uk/english

Nottingham is consistently named as one of the most targeted universities by Britain's leading graduate employers.*

* The Graduate Market in 2013, 2014 and 2015, High Fliers Research.

Occupations of our recent graduates have included:

- actors
- archivists and curators
- arts and theatre officers
- authors, writers and translators
- business and project management professionals
- careers advisers
- conference and exhibition managers
- finance and investment analysts and advisers
- financial accounts managers
- human resources officers
- information technology and telecommunications professionals
- journalists
- legal professionals
- marketing and web design professionals
- newspaper and periodical editors
- primary education teachers
- public relations professionals
- public services officers
- publishing and editorial professionals
- research and development managers
- sales and business development managers
- secondary education and other teaching professionals
- speech and language therapists
- TV and radio producers and editors
- university teachers
- university researchers and administrators

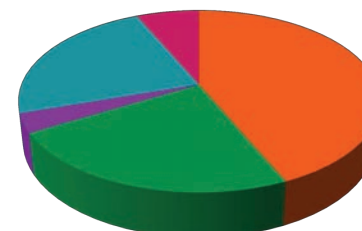
Graduate employment data for graduates of the School of English

First-degree graduates



Full-time work	45.2%
Part-time work	9.6%
In work and further study	8.4%
In further study	27.1%
Unemployed	4.2%
Other	5.4%

Higher-degree graduates



Full-time work	43.3%
Part-time work	23.3%
In work and further study	3.3%
In further study	23.3%
Unemployed	6.7%
Other	0%

Salary data for graduates from the School of English (includes full-time paid work and self-employment)

First-degree graduates

Maximum: £42,000
Average: £20,421
Minimum: £10,000

Higher-degree graduates

Maximum: £31,100
Average: £23,920
Minimum: £16,500

Further study

Masters courses

Like a number of our students each year, you may decide to continue your studies at postgraduate level to give you the edge when it comes to starting your career. Masters degrees offered by the School of English include:

- MA Applied Linguistics*
- MA Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching*
- MSc Communication and Entrepreneurship
- MA Creative Writing
- MA English Literature
- MA English Studies*
- MA Health Communication**
- MA Literary Linguistics*
- MA Modern English Language**
- MA Viking and Anglo-Saxon Studies

* Also available by web-based distance learning.

** Only available by web-based distance learning.

Postgraduate research

The School of English has a vibrant community of approximately 80 postgraduate research students. Students work on topics that range widely, from the study of Old English vocabulary to women writers and the Second World War, and from the sensation novels of the 1860s to language and gender in higher education.

For a list of PhD supervision areas, graduate profiles and other web pages for research students, please see
www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/researchdegrees

“Having a Masters in English provides lots of transferable skills and demonstrates that you are hardworking and keen to learn more. Having an MA under your belt sets you apart from the crowds of people searching for jobs.”

Georgina Stokes
MA Creative Writing

A postgraduate student reading in the
Trent Building on University Park Campus.



Graduate profiles

"Shortly after completing my degree I was contacted by Edelman, a Public Relations Agency I had registered with during a Graduate Careers day in my third year, which needed an intern to start immediately to help on a high profile crisis client.

I commenced on a hectic six-week internship, and was then offered the chance to interview for a permanent position. After two years I was promoted to Account Executive. Edelman is the world's largest PR company and I now work in reputation management with a wide variety of international brands. My day to day work is incredibly varied, as I work with the media to deliver positive press coverage for my clients, manage events and handle any issues they may have. My career means I have played a small role in important events in the UK, from the Jubilee to the London 2012 Olympics to the Leveson Inquiry.

My three years at Nottingham were everything I could have asked for. The English course is rich and varied, and allows the chance to explore great texts and academic debate, whilst crucially still leaving you with a solid degree that will open doors across a number of industries at the end of it. The beautiful campus, sports facilities, fantastic nightlife and societies such as Karnival mean Nottingham has every aspect of student life covered. I will always look back with fond memories of my three years there."

Rose Fox
BA English graduate (2011)
PR Account Executive

"Perhaps above all else, my time studying English at Nottingham helped to develop my writing and editorial skills in a way that now allows me to truly engage with the subject in front of me – whatever it happens to be at the time. When I first left university, like many people, I spent a few months searching for permanent work whilst temping and I think it's important that graduates don't feel trapped if that happens to them: it's a chance to explore different industries and get a feel for what you really want to do, or even just an opportunity to travel and make the most of being your own boss for a while.

I've pursued a mix of full-time employment and my own creative projects in the past couple of years, going into publishing for my living, which has always fascinated me, and writing plays in the evenings, which I've now had performed in cities across the UK. Palgrave Macmillan has been a fantastic company to work for, for the breadth of areas that it publishes in, and my current role in academic titles with Palgrave means that I get to work with many of the people who guided me in my own writing back when I was a student – the same academics who taught me to write, and whose research encouraged me to think.

My years at Nottingham were among the happiest of my life and my greatest advice to anyone applying to study is to get the most out of your time there academically, socially and personally."

Peter Carey
BA English graduate (2011)
Assistant Editor for Literature/Theatre and Performance at Palgrave Macmillan

Graduation days are a chance for students to celebrate their success with family, friends and University staff.



Further careers support

Meet the arts faculty team – Careers and Employability Service

As an English student, you will have access to a team of career advisers dedicated to English and other arts students, who offer weekly drop-in and pre-bookable sessions for one-to-one help and support with all aspects of careers, as well as weekly skills workshops for advice on CV-writing, application forms, assessment centres and interviews. The team arrange regular presentations and careers events geared specifically to English and other arts students. They can also help you to choose, research and implement your career ideas, find out how to get into a chosen area and prepare for all aspects of the recruitment process.

E-mentoring scheme

The University runs an e-mentoring scheme, in which a number of our English students have taken part, to gain insight into a particular profession, benefit from their mentor's experiences and knowledge, and develop professional communication and networking skills. To find out more, please visit

www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/ementoring



Two undergraduate students compare notes in the Careers and Employability Service reception area.

Contacts and resources

School of English placements

If you would like more information about our School of English placements, volunteering schemes or anything else mentioned in this brochure, please get in touch with us:

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Trent Building, A90
University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD

t: +44 (0)115 951 5900

e: english-placements@nottingham.ac.uk

w: www.nottingham.ac.uk/english

Careers and Employability Service

For general careers advice, or information about paid opportunities including the Nottingham Internships Scheme in the summer, please contact the Careers and Employability Service:

Careers and Employability Service
The University of Nottingham
Portland Building, Level D
University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD

t: +44 (0)115 951 3680

e: careers-team@nottingham.ac.uk

w: www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/arts

w: www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/workexperience

Volunteering opportunities

For University-wide volunteering opportunities, please visit the Students' Union Student Volunteer Centre: www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/volunteering

Online resources

Destinations of English graduates from Nottingham:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/english

Choosing your career:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/students/choosing

External websites

Using your subject:

www.english.heacademy.ac.uk/explore/resources/careers

Why Study English?

www.whystudyenglish.ac.uk

The University of Nottingham has made every effort to ensure that the information in this brochure was accurate when published. Please note, however, that the nature of the content means that it is subject to change from time to time, and you should therefore consider the information to be guiding rather than definitive.

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