



THE OXFORD GUIDE TO CAREERS **2022**

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Your year ahead



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Sector advice and alumni profiles





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WELCOME TO THE OXFORD GUIDE TO CAREERS 2022



*Jonathan Black,
Director of the Careers Service*

Last year was in many ways a great reset that interrupted all our lives and your studies; it's made every employer, and many of us, think about where and how we should be working in future. Previous Oxford Guides will have just assumed it was business as usual: crowded offices, in person meetings, long commutes, and water cooler chats to learn from colleagues.

Here in Oxford, we'd have been planning live panel discussions, crowded careers fairs, travelling to internships all over the world, and in person one-to-ones. But we've learned we can achieve even more, meet many more of you, save you time, and still provide all the skills training that employers have always wanted and new skills for the new world of work.

We're still in a transition so stay adaptable and open to new opportunities. Focus on developing your set of transferable skills – like teamwork, business awareness, leadership, and problem solving –



that every employer is seeking when they recruit. You can develop your employability skills in our programmes and also in activities in many other places including college, department, student societies, sports, volunteering, and the creative arts.

We have written this Guide for any and every Oxford undergraduate or postgraduate, artist or scientist, who each usually have one of three questions:

- Where do I start?
- How do I gain more skills to improve my chances (especially in this time of change)?
- Where do I find jobs and internships?

You'll find answers to these questions, and many more in this Guide: from 'How do I write a winning CV?' to 'What does it take to be a solicitor?' and from 'How do I get experience in the museum and heritage sector?' to 'How do I meet a careers adviser for a 1:1 meeting?'.

This Guide is just one of the many free services you can access from the University Careers Service. Other services you can use include:

- To get started:
 - Book a confidential 1:1 (there are over 5,000 online every year to choose from).

- Visit some virtual careers fairs.
- Meet some employers online.
- Learn about Information interviewing with alumni.
- Log on to one of the many 'Introduction to...' talks we run.
- To gain more skills:
 - Take part in the Oxford Strategy Challenge or The Student Consultancy – online or in person.
 - Work in an Oxford-exclusive micro-internship or summer internship.
 - Attend Insight into Teaching/Medicine/Business/Publishing/Academia/Pharma programmes.
- To find jobs and internships:
 - Log onto CareerConnect.
 - Sign up for automatic alerts about new jobs in your industries of choice.
 - Meet the Internship Office to explore our internship and micro-internship programmes.

We look forward to meeting you (probably online) at our fairs and events – both while you are here and for the rest of your career.



Virtual

OXFORD UNIVERSITY CAREERS FAIR

TUESDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2021
STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30



Meet recruiters, attend presentations, browse jobs, and find out about different career options at our **careers fair for all sectors.**



www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs

THE OXFORD GUIDE TO CAREERS 2021

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The Careers Service is offering a full programme of support and activities online throughout the current pandemic. See www.careers.ox.ac.uk for details.

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www.youtube.com/user/OxfordCareersService

www.facebook.com/internshipoffice

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THE CAREERS SERVICE AND YOUR YEAR AHEAD

56 Banbury Road

Careers Service
Internship Office



The Careers Service provides support and impartial advice on any careers-related topic. Use this Guide to get started, and see our website for in-depth guidance: www.careers.ox.ac.uk

56 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6PA

The Careers Service will continue to offer a full programme of support and activities online throughout the current pandemic – and beyond!

See www.careers.ox.ac.uk for details.



Daily

Advice appointments: Confidential and impartial one-to-one meetings with a careers adviser held online, on the phone or in person at the Careers Service, with extra sessions hosted in departments and colleges. Book in advance on CareerConnect.

Weekly

Newsletter: The easiest way to keep up to date during term, our newsletter hits your inbox each week with details of upcoming events and opportunities.

Talks and workshops: We frequently host talks on specific career options and run skills workshops, many with invited external speakers. Most are open to all students, with some tailored to master's students, DPhil students or research staff.

Termly

TOSCA: Work in a team to help local organisations solve real business problems and develop your employability skills: includes consultancy training.

Skills sessions: Workshops and presentations on a specific topic, such as psychometric tests or interviews, led by an employer or a careers adviser. All advertised on CareerConnect.

Micro-internships: Two- to five-day voluntary, full-time work placements with a host organisation, run in 9th week every term.

Annually

Career fairs: Meet employers and alumni to learn about and explore some of the options available. Starting early in Michaelmas term, we run at least eight sector fairs, whether online or in person!

Opportunities: Nearly 10,000 vacancies and internships are advertised every year on CareerConnect.

The Summer Internship Programme: Hundreds of work experience opportunities in many sectors and countries exclusively for Oxford students.

Plus...

Insight into: Short programmes to help you develop your knowledge and understanding of a specific field, including Insights into Teaching, Medicine, Business, Publishing and Academia.

Recruiter in residence and mock interviews

Meet employers one-to-one and learn about their sector or organisation, get advice on your CV and applications or have a practice interview. Times and topics advertised on CareerConnect.

The Careers Service and COVID-19

In 2021 and 2022, all our usual workshops, programmes and appointments will go ahead. We are offering careers advice sessions on the phone and online; we are negotiating remote-working internships with employers; and we are delivering talks, workshops and insight programmes virtually. If government guidance changes, we will start holding in-person events and appointments. We are staying up to date with the latest employer news so that we can pass useful information on to students and alumni via our website and weekly newsletter. All bookable on CareerConnect in the usual way.

CareerConnect

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careerconnect

Accessed with your Oxford Single Sign-on, CareerConnect is the password-protected area of the Careers Service website that provides dedicated services enabling you to:

- Book appointments.
- Browse our calendar of events.
- Book your place on workshops and employer-led events.
- Search our extensive database of job vacancies and internships.
- Access additional resources to which we subscribe on your behalf, including practice tests. ... and much more!

What's next? What's first?

Take a breath, find your bearings and think about what would most help you move forward.

Most students will explore career options, including further study, alongside their studies. This Guide is for everyone considering what to do at the end of their current course, and will help students who have a clear focus to sharpen their career objectives and add polish to their applications. It summarises our guidance and signposts further resources to explore options, make decisions and work purposefully towards a successful future.

Consider the following questions about your possible next steps and mark where you currently stand on the grid on the opposite page.

- How clear are your ideas?
- How well do you understand your core interests and motivations?
- And, do you have sufficient understanding and experience to make a sound decision?



Career readiness grid

1 Make a start

Whether your next move is to explore a little and try something new, or to reflect on your personal preferences and start planning, the important thing is to make a start.

- Attend a career fair or company events.
- Use career planning tools to generate ideas and a focus.
- Get involved with a student society.
- Sign up for some workshops.

The pointers opposite (for students in Quadrants 2 and 3) indicate more specifically what's needed to move 'down' and 'right' on the Career Readiness Grid.

Remember, it's never too late to start, and the Careers Service is here to support you all the way.

2 I have a focus but I'm not sure...

...how to show companies I am a strong candidate, ...if it is truly right for me.

Whether your focus is a logical next step from your degree, or comes from career planning (or even a hunch), getting some experience will help you both to be a stronger candidate and understand better why a role, organisation or further study option is right for you.

The most powerful way to find out if you enjoy something is to try it. See the guidance on **Gaining Experience and Developing Skills** for advice and ideas about opportunities to 'learn by doing'. Consider:

- Taking on a similar role in your extracurricular activities (e.g., for a student society).
- Doing an internship or volunteering.
- Participating in **the Careers Service's employability programmes**.
- Work-shadowing or short-term work experience (e.g., a micro-internship).

Use career fairs and company-led events to talk with alumni and others working in specific fields to test any assumptions, deepen your understanding and extend your thinking. When combined with experience you may identify additional ideas to develop into your plan B and plan C as a back-up to your primary focus.

If you have doubts or questions, book an appointment with a careers adviser on CareerConnect for an unbiased conversation.

Plot your progress!

Unsure what I want to do



3 I enjoy lots of different things: how can I choose between them?

Oxford students often have potential to succeed in many different roles and fields and, yes, it can be difficult to choose!

If you are already exploring options and taking on different roles to build skills and experiences, see the section on **Developing Your Career Ideas** for guidance and tools such as Career Weaver to help you identify your pattern of interests and motivations. Reflect on your experiences and try to identify any themes that are important to you:

- Why do you choose to do these activities?
- Which skills do you use?
- What do you enjoy doing most and why?
- How important to you are the people, relationships and outcomes?

Once you understand what kind of work and outcomes offer you intrinsic satisfaction, further research through the web and 'in person' into industries, roles and organisations will help you to create focus and make decisions.

If you are struggling to narrow your focus, a confidential chat with a careers adviser can help you gain clarity.

4 Organised and clear about next steps

If you have placed yourself in this bottom right quadrant (you may already be applying and interviewing), reflecting on how you developed your focus, examining any assumptions and aligning your choices to your core motivations can:

- reinforce decisions made;
- strengthen applications, by improving the evidence you present of your skills and interests;
- help identify viable alternatives.

Additional support can still be helpful, especially if your early applications aren't working as you'd like. Attend workshops, company events and chat with a careers adviser to hone your approach and consider what plan B and plan C might look like.

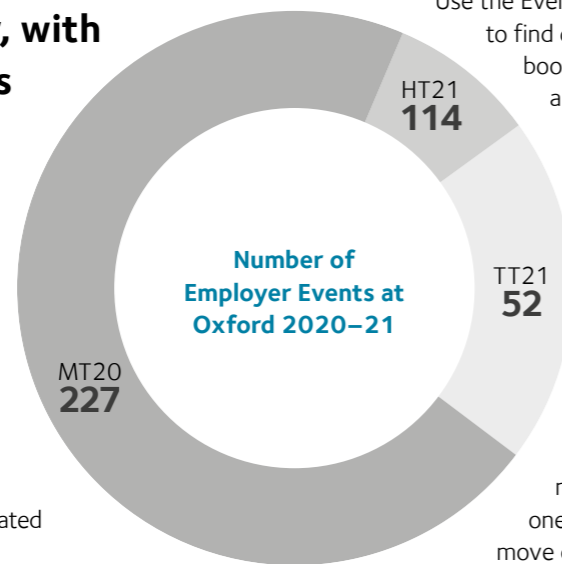
More information

- www.careerweaver.ox.ac.uk
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- www.careers.ox.ac.uk/i-am-deciding-on-a-plan
- www.careers.ox.ac.uk/i-have-a-clear-plan

Careers term by term

Graduate recruitment runs year-round and there are always new positions being advertised. However, many of the biggest recruiters link their cycles to the academic year, with full-time positions for finalists advertised from late summer, for entry the following year.

Every year, hundreds of organisations visit Oxford specifically to meet you – to start a conversation. However, our academic terms are NOT created equally.



Michaelmas term

Michaelmas term is the time to talk to firms that interest you. In fact, we run eight of our annual career fairs in weeks 1 to 3, and this term will account for almost 75% of all the company presentations and company visits coordinated by the Careers Service in the whole year.

At our career fairs and company presentations you can meet:

- Recent alumni working in areas you might be interested in – people who were in your shoes not so long ago.
- Recruiters who can tell you more about the firm, graduate roles and training, and the recruitment process.
- Senior managers and business leaders (many will also be Oxford alumni) who can provide a wider perspective on the organisation and graduate career trajectories.

Use the Events Calendar on CareerConnect to find company presentations and to book places on relevant workshops and skills sessions offered through the Careers Service.

Finalists and one-year master's students

Full-time jobs and graduate schemes
Applications will already have opened during the summer at most large graduate recruiters. If you have not already started, finalists and one-year master's students should move quickly to:

- **Law Fair:** Wednesday 20 October, 12.30 – 17.30
- **Careers in Computing Fair:** Monday 25 October, 12.30 – 17.30
- **Jobs for Mathematicians Fair:** Wednesday 27 October, 12.30 – 17.30

Earlier this year, we ran the Careers Conference for Researchers in Hilary term and the Virtual Summer Careers Fair in Trinity term. Dates for 2022 yet to be confirmed.

Virtual careers fairs

The following fairs will be run on our virtual platform and will be open from midday to 6.00 pm. [See our website and CareerConnect for details.](#)

- **Oxford University Careers Fair (for all sectors):** Tuesday 12 October, 12.30 – 17.30
- **Finance Fair:** Wednesday 13 October, 12.30 – 17.30
- **Management Consultancy Fair:** Thursday 14 October, 12.30 – 17.30
- **Science, Engineering and Technology Fair:** Monday 18 October, 12.30 – 17.30

- Understand the application processes for different firms and be sure to note and hit any deadlines.
- Beware! Some sectors close as early as the end of October (notably banking and investment, the Civil Service Fast Stream and management consultancy) and some have 'rolling recruitment', filling vacancies as and when students apply.

Other firms will open applications during this term and into Hilary term. Monitor careers sites, set email alerts and follow target companies on social media to make sure you hear first about new opportunities.

Plan enough time to make high quality applications: CVs, cover letters and application forms take time to complete well and should be tailored for each and every application.

[Read our advice on crafting good applications in this later section of the Guide.](#)

Be ready for the recruitment process to move quickly once you have applied. Online testing, interviews and assessment centres can all follow within a few weeks, and offers may be made before Christmas.

Consider booking a one-to-one discussion with a careers adviser and find relevant workshops and skills sessions advertised on our Events Calendar on CareerConnect.

Considering further study?

Research possibilities *now* to understand application processes and funding options.

- Popular courses can fill quickly, so consider applying early.
- Research deadlines to apply for grants and bursaries too.

[Read more about bursaries and grants in our further study article here.](#)

More than one year to completion

Internships, spring weeks and insight days

Organisations with substantial graduate recruitment programmes are increasingly interested in meeting penultimate-year students, freshers and second years on a four-year course. Use careers fairs to ask about internships and 'taster programmes', and when applications will be opening.

Some companies now start to accept applications for internships and insight days towards the end of Michaelmas, with many more opening in the new year. The recruitment processes often mirror those for full-time positions because success in the internship can lead to an offer for a full-time position the following year.

First years and second years on a four-year programme should note that places for taster days and spring weeks are limited and can fill in less than a week. Be sure to sign up for alerts if you intend to apply: the prize not only includes first-hand experience of the organisation but quite often a fast-track to paid internships the following year.

Hilary term

Finalists and graduating master's students who have made good applications should expect January and February to be busy with interviews. Continue to target new graduate programmes and seek advertised positions – you may also find attractive internships to apply for. Similarly, those targeting further study should continue to make applications to courses and funding bodies.

Hilary Term is also a key time to start seeking internship and summer opportunities. The advice above about applying for full-time positions all holds true here. Some firms that recruit graduates only open their summer internship places to penultimate-year students, and these can lead to full-time offers for interns that do well. But also look out for other opportunities including our own Summer Internship Programme, which offers all Oxford students exclusive internship opportunities, many of them in sectors where internships can be hard to find, or overseas.

Keep abreast of the skills sessions, workshops and seminars offered at the Careers Service via the Events Calendar on CareerConnect.

Trinity term

Be sure to keep on track academically and invest enough time to do yourself justice in finals or any exams that you have.

The big graduate schemes form only a small proportion of the graduate employment market and the number of vacancies offered every month through CareerConnect remains fairly constant through the year, so there are always new opportunities. However, keep an eye open as some graduate schemes re-open this term to fill any remaining places. You can also apply to firms that have year-round rolling recruitment.

The Careers Service continues to offer workshops and careers advisers continue with confidential one-to-one discussions during Trinity and the long vacation, on Skype, telephone or virtual platforms such as Microsoft Teams.



Careers year by year



Finalists and one-year masters'

Develop your plan and extend your research

- It is never too late to start thinking about your career. Make a commitment to make a start and give yourself the best chance of success. Turn to the [Developing Your Career Ideas section](#) and make plans to talk to a careers adviser.
- If you already have clear goals, or even fuzzy ideas, research online and meet employers at fairs and at company presentations. See the [Events Calendar on CareerConnect](#) for dates and to book your place.
- Research options of further study and apply early to popular programmes.

Make applications and prepare for interviews

- Understand your motivations, your strengths and be ready to support your applications with evidence as discussed in [the Application Essentials guidance](#).
- Find the [workshops you need on our Events Calendar on CareerConnect](#).
- Polish your application skills and seek advice from a careers adviser if you want a second opinion on your CV, cover letters or application form.
- Submit applications for both your plans A and B (and plan C ...) in parallel.
- Be ready for online tests and interviews, some of these happen straight after you have submitted your application.

It's not too late to develop your skills and experience

- Continue to be fully involved in student life through societies, volunteering and extra-curricular activities.

- Consider participating in [our skills programmes and Insight programmes](#) if you haven't already done so.
- Apply to our own [Summer Internship Programme](#) from January onwards.

Network and build your visibility

- Meet contacts and alumni at events and reach out to them.
- [Use LinkedIn and social media as research tools, to follow targeted companies and make yourself easier to find.](#)
- Attend the cringe-free networking workshop run by the Careers Service each term, bookable on CareerConnect.
- For some sectors – such as creative careers, journalism, publishing, charities – networking and speculative approaches can be important to uncover opportunities: thinking six months ahead is key.

Penultimate year

Start to focus on what you might do after graduating

- Review your career preferences and interests, or start your self-assessment. [The Developing Your Career Ideas section will help.](#) Follow the advice to finalists above – the same rules apply!
- Plan, research and develop your CV – attend relevant workshops organised by the Careers Service.
- Attend the relevant careers fairs. Get into your job-market research and look for application deadlines – be aware of deadlines as early as October for consulting, banking and the Civil Service among others.
- Apply for summer internships, including those

advertised from January onwards as part of [the Careers Service Summer Internship Programme](#).

Talk to people and network

- Find out about their jobs, their companies and the sector at the many careers fairs and company presentations held in Oxford or virtually. Most people remember what it is like being in your position and want to help.
- Use LinkedIn to contact alumni whose work interests you.
- Get advice and tips from final-year students. Ask about their summer internships and for introductions to their colleagues to learn more.
- Plan how to make the most of your summer vacation, and make speculative applications to find work experience with organisations of interest that don't offer formal internships.

Considering further study?

- Talk with tutors, supervisors and research students in your field.
- Ask about working as a research assistant during vacations.

Build your skills and experience

- Get elected to a position in a society, common room or club and make a difference by organising an event, running the show or starting something new – all will develop your skills and add value to your applications.
- Sign up for workshops and skills sessions at the Careers Service or [join one of our employability programmes](#).
- Try out different ideas, perhaps via our micro-internships, work-shadowing or work experience. Volunteer with local charities or through the [Oxford Hub](#).

More than two years from completion

Get involved and enjoy Oxford

- Join and get involved in societies, clubs and a social life alongside your studies.

Start thinking

- It's never too soon to start thinking about your post-university plans.
- Develop some awareness of your career-related preferences and interests with some self-assessment exercises, such as [Career Weaver and other tools in](#)

[the Developing Your Career Ideas section.](#)

- [Visit the Careers Service website to start researching what you could do and check out your options.](#)
- Talk to a careers adviser if you need help with your plans or ideas for how to get started.

Start to develop your skills

- Review the skills you can evidence already. Consider where and how you can develop these further, and which new skills you might develop.
- Review your ideas by following the guidance in the [Gaining Experience and Developing Skills section](#).
- Support your college or department with their outreach programmes.
- Get involved with an Oxford SU campaign or a charity fundraising event.
- [Volunteer with Oxford Hub and local charities in term-time and during the vacation – a great way of gaining skills, meeting people and making a difference.](#)
- Participate in staff/student liaison committees within your college or department.
- Refresh your old CV; attend a CV workshop.

Gain some experience

- Look for, and apply to, insight days, spring weeks and work-shadowing opportunities in different sectors for inspiration. Places are limited and application windows can close within days, so register for notifications and be ready to apply as early as October.
- Apply for vacation work to earn money and gain experience and skills. Every opportunity can provide meaningful experience: bar and retail work can develop your customer focus, teamwork skills and insights into what makes a successful business.
- Visit the vacancy database on CareerConnect to look for part-time and vacation opportunities.
- Apply for a summer placement on the [Summer Internship Programme from January for overseas internships, and from mid-February for internships in the UK.](#)
- Start to build your network, and to learn about sectors and organisations.



Five steps for better career planning

Take time to understand what you enjoy most and what helps you succeed. Combine these insights with research into your preferred options to make decisions and take action.

1 What you do and what you like best...

Use Oxford's Career Weaver app to explore what interests and motivates you most.

Reflect on past experiences that have given you a sense of enjoyment, achievement or real satisfaction.

Consider how you decided which subject to study and which elements of your current studies most engage you.

Examine your extra-curricular activities and ask yourself:

- What appealed to you when you chose a specific activity?
- What has given you most satisfaction?
- What have you learned or gained from your extra-curricular activities?
- What are your reasons for continuing with it? Or, perhaps, for stopping?

Link these questions to the prompts in the table on the next page to begin to better understand your personal pattern of career interests and motivations.

Your strengths and skills are also important and you can develop existing skills and learn new ones whilst at University. Start with the eight employability skills listed below and consider what you are good at and what you really enjoy doing. Think about your range of skills:

- Where have you developed and used them?
- How do you like to use and apply them, both in your studies and extra-curricular activities?

See [Generating Career Ideas at www.careers.ox.ac.uk/generating-career-ideas](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/generating-career-ideas) to learn more about using Career Weaver and a variety of additional tools and ideas you can use, including:

- Psychometric tools based on short questionnaires, including [Prospects Career Planner](#)
- Reference books at the Careers Service, including *Build Your Own Rainbow*, *Where Am I Going And Can I Have A Map?*, and *What Color Is Your Parachute?*
- Book an appointment with a careers adviser to discuss any questions you have and for advice on how to interpret and apply the insights gained.

What is your personal pattern?

Our Career Weaver tool helps you to think about what you value most in your working environment. It provides a rich variety of short exercises to stimulate and structure your thinking and helps you to identify and describe:

- What you love.
- What you are good at.
- Why you do what you choose to do.

Use your SSO to open your personal account at www.careerweaver.ox.ac.uk and begin to explore, define and explain your most important drivers and best examples.



Core employability skills

The next chapter defines the 'transferable' employability skills listed below and reviews many options to practise and develop them.

- Business awareness
- Communication
- Creativity
- Initiative
- Leadership
- Planning
- Self-management
- Teamwork

In addition to these core employability skills, some jobs require specific skills such as languages, computing and IT, or even specific laboratory skills.

DEVELOPING YOUR CAREER IDEAS

With hundreds of possible directions, many students find it hard to decide what they want to do after graduating, and may even find the process quite daunting.

This chapter can help you make a start and get you thinking about how to identify careers that might appeal to you, and how to choose between them.

Style of work	Nice to have	Important	Essential
Analytical (researching and investigating, numerical work)			
Collaborative style of working			
Creativity and generating ideas			
Enterprise and business			
Managing and leading people			
Social and caring roles			
Solving problems			
Supporting and advising people			
Theoretical and conceptual (working with ideas)			
Working with defined processes			
Working with technology			

Motivations	Nice to have	Important	Essential
Altruism or benefiting society			
Challenge			
Connection (belonging and friendship)			
Empowerment (autonomy)			
Financial reward			
Fun			
Influence			
Job security			
Learning and personal growth			
Personal recognition			
Positioning (for the next career move)			
Prestige or status			
Progression (scope for rapid advancement)			
Responsibility (for delivery or people or things)			
Variety			

2 Exploring possible occupations and creating your 'long list'

As an Oxford graduate from any discipline it is possible to work in many industries. In the UK, the majority of graduate roles do not require a specific degree and many organisations seek to attract a diverse pool of candidates. This opens a world of possibilities and creates choices for you.

Start to build your 'long list' of possibilities, considering both the industry sector(s) and the kinds of roles you might be interested in: remember, similar roles can often be found across different sectors; whether it's design work, financial management, planning, managing or communicating.

It might be important for you to use the knowledge gained from your degree, or find a related role where you can still draw on that knowledge. Alternatively, you may choose to apply the transferable skills that you have in a totally new area.

Ideas and tactics to build your long list include:

- Reviewing roles suggested by an online career-planning tool.
- Exploring what others with your degree have chosen to do:
 - [Review the Graduate Outcomes Survey on the careers website.](#)
 - www.prospects.ac.uk has pages on 'What can I do with my degree?'
 - Examine the careers of 200,000+ Oxford alumni via the University of Oxford page on LinkedIn.
- Browsing jobs boards, including CareerConnect – what catches your eye?
- Thinking about careers related to your interests and extra-curricular activities.
- Dreaming a little and envisioning your future in an ideal world...
 - What are you doing? What skills are you using?
 - What happens? What results do you deliver?
 - Where are you working – an office/outside/at home?

“ It's OK not to know what to do and it's OK to take your time to find it. If you find something you really want and truly believe you're suited to then you have a much better chance of getting the job and of enjoying it.

— Rachel Ballard, Music, New College, 2016

[Read Rachel's full profile](#)

- Who are you working with, and how?
- What does an ideal working day/week look like?

Each time you find an idea of interest to you, consider the specific skills and attributes typically required for that role and how strongly these match your preferences. Also, look for related or adjacent fields to increase the options you are considering.

3 Researching your options

Researching industries, individual organisations, and roles helps you make better choices. It also lays the foundation for successful applications because it helps you:

- To be clear that you'd be happy doing the job!
- To signal why you are motivated to do the job with that specific organisation.
- To impress recruiters with insightful questions and an awareness of issues or trends that may affect their market.

Research: get first-hand experience

First-hand experience allows you to explore whether you have the ability and interest to perform well in a role. You also learn more about the organisation, its people and working culture, which helps you evaluate whether you are likely to enjoy working there.

The next chapter provides a fuller overview of the options available, which include not only internships and work experience but also a variety of shorter opportunities to visit organisations. These programmes can help you to:

- Learn about an industry and a role, and the organisation and its culture.
- Develop transferable skills and a track record that provides evidence of your ability and motivation.
- Secure an offer to the next stage:
 - Insight programmes may provide a fast track to an organisation's internship programme.
 - Leading employers report that nearly a third of their graduate intake will have undertaken work experience with them before they are hired, and this rises to more than two-thirds in some sectors.

Research: other methods

Read widely to research the industries and organisations you are targeting. Start with the following ideas:

- [Read our industry sector introductions in this Guide.](#)
- Dig deeper with over 50 in-depth sector briefings and the resources we have listed on our website: www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sectors-occupations.
- Company websites, particularly their career pages, often provide lots of information, including:



- Profiles from recent graduates.
- Information about their graduate programmes.
- Tips and practice materials for the recruitment processes.
- Professional bodies' websites.
- Free resources at the Careers Service:
 - Podcasts of relevant panel discussions.
 - Search for GoinGlobal (country guides) and practise psychometric tests on our website.
- Join relevant LinkedIn groups to keep up to date with current topics in the sector.
- Use your Single Sign-On and Bodleian Library membership for free subscriptions to *The Financial Times*, *The Economist* and plenty of leading newspapers and industry journals.

- Attend company presentations and events to meet senior managers, alumni and recruiters.
- Talk informally with family, alumni, and others to understand their careers and what their organisations are really like:
 - Talk to friends and finalists returning from internships or work placements.
 - Use LinkedIn to find alumni you might approach directly.
- Join relevant societies to find like-minded students and more events – many with employers.
- Speak to a careers adviser who has a particular interest in that sector.

4 Narrowing down your options

For many people, career planning is an ongoing process, revisited and revised as they gain experience, learn and grow. The choices you make now are just the first steps; changing career direction in the years after graduation is quite common.

However, it is important to engage. Make a decision rather than 'drift' into a career or further study simply because it seems within reach. To weigh up the 'pros and cons' of different choices, analyse your options and listen to your intuitions, with the aim of identifying which roles best match up with your key criteria.

One option is to build a 'decision-making grid', where you weigh the relative importance of your key criteria and score each career option independently. In the worked example (opposite), it seems that option Y is least attractive – and could be discarded – but it might be worth pursuing both options X and Z as attractive choices.

Research: talk to people

To go beyond the information on an organisation's website, talk to people – lots of people – about what they do, what they like and don't like, and ask for their advice.

Read the guidance on how to find and network with people who are able to share their experiences and offer relevant advice and insights into the roles that interest you most.

During term time, particularly in Michaelmas term, take advantage of the many chances to meet and talk with company representatives – check the Careers Service Events Calendar on CareerConnect.

- Attend the careers fairs and our industry panel events to hear from and meet recent graduates and recruiters.

To distinguish between options X and Z more fully, it may be necessary to do further research or add additional factors to the grid, or use an alternative approach. [The Careers Service advice on How to Make a Career Decision provides further details](#) on the 'decision-making grid' and three other decision-making strategies: the D.E.C.I.D.E.S. model, Force-field Analysis, and Visualisation.

At this stage, you do not need to narrow your choice to a single option. In fact, we recommend you work in parallel on your 'plan B' (and perhaps 'plan C') in case your first choice does not work out. For every option you follow, though, allow yourself enough time to undertake sufficient research and to make high quality applications.

Example of a decision-making grid

Decision factor	Weighting	Option X	Option Y	Option Z
Staying in Oxford	2	2×2 = 4	2×2 = 4	2×1 = 2
Creative job	3	3×1 = 3	3×0 = 0	3×1 = 3
Learning: quality of training	3	3×1 = 3	3×1 = 3	3×2 = 6
Total		10	7	11

Weighting of criterion:
3 = important, 2 = quite important, 1 = less important.

Criterion satisfied in this occupation/role:
2 = almost ideal, 1 = quite good, 0 = not met at all.

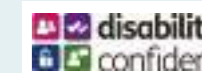
5 Moving forward from your decisions

Allow plenty of time for this and in particular:

- Plan ahead and attend events listed on our Events Calendar on CareerConnect. These include:
 - Career fairs.
 - Company presentations.
 - Skills workshops and training sessions.
- Ensure you receive the Careers Service's weekly newsletter.
- Save searches on CareerConnect to receive job alerts.
- Check application deadlines for your top choices and begin to plan your applications.
- Bookmark target firms' careers pages, set up email alerts for vacancy notices, and follow them on LinkedIn and social media.
- Continue to research your target organisations and roles.
- Check your own online presence, particularly your visibility on social media.

Researching employers' diversity and inclusion policies

It is often difficult to know whether an employer is genuine about recruiting applicants from diverse backgrounds and not just 'ticking a box'. There are several indicators that will help you to decide whether a recruiter is truly proactive. If you are interested in specific recruiters, research their diversity and inclusion policy and practice, talk with their representatives at careers fairs and question them as to what their organisation does to recruit and retain staff from diverse backgrounds.



Indicators of the strength of their commitment to recruiting from diverse backgrounds can include:

- They are a 'Disability Confident' employer. Look out for the government-endorsed logo below on their promotional material and vacancy adverts. This means the employer has made a commitment to employing disabled people.
- They are accredited as a 'Mindful Employer', indicating that they are extremely supportive of employees with mental health issues.
- They have diversity networks and buddy schemes, such as Gender Balance Network and Carers Schemes.
- They partner with and provide internships for people from under-represented backgrounds through organisations such as SEO (Sponsors for Educational Opportunity), EmployAbility, The Windsor Fellowship, and Rare Recruitment.
- They score highly on indicators such as the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index due to their work ethos and practices.

There is more [advice on equality and diversity in the application process on p.50](#).

“ You might be tired of hearing it, but you've probably got more free time on your hands now than you ever will. Use it wisely! Start figuring out what you like and dislike (just as helpful), and to start building the foundations that will give you the best shot of landing that dream role.

— Issah Abdul-Moomin, PPE,
Lady Margaret Hall, 2014

Ethical Networking

The phrase ‘it’s who you know, not what you know’ makes us a little uncomfortable as we put more emphasis on widening participation, diversity and inclusion.

Surely we want to live in a world where people are hired based on a diligent and transparent process which considers:

- Formal qualifications.
- Size and scope of relevant achievements that prove skills and strengths.
- Sector and organisation knowledge that proves enthusiasm and fit with the role.

So what are the ethical reasons for networking?

- To become aware of opportunities: it is said that 60% of jobs are never advertised (‘the hidden job market’) e.g., a start-up with no time nor HR department.
- To understand what really goes on inside organisations so that you choose the right opportunities to apply for.
- To uncover the language and terminology of the organisation so that you can make your achievements sound as relevant as possible and talk like an insider to establish fit and enthusiasm.

Beyond the objectives of ethical networking, we need to approach the subject with emotional intelligence, people do not like being sold to or taken advantage of:

- ‘As you walk into a room to network: don’t prepare to sell yourself; prepare to understand people and

“ Students ask me what it takes to be successful and there are many factors. But most important is to go out into the world and make lots of friends and no enemies. It is never worth winning an argument and losing a friend. Bake cakes, buy beers, socialise at lunchtime. The more you can turn your tutor or supervisor or other senior people into sponsors who support you and push you forward for things, the more successful you will be.

— Dr Mike Moss, Careers Adviser

how they may be helped’ Maurice McCartney, entrepreneur-in-residence, Oxford Careers Service.

- ‘Networking is about conversation and generosity,’ adds Dr Rachel Bray, Research Staff Hub lead and former careers adviser at Oxford University.
- ‘You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you,’ says Dale Carnegie, author of *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

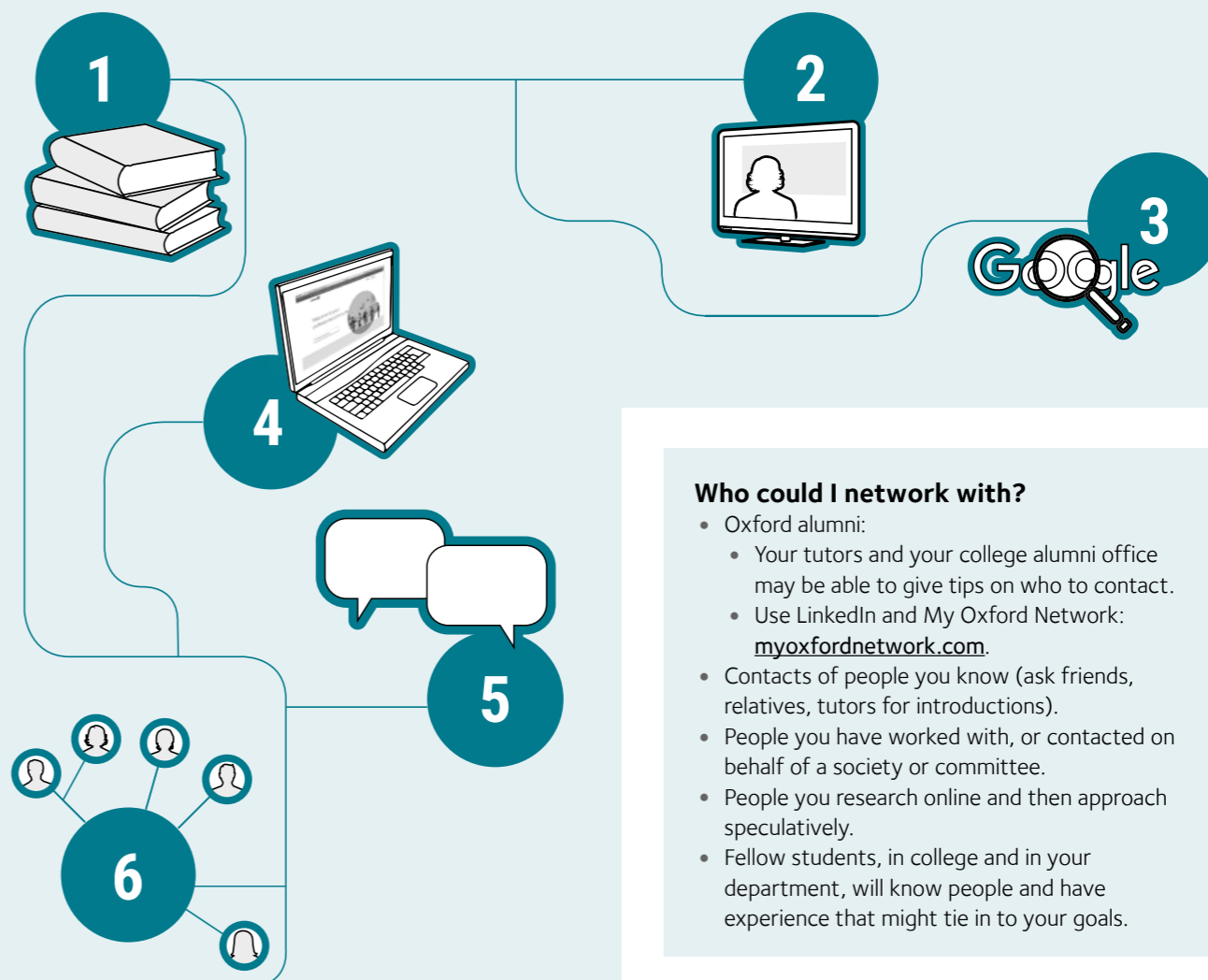
Viewed through this lens, networking is a way of life; the goal is to build and maintain a ‘network of reciprocal assistance’. So it is best to think of networking as going out and making new friends. The only thing to get used to is that this very normal human process is preceded by some planning and preparation so that you can find out more about new organisations.

How do I approach people?

The key to effective networking is research. Always prepare in advance; when you are going to meet someone, look them up on LinkedIn, so you can talk their language. Sheryl Sandberg, the chief operating officer of Facebook, gets very embarrassed when women ask her to mentor them: ‘While asking a stranger to be a mentor rarely, if ever, works, approaching a stranger with a pointed, well thought-out inquiry can yield results. Focus on how to manage a business not on how to manage a career’. When Bill Gates was a teenager he read ‘tons of biographies and autobiographies’ of technologists and business people to create a foundation on which to build his commercial awareness (so he could start Microsoft at 19 years old).

Also, tailor your elevator pitch. An elevator pitch is three sentences:

1. Who am I? – tailor it to resonate with who they are looking for.
2. What do I want? – tailor it to resonate with what they are offering.
3. A question – to start a conversation, research it, make it engaging and demonstrate the depth of knowledge you already have.



Discovering your network

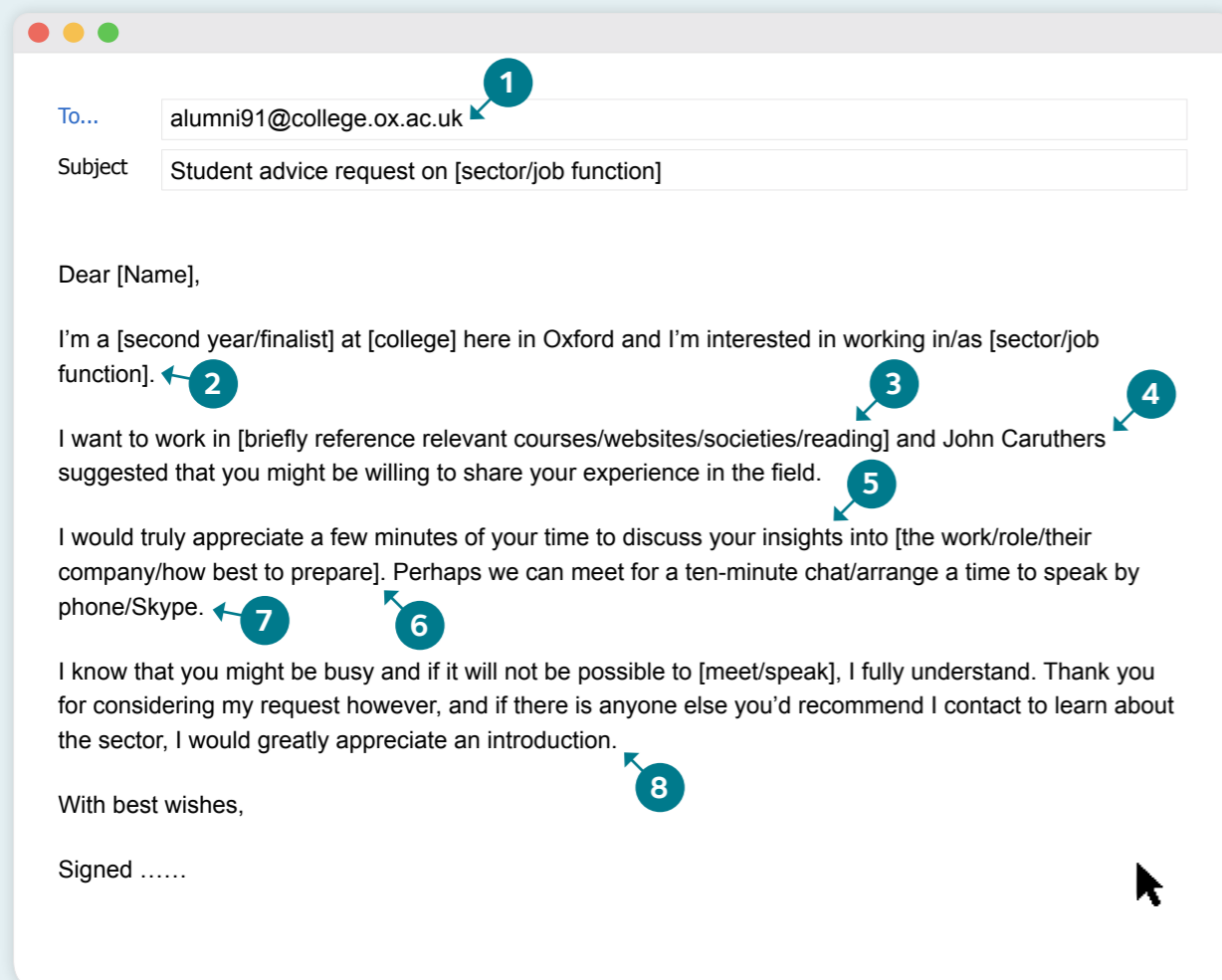
- 1 Read (auto)biographies of sector leaders.
- 2 Engage with the latest stories from the sector in mainstream media.
- 3 Research the sector on Google, so you never ask a question that is answered on the website; look at competitors.
- 4 Research people who work in the sector on LinkedIn.
- 5 Talk to junior sector workers and note the language and technical terms they use as they talk about their job.
- 6 Network with sector leaders or interview them when you understand the job inside out and how to talk about it like an insider.

Who could I network with?

- Oxford alumni:
 - Your tutors and your college alumni office may be able to give tips on who to contact.
 - Use LinkedIn and My Oxford Network: myoxfordnetwork.com.
- Contacts of people you know (ask friends, relatives, tutors for introductions).
- People you have worked with, or contacted on behalf of a society or committee.
- People you research online and then approach speculatively.
- Fellow students, in college and in your department, will know people and have experience that might tie in to your goals.

Platforms for networking

- **My Oxford Network:** A networking platform just for Oxonians.
- **LinkedIn:** The biggest professional social network, with powerful search tools.
- **Twitter:** Use the search facility to find people who mention their employment or university in their profile.
- **Facebook:** Post a message to your personal contacts letting them know what you are most interested in and asking for recommendations for people to contact.
- **Industry websites:** Many employer websites include ‘about us’ or ‘staff team’ pages where you can learn more about who works there (sometimes there is also an email address).
- **ResearchGate:** A social networking site for scientists and researchers to share papers, ask and answer questions, and find collaborators.



Email/social network message

- 1 If you do not have a direct email address, try an organisation's generic email address marked 'FAO [name of contact]', politely asking for it to be forwarded.
- 2 Make a connection so your contact understands who you are and how you found them.
- 3 Build your credibility and show you are serious by briefly outlining relevant research, and explaining where you identified them as a potential contact – perhaps the college alumni office or LinkedIn.
- 4 A reference from someone they know can be a powerful incentive to respond, but check first with your source that they are happy for you to use their name.
- 5 Asking for advice or information is useful – it is free to give and people are usually happy to share what they know. It also covers many possibilities, including where to find information, insider views on careers, tips for getting in, other potential contacts and even unadvertised jobs.
- 6 Explain what you are most interested in. Try to be specific so they understand what you hope for and can judge whether they can help you – if you ask a vague question, you will get a vague answer, or none at all.
- 7 Suggest a way forward, and be specific about what you are expecting: 10 to 15 minutes is realistic for a first chat or call.
- 8 Show respect for their time, keep it polite and positive, and keep the door open to future contact.

Building your occupational awareness



It can sometimes be useful to look at what other Oxford students have done after completing their degrees to get a better understanding of the breadth of choices open to you. To go beyond the outline provided here, use the Careers Service's webpages on 'The Graduate Outcomes Survey' to see the early-career destinations for Oxford graduates from 2012 to 2018.

Further study

Just under 20% of graduates choose further study and the Careers Service provides support and advice on this:

- From finding courses, to assisting with applications, and advising on potential funding sources or studying abroad. **Turn to the Further Study advice** for more information on options and planning for further study.

Consider carefully what benefits you hope to gain from undertaking another degree, against the time and costs required. Although further study is a prerequisite for some careers, and highly desirable for others, for many careers it's unnecessary and may make no difference to either your entry level or starting salary.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/further-study

Occupational sectors

Careers are often labelled according to their industry sector, and the latter section of this Guide provides short industry introductions and company listings covering over 21 major industry sectors that our leavers enter. There are many more – nearly 50 – detailed briefings on our website, covering all the sectors in this Guide and more. Briefings usually include sections such as:

- Types of job.
- Entry points.
- Skills and experience.
- Getting a job.
- External resources.



Source: Graduate Outcomes Survey 2017–2018 (data collected 15 months after graduation)

Students who go into work after graduation, work in a wide range of sectors such as:

- Education
- Health and social care
- IT and computing
- Government and public services
- Banking and investment

- Law
- Consultancy
- Scientific research and development
- Media, journalism and publishing
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Arts and heritage
- Consumer goods and retail
- Advertising, marketing and communications
- Accounting and financial services
- Civil engineering, construction and property

And many more... Don't worry if you're not interested in any of the listed sectors; we'll try to help you find the right sector and role for you.

Functional roles

The industry or sector that someone works in is only one aspect of their career. Equally important is the role or function that the person takes on. Many larger companies offer graduate-entry programmes where the first two to three years involve rotation through a number of different functional areas to provide a broad grounding in the company and its business. Graduates

also have time to assess their strengths and preferences for later specialisation.

It's important to consider which functional roles you might be most interested in. For some people, the function becomes their primary goal, so remember that the same functional role can be found in many diverse industries: charities need IT specialists, marketers and HR managers as well as front-line volunteers, fundraisers and policy-makers. Data analysts are needed as much in the advertising and retail sectors as in academic research, policy, finance and consultancy organisations.

Take time to think more broadly about where you might find opportunities that you'd be interested in.

If you don't limit yourself by exclusively targeting industries that seem to have the "right label", you may be surprised at the possibilities you find – both as a first career destination or a few years later.

For example:

- Aspiring journalists can learn valuable skills in a PR role in any sector, and by blogging.
- Considering a career in IT? IT roles exist in virtually every sector and organisation.



“ Don't panic if you leave Oxford unsure of your next steps! Many graduates have no idea what they want to do after leaving university. It can also take time to find your first post-university job, so don't get discouraged. Bear in mind the Careers Service supports alumni as well as students, which is an opportunity definitely worth taking.

— Hannah Shearer, Development Assistant at Exeter College, BA History, Balliol College, 2014

Changes in direction

It's also true that careers develop over time. Whatever direction you start out in doesn't tie you to that industry or function for life. It's quite natural for your ideas to develop and change as you gain experience and find new interests, or as new opportunities present themselves.

A change of career doesn't mean wasted time: most of your skills will be transferable to other careers. Some graduates choose to gain specialist expertise through a graduate scheme, such as general management, marketing or accountancy and use this as a stepping stone into an industry where graduate opportunities can be harder to find – such as in arts & heritage, charities, or the creative industries. These first career steps can provide both professional qualifications and experiences that are highly valued, but which may be hard to come by as a new graduate entering directly into certain sectors.

Read the alumni profiles included in the industry sectors of this Guide: they demonstrate that shifts in career direction are quite common, and that even a radical change of direction is possible.

The Careers Service only tracks leavers' initial career destinations using the official DLHE and Graduate Outcomes surveys. However, we have surveyed alumni ten years after leaving and this revealed that:

- On average alumni had worked for three employers since leaving Oxford.
- The sector in which alumni worked after ten years could be very different from the sector they initially entered.

In recognition of the fact that careers are not fixed, the Careers Service provides access for alumni to a large number of our events and services for life. We also have a careers adviser specifically working with alumni who can advise on decisions and strategies for managing career changes.

Why do some sectors seem more visible than others at Oxford?

Whether it's the advertised listings in this Guide, company presentations on our termly Events Calendar or sector-specific career fairs, you'll probably notice that recruiting firms within the four 'City' sectors are highly visible in Oxford. So why do accountancy, banking and investment, consultancy and law firms stand out so much, if they each account for only a small proportion of all the destinations of leavers?

There are a few reasons for this apparent imbalance:

- In some sectors, such as media, retail, and FMCG (fast moving consumer goods), and energy, a few big organisations dominate – and many are already household names (BBC, Google, John Lewis, Sainsbury's, Shell and Unilever.) These companies don't need to advertise their names or brands to become known, and students find their graduate opportunities unaided. In contrast, large 'City' firms can have significant graduate programmes but aren't well-known outside their field, so need to promote themselves more.
- Smaller organisations – which account for the majority, perhaps 85% of all graduate-level jobs – generally have less predictable recruitment needs, smaller recruitment budgets, and may not have a 'graduate programme' to promote. Instead they will hire into specific graduate-level positions, advertising these individual jobs as and when positions arise.
- In some sectors – such as, advertising, arts and heritage, charities, international development, marketing and PR, and media and journalism, only a limited number of 'graduate schemes' exist. A lot of recruitment is done from the network of people known to the company, often from people seeking relevant experience and visibility through volunteering (charities), or being runners/assistants (TV and film) or fieldworkers/volunteers (development). Paid and unpaid industry-specific work experience tends to be very important in these industry sectors and both direct approaches and speculative applications are often expected.

Routes into graduate employment



The Careers Service offers impartial advice on different approaches to finding graduate-level employment. We can relate this to different industry sectors and roles, and will not steer you in any particular direction.

Within a sector, there are a typical set of recruitment processes, but each organisation will manage its vacancies and applications in its own way, so:

- Understand both the industry pattern and the exceptions for the roles you are targeting.
- Be clear about timescales and deadlines from the beginning.
- Start your sector research with the 20+ short industry briefings in this Guide. Each one includes advice on recruitment processes and outlines ideas on how to develop relevant skills, enriched by personal stories and advice from Oxford alumni, and supported by listings from some of the major employers.
- Talking to companies and people doing the work in which you are interested can be invaluable. While you can network all year round, the first few weeks of Michaelmas term see hundreds of companies visiting Oxford every year for our career fairs and company-led events. We are planning for online fairs again in 2021 but just as many firms will be there to engage with so plan your time well:
 - See [Careers Term by Term for an overview of the recruitment year at Oxford](#).

“What can you offer an employer in addition to your degree qualification? Graduates who can demonstrate the transferable skills most commonly sought by recruiters will find that they have a competitive advantage in the jobs market. The eight core employability skills that employers look for are described here: www.careers.ox.ac.uk/develop-your-employability-skills. Use this resource to identify your own skills gaps, get tips on improving your profile and boost your chances of job success.

Rebecca Ehata, Careers Adviser,
Oxford University

- Use the Events Calendar on CareerConnect to find dates, times and locations.
- Follow employers' websites, Facebook and Twitter for the latest news and job alerts.
- Use national graduate career sites like Prospects, TARGETjobs, and Milkround.

Graduate training programmes

Organisations that recruit a number of graduates every year often have structured training schemes. These generally last for one or two years and provide formal training and development as part of a structured programme. Often they also offer 'rotations' through a succession of roles in different parts of the organisation. Graduates gain a range of experience, specific skills and a broad introduction to the firm and its industry.

Applications usually open during the summer (July onwards) and often close during Michaelmas term (as early as October!) for start dates in July to September following graduation. Check the relevant industry sector briefings for more specific information.

Oxford's numerous careers fairs in October and November support this cycle. These, together with our other fairs in Hilary and Trinity terms, are excellent opportunities to meet a wide range of recruiters and alumni, to find out more about their work and explore possibilities. With a little preparation, they are also a chance to make a good first impression and show your interest in an organisation.

Many employers also run separate company presentations in Oxford. Go to these whether you are simply interested to learn more about their graduate scheme, or use them specifically to deepen your knowledge about that company and meet more people from the firm. You'll find these listed in the Events Calendar in CareerConnect.

Individual graduate roles

Many, many more graduates join organisations to fill a specific position rather than as part of a graduate training programme. All types of organisations offer these direct entry roles, including employers with big graduate schemes.

Direct entry roles are advertised widely, generally one to three months before a job starts. The best places to start looking for vacancies include:

- Individual organisations' websites and, increasingly, their social media feeds.
- The Careers Service's vacancy database on CareerConnect.
- National graduate career sites like Prospects, TARGETjobs, and Milkround.
- Industry professional bodies and specialist media channels.

Finding work in specific UK locations

Geography and reputation mean that recruitment at Oxford can appear London-centric. However, opportunities exist across the UK:

- Major organisations often offer a choice of locations in regional offices.
- Some sectors, like education and healthcare, provide opportunities countrywide.
- Many thousands of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) offer graduate jobs too, and the websites of professional bodies usually list locations for SMEs in their industry. Some regions are recognised for specific industries. For example, Manchester is increasingly seen as a creative hub, and Cambridge has a reputation for science and computing start-ups. Oxford is also particularly good for science, health and publishing jobs, and has a vibrant and growing tech sector: attend our 'Summer Fair' each Trinity term to meet some of these dynamic and rapidly expanding companies.

Many job platforms allow you to search by region – including our own vacancies on CareerConnect – and you can search specifically for jobs in:

- Scotland www.s1jobs.com
- Wales www.gowales.co.uk
- Northern Ireland www.gradireland.com

Read the [advice on working in different countries and UK visas](#), or see a careers adviser at the Careers Service for advice if you are considering working abroad.

Unadvertised roles

A significant number of job vacancies are never advertised or only advertised via social media. Employers often recruit people they know, who are recommended to them, or who approach them speculatively. In certain sectors, such as media and advertising, networking is an essential and expected part of the application process for both full-time jobs and work experience.

Networking can help you understand the industry in which you are interested and uncover possible opportunities. For more information see our [advice on ethical networking](#).

As you build your contacts and knowledge, you develop the foundations to make well researched speculative applications that are properly tailored to the specific needs of an employer.

Recruitment agencies

Recruitment agencies help organisations recruit staff for a fee (paid by the company) by providing their clients with quicker access to pre-screened and qualified candidates. Agencies often specialise in specific sectors, and if you have relevant experience they can be an extremely effective way of finding work. Research agencies in your field and select one or two to build a relationship with.

If you are working with an agency, it is important to remain actively involved in your own job search and continue to check employers' websites and other sources for vacancies.

Jobs from internships and work experience

Work experience and internships can be a great way to secure a full-time offer. This is especially true for companies offering internship programmes exclusively for penultimate-year students: these are often used as a core recruitment tool, with a successful internship leading directly to a job offer for the following year. Research by High Fliers confirms that at major employers, nearly a third of positions are filled by graduates who had already worked for the company. Our experience suggests that in some specific sectors, such as banking, this proportion can rise to as high as three-quarters of graduate positions.

All companies – large and small – may offer work experience or internships. In line with the advice for finding full-time positions, use companies' own websites, our CareerConnect jobs board, and graduate recruitment sites. Speculative applications can also be highly effective, and sometimes firms will even create an opportunity when approached directly. Read our advice online about making speculative approaches.

Specific opportunities for Oxford students include:

- The [Oxford University Internship Programme](#), run by your Careers Service, which sources hundreds of internships in locations around the world exclusively open to Oxford students.
- The [Micro-Internship Programme](#), run by the Careers Service, offering work experience projects in 9th week of every term.
- The Oxford Hub offers a range of programmes to support both young people and the community – go to www.oxfordhub.org or email hello@oxfordhub.org.

For more ideas on how to find work experience and short-term engagements, turn to our advice on:

- [Gaining Experience and Developing Skills](#)
- [Application Essentials](#)
- [Networking](#)



Further study

Taught masters', research masters' or doctoral degrees? In the UK, Europe, North America or elsewhere? Narrowing down your options can be tricky.

Consider your motivation

- It might be to satisfy intellectual curiosity, to access a specific career or change direction. Think about what you need to know to assess how effectively potential courses can deliver your goals. Talk it over with a careers adviser if you need to.

Talk to people

- Recommendations from Oxford academics in your field.
- People working in your sector of interest – find them on LinkedIn.
- Get in touch with prospective tutors and supervisors.

Do your research

- Academic literature and conference proceedings to find key research groups.
- Destination statistics for each course.
- University rankings.
- Research Excellence Framework assessments of research departments www.ref.ac.uk.

Fees and funding

Costs vary but are likely to run to many thousands of pounds.

- **Self-funding** is the reality for many graduate students: savings, family support or loans.
- **Postgraduate loans** of £11k–£12k are available for masters' degrees in the UK. Loans of £26k–£27k are available to residents in England for doctoral study at UK universities. www.gov.uk/postgraduate-loan.

Careers adviser Abby Evans answers further study FAQs

Do I have to do a master's degree before a PhD?

Not always: it is possible to go straight on to a PhD programme from a first degree course. This is common in science and engineering in the UK. Some PhDs have a master's year built in. However, in many continental European countries a master's degree is required to begin a PhD. Even in the UK, most arts, humanities and social science students complete a master's degree before embarking on their PhD.

Will I need a first class degree?

Most courses ask for at least a 2:1 class degree or

- **Research Councils**, www.ukri.org, fund some UK PhDs by allocating funds to Doctoral Training Centres or departments to distribute to eligible candidates.
- **Scholarships** are listed on the graduate admission pages of university websites. Check eligibility and closing dates carefully.
- **Graduate assistantships**, and other opportunities to teach or conduct research in your department or college, may provide additional income. In the US, they are a common way to fund study. Discuss opportunities with departments.
- **Sponsorship** or employer support is relatively rare but not unheard of in scientific and engineering disciplines (e.g., Industrial CASE awards – via Research Councils – and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships at ktp.innovateuk.org).

Studying abroad

Higher education is an international marketplace. You might be tempted by lower fees charged in certain countries, by the opportunity to improve your language skills or by a centre of academic excellence in your subject. Many universities in Europe offer courses taught in English. Application schedules vary, so research the differences carefully.

There are useful country-by-country overviews at www.prospects.ac.uk and on GoinGlobal via www.careers.ox.ac.uk.

The Careers Service publishes advice on study in the USA and abroad, all available online.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/further-study/

equivalent, and many graduates with 2:1s successfully apply for further study. However, a first class degree might increase your chances when applying for popular courses, and may help you secure funding.

How can the Careers Service help?

In addition to extensive information on our further study webpages, we also offer seminars on a range of aspects of further study including Postgraduate Study in North America and in Europe, Writing Personal Statements. You are welcome to book an appointment with a careers adviser to discuss your options, strategies for choosing courses or securing funding, or to get feedback on your application materials.



Working in different countries

You may decide to work outside your home country as part of a career with international postings, as time out after your studies, or as a planned long-term emigration. Opportunities are numerous and many Oxford graduates work internationally at some point in their career.

Consider your motivations carefully and research your options thoroughly to understand what opportunities are available. You will need to be aware of requirements in terms of languages and qualifications and to investigate any work restrictions. [Visa options for working in the UK](#) are outlined in the next article.

Jobs with international opportunities

Multinational companies, multilateral organisations, international development agencies and diplomatic services may all offer secondments or transfers to their international offices after a period of time, or as part of graduate training. Talk to organisations of interest to assess your chances of gaining an international posting if you work for them. If you have wanderlust, a range of organisations have graduate programmes that are explicitly intended to give international experience. Often these require fluency in more than one language,

and/or extreme flexibility regarding job location. Examples of such recruiters can be found in many different sectors, and includes BMW (automobiles), Aviva (insurance), Unilever (fast-moving consumer goods), TUI (travel), Airbus (aerospace), Pandora (retail), and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

If you are seeking short-term work in another country and an opportunity to experience international environments, the Careers Service's Summer Internship Programme provides opportunities across the globe.

Time out after your studies

Taking some time out to travel after graduating can often be funded by working simultaneously. Depending on your nationality, there are a number of visa schemes to help you gain short-term employment outside your country of citizenship. Check with the embassy of your destination to find out more, and see the website Anywork Anywhere for many examples and further resources: www.anyworkanywhere.com.

People who are fluent in English are in demand as teachers all around the world, and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is a popular option for experiencing life in another culture. TEFL can also become a longer-term international career. Certain schemes and some schools will provide training and others will require further qualifications. Read our online advice about TEFL teaching for full details.

Other options exist for volunteering/work experience where you receive bed and board: eg. teaching positions brokered by the British Council; VSO; WWOOF; Work Away. See the advice on Gaining Experience and Developing Skills: Volunteering for details.

Employers at Oxford and beyond

Many multinational firms visit Oxford's career fairs. If you are interested in working for one of their global offices, ask their UK representatives how you can apply to work for the firm in a different or your home country. Some international employers also visit Oxford to give recruitment presentations (and may conduct interviews here), so check CareerConnect's online Events Calendar regularly for details.

Many other fairs organised by international recruitment organisations take place throughout the world: some in London, while others are 'virtual' and held online. Look out for details of these on the Careers Service's blog and weekly newsletter.

International networking

Make the most of opportunities, while you are in Oxford, to develop your language skills and intercultural awareness by joining relevant international student societies. Employers may contact international

student societies to advertise in-country roles. Alumni from Oxford live all over the world, and are often happy to give advice to current students. Use 'My Oxford Network', your college alumni office, or LinkedIn to connect with them, or contact international alumni branches via their websites or Facebook groups. [See the earlier article on Ethical Networking in this Guide.](#)

If you are an international student looking to work at home, maintain links with your home country. For example, keep in contact with friends at university there and join your national student society at Oxford for networking opportunities. Use the resources and tips described above to research your options and stay in touch with relevant opportunities and developments in your home country. Remember that the recruitment cycle and processes may be different to those in the UK.

Online resources

Online databases provide a vast array of resources to aid job-seeking in most countries. Many are referenced on the Careers Service website. Some examples you can search for include:

- The Careers Service's vacancy database on CareerConnect frequently holds job postings placed by international recruiters.
- GoInGlobal – an external resource accessible via the Careers Service website with your Oxford Single Sign On, featuring profiles of 42 countries, a directory of employers, as well as international vacancies and internships.
- Our online briefing on finding work outside the UK contains links to a number of national and regional jobs boards.
- GradLink – advice and job boards for graduates looking to work in China, South-East Asia, the Gulf, Canada, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa and India.
- EURES – a website listing private and public job opportunities across all member states of the European Union.
- If you know your destination, search for 'expat' websites which may offer great advice and opportunities to meet others who have made the same transition.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/goinglobal
www.myoxfordnetwork.com
www.gradlinkuk.com
www.ec.europa.eu/eures
www.graduateland.com



Visa options for working in the UK

To stay in the UK to work after your studies, international students will need permission in the form of a visa. The rules about working in the UK are complex and change frequently, so be sure to check for full and up-to-date information.

The University's visa and immigration advisers give regular talks at the Careers Service on the current work visa options and can also cover individual queries. Check our Events Calendar on CareerConnect for details. Regrettably, the Careers Service's staff cannot advise on visas.

Graduate Route

The Graduate Route is open for applications from 1 July 2021. This visa is an opportunity to remain in the UK to work, or look for work, for two years if you have completed an undergraduate, PGCE, or master's Degree, or three years if you have completed a DPhil.

You will need to have successfully completed your qualification before you apply but unlike other routes you do not need a job offer or sponsorship from the

University or an employer. You must be in the UK to apply and you must have a valid Tier 4 or student visa at the time of your application.

The Student Immigration team has answers to frequently asked questions about the graduate route and you can check the gov.uk website for updates on the launch and how to apply.

Skilled Worker Visa (previously Tier 2)

Applicants are eligible for this visa if they have been offered a job by an employer who holds a license and have been issued a Certificate of Sponsorship.

The salary offered for Skilled Worker Visa applicants must be appropriate to the type of work and be at least £20,480. If you switch into this category from a student visa or within 2 years, your qualifying salary could be 70% of the usual level.

If your last visa was a student visa and you wish to apply from within the UK you will have to show that you completed a degree or at least one year of your DPhil. For more information on what is required see the Home Office requirements.

Start-up Visa

This visa is for students who have an innovative, viable and scalable business idea for development in the UK. Oxford University can endorse applicants each year and applications are made via the Careers Service. We advertise details of the application process via the Careers Service's blog and in our newsletters. If you are

endorsed by the University or another authorised endorsing body you will need to [apply for a start-up visa, which is valid for two years, via the gov.uk website.](#)

Tier 5 for an internship in the UK

You could apply for a Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange visa for an internship related to your degree for up to a year. This would normally need to be sponsored by a third-party sponsoring organisation, such as:

- Access Tier 5: www.accesstier5.com or Tier 5 Intern: tier5intern.com
- For Government information on this, see: www.gov.uk/tier-5-government-authorised-exchange

Other options

Nationals from some countries may have access to other routes for working in the UK, including a scheme for Commonwealth citizens with a grandparent born in the UK, and the Tier 5 visa (Youth Mobility Scheme), both of which you must apply for from your home country.

More information

www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/work
www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas
www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice

GAINING EXPERIENCE AND DEVELOPING SKILLS

Alongside your studies making time for extra-curricular activities can not only be enriching personally, but professionally too. Learning new skills and developing those you most enjoy will contribute crucially to your overall employability as the majority of organisations look for both academic qualifications and interests beyond academia.

Graduate employers expect you to have both a solid (predicted) degree class and strong employability skills that you have developed at university.

On the following pages, we highlight the core employability skills that recruiters look for, and suggestions of how to build and improve these while you are at Oxford. Additional job specific skills can be expected for many roles as well, such as strong numerical and analytical skills, or specific language and technical knowledge or expertise.

Recruiters tell us that they are generally impressed with the ability of Oxford students to display these skills compared to other graduates. However, they stress the importance for Oxford students to develop and demonstrate skills that are not necessarily developed through their academic work – especially commercial awareness and teamwork.

To support you, the Careers Service run a number of programmes to enhance your experience and work-relevant skills, including insight schemes, internships and personal development programmes. These are outlined in [the guidance on employability programmes](#).

“ Despite the challenging academic workloads, make time for extracurricular activities because the skills you learn here will be invaluable and help you later with your job interviews. Recruiters appreciate the extra effort and time that goes into these activities and enjoy listening to competency examples related to outside academia.

— Dr Lakshmi Manjoosha Adapa,
IT Consultant at Accenture

Developing core skills

1 Initiative

Recruiters want you to be able to demonstrate making things happen and getting things done. Ideas to help you develop this include:

- Organising a unique fundraising event for a charity.
- Helping to increase participation or membership for an event or society.
- Setting up an Oxford student arm of a professional organisation or a charity.
- Joining [The Oxford Strategy Challenge \(TOSCA\)](#).
- Developing your own website, or building one for a student society.
- Starting your own society, social enterprise or small business.
- Volunteering as a student representative for your course.

2 Communication

Employers want to see that you have good interpersonal skills, and can communicate verbally and in writing – to empathise and persuade. You can display these skills by:

- Persuading guest speakers to attend a society event you are helping to organise.
- Securing corporate sponsorship for a club or encouraging alumni to donate as part of a college fundraising campaign.
- Representing an external organisation as their Oxford brand ambassador.
- Work experience in a customer service role.
- Write a regular blog on something that interests you, and record ‘likes’ and ‘click-throughs’ quantitatively.
- Contributing articles or reviews to student publications or contributing to Oxide Radio.
- Creating publicity materials for a charity.
- Acting as secretary of a student society or your Common Room.
- Debating at the Oxford Union or the Oxford International Debating Society.
- Creating YouTube presentations or doing your own podcasts on something of interest to you.
- Volunteering to help with outreach and access events: assisting at Oxford open days, or visiting schools to encourage students to apply to Oxford.
- Volunteering to give a presentation in your college/department on an academic project.

3 Teamwork

Organisations want to know that you can work in a group to achieve something tangible. There are many ways to develop teamwork skills, including:

- Joining a sports team. There are dozens of student-run sports clubs, and many more for individual colleges. See www.sport.ox.ac.uk for inspiration.
- Getting involved in a choir, orchestra or band – or helping to produce a play.
- Contributing to the decision-making of your Common Room committee, or a student society.
- Choosing to do group project work, if the option is offered on your course.
- Joining [The Oxford Strategy Challenge \(TOSCA\)](#), or student-led initiatives for consultancy work in a group, like OxAid or the Microfinance Initiative.
- Completing a Duke of Edinburgh award.
- Campaigning with Oxford SU. Campaigns promote many good causes, from mental health to racial equality.
- Becoming part of the student team that runs Oxford Hub.

4 Creativity

Creativity is about being curious and innovative, finding new ways of doing things and understanding and taking risks. Consider:

- Driving change, improving systems and services.
- Brainstorming ideas for events or realising a themed ball.
- Lighting, set and costume design as well as performing and directing.
- [Creating ideas or work for The Agency](#), run by the Careers Service.
- Joining Oxford Entrepreneurs’ pitching event: Idea Idol.

5 Planning

Employers will want to see evidence that you can organise people and resources to achieve objectives and work to a deadline. Outside managing your studies, ideas of how you can develop this include:

- Organising a ball, bop, conference or campaign.
- Co-ordinating your Common Room’s annual elections.
- Organising a group or event to raise money for charity.
- Organising an away-day for a society, or an inter-university match for a sports club.
- Editing a student publication, such as a newspaper, website or yearbook.

6 Leadership

Employers will want you to have the ability to motivate, influence and organise others. Leadership involves having a vision, enrolling others into your vision and delivering tangible quantified results. You can develop this by:

- Taking a position of responsibility in your Common Room or with Oxford SU.
- Producing or directing a play, or organising an event, such as a ball.
- Joining the Oxford University Officers' Training Corps, for their leadership development training programme.
- Volunteering with youth organisations, such as the Girl Guides, Scouts, or even a cycling proficiency group!
- Offering to help train new staff in a part-time job, captaining a sports team, or running a student society.
- Leading a team on [The Oxford Strategy Challenge \(TOSCA\)](#).
- Encouraging students to apply to Oxford.

7 Self-management

Recruiters will want evidence that you can manage your own time, are flexible, resilient, and can improve yourself based on feedback. You can demonstrate this by:

- Doing any extra-curricular activities or part-time work in addition to your degree. This will signal to employers that you can balance various responsibilities and workloads.
- 'Up-skilling' yourself. Why not take a course at the Oxford Language Centre, or a free computing course at IT services during term?
- Setting yourself personal goals that require training to complete, such as running a marathon.
- Participating in an organised charity challenge, such as the RAG jailbreak or 'Three Peaks Challenge'.
- Undertaking an extended research project as part of your academic studies.

8 In-touch and agile

Academia is about specialisation, and many courses at Oxford are quite traditional and/or theoretical. Being 'in-touch' means being aware of the broader general context, and being sensitive to new and emerging trends. Being agile means demonstrating responsiveness to these emerging trends in a practical and productive way. You can:

- Research the latest and potential future trends in your sector of interest. How will machine learning influence sectors like banking and consultancy? How will machine learning automate the communication between people of different

languages? How will robotics and artificial intelligence influence medicine, law, government or manufacturing? How will sustainability affect global travel and food security?

- Take part in initiatives towards zero emissions, zero single use plastics etc.
- Get involved in data analytics, machine learning, robotics etc.

9 Computing & IT

You could boost your IT ability by:

- Enrolling in a free course and learning to do something new: Oxford's IT Services offer a wide range of free courses during term.
- Free coding workshops are run by CompSoc and CodeFirst: Girls.
- [Self-directed video based learning at LinkedIn Learning](#) (formerly lynda.com): free to you via the Oxford IT Services' website using your SSO.
- Downloading professional software, such as Adobe Creative Suite, and seeing how proficient you can become during the free trial.
- Familiarising yourself with another operating system.
- Taking free LinkedIn Learning online courses via Oxford IT Services to develop greater skill with, say, Excel. All you need is your Oxford Single Sign-on.

And if you are already quite skilled, you could try:

- Designing an app.
- Making a website for a student society.
- Volunteering to help out your college IT officer.
- Joining CompSoc or attending Oxford Geek Night to meet and learn from developers and designers.

10 Commercial awareness

All organisations – including not-for-profits – will want you to understand the key factors behind successful businesses. You can develop commercial awareness by:

- Organising an event that has to turn a profit, such as a concert, ball or a college bop.
- Joining [The Oxford Strategy Challenge \(TOSCA\)](#) to get an insight into a local business.
- Suggesting ways to improve efficiency at work, resulting in time or cost savings.
- Attending the Careers Service's [Insight into Strategy and Management programme](#).
- Negotiating with a local business to give a discount to members of a student society you belong to.
- Taking part in a business case studies workshop run by the Careers Service.
- Joining relevant student societies, such as Oxford Entrepreneurs, or the Oxford Guild.
- Taking part in virtual investment competitions online.

Joining employability programmes

The Careers Service runs several programmes to help students develop and practise the key skills outlined in [our article on core employability skills](#).

The Oxford Strategy Challenge

[The Oxford Strategy Challenge \(TOSCA\)](#) is a team-based experiential learning event with participants working on real strategy-focused client challenges over a week.

(Dis)AbilityWorks

The Careers Service puts inclusion and accessibility at the front of everything it does. We aim for all of our services to be



accessible but, recognising some students prefer bespoke support, we also offer a series of events and workshops to advise and provide practical help and resources for students with a disability, neurodiverse condition, mental health need and/or long-term health condition. Events will be publicised through the Events Calendar on CareerConnect and sessions are likely to include:

- Extended 1:1 guidance sessions.
- Talking to employers about a disability: if, how and when.
- Developing confidence in your career planning.
- Developing resilience.
- Advocacy with recruiters.

TOSCA is an opportunity for you to develop a broad range of transferable skills including teamwork, leadership, communication and business awareness. These along with the client relationship experience, will help you demonstrate your potential in applications, on your CV and in interviews.

You will work with a small team providing consultancy on a client project. The project you will work on will be important to your client, an opportunity for hands-on client work experience, and to make a real contribution to an organisation.

TOSCA currently runs monthly (excluding October and December).

The Student Consultancy

[The Student Consultancy \(TSC\)](#) is a progression opportunity open to participants who have completed The Oxford Strategy Challenge (TOSCA). It is an experiential learning programme providing hands-on consultancy and strategy experience with client organisations.

Over a period of 4–8 weeks you'll work in a team on a project that's important to the client – it might be understanding what customers value, a fundraising strategy for a charity, or ideas on how to promote their products and services to more people.

TSC currently runs termly.



Insight into... programmes

The Careers Service has established a series of 'Insight into...' programmes to accelerate students' learning and provide direct experience of the workplace and style of work in different sectors.

Last year, we offered five programmes: Insight into Strategy and Management, Medicine, Pharma, Publishing and Teaching. For more information, including how to apply, see the webpages for Our Skills Programmes, and monitor our blog posts and the Events Calendar on CareerConnect to hear about new programmes.



Insight into Medicine

If you are thinking about a career in medicine, spending time shadowing a doctor is extremely important. It can help you decide whether a medical career is right for you, and will enhance your UCAS application to medical school. If you have difficulty arranging your own medical work shadowing, this programme enables you to spend a day with a hospital consultant in Oxford. This programme runs in 9th week but not in every term – check the Events Calendar on CareerConnect.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-into-medicine

“ I enjoyed seeing the day-to-day interactions with patients and getting to grips with not just the science (which I love) and the patient care (which I love) but how the NHS works: why decisions are made and how doctors interact with patients in regards to this. It made me surer about entering the profession – seeing the medical teams interact to help people made me know I wanted to be able to contribute that way too.

————— Insight into Medicine participant, 2018/19

Insight into Pharma/Biotech

This programme is specifically for science students who are interested in research within the pharma/biotech industry and it gives you the opportunity to gain an insight into working at a local biotech company. You will have the opportunity to hear from a panel of scientists who will explain what their work is like on a day-to-day basis and there will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions. It typically takes place in 9th week of Michaelmas and Trinity terms: check the Events Calendar on CareerConnect.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-into-pharmabiotech

“ I really enjoyed the presentations at the start (where they compared academia life and working in a biotech company). The tour afterwards was also very helpful, and the staff did a great job at answering questions.

————— Insight into Pharma/Biotech participant, 2019/20

Insight into Teaching

Whether you are considering a career in teaching or are just weighing up your options, experience in school can be very valuable. This programme allows you to spend three days in a school, observing lessons, shadowing teachers, and perhaps planning and teaching a lesson. Placements are available in a wide variety of subjects; in primary and secondary schools, and sixth-forms, across the state maintained and independent sector, and in Oxford and other locations nationally. We are hoping for placements to take place during 9th week of Hilary and Trinity terms.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-into-teaching

“ Cherwell School were really accommodating and I got to see a variety of lessons through year group and ability. It was great to see different teachers' styles and how the different sets changed: teaching the top and bottom of the year. I enjoyed chatting to the children – hearing what they enjoyed about lessons and what they hated.

————— Insight into Teaching participant, 2019

Insight into Publishing

Insight into Publishing gives future publishing candidates the chance to hear from professionals in the different departments of publishing companies as varied as HarperCollins, Elsevier and Oxford University Press. Participants gain an insight into the future of publishing and discover practical ways to make their job and internship applications publishing-focused. It runs over three sessions and is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students from all degree backgrounds.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-into-publishing

“ I gained a lot of valuable experience throughout the three sessions and appreciate all the hard work that went into the organisation and execution of these.

————— Insight into Publishing participant, 2020

Insight into Academia

This seminar series explores topics relevant to those considering higher education roles in research, teaching and related areas. Open to current matriculated Oxford University students, alumni and early career research staff at the University. These informal sessions are intended to provide an open and impartial forum for you to learn more about the reality of becoming and being an academic, how to position yourself for success, and practical guides to job search and the application process in the UK and globally. All are led by careers advisers and we often invite early career academics and others to join us to share deeper insights. For more information see the website.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-into-academia

Insight into Strategy and Management

Our Insight into Strategy and Management programme is designed to demystify business and increase understanding of professional life to help students become ready for employment.

At the end of the programme you will be able to demonstrate to prospective employers a broader understanding of business, strategy and finance principles. You will also learn about matching your personal profile to prospective employers to help with career choices and how to apply the learning to cases and interviews.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-into-strategy-and-management

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/employability-skills
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/tsc

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/the-agency
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-programmes

Seven ways to gain experience

Work experience is an opportunity to explore your options and make good things happen. See individual employers' websites to check how they have adapted their offering during COVID-19 restrictions.

Work experience can be:

- A way to develop valuable skills and accomplish something noteworthy.
- A chance to try out possible career directions.
- An opportunity to make contacts in fields that interest you.
- A chance to earn money.

Work experience provides a valuable opportunity to develop awareness and understanding of yourself: what really interests you, how you like to work, and what you find most fulfilling.

It also has a very important role in enhancing your employability. In a study of major graduate employers (*High Fliers 2017*), half of the recruiters surveyed warned that graduates with no work experience were unlikely to be successful in applying for graduate-level jobs in their organisations. This is because work experience:

- Enables you to enhance and apply your skills.
- Provides evidence of your skills and achievements that you can highlight in your applications and talk about in interviews.

There's lots of work experience that you can do eg: student committee roles, volunteering, summer jobs and individual projects. What you've chosen to do already can be a useful clue as to what other forms of work experience and ultimately, jobs, might be fulfilling, as outlined in the [earlier section on Developing Your Career Ideas](#). Here are seven ideas to get you started.

1 Do an internship

“ A short fixed period of paid work experience in an organisation, usually working on a graduate-level, structured project or a defined set of tasks, which is designed for someone hoping to enter the profession.

These might be advertised opportunities requiring an application, or arranged with an organisation after contacting them speculatively. They can take place at any time of year, but most advertised opportunities take place in vacations, particularly the summer. Some organisations offer internships purely to provide interested students with some first-hand experience and do not expect to hire interns at the end of the period. Others use internships as a core part of their recruitment process, particularly major graduate recruiters, who often advertise summer internships for penultimate year students in Michaelmas term.

The Careers Service also runs The Oxford University Summer Internship Programme, a unique scheme exclusive to Oxford students which provides 4–12 week funded summer work experience across the globe.

2 Volunteer

Volunteering is a great way to develop employability skills and help others at the same time. As a volunteer you can work on projects or tasks that still use and develop your skills, but you have the added benefit of full flexibility and negotiable hours.

Here are a few suggestions for finding volunteering experience while at Oxford:

- The Micro-Internship Programme – provides short-term learning and development experiences in Week 9 or 10 of each term based in organisations across the UK and beyond.
- Oxford SU – organises diverse fundraising activities you can get involved in, including the annual RAG campaign. Oxford SU also wants volunteers for Target Schools and other programmes. See www.oxfordsu.org
- Oxford Hub – a student-run organisation that acts as a focal point for charitable activity in Oxford. It co-ordinates a variety of volunteering projects in many sectors. You can visit its website at www.oxfordhub.org
- Do-It – a web-based national database of volunteering opportunities. Search for projects in Oxford at www.do-it.org

- OCVA – Oxford Community and Voluntary Action is our local city volunteering hub, with lots of opportunities available: www.ocva.org.uk
- UN Volunteers (Online) – international volunteering opportunities with a development focus, that you can do on your laptop: www.onlinevolunteering.org
- Consider getting in touch directly with local organisations with causes you care about to discover if there's something you could help with, or to suggest a project, both in Oxford or near your home.

3 Insight days/open days

Some organisations advertise insight days, giving students talks and tours at their place of work. These are often offered to help students who are interested in the industry make a more informed application, but are not offered in all sectors, particularly during COVID-19 restrictions, although some offer virtual tours or insight days. In a similar vein, many major graduate recruiters will run company presentations and events in Oxford or virtually, where you can learn about the organisation, their recruitment processes and meet their staff.

How recruiters support equality and diversity

Recruiters are very keen to raise their profile with



applicants from all backgrounds and to dispel perceptions that may deter applications. The best way to assess whether their projected image is 'reality or myth' is to speak with current employees.

A useful starting point can be the 'buddy and mentor' groups or forums (eg, LGBT and BAME forums), which many organisations now promote.

An increasing variety of organisations are also establishing internship programmes, insight days, networking events and mentoring opportunities to encourage a greater diversity of applications. Such opportunities will be focused on groups which an organisation feels are under-represented in their employee profile; so check what is available in the industries that you are most interested in. There may be opportunities that focus around gender, ethnicity or sexuality, or for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

You could also explore specialist organisations that support candidates from under-represented groups, such as Creative Access, SEO London or Rare. Alternatively, look for programmes run by specific employers, such as the Civil Service Fast Stream's Summer Diversity Internship Programme.



“ Take opportunities to try new things at Oxford. I did voluntary tutoring and was a postgraduate teaching assistant during my PhD, and these experiences have helped me when it comes to discussing complex ideas with clients.

— Dr Francis Newson, Scientific Software Analyst. DPhil Particle Physics, Christ Church College, 2011

4 Work shadowing

Shadowing is a short period of time spent observing in a workplace. It can help you assess at first-hand whether a possible career might suit you, yet you don't have to have the skills needed to actively participate in the work. For this reason, formal shadowing programmes are often offered in fields where further training is required in order to actively participate, such as the health professions or teaching.

It is actually not difficult to set up shadowing yourself in any industry. Contact the organisation or individual you would like to observe, and ask! If they are not able to help, you could ask whether anyone might be willing to meet with you over coffee to help you learn more about the work they do.

5 Spring weeks/spring insight programmes

In an increasing range of sectors, organisations with larger graduate intakes now run one- or two-week insight programmes targeted for first years (and for second years on a four-year course). These discovery programmes often happen around Easter and usually have their own application process. In addition to offering participants industry insights and the chance to meet recent graduate recruits, they frequently include some skills development, advice on applications and may lead directly to offers for summer internships in your penultimate year of study. Some accept applications in Michaelmas, so start looking early!

6 Vacation and seasonal work

Seasonal jobs can provide money, an insight into an industry and demonstrate your adaptability and skills. They are often advertised in the few months preceding a vacation. They might be found on local employment websites, the organisation's own website, through temping agencies, word-of-mouth or by signs on organisation premises. You might also be interested in organisations which offer seasonal work abroad (such as Work Away or WWOOF), some of which run on an accommodation-for-work (work exchange) basis.

7 Personal projects

Depending on your goals, you might want to generate your own experience. It could be:

- Managing a 'fantasy fund' to demonstrate your passion for financial markets.
- Creating a piece of work to add to your artistic portfolio.
- Starting an entrepreneurial or charitable endeavour.
- Using your technological skills to code a new website/app/ game.

See if there are any local organisations that might be interested in using your project to help their work, or giving it publicity. Working with other organisations will give you new contacts and might lead toward referrals as well as increasing the scope for your project. These could all be added to your CV under 'Relevant Experience' or 'Projects'.



Making the most of the Internship Office

The Internship Office at the Careers Service offers a range of unique schemes that provide Oxford students with research and professional work experience opportunities with organisations across the UK and around the world.

The Summer Internship Programme

This programme offers hundreds of summer internship opportunities in locations across the globe, all exclusively available to current matriculated Oxford University students. They're offered in a wide variety of sectors, and often come with funding support or travel scholarships. There are opportunities suitable for students of all levels of experience and of all years of study, from first-year undergraduates to final-year DPhils. Internships can be in person or remote.

Examples of funded opportunities offered previously include:

- Internships with world-leading international development organisations, such as the UN Development Programme as well as development charities in Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- Professional placements from multinational organisations like Mitsubishi in Japan and consultancy companies around the world.
- Scientific research internships with universities and institutes in China, Brazil, Russia, Germany and more.
- Teaching positions in schools around the world.
- A wide range of arts and heritage internships.



The Internship Programme also offers access to placements in the UK, beyond the undergraduate internship schemes of the major graduate employers. Many Oxford-based opportunities frequently feature among these internships, with an increasing number of placements available within Oxford University itself, including colleges, departments, the Bodleian and the University museums.

The Internship Office strives to ensure that every placement, UK or international, comes with funding or assistance with travel or accommodation. UK internships advertised through the programme are paid at national minimum wage or above if the work is offered by a company in the for-profit sector. The internships are advertised from January each year, with application deadlines from February onwards.

Crankstart Programme

If you are a Crankstart Scholar, additional funding is available specifically for undertaking internships. You can apply for this at any point during your undergraduate studies. Internships can be sourced through our regular programmes, independently (directly with an employer) or through our Crankstart Exclusive Internships, which are advertised via a regular bulletin.

The Micro-Internship Programme

The Micro-Internship Programme offers voluntary, short-term learning and development opportunities across the UK and beyond. Placements last up to five

days, and take place in 9th or 10th week of each term. The opportunities are open to all matriculated students. Micro-internships are an excellent way to fit valuable work experience around your studies. Each placement offers the chance to gain useful insight into a particular sector while tackling a challenging work project to gain key employability skills. Micro-internships are available in all sectors, from investment firms to consultancy, tech start-ups to heritage sites. Placements can be in person or remote.

Mentoring Programmes

The Careers Service runs two mentoring programmes. The Crankstart Careers Mentoring Programme, exclusively for Crankstart Scholars, and the Promentor Programme, which matches selected mentees with alumni mentors over the duration of their undergraduate degree. Both programmes handpick experienced professionals to suit the mentee's area(s) of career interest, and encourage collaboration to explore aspects of a profession that may be of interest. Mentoring can be a great way to gain different perspectives, insight into certain sectors and develop key skills – among many other things.

More information

See the Our Internship Office section of our website: www.careers.ox.ac.uk/internships



APPLICATION ESSENTIALS

“ Tailoring applications to a handful of organisations is better than applying a scattergun approach. It can be tempting to copy and paste similar content but demonstrating you understand the employer's culture can help make your application stand out. Each application took me around a day and a half but the time is worth it: there is a career at the end.

— Amy Rickwood, Future trainee solicitor, New College, 2019

Good advice on applications applies to every aspect of the process, from preparing your CV and cover letters through to interviewing and assessment centres. And it is relevant for any application, whether it's for further study, a small charity, a graduate position or an internship with a leading multinational.

Successful applications

Throughout the application process:

- Demonstrate that you have the desire to do the job; right mix of skills; and potential to grow and learn.
- Explain clearly why you want to join their organisation; and how you fit both the role and the culture.

Successful applications therefore grow from enthusiasm for an organisation and knowing you would be happy doing the job. Invest time in identifying your preferences, motivations and skills. Research industry sectors to target your efforts better; try to understand the culture and style of different organisations and the skills and qualities sought. Talking to people working in the sector can really help to deepen your research.

For more detailed advice, see our section on [Developing Your Career Ideas](#).

Good research is vital and will help you stand out. It lays the foundation for communicating clearly how you meet the requirements for the role and fit the organisation. Before applying, analyse the advertisement or personal specification to understand:

- What the job entails.
- Which skills are most important.
- What excellence might look like.

All elements of your applications can then:

- Actively promote your strongest relevant skills and abilities.
- Present evidence showing where and how you have developed and applied these skills and abilities.
- Persuade your audience of your interest, excitement and motivation for the role and their organisation.

Identify and evidence the required skills

Identifying the skills and competencies required for a role can be straightforward because these are often listed in the job description and personal specification. Application forms often ask you to give examples of the specific skills sought. Even where these are not clear, or when making a speculative approach, you should try to identify which **core employability skills** are likely to be most important for the organisation.

Effective applications are supported throughout by evidence – it builds credibility. Simply asserting that you have a skill does not work, not least because anybody can make that assertion! Consider the opposite example in the 'Assertion or evidence?' box.

The examples you use in written applications and interviews can be drawn from a variety of activities, as transferrable skills are developed in many situations – through your studies, extra-curricular activities and work experience. Choose examples that:

- Relate to what you actually did, rather than what you might do in a hypothetical situation.
- Show your personal contribution, even within a team effort.
- Had positive outcomes.
- Are relevant to the employer – signpost this by mirroring the language used in the job description.
- Are fairly recent (preferably in the last two to three years).
- Allow scope for you to expand on if asked for more detail in an interview.

From building your CV to answering competency-based questions in interviews, you can **add structure to your evidence by using the CAR or STAR mnemonics**.

Assertion or evidence?

I will make a strong contribution at [company's name] because I am a good team player and natural leader.

Last spring, my leadership enabled our student consultancy team to make robust recommendations to our client, a local charity, on how to increase volunteering amongst sixth formers based on over 100 survey responses.

Remember...

Lastly, remember that recruiters are not mind-readers, and frequently work to tight deadlines. Never expect recruiters to infer how you fit their criteria. Instead, make it easy for them to find the evidence they are looking for.

- Be direct and state how you meet the criteria clearly, with lots of evidence to back up your claims.
- Mirror the language used in their recruitment literature to:
 - Align your style to theirs.
 - Enable software used to scan applications to match your evidence to the key competencies and skills required.
- Highlight relevant aspects of your background, knowledge and experience for each organisation and role.
- Reflect how your aspirations and longer term goals align to the opportunity.

Demonstrating commercial awareness

Good candidates are able to: demonstrate an understanding of an organisation's core activities, products and services; the marketplace – including competitors; and how political and technological change might affect their sector in future.

- Learn about the sectors you are targeting.
- Attend company events and career fairs, talk to alumni, join relevant student societies.
- Read journals and websites dedicated to the sector.
- Find and follow professional bodies and opinion leaders as well as companies and organisations.
- Be ready to discuss industry trends and how current issues might affect an organisation's markets or strategy – and/or their clients.
- Read the (financial) news and follow one or two major current affairs over time.
- Consider how organisations in the sector compete with one another.
- Become comfortable with business terminology and financial measures relevant to the sector and role.

Gain first-hand experience and insight through our [employability programmes](#) and work experience. See our [advice on Gaining Experience](#).

Equality and diversity in the application process

Many students worry that recruiters will be biased, fearing preconceptions about race, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, mental health conditions, social class or age.

The reality is that recruiters want the 'best individual for the role/scheme' and are keen to recruit employees from diverse backgrounds but are not always sure how to demystify or prevent misconceptions.

Many employers are proud to have robust diversity and inclusion policy and practice – look for indicators when researching organisations. These organisations recognise and value the unique skills, experience and attitudes that individuals bring owing to their personal circumstances. They also understand that students with a disability, health condition or those who have had to 'suspend studies' are often concerned that they may be at a disadvantage in the recruitment process – that it will not be fair.

Applicants have protection in law. This will vary depending on the country you wish to work in but the UK Equality Act 2010 protects you – at all stages – from discrimination due to disability, age, gender, race, religion and beliefs and sexual orientation. It is worth familiarising yourself with the law – see www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance and the law in the country you'd like to work in.

Whilst you may fear that your circumstances will be viewed negatively, for the recruiter they are often seen as an asset – for example, your problem-solving skills developed through having a disability may be much higher than others. Ultimately, what matters is how you evidence your skills, motivation and competencies throughout the application process – you are your best advocate!

Depending on your situation, and to prevent putting yourself at a 'disadvantage' to others, you may choose to 'disclose' or be open about your circumstances, so that the recruiter can put in place adjustments/support that enable you to demonstrate your potential at each stage of the application process (eg. extra time for online tests, specific software for visually impaired applicants, visiting the test centre before the day to familiarise layout and many more).

It is your personal decision whether or not to tell a recruiter of your circumstances. And, if you do choose to share this information, you must also decide at what point in the recruitment process (application, interview, job offer or in the job) to do so.

Everyone's circumstances are different and understanding your situation in this context can be difficult. Try not to pre-judge how recruiters might view you from what you have read or heard in the media and from others – instead, seek advice and more information to help YOU to make the right decision for YOU.

- The Careers Service has advisers who specialise in disability and diversity issues and can help you to decide if, when and how you might want to be 'open' about your particular circumstances.
- Approach the organisation's recruitment team for advice – this is an important part of their role.

CVs

The goal of a CV and its cover letter is to get you to an interview; for a speculative application, it is to encourage the reader to respond positively.

Remember, recruiters usually review CVs very quickly – perhaps only 10–20 seconds – and so CVs have a certain style all of their own. The primary challenge is to make it easy for the recruiter to find exactly what they are looking for. Focus on their core requirements and adjust or adapt your CV for each specific application.

Getting ready to create your CV

- Create your long list of all your experience, achievements and key dates. Transferable skills are developed and demonstrated in diverse situations, so include:
 - Educational achievements, prizes, awards.
 - Voluntary, paid and unpaid work experience.
 - Involvement in societies, sports and clubs.
 - Additional interests and skills (eg. languages; IT skills; music).
- For each application, identify the skills and competencies required.
- Select your most relevant experiences to demonstrate the skills and competencies required for the role.
- Select your format – for most graduate positions, a standard reverse chronological format is recommended (see [Siân Magellan's CV](#)).
- Consider which headings are most useful to present your experience most effectively:
 - EDUCATION will normally be at the top.
 - EXPERIENCE rather than 'Employment'.
 - Headings such as 'POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY' or 'AWARDS' can signal other important information.
 - INTERESTS or OTHER INTERESTS AND SKILLS should be included to indicate extra-curricular activities and diverse talents. This section might include sub-headings such as Languages; IT Skills; Sports; and Music.



There are four key characteristics of CVs that work well

Relevance

- Content is relevant to the position applied for – this is not a list of everything that you've done.
- Content highlights your personal contribution.

Clarity

- A well laid-out CV is inviting to read and easy to scan quickly.
- Use simple language – avoid jargon, acronyms and technical details that may not be understood or provide too much detail.
- A standard reverse chronological format helps recruiters as they know where to find what they are looking for.

Evidence-based

- Provide evidence of your contribution and impact.
- Focus on 'actions taken' rather than 'responsibilities' to showcase your skills.
- Use numbers, percentages and values to quantify your impact and give a sense of scale to your actions.
- Avoid unsupported assertions or opinions.

Brevity

- Avoid paragraphs, as these are slow to read.
- Use bullet points to package information succinctly.
- Avoid too much context, excessive detail or unfocused material that will dilute the impact of your most relevant messages.

Other forms of CV

Some roles may allow for, or invite, a different form of CV.

Creative CVs

If you are applying for a 'creative' role, in advertising or design for example, they may look favourably upon an infographic or otherwise visually unusual CV. This allows you to project something of your style and personality and can demonstrate your ability and skill communicating information clearly in a creative and striking way.

Academic CVs

There is no upper limit on the number of pages expected in a CV for an academic post. Information should still be relevant, brief, evidence based and clearly presented. If applying for a postdoc, fellowship, lectureship or research assistant post, make sure your CV has:

- Sections for professional memberships, publications, and conference presentations/posters.
- A focus on areas specific to academia, such as research experience, teaching experience and any university/college administration or committee work.
- Details of successful bids for awards, grants and collaborations.
- Referee details – usually three – ideally academics who both know you and are recognised in your field. It can take a number of revisions before you are

happy with your CV, and getting a second opinion can be very helpful. It might all make perfect sense to you, but you could be surprised by the things that others may question or not understand. Ask a friend to check it or meet a careers adviser for feedback.

Final checks

Once you think your CV is ready, we recommend a few final checks:

- First, ensure that you are putting forward your best case – that everything included is relevant.

Applications outside the UK

Expectations and conventions for what is acceptable in a CV varies between countries: eg, a photograph is never included in a resume for the USA, but is expected on a German CV. If applying outside the UK, research country-specific current practice, starting with:

- [Our advice on Working in Different Countries.](#)
- GoinGlobal country reports, free to use via www.careers.ox.ac.uk/goinglobal.

- Second, always check carefully for errors and typos – many recruiters dismiss well qualified candidates if there is even one typo in the CV, cover letter or application form!
- Finally:
 - Hold your CV at arms-length – does it look easy to read?
 - Fold it vertically and scan the left side in 10 seconds:
 - Will the reader get the gist of your application?
 - Are your strongest skills immediately visible?
 - Check for jargon and acronyms, and over-long bullets – edit vigorously.
 - Is it the right length?
 - Some employers (eg, investment banks) expect just one page.
 - Aim for a maximum of two pages, except for an academic CV.

Finally, finally!

Take a good break and then proofread – yes, again! – double checking for errors and typos. Save your CV as a PDF to ensure it keeps its beautiful formatting when you send it.

More information and examples

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cvs

Comments on Siân Magellan's CV

Overall

- Looks easy to read.
- Text and dates aligned, no full-stops and plenty of 'white space' around text.
- Consistent use of headings, capitals and bold text provide clear signposting.
- No jargon or acronyms that may muddle understanding.
- Numbers, percentages and values add clarity and give a sense of scale.

Bullet points

Separate bullet points cover a single idea, skill or activity.

Note: Siân has used **Context, Action, Results (CAR) as a structure** for her Experience section.

- **Context:** Dates, organisation name and positions/role give sufficient context.
- **Action:** Bullets start with active verbs/skills, aligning these to left margin for ease of scanning.
- **Results:** Outcomes included to show how and where Siân added value.

SIÂN MAGELLAN

Balliol College, Oxford, OX1 3BJ
M: 07685 314529 E: Siân.magellan@balliol.ox.ac.uk

EDUCATION

BA Hons English, Balliol College, University of Oxford 2018 – 2021

- First year exam results: 2.1 (65 average)
- Researched and delivered on time 12 3,000 word essays on new topics in each 8-week term for discussion with peers and leading academics

St John's School, Milton Keynes 2011 – 2018

A levels: French A*, English A*, Chemistry A, Geography A
GCSEs: 5 A*, 3 A, 1 B including A* in English and Maths

EXPERIENCE

WWOOF, Organic Farm in Haute Vienne, France, Volunteer (summer) 2020

- Independently planned and organised 2 months' work in France
- Improved to near-fluent French, while learning food production chain process
- Developed good working relationships with 22 colleagues from 12 countries

Oxford University, The Oxford Strategy Challenge (TOSCA), Team Leader, (8 weeks) 2019

- Led a team of 5 students to develop marketing strategy for local start-up
- Designed and executed paper and phone surveys, engaging 250 participants
- Presented recommendations to client; all implemented within 3 months and delivering 20% increase in sales within 6 months

EGM Analysis, Market Research Assistant (1 month internship) 2019

- Produced 8 accurate data tables to summarise previous field activities using SPSS
- Presented daily key data summary to managers with a colleague
- Developed knowledge and interest in marketing and consumer goods

Red Lion Hotel, Newport Pagnell, Waitress (part-time summer work) 2019

- Provided professional, courteous dinner service in busy gastro-pub with 80 covers
- Maintained positivity and good working relationships in high-pressure service environment

Milton Keynes Hospital, Data Entry Clerk (part-time holiday work) 2019

- Developed administrative skills, and understanding of organisational processes
- Ensured accurate classification of records and meticulous proof reading
- Liaised with 6 hospital departments to compile datasets to tight deadlines

OTHER SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Languages: English – native; French – near-fluent; German – conversational
IT: Proficient in Excel and SPSS, WordPress, InDesign and MS Office
Music: Lead clarinettist in Milton Keynes Youth Band; member of National Youth Orchestra
 Marketing Officer for Balliol College wind ensemble. Promoted concerts and managed ticket sales, increasing audience numbers by 30% in the first year
Sport: Balliol College women's football team; training twice a week
 Captain of St John's School women's football team (under 18s)
Travel: Extensive travel throughout Europe, including organising work placement in France

Cover letters

Always submit a cover letter if you have the chance. Aim to be focused and engaging. Make a strong and persuasive case built on your research and supported with evidence linked to your CV.

The cover letter gives you scope to:

- Showcase what interests and drives you, your enthusiasm for an organisation and the role.
- Align yourself with the organisation's strengths, values and culture.
- Highlight your knowledge and strongest, most relevant skills for the position.

Try to sound professional yet conversational, rather than wordy or too stiff and formal. Write in clear, concise English – take care not to drown your reader with detail, and avoid jargon they may not understand. Search online for advice from [The Plain English Campaign](#), which offers simple, clear guidance on improving your writing style.

While this may sound simple, your early cover letters may go through three or four drafts (or even more!) before you are happy with them.

When you feel your cover letter is finished, put it down overnight (or at least for a couple of hours) before reading it through – aloud.

As you read, listen to yourself:

- Does it say clearly what you want it to say?
- Does it have your 'voice'? Do you sound confident? Enthusiastic about the company? Excited about the role?
- If you insert a competitor company's name, does the letter still read the same? If so, try to differentiate each letter more!
- Are there any sections that are hard to read or follow? If yes, try simplifying your language, using shorter sentences or try taking that section out completely.

This advice also applies if you are writing a speculative letter or application, perhaps asking an organisation if they can offer you work experience. State clearly why you are writing in your opening paragraph, and go on to outline two or three areas where your core skills and experiences best fit the organisation's needs. Close with an indication of what you would like to happen next.

Top tips for cover letters

The outline letter opposite provides ideas about content and structure to enhance your letters.

- Keep it short – a concise letter demonstrates focus and strong communication skills.
- Project confidence – write with the assumption that they will interview you.
- Keep the tone and content professional – attempts at humour are best avoided.
- Include specific relevant details that show your research and how you consider they differ from their competitors – do not cut and paste content.
- As for CVs, double check for errors and typos: using a spell checker is not enough.
- Ask for feedback from a careers adviser.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cover-letters

Your address

your.email@provider.com

Their address

Date

Dear . . .

OPENING PARAGRAPH: Simply state what you are applying for and where you found out about it. This tells the recruiter why they are reading the letter, and helps them know which promotional tools work. Briefly introduce yourself: what you are studying, where, and which year you are in or when you will finish.

Explain **why you are interested in the position and/or the organisation**. Differentiate yourself. Genuine enthusiasm and specific knowledge of the organisation will set you apart from those sending generic letters. Draw on your research to demonstrate understanding of the business and the way they work that goes beyond the corporate website. Reflect what you learnt from speaking with their staff: be specific about why you want to join the organisation or why the position is particularly attractive for you: back this up with evidence from your past, or link this to your broader career plans and aspirations.

Help the person reading your letter to understand **how you meet 'essential' requirements** for the role. State explicitly how you match their criteria, supported by evidence from your CV. Focus on your accomplishments and the most relevant transferable skills you have for the role. If you have good evidence for any 'desirable' traits in the job description, include this too. Even if you think the position is out of reach, you may convince the recruiter you are qualified enough and able to do the job – particularly if you demonstrate strong motivation elsewhere.

Support your claims with **examples from your CV**. You may build a stronger, more credible case by linking different experiences to highlight different aspects of competencies or development of a skill. Consider these examples:

- having run [named event] at school, I further developed my organisational skills when raising [£££] through a College fundraiser in my first year and, more recently, by leading [a major event] for the [named Society] attended by [number] of people.
- the [role applied for] would allow me use my passion for helping others, which underpins both my work as College Welfare Officer and the real sense of achievement I get from tutoring disadvantaged children through Oxford's Schools Plus programme.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH: Keep it simple and clear. Thank the employer for their interest in your application and reiterate your desire to join the organisation. If known, refer to the next step: eg, 'I look forward to interviewing with [Company name] in two weeks', or 'discussing the position with you soon'.

Yours faithfully, (if you started 'Dear Sir or Madam')

or

Yours sincerely, (if you addressed the letter to a specific person)

Signature

Application forms for employment and further study

Many applications, both for employment and further study, require an application form. You are more likely to be successful sending targeted applications, rather than a mass of near-identical forms.

Application forms usually include questions that prompt similar content to a good cover letter and/or competency-based interview questions, eg:

- Why are you interested in this role/organisation/career?
- What are your three strongest skills for this role?
- Provide an example of a time when ... [you have taken a leadership role].
- Outside your course, what extra-curricular activities are you involved in?
- Which relevant transferable skills can you demonstrate?

Draft your answers offline first, so you can:

- Bring your answers and job description to review with a career adviser at the Careers Service.
- Thoroughly check for typos.
- Ensure you don't lose your answers if the server 'times out'.
- Create a bank of material to help you answer similar questions asked by different organisations – but always tailor responses.
- Don't be tempted to copy and paste directly from one application to another.
- Review your answers before your interview.

Always follow the instructions given. For example, if you are asked to write to a word count be sure to stick to that. Use concise sentences and active verbs. Never take a shortcut by simply including your CV; if a recruiter wants your CV, they will ask for it.

Personal statements may be required if an organisation has listed the skills and experience needed for the role in detail. Aim to show how you meet each item on the list. Be guided by their sub-headings and consider using these to organise your own statement if feasible – making it even easier for recruiters to find the evidence they are looking for!

More information and examples

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/application-forms

Applications for further study

For most courses applications are made direct to each university. In Europe and North America most further study applications open during the autumn with deadlines between Christmas and Easter, but some do close earlier so check individual closing dates carefully. Some vocational courses have a centralised application system, notably graduate entry medicine, teacher training and Graduate Diploma in Law.

Details differ, but you are likely to need the following:

- Application form.
- Personal statement and/or research objective.
- Transcripts of university exam results.
- Two or three references.
- CV.
- Examples of written work.
- Results of standardised tests (eg GRE for the USA).
- Payment of a fee.

More information

See [our guidance on types of further study](#), [choosing a course](#), [studying abroad](#), [fees and funding](#) and www.careers.ox.ac.uk/further-study

How to reflect the same experience in a CV, cover letter and application form

For any application, you should lead with your best, most relevant experience for the role. It is likely, therefore, that you will want to refer to some experiences more than once in different elements of the process.

The paragraphs below illustrate how this might look for Siân Magellan's Student Consultancy, now known as TOSCA, leadership experience in her cover letter, application form and CV.

1. Cover letter

While participating in The Oxford Strategy Challenge (TOSCA), I developed my leadership skills by leading a team of five students to design and implement a marketing strategy to increase sales for our local start-up client. I organised our meeting schedule, allocated roles to each team member, coordinated with the client, implemented our surveys and ensured that we delivered our recommendations on time. As a result of my team's recommendations, six months later our client's sales have increased by 20% and I received excellent feedback both from the client and other members of my team.

2. Employer Application Form (EAF)

Describe a time when you demonstrated leadership skills:

Last January I led a five-member team on The Oxford Strategy Challenge (TOSCA), an eight-week programme run by Oxford University Careers Service to build commercial awareness and team skills. Within this timeframe, my goal as team leader was to deliver a series of recommendations to our team's local start-up client to increase its sales. First I organised a series of meetings across the eight weeks when all or most of us could get together to work on the project. Secondly I asked each team member to share their skills and insights into how they could contribute to developing

an effective marketing strategy. Thirdly, and based on the combined skillset of my team, I allocated roles to each member, covering research, survey design and implementation, budgeting and reporting. Having established a way forward, we then agreed a timeframe for each aspect of the project. As team leader, as well as being responsible for survey implementation, I remained the focal point of contact with our client, keeping them up to date with all our project implementation, key findings and asking for any clarifications when required. I also kept in touch regularly with each team member in between our team meetings so that I could deal with any unexpected delays or findings and keep our project on track. We delivered our recommendations on time to our client, who welcomed and implemented them all. Six months later, the client's sales have increased by 20% and our suggestions are still being followed.

3. CV

EXPERIENCE

Oxford University, The Oxford Strategy Challenge, Team Leader, (8 weeks) 2020

- Led a team of 5 students to develop marketing strategy for local start-up
- Designed and executed paper and phone surveys, engaging 250 participants
- Presented recommendations to client; all implemented within 3 months and delivering 20% increase in sales within 6 months

Recruitment tests

Psychometric and online assessments were widely used even before COVID-19 greatly increased recruiters use of virtual recruitment tools. Expect to encounter online tests as an initial screening stage or later in the process, and even to be retested at assessment centres.

Ability tests require both speed and accuracy. Test familiarisation and a little practice helps candidates to focus their energy on finding correct answers, rather than wasting time on understanding how to answer the questions. See the Careers Service's advice on preparation and how to access free practice resources at www.careers.ox.ac.uk/psychometric-tests. Candidates should always study any practice questions offered by a company to minimise the risk of being tripped up by new styles of question.

To perform at your best in these tests:

- Choose a time and place where you can focus without distraction.
- Always read instructions carefully.
- Work as quickly and accurately as you can, reading both questions and answer-choices carefully.
- A good strategy is to eliminate as many wrong answers as possible. For example, with numerical

tests a quick estimate may help you discard options without working out every alternative.

- Keep an eye on the clock.
- Do not spend too long on any one question – if you get stuck, leave it and move on rather than wasting time.

Types of tests

Tests of ability include numerical and verbal reasoning tests. Unless a job requires a high level of numeracy, numerical tests are not likely to be pitched higher than GCSE-level maths. Candidates can expect to calculate percentages and ratios, and extract information from charts and graphs, accurately and under considerable time-pressure. If your mental maths or calculator technique are rusty, start practising:

- Study different types of charts and financial reports in quality newspapers and the financial press.
- Attend the Careers Service's numeracy refresher sessions, advertised via the Events Calendar on CareerConnect.
- Brush up with BBC bitesize maths revision: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

Verbal reasoning and critical reasoning tests typically evaluate your ability to extract the details and main points from a short piece of information, sometimes requiring you to make logical inferences from the text. Use the free practice resources we offer you to become familiar with these tests and the range and subtleties of the distinctions you need to make. These tests are perhaps more difficult to prepare for than numerical tests, but reading material from outside your academic discipline, for example in technical and business journals, can help you to become comfortable with different written styles.

Situational judgement tests are becoming more widespread. These require candidates to identify the best (and worst) options for addressing work-related scenarios, and the judgements needed can seem finely balanced. You should consider both how fully each option achieves the required objective and whether or not the actions are in line with the organisation's stated values and core competencies. In-tray/e-tray exercises are also used to test judgement and work skills.

Some firms are using game-based assessments, which can be engaging for candidates, require no special gaming skills and may reduce bias.

Personality tests evaluate traits and preferences, and do not have right or wrong answers. Answer intuitively as yourself.

Further study applications: tests and interviews

Admissions tests are rare in the UK for Masters and PhD programmes. However, some vocational programmes (eg Medicine) do require test results, and there may be tests to demonstrate your language capability.

In North America, standardised tests are an almost universal part of the application process. You will most commonly come across the GRE, but others exist and it is important that you check both which tests are required for your chosen courses and the cut-off dates for taking these. Research requirements early for any course you are considering as in 2020–21, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many courses suspended GRE requirements.

In the UK, interviews are common but not ubiquitous. Not all Masters courses interview

Equality and diversity: disclosure or being 'open'

If you feel that you might be at a disadvantage to others in the application and



selection process (eg online tests, video interview, time-out from studies), owing to a disability, health condition or dyslexia and dyspraxia, then contact the recruiter beforehand to discuss if the process can be adapted or 'adjustments' could be made for you, for example, by giving you extra time in the timed tests. Your experiences of adjustments that are made for you at university are a good guideline for what to ask for, or advise a recruiter to put in place.

candidates, but most PhD programmes will. Vocational courses like the PGCE nearly always involve an interview. If you are based in a different country, you won't usually be expected to travel for interview: virtual online and telephone interviews are becoming more common in those cases.

If you are interviewed, then expect a rigorous examination of your motives for applying to the course, as well as questions exploring your academic interests and knowledge. Be ready to talk about dissertations or other pieces of work, and keep in mind that this is also your chance to determine whether a course is right for you – particularly important for PhDs.



Assessment centres

Many employers believe that individual interviews can't tell them enough about candidates and prefer to use a range of selection techniques incorporated into an assessment centre.

What to expect

Assessment centres (ACs) tend to be a few hours to a full-day in length and will consist of a range of selection methods such as aptitude tests, personality questionnaires, case studies, group discussions, spoken presentations, one-to-one interviews, socialising (which is still observed!) and meeting recent joiners.

In 2020–21, companies successfully moved ACs online and we expect many will continue to use virtual ACs in future.

Applicants will usually be assessed against selection criteria based on the company's competency framework, which defines the core abilities, skills and behaviours judged to be necessary for the role. These competencies are likely to include **key transferable employability skills** as well as company-specific competencies and/or technical skills for some roles.

Typically, competencies include areas such as:

- Creativity, analytical skills and problem solving.
- Effective communication skills and teamwork.
- Business/commercial awareness.
- Ability to influence/persuade.
- Drive, initiative and flexibility.

A typical one-day assessment centre may consist of:

- Introduction and company presentation.
- Psychometric testing.
- In-tray exercise.
- A presentation.
- Lunch/socialising informally.
- Group exercise, solving a work-related problem.
- Interview(s): ranging from strengths-based to competency-based interviews.

The assessors will keep notes of how each candidate performs. Try to stay focused and in the moment throughout the day and stay positive even if you feel you under-performed in an exercise as most skills will be assessed in more than one exercise and assessors are evaluating your overall performance.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/assessment-centres

Presentations and written reports

You may be asked to prepare some materials in advance of the assessment centre or be given some time to prepare on the day based on a case study. You will present to the assessors, and possibly other candidates. When preparing your presentation:

- Make sure that you understand what is required and the time you have both to prepare and to present.
- Consider your audience – this will influence the content, level and tone of your presentation.
- Timing is important as you will be stopped when your time is up.

Keep the structure simple:

1. Tell them who you are and what you are going to tell them.
2. Tell them.
3. Summarise what you have told them.

Because time will be short, it is best to start with the key issue and your main conclusion or key recommendations. The rest of the presentation should support this conclusion.

- Structure your arguments and limit complexity – eg, three to six main messages.
- Support your ideas and themes with examples, statistics and facts and (brief) anecdotes – but keep it moving to reach the end of your presentation.

Consider whether an interactive element would be appropriate given the context – eg, in a teaching or training type role play, this could be appropriate. Allow time for questions at the end if this feels appropriate.

Group exercises

The most important outcome for group exercises is for the group to deliver successfully against the given brief. This really is not about winning or losing!

Successful teams work together. They find and use the best contributions from across the whole team and good teamwork involves listening to, acknowledging and following through on the ideas of others: it's about building on one another's strengths and contributions.

But yes, you are being assessed, and assessors can only judge you on the contributions they see, so it is important to get involved and make sure that your contribution is heard. Even if your ideas are not taken up by the group there are many alternative ways that you can gain recognition – eg, leading, facilitating, generating ideas, encouraging, monitoring progress, re-capping/summarising, questioning, or analysing.

- Get a good grasp of any information you are

given, but don't waste time on minute details.

- Use the information given and help the group clarify objectives and select decision-making criteria. Use these to keep the discussion focused on shared priorities.
- Be assertive and persuasive, but also diplomatic.
- Listen to what everyone else has to say, and try to get the best contribution from each person.
- Don't assume that shy or quiet members have nothing to contribute – ask for their thoughts.
- Find the balance between taking your ideas forward and helping the group to complete the task.
- Keep an eye on the time and overall objective of the exercise, and help ensure that the group keeps on track and delivers against the brief.
- Wear a watch so you can still keep track of time if there is no clock in the room.

In-tray exercises

In-tray or 'e-tray' exercises are a test of your ability to deal with a real work scenario. You may be given a simulated inbox full of emails, reports and other correspondence – or it may start nearly empty, but you can expect additional emails to arrive during the exercise.

- Employers are usually looking for you to prioritise your workload, draft replies, delegate tasks and recommend actions.
 - Keep focused – time is often short, so work quickly and avoid getting too absorbed in any single aspect of this task.
- Take care to:
- Read the instructions carefully and thoroughly.

- Prioritise what is most important or urgent by scanning the information.
- Identify which items you need to complete during the exercise (handling tasks that are both 'urgent & important' as a priority).
- Select which items could be delegated/referred to someone else and those that can be noted for completion 'later'.
- Highlight any resource constraints, conflicts between tasks, or implications for the organisation.
- If asked to draft a written response to any item, identify the main points of your response quickly and expand concisely on them.

Confident interviews

If you have been invited to interview, you have convinced the employer that you are suitable for the role on paper. An interview is your opportunity to confirm this impression, and demonstrate that you are what the hiring manager is looking for.

Remember interviews work both ways: you're interviewing the prospective company as well as being interviewed.

I built up a good rapport during my Arup interview and knew the people I'd met would be great to work with but it definitely wasn't like that for all other interviews. Don't be afraid to turn down a job offer if you don't think it's the right fit for you.

— Tabitha Kennedy, Environmental Consultant, Arup. BA Geography, Hertford, 2016

How to prepare

Repeat the preparations detailed throughout this section, but in more depth. Re-read the job description and candidate specification, and ensure that you understand the job and the competencies required. Be clear about the points you absolutely want to make, and practise building them into different answers.

As a starting point, prepare some answers to typical questions, and practise answering them aloud. Articulating your answers is harder than thinking them over in your head, and saying them aloud will help you to sound more convincing and fluent on the day.

- Be clear on your motivations: why you want to work for the organisation and do that specific job.
- **Be ready to show commercial awareness:**
 - Consider how recent global events, current affairs and the economy may affect the organisation.

- Think about how the organisation competes in its market, and how it compares with its competitors.
- Read a quality broadsheet and be ready to offer an informed opinion on business and current affairs.
- Prepare some questions (note them down) to ask at the interview.

Support at the Careers Service

- Sessions for improving your interview skills are held each term, and dates and times are advertised in our weekly newsletter and on CareerConnect.
- Employer-led mock interviews are offered every term. You are able to make a recording to review at a later point, and the recruiter will give feedback to help improve your technique.
- You can also use a short discussion with a careers adviser to discuss interview technique or tackle some general interview questions.



Competency-based recruiting

Many companies still use competency frameworks to identify and group related skills, knowledge, attitudes and abilities that are needed to be effective within their organisation and the range of situations typical for a particular role.

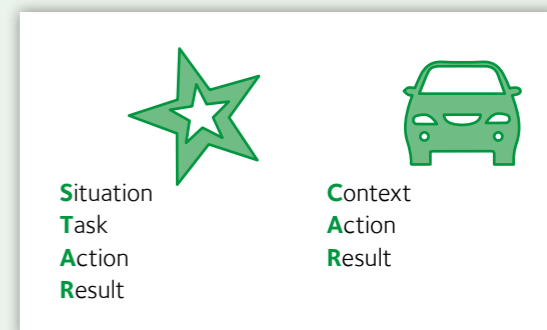
In interviews, competency-based questions are common and tend to follow the structure:

"Can you tell me about a time when.....?"
[insert competency here]

Using a simple framework to provide structure to your answer helps you to:

- Tell your story clearly and makes it easier for an interviewer to follow that story.
- Include all the most relevant and important points.

Structure your responses with these mnemonics:



For example, use the STAR outline to:

First: Briefly describe the specific SITUATION you were in.

Second: Describe the TASK you needed to accomplish. Give only enough detail for the recruiter to appreciate your contribution.

Third: Describe the ACTION(s) you took. Keep the focus on what you did rather than the efforts of the team, even for a group project.

Lastly: Describe the RESULT. Based on relevant measures of success, outline what happened and what you accomplished.

When appropriate, probably within an interview, you can extend this structure by including 'E' for **EVALUATION** (STARE):

- Highlight what you learned from the experience, or what you would change if you went through the process/experience again.
- Explain how this experience might be relevant in the role applied for.

Strengths-based recruiting

More and more graduate recruiters use this type of interview as they understand that employees will perform best when using their individual strengths. They aim to get the best out of you by focusing on your natural aptitude, what you enjoy doing and what engages you.

In this type of interview, interviewers may ask a wide range of questions to get a good feel of your personal abilities and will be looking not only at what you say but also how you say it; to see if your tone, body language and expression demonstrate a genuine motivation.

They may ask questions such as:

- When are you at your best?
- What are you most proud of?
- What do you do well?
- What do you love to do in your spare time?
- How would a close friend describe you?
- How do you feel when working on a disorganised project? What do you do in situations like this?
- How do you ensure you maximise your time to achieve your goals and targets?

In order to prepare you will need to think about your achievements academically, professionally and in an extra-curricular capacity. What have you done that you particularly enjoyed – why did you enjoy it? Also, as with all interviews think about the organisation and the role you are interviewing for: does it allow you to use your strengths and natural talents?

On the day

- Plan your route and aim to arrive 15–30 minutes early to settle down and relax. Plan what you will do if there is an unexpected delay. Always have the name and telephone number/email of your main contact within the organisation.
- Consider what you are going to wear: be clean, neat and tidy, and dress appropriately for the environment you would be working in.
- First impressions are important: be ready to say hello with a confident handshake and steady eye contact.
- Remember – you are on show from the minute you arrive to the point that you leave.
- Be polite and friendly (but not over-familiar) to everyone you meet – receptionists, secretaries... everyone. Arrogance or rudeness will be noticed and will work against you.

In the interview(s)

- Don't be afraid of silence:

Top tips for answers

Try to use examples from different experiences, such as your studies, work experience, extra-curricular activities and volunteering.

- Be as clear as possible – many of us tend to ramble when we're nervous, so use specific examples that provide evidence of your skills and contribution.
- Feel free to use examples already mentioned on your written application: the interviewer will not have memorised all of them. Be ready, however, to go into more detail.
- Think about the structure of your answer to ensure you get the relevant points across clearly. For competency-based questions, use the STAR/CAR mnemonic.
- A good interview is a dialogue, and you should take an active role in the conversation.
- If you are not sure that you understand the question, ask for clarification. Similarly, if you are wondering whether you have answered a question fully, you can ask the interviewer if they would like more information.

- Take time to think before answering.
- Make sure you answer the question you have been asked.
- Structure your answer so it is easy to understand.
- If you have finished – and the interviewer remains silent – don't keep talking to fill the gap.
- Be positive in everything you say:
 - Don't make negative comments about previous employers or tutors.
 - If asked about something that went wrong, outline what you learned from the experience and how you would handle it differently next time.
- Aim to keep answers reasonably short – if there is more that you could add, perhaps ask the interviewer if they would like more details or further examples.
- Don't let a friendly, informal interview style lull you into a false sense of security: you are still being assessed.
- Keep your answers professional, focused and relevant.
- Be aware of body language and try to maintain eye contact. This is particularly important in a panel interview, where eye contact can help you to engage all the panel members.

After the interview

As soon as possible after the interview, jot down notes of what was discussed, what you feel went well, and what didn't go well. Consider how you could

Prepare for the most typical questions

Employers will want to understand what your interests are, what you enjoy doing, and how these relate to the position, so some questions are quite common. They will want to understand what motivates you and how much insight you have into yourself, their company and the role – so be sure to prepare well and practise aloud for these FAQs.

- Tell me about yourself.
- What attracted you to this company?
- Why do you want this position?
- What will you bring to this role?
- Tell me about a time when you led a team/completed a project/worked with someone you found difficult to work with.
- What would you do differently if faced with that (difficult) situation again?
- What do you consider your greatest strength?
- ...your greatest weakness?
- What has been your greatest achievement?

have responded differently and what you could add to strengthen your answer(s). This will help if you are asked similar questions in future – including during a final round interview – if the organisation decides to drill deeper into areas which have already been assessed.

Handling offers or rejections

If you're offered a job and are still hoping to hear back from other recruiters, look up the advice on [handling offers on the Careers Service's website](#). If you are still unsure, discuss your situation with a careers adviser. If you are not offered the job, do feel free to contact the recruiter for feedback – it can be really helpful. Most importantly, learn from the experience and try not to lose confidence.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/types-of-interview
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/interview-technique
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/make-a-good-first-impression
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/case-study-style-interviews
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/telephone-video-interviews
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/handling-offers
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/handling-rejection

Telephone, Skype, virtual pre-recorded interviews

Many employers now use virtual interviews as the first stage in the process and, at the time of writing (Summer 2021), at every stage in order to meet social distancing requirements. Prepare for this type of interview as if for a face-to-face interview – don't treat it any less formally.

If you're asked to do a video (or pre-recorded) interview, you'll be sent a video link and will complete the interview via webcam. You'll be asked a question, given a short time to prepare, and then have to record your answer; you can usually pause between questions but not after the question has been asked.

When preparing for the interview

- Ensure that you have privacy for the interview away from noise and distractions. Ask friends or family not to disturb you – put a sign on your door!
- Ensure your phone/laptop is charged, check the signal/internet access, and/or that the virtual platform the recruiter has invited you to use is working properly.
- Have your CV or application form available as a prompt, as well as some paper and a pen for making notes.
- The main difference between telephone and standard interviews is the lack of visual cues, but your body language is still very important as it affects your confidence and performance.
- Dress smartly, even for a telephone interview – as this will affect your overall attitude and confidence.
- Smile! By smiling, you will sound friendlier and more confident.
- Use gestures as you would in a normal conversation; this will help you sound livelier. Vary your pace and pitch to avoid sounding 'flat'.
- If there are any long silences after your answer and you are not sure whether to continue, you can always ask, "Would you like me to expand further on that?"
- You can stick post-it notes around your screen if there's some information you really want to remember during the interview – the recruiter can't see them.

INDUSTRY SECTOR BRIEFINGS AND ALUMNI PROFILES

The overviews over the next 70 pages give you a summary of each sector followed by revealing insights from Oxford alumni about how they got into the sector, the skills they use day to day and how they made their applications stand out. This is an excellent place to start your research. Even more briefings, such as music and radio, TV and film and social care, are available at www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sectors-occupations.

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ACADEMIA AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Working in the university sector offers a wide variety of professional roles from academic research to HR.

Academia itself can be a stimulating career option, offering the potential for significant autonomy and flexibility in your working life. It is a challenging route that demands drive and commitment to your area of research and to producing the publications, grant applications and projects expected by university departments. Competition for roles after the doctorate means that you can expect several years of insecurity while trying to find a permanent position.

It is near essential to have a DPhil/PhD in order to gain a permanent academic position in the UK and many other countries. Following a DPhil/PhD, next steps include a postdoctoral research position or a fixed-term teaching contract; in some subjects it may be possible to move directly into a junior lectureship. Independent fellowships offer a grant to develop your own research, so attract many applicants. Postdocs and fellowships can last from six months to several years.

Early career academics often take on a variety of roles as stepping stones to a permanent position, or towards a 'portfolio career' in which academic work is one of several strands such as consultancy, editorial or advisory work. Permanent lectureship positions combine research and teaching with administration duties, such as organising seminar series and sitting on committees. There are very few teaching-only or research-only permanent academic roles.

Academic support roles in universities typically offer a stimulating range of activities, teamwork, creativity as well as opportunities to develop policy and interact with academics engaged in cutting-edge research. They can also offer more stability.

Career paths vary depending on discipline, type of institution, and region. Aspiring academics will find more opportunities if they are flexible about location and willing to consider working abroad. The HE sector is expanding, for instance, in South America, Asia and the Middle East.

Working at the interface of research, teaching and action is very exciting. Persistence, courage and being strategic are all key to making academia work for you.

Getting in and entry points

For undergraduates/masters' students: Depending on your subject, a masters' may be necessary to undertake a DPhil/PhD. Most application deadlines for postgraduate study and funding in the UK are between December and February in the academic year prior to starting. We advise allowing plenty of time beforehand to talk to your tutors, the Careers Service, and research institutions to consider whether and where to continue your studies.

For DPhil/PhD students: Networking throughout your DPhil/PhD will mean you hear of posts through contacts, and will know people to advise you on applications. Postdoc positions are advertised all year round, but fellowship deadlines can be up to one year before they start. Junior research fellowships – offered at Oxford, Cambridge and a few other UK institutions – are highly competitive, vary in salary, and are advertised from September onwards. Most are advertised between February and April. Lectureships are advertised year-round for the UK, and from September to December for North America.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Before doing a DPhil/PhD, try to gain experience by supporting research in some way. Ask tutors/academics in your field how you might assist, or get tutoring or teaching experience with any age group.
- During a DPhil/PhD, get university teaching experience or get involved in The Brilliant Club – giving tutorials to outstanding school pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Start building a network around your area of interest. Join societies related to your subject, and attend talks at the Careers Service on developing a professional network within academia, and using LinkedIn and other relevant social media.
- Search the professional, managerial and support roles advertised on www.jobs.ac.uk for inspiration about other roles in universities. Despite there being only a few graduate schemes, most professional-support functions are filled by university graduates.
- Get your work out there; submit articles for publication and get involved with outreach in your subject in different public spaces.
- Speak at conferences, or organise one yourself.
- Apply for internships with non-UK universities and/or industry to gain international and practical experience, e.g., those offered by the Careers Service.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/academia
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/researchers

Dr Jessica Hedge

Staff Development Coordinator, Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences (NDCN), University of Oxford
 Postdoctoral Researcher, Department of Zoology, 2016–2019; Nuffield Department of Medicine, 2013–2016

What: After six years as an Academic Researcher investigating the evolution of infectious diseases, I switched to Higher Education support. My current role focuses on supporting staff development and improving gender equality in academia, which involves an interesting mix of project management, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and review of policy and practice.

Career path: After my Biology degree, I completed an MSc and then a PhD at Edinburgh on the evolution of the 2009 flu pandemic. During two postdoc positions at Oxford, I became involved in several staff development projects at the university. I increasingly enjoyed the strategic, team-based and practical work involved and began exploring jobs more closely aligned with these interests. My current role offers all of the above and enables me to apply the skills I'd worked so hard to develop as a postdoc to new, interesting challenges.

Why: I became a postdoc because I enjoyed working in a diverse, stimulating environment and doing cutting-edge science with leaders in the field. But I was also attracted by the numerous professional development opportunities, from presenting work at international conferences and building collaborations, to designing

outreach activities and teaching. These could set me up for a career either within or beyond academia.

Top skills for success: Learning to code was by far the most important skill I developed during my postdoc (although admittedly, I was initially rather reluctant). Being able to code makes me very efficient at everyday data-related tasks and gives me the confidence to handle large, messy datasets. Another important skill in my field is being able to communicate complex ideas clearly – whether that's to attract funding, inform policy or just get your research published.

Advice: Remember that both a PhD and postdoc are training positions, so make the most of the professional development initiatives which are (often freely) available. You'll find these in your department, college, university or professional societies. They will make you a better researcher, expand your professional network and help you match your strengths and interests to future career options.



Dr Simukai Chigudu

Associate Professor of African Politics, University of Oxford. DPhil in International Development, St Anne's College, 2014–2017; MSc in African Studies, St Anne's College, 2013–2014

What: My academic interests are focused on the social politics of inequality in Africa, which I examine using disease and public health as organising frameworks for both contemporary and historical case studies. My recent book, *The Political Life of an Epidemic: Cholera, Crisis and Citizenship in Zimbabwe*, is a study of social and political causes and consequences of Zimbabwe's catastrophic cholera outbreak in 2008–2009, the most extensive in African history. I argue that the cholera outbreak was a politically constructed disaster; I show how an epidemic delineates the contours of inclusion and abjection within the body politic; and I demonstrate critical weaknesses in the global humanitarian response to medical disasters.

Career path: I took a meandering path to my current position. I studied medicine as an undergraduate at Newcastle University. During my medical studies, I became interested in politics and health inequality, and pursued these interests through various avenues: a human rights internship in San Francisco, an overseas clinical placement in South Africa, and a research project in Tanzania. Following graduation, I spent three years working

as a clinician and public health specialist. After years of toying with the social sciences, I eventually decided to commit. I left my job as a public health doctor and came to Oxford to read for degrees in African Studies and International Development.

Top tips: I was very fortunate to be appointed as an Associate Professor only a year after submitting my doctoral thesis. My advice to PhD students who want a career in this profession is to put your work out there. Publish as early and as often as you can. Present your work at conferences and workshops. Give lectures and seminars on your material. This will create a cycle of receiving both exposure and feedback, which will enhance your reputation and improve the quality of your work. Academia can be rewarding but it is tough! Enthusiasm, open-mindedness and perseverance are powerful qualities to cultivate in this line of work.



ACCOUNTANCY AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

The financial services sector includes some of the largest graduate recruiters and offers positions across a wide range of functional roles (eg, legal, HR and technology roles) alongside financial and advisory roles. A high degree of comfort with numbers is important for finance-related roles as well as key employability skills such as communication, team-working, problem-solving and analytical skills.

In many areas, graduates can expect to study for a professional qualification alongside their work, which provides a firm foundation for a professional career. Most employers will pay for the training and routinely offer study leave to trainees. Accountancy training normally takes three years, and actuarial training from three to seven years.

Accountancy

Accountants work in varied roles across a broad range of service areas, including advisory, assurance, corporate finance, tax and risk. Accountants play a key role in decision-making by providing accurate financial information and analysis for management. Therefore, organisations look for people with strong commercial awareness and good interpersonal skills – not just ‘number-crunchers’! There are opportunities in both commercial and public sector organisations at firms of all sizes. The larger organisations, including the ‘Big 4’ (Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC), have broadened their focus to provide strategic advisory services and now also include large management consultancy practices.

Chartered accountants provide professional advice to fee-paying clients, small businesses, large organisations and individuals – in areas such as audit, financial reporting, insolvency and restructuring.

Management accountants usually work in-house (although they can be external) and their role is to advise an organisation’s senior management about the financial repercussions of business decisions, and to monitor corporate spending.

Actuarial work

Actuaries are risk management experts, applying mathematical tools to assess the probability and risk of future events. Actuarial assessments are used in

various industries, especially the pensions, insurance and investment sectors. Most successful candidates will have a numerate degree (eg, mathematics, statistics, economics), but students from other disciplines can demonstrate their numerical ability by passing the Certificate in Financial Mathematics (CT1) exam.

Insurance

Insurance is focused on protecting the value of an individual’s or organisation’s assets, and has huge breadth, including corporate insurance, personal insurance, reinsurance, and life assurance.

Firms are similarly diverse. Employers are generally open to graduates of all degree disciplines, although some employers have a preference for numerate degrees.

Getting in and entry points

Meet firms at our virtual careers fairs in Michaelmas term and company presentations, and monitor your target firms’ websites.

Accountancy: The large accounting firms open graduate recruitment during the summer in the year before graduation. Positions in London fill quickly in Michaelmas term, so apply early, whilst vacancies for regional offices may exist late into the year. Firms with smaller annual recruitment targets will typically open vacancies in Michaelmas term or recruit on an on-going rolling basis. It can also be worth considering a speculative approach to small firms even if no ‘graduate programme’ is advertised.

Actuarial work and insurance: Graduate programmes will vary depending on the size of firm and areas of specialism, and application deadlines also vary, so research and prepare applications early.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Demonstrate your interest in the sector by becoming active in related student societies – such as the Oxford Guild or the Oxford Finance Society.
- Show your financial acumen as treasurer for a society or JCR/MCR.
- Help run an event that makes a profit, from charity fundraising to a college ball.
- Apply to ‘insight days’ and ‘spring week’ programmes as a first year (or a second year on a four-year degree).
- Attend the Careers Service [Insight into Strategy and Management programme](#).

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/accountancy

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/actuarial-profession

Sophia

Business Development, Admiral Insurance
Classics, Exeter College, 2017

What: I joined Admiral’s general graduate scheme in 2017 after graduating with a classics degree. Admiral is one of the largest car insurance providers in the UK with a presence in eight countries, including Spain, Italy, and France. After completing the scheme, I accepted a full-time role within the business development team, which acts as an internal consulting function to help shape the future of the business.

Why: I was initially drawn to the 18-month graduate scheme because it encourages you to rotate around different areas of the business. I wasn’t entirely sure what I wanted to do when I left university, so I was keen to join a graduate scheme where I was able to do a bit of everything. With a variety of different departments and products within several different markets, I was able to shape the graduate scheme to suit my specific interests, which was a huge bonus.

The length of the scheme was just right and it allowed for quick progression into a permanent role. The multinational nature of the business also meant there were opportunities to work internationally, which is something that I had always wanted in my career.

A financial services company may not sound like the best fit for a classics graduate; however, my degree has helped me in surprising ways during my career so far. I was able to apply learnings from my philosophy and logic modules to areas such as pricing and IT, and I was able to apply my analytical and creative thinking to areas such as product development and problem solving. If you’d told me during my first year that my classics degree would help me to understand rating tables, coding and product development, I don’t think I would have believed you!

Advice: A career within financial services or insurance isn’t just for graduates from numerical backgrounds; as a humanities student you have valuable transferable skills, so don’t be afraid of applying.



Ian McFarlane

Actuarial Associate, APR LLP
BA Maths, Balliol College, 2017

What: As an actuarial student, my job is broadly to predict and manage financial risks, largely in insurance, pensions or investments. At APR, most of our work involves being placed in a client company, working alongside the client’s own actuarial teams to perform this analysis, so that we can offer additional expertise and a fresh perspective. Our work is important as we help these companies protect and enhance their assets, which in turn protects policyholders.

Why: I always wanted to use the maths and statistics I’d learned as a student in my work, and being an actuary is the perfect career for that. The role is technically challenging and allows for continuous progression, thanks to the variety we get from moving around clients and projects – each one is different and there is always something new you can learn. My organisation has a strong and comprehensive training programme, with a lot of scope to tailor this to each person’s strengths and interests as you progress. These opportunities mean that there’s always a sense of moving forward and developing professionally – I’ve learned a lot in just one year here!

Main challenges: Balancing work and studying for the actuarial exams is very different to being a full-time student, and definitely takes some getting used to. My employer is very supportive and has a generous allowance of study days (days you can take off work to study in the lead-up to the exams), but it takes a lot of commitment so make sure you’re aware of this before choosing an actuarial career.

Advice: Before you apply, make sure you understand the job as fully as possible – actuaries work in lots of different sectors and the job is more varied than you may initially think. It’s also worth looking into how the exams work and how much study is required – employers usually won’t expect you to study for these on your own beforehand, but they’ll want to be clear that you’re committed and informed.





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www.theoxfordguild.com

Virtual FINANCE FAIR

WEDNESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2021
STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30

Meet recruiters, attend presentations, browse jobs, and find out about the variety of career options available in the finance sector.



www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs

ADVERTISING, MARKETING AND PR

Dynamic, diverse and fast-moving, this sector offers roles for graduates from all degree disciplines. There are some 10,000 agencies in the UK, from specialists to multinationals offering services across the full span of communication specialisms.

Employers look for creative graduates who have high-level communication, analytical and organisational skills and a keen interest in digital and social media. Different roles at agencies commonly include creatives, account management, strategic planning, media planning and buying, and production.

Graduates from STEM subjects and people with IT skills are increasingly in demand because of data analytics to unlock insights into customer behaviour and the potential for application of AI (artificial intelligence) to exploit the rapidly evolving digital landscape. The sector offers numerous opportunities for social media strategists, analysts, web developers, and user experience (UX) designers.

Fields of operation (and terminology) for agencies in the sector overlap, but can be broken down as follows:

- **Advertising** uses paid-for space across all media to motivate people to buy products and services, or to alter their attitudes.
- **Public Relations (PR)** involves managing and enhancing reputations (people, products or services), principally by influencing the media. Tools range from press releases to promotional events.
- **Public Affairs** is similar to PR but focuses on persuading policymakers to adopt particular viewpoints.
- **Marketing Agencies** will advise on brand strategy, management and communications, and provide services across the range of advertising, market research, media planning and buying, PR, distribution, sales strategy etc.
- **Market Research** seeks to understand people's preferences to inform product development and/or marketing campaigns.

Opportunities exist in cities all over the UK but the main cluster of agencies are in London. Large agencies and PR consultancies are often international in scope, with some having a parent company based in another country.

Getting in and entry points

Most agencies recruit into specific roles as positions

arise with a few offering specific graduate schemes (and internship programmes). Applications for these often open during the summer – deadlines can fall early, some before the end of October.

Expect competition for advertised positions to be intense, but there are alternative routes into agencies. This is a highly networked sector. It is therefore very helpful to be visible and known: work experience is important, and speculative approaches for full-time roles, internships or work experience are often welcomed as they demonstrate interest, motivation and initiative.

These industries thrive on creativity, so think about making your speculative approach a little different too. Not all agencies want a traditional CV and creative alternatives can sometimes be effective, such as an infographic or videographic CV. A website or blog are good forums to showcase skills, and it is important to use social media to keep in touch with agencies' latest work and to hear first about new opportunities – but candidates are advised to manage their own web-visibility carefully!

Agencies are not the only option however. Marketing and communication roles are needed in all sectors, and there are many prestigious graduate programmes with larger companies in brand management, marketing and market research (consumer business insight), and general management roles – deadlines often fall in November and December. You can also gain experience as an in-house marketing assistant, for example with a charity or technology firm, as a foundation to build on.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Get involved in the marketing of an event, fundraiser, or any aspect of promotion of a student society and enhance your use of social media.
- The Oxford Strategy Challenge, run by the Careers Service, gives you first-hand practical experience and insight and often has marketing and communication projects.
- Get involved promoting Oxford SU's campaigns.
- Stay abreast of the industry through key resources, such as *Marketing Week*; *Campaign Live*, and The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) website.
- Apply to be 'brand ambassador' for a recruiter looking to raise their profile at Oxford.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/advertising

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/marketing

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/public-relations

Virtual JOBS FOR MATHEMATICIANS CAREERS FAIR

WEDNESDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2021
STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30

Attend presentations, browse jobs, and meet employers who are recruiting for roles using maths.



www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs

Rachel Ballard

Marketing Consultant, The Value Engineers
Music, New College, 2016

What: I'm a consultant at The Value Engineers (TVE), a strategic marketing consultancy. From day one you're thrown right into the deep end: real projects, with real responsibilities and client interaction almost instantly. My first projects covered an array of brands, from Sony to Angry Birds to McDonald's, and a broad spectrum of work, from creating the next best cheese product, to developing a holiday journey for a customer, to tracking interest in the biggest tech brands on a global scale. This variety has continued throughout, and is a hugely valuable aspect of the job and my enjoyment of it.

How: When I graduated I knew that, although music would always remain a hobby, I didn't want a career in it. But I had very little idea of what I did want as a career. It was at a Careers Service event that I saw a talk given by TVE. It was like a penny dropping. They spoke about the variety of work and brands, but also that they were looking for graduates who could think creatively, strategically and rigorously. Until then I didn't realise it was this balance I was looking for from a career. Now it seems fairly obvious.



Top tips: It's OK not to know what to do and it's OK to take your time to find out. If you find something you really want and truly believe you're suited to, then you have a much better chance of getting the job and of enjoying it.

I found my organisation thanks to the Careers Service. Attend as many talks and events you can and use all the resources available; unsurprisingly, it's invaluable knowledge and advice.

If you don't ask you won't get. Talk to anyone you can about careers, applications or interviews. You have nothing to lose and it could give you that winning edge or sector knowledge that makes the difference.

Really think about what you'll enjoy from a career and why. You'll pinpoint roles that will suit you faster (and avoid wasting time on applications that don't), plus self-knowledge shows maturity and thoughtfulness – two things employers are keen to find.

Melanie Eckersley

Strategist, Mother
Fine Art, Lady Margaret Hall, 2015

What: I work as a strategist at a communications agency. Communications is a bit of a catch-all term including advertising, PR and design; my role is all about connecting the dots between brands, people and culture. For my role, I interrogate what a brand wants to communicate and why, what real people ('consumers') want or need and how the brand fits into wider culture. As a result, communications is key to aiding the growth of the business and ensuring the brand appears desirable and truly relevant. Remember that tone deaf Kendall Jenner Pepsi advert in which she 'solved racism' by sharing a can with police? Another way to describe my job is making sure fiascos like that don't happen!

Why: My job has a lot of parallels with working as an artist. When I attended The Ruskin School of Art, my art was often intended to be experienced in specific ways. I would consider what I wanted to make people think and feel. Of course, people bring their own life experiences with them, meaning their interpretation never exactly equalled my intention. But I loved the process of creating something and trying to get a stranger to understand it, and that's pretty much what communications strategy is all about.



It's great in that every project is different; you get to work with super creative people; it's informal and collaborative. But there are also some other elements worth bearing in mind: projects have tight deadlines, which can mean late nights; creativity is subjective after all so you can't be too precious about your ideas; it can take a year of interning before you land a permanent job.

Top tips: For budding copywriters and art directors – consider doing an advertising course to help you pull together a 'book' of ideas e.g. Watford or School Communications Arts.

For those interested in client servicing, strategy or production, look up internships at agencies like Mother, Bartle Bogle Hegarty (BBH), Grey and Engine.

The best tip I ever got was to reach out directly to people whose career you admire. Just ask if they have time for a virtual coffee. People love talking about themselves! And the more you do it, the less weird it will feel.



The Summer Internship Programme

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sip

Funded internship opportunities in the summer vacation, exclusively available to Oxford University students.

UK and international internships available in a wide variety of sectors, carried out in person or remotely.

ARTS AND HERITAGE

Arts and heritage jobs can be found in museums, public and commercial galleries, archaeology organisations, auction houses, theatres, the music industry, performing arts companies, venues, historic sites – and many specialist organisations.

This sector covers a huge range of roles, from artistic (designers, performers, artists, writers) to ‘arts management/administration’, requiring organisational, operational and leadership skills. Other roles use research or academic skills (‘curatorial, conservation and specialist’ jobs), involve teaching or training (‘arts education’) or technical skills (eg, fashion or set design).

Employers in this sector often rely on candidates to seek them out and there are very few graduate schemes.

- The vast majority of roles are advertised as individual opportunities – check organisations’ websites, as well as sector-specific job sites such as Arts Jobs, Arts Professional, Museum Jobs, BAJR (for archaeology), Heritage Daily, Screen Skills, Creative and Cultural skills, etc.
- A handful of graduate schemes exist (eg, Sotheby’s, Christie’s and Ambassador Theatre Group’s graduate scheme; the Arts Fundraising Fellowships), but these are really unusual in this sector.
- Do not just consider the big names. There are hundreds of smaller organisations, which often attract less competition. If you love the work of a particular organisation, then sign up to their newsletter for up-to-date information.
- Think about your local organisations and research within your region.
- Consider gaining experience with organisations providing specialist services to the arts and heritage world: eg, art investment, specialist legal and insurance firms, marketing and PR firms, specialist IT or training companies, public sector bodies and charities.
- Develop expertise and relevant skills in a different sector before moving to the arts later – eg, accountancy, law, marketing, teaching, graduate leadership schemes.

See the [Careers Service’s briefing for more on specific roles](#), ideas on how to build experience, and links to external resources.

Further study

Further study may be needed for certain careers (eg, curatorial or technically skilled roles) and it can help when seeking roles that attract strong competition. It is important to research courses before signing up, so consider the following:

- Browse job adverts to understand which roles commonly require additional study and which qualifications are sought.
- Investigate career destinations of graduates, and tutors’ backgrounds, for courses you are considering.
- Ask alumni and others working in your preferred field which courses they took and/or which are most respected.

Getting in and entry points

Competition for positions can be high, so relevant experience on your CV is vital. Consider:

- Volunteering with local arts and heritage organisations – seek out local museums (eg, www.museums.ox.ac.uk) and heritage organisations, such as Oxford Preservation Trust.
 - Advertised internships and short-term seasonal jobs offer great experience, paid or unpaid (eg, paid work staffing festivals and events; front-of-house or promotional work; support for tours; summer work with children and young people).
 - Asking directly about jobs, internships or volunteering by networking and speculative approaches to organisations, even if there is nothing on their website.
 - Positions may not be advertised widely (or at all!) so check websites and approach individual organisations directly.
- Create your own professional portfolio/blog to document your creative work and interests.

Extra-curricular ideas

Take advantage of the rich cultural life of Oxford and the University to try things out. For example:

- Perform in or direct student theatre or music events – see www.ouds.org
- Join community arts projects: eg, explore www.oxonarts.info
- Work on student films with the Oxford Filmmaking Foundation.
- Write a researched short article for Trusted Source on the National Trust’s website – exclusive to Oxford University!
- Try arts production or marketing; run events as ‘entz’ officer for your college.
- Submit articles for arts, culture and heritage sections of student newspapers.
- Start something new: eg, establish a performance group; create a heritage-style ‘audio guide’ to your college; write a blog; curate a sale of student art.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/arts-heritage

Indyana Schneider

Opera Singer, Wiener Staatsoper (the Vienna State Opera)
Music, Magdalen College, 2016

What: I’m lucky in that, for a long time, I’ve known my dream job – to be an opera singer. But I also know that working in the arts is tough. So, my initial plan was to work in London to save some money and gain some vital CV experience, before taking the plunge.

My extracurriculars at university largely revolved around organising TEDx conferences and performing in plays, musicals and operas. I really can’t stress enough how these creative outlets helped both my wellbeing and future job prospects.

Why: The summer after second year I interned for BCG, the management consultants. I realised very quickly that I did not want to work as a management consultant after graduating as, with the long and demanding hours, I had no time to do any singing. I worked in the finance sector and, while the learning curve was steep, it sparked an interest in financial modelling, which informed my final dissertation – opera’s terrible economic model.

Career path: I considered studying a Performance Master’s at the Royal Academy of Music, but decided to stick to my original plan. I turned the place down without a back-up, which was equally brave and stupid.

Then, I got very lucky. In my dissertation, I used the innovative touring opera company, OperaUpClose, as a case study. I joined their mailing list. As I graduated, they were advertising for a Development Manager job – all about opera economics. Working for OperaUpClose, I acquired a range of business, fundraising and financial strategy skills. After 18 months, I felt ready to leave and pursue my dream job. Currently, I’m singing in operas while working part-time as Head of Development for Just Like Us, an LGBT+ charity. I finish my contract in June, and am moving to Vienna to sing with the Wiener Staatsoper: the Vienna State Opera.

It’s funny looking back and seeing how each of these (at the time) self-contained decisions can tell quite a neat, linear how-I-got-here story. That certainly wasn’t the case.

Advice: Be patient, trust yourself, try and talk with people who’ve been there and done that, and do what you love – the results are always worth it.



Robyn Haggard

Public Engagement Officer, Museum of the History of Science
MSc History of Science Medicine and Technology, St Hilda’s College, 2015

What: As public engagement officer about 60% of my role is creating events for the museum, from debates to musical promenades through the building. The event I’m proudest of was an astronomy afternoon in University Parks with a local community observatory. Over 300 people gathered to watch the transit of Mercury. The other 40% is managing the Museum’s communications, including press and marketing, social media accounts and print material.

Why: Running both our events and communications allows me to help shape the way the Museum is presented to the public. I also love being able to share the specialist knowledge I gained during my MSc. As with all small institutions, there’s a lot of opportunities to get involved in areas outside of my role. I learn new skills all the time, whether its conservation or website development.

Getting started: I realised I wanted to work in museums during my undergrad. This meant that I was in a position to gain a lot of volunteer experience while studying.

After coming to Oxford I was able to volunteer across the Oxford University Museums and discovered just how varied the

roles in the museum sector are. Once I realised I was interested in events, rather than curation, I was able to target my volunteering to improve my skills in that area.

Advice: Volunteer as much as you can, but make sure you are strategic. It’s definitely not the only way into the sector – look out for paid internships and apprenticeships – but it is a common one.

But, if you take volunteer roles whenever they come up you’re likely to burn out before you get a paid job in the sector. Once you have worked out what skills you need to get your dream job don’t be afraid to target those areas and ask for training while volunteering.

Top tip: Talk to everyone you can about their jobs and experience. Building up your own network is really important for future jobs, and having people you can turn to for advice is invaluable.



BANKING AND INVESTMENT

Opportunities in this sector are many and varied, so if you are interested in finance you should be able to find the role and firm that's right for you.

Generally, this sector can be split into the buy-side and the sell-side, and within each of those there are a variety of roles offering very different remuneration, work/life balance and skill requirements.

The buy-side (investment)

The buy-side make money for their clients including high-net-worth individuals, companies, governments, pension funds etc by investing their capital in various financial products. Their aim is to deliver higher rates of return by devising effective investment strategies.

You may have heard of terms including hedge funds, pooled funds, mutual funds etc. All of these fall broadly under the asset management umbrella and have roles including fund managers, analysts, researchers and operations analysts. All have different skill sets but as an investment analyst you would typically conduct research and analysis to make decisions about which companies to start or stop investing in.

The sell-side (banking)

The sell-side provide a market for their clients (the buy-side) to purchase financial products; this is known as market-making. They also provide complementary research and custodian services (the holding of assets). The market-making roles, often referred to as 'markets' or 'secondary capital markets' include sales, trading and research roles.

The sell-side also has another core function in helping companies raise capital. This can be in the form of debt (similar to you taking out a credit card or loan) or equity (selling a part of their company). These markets are often referred to as DCM (debt capital markets) and ECM (equity capital markets).

Mergers and acquisitions and corporate finance

The other function of investment banks and other specialist corporate finance houses is to help companies to restructure through buying or selling parts of, or their whole company, or merging with another company. This is known as M&A and the function most readily associated with 'investment bankers'.

The buy-side and sell-side distinction is somewhat different in this context: if the bank is acting as an adviser to the potential seller they are on the sell-side; conversely, if they are advising the potential acquirer they are on the buy-

side. This is a deals-based, high-profile function and often the most competitive. Bankers in this area often work the longest hours, and are among the most highly remunerated.

Getting in and entry points

This is a highly competitive sector and firms receive applications from students across the globe so proper research and preparation are key to securing the right job.

You don't need to have studied a finance-related degree, but it's important to have a keen interest in and understanding of the wider concepts within the banking industry and global markets. You also need a high degree of analytical intelligence and the ability to build and maintain good working relationships in what can be a competitive and pressurised environment.

In order to secure a full-time graduate role getting work experience is very important, and even a requirement for some firms. It's important to note that most banks, and increasingly asset management firms, use their internships as a major pipeline for their graduate programmes. We would recommend looking for banking 'spring weeks' (typically one-week work experience) in your pre-penultimate year and summer internships (8–12 weeks) in your penultimate year to gain as much experience and exposure as possible.

It's really important to have a good understanding of application deadlines; these are usually in early Michaelmas term and often work on a rolling basis, (they are reviewed as and when people apply) so there is a benefit to applying early.

If you don't get an internship in your penultimate year, all is not lost; a number of the large banks offer 'off-cycle' internships for those who have just graduated and smaller boutique banks, corporate finance houses and trading firms offer less rigid recruitment processes.

See the more detailed briefing on our website for further information on the skills required and recruitment timeframes associated with the different job functions.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Engage with employers at careers fairs, presentations, workshops etc, especially in Michaelmas term.
- Join and actively participate in relevant student societies: eg, the Oxford Alpha Fund, CapitOx, the Oxford Guild, and the Oxford Finance Society.
- Demonstrate your skills at managing finances by overseeing your own fantasy fund or learn a valuation methodology such as discounted cash flow (DCF).
- Apply to 'insight days' or 'spring week' programmes in your first year (or second year of a four-year degree).

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/banking-investment

Tom Johnson

Corporate Finance Analyst
BA Physics, Lady Margaret Hall, 2016

What: As a corporate finance analyst, I work with clients to help raise funding for their business. The day-to-day work can vary drastically but typical graduate tasks include: financial modelling of transactions; working on investor presentations; and analysing businesses. It's a role that is often associated with big banks but is actually very often done by small, specialist teams. Being in a small firm has brought a lot of exposure to work that is typically done by high-level people in the business such as negotiating directly with large private equity funds.

Why: Coming from a scientific background, the main factor I was looking for in my career was to continue problem-solving. Working in corporate finance appeared a great way to do this:

Networking is key: corporate finance is a people business. Reaching out to people on LinkedIn – especially other Oxford alumni – can be a great way to find people who are often willing to talk and give advice.

trying to fit a client's needs with a realistic funding solution that works for investors. It also gives me the chance to experience a wide variety of sectors and the opportunity to work with senior level executives to really understand their business.

Advice: Don't only focus on the big firms. While the big firms can look great on the CV, smaller firms can often provide higher levels of exposure and responsibility early on in your career. Many boutiques have areas that they're particularly strong in so if you know what you want to do, researching smaller firms that are strong in that area could be time well spent.

Top tips: Networking is key. Corporate finance is a people business and who you know can often be key to finding the solution for a client or the next job in your career. Reaching out to people on LinkedIn, especially other Oxford alumni, can be a great way to find people who are often willing to talk and give advice.



Kavya Deshpande

Capital Consulting Analyst, UBS
BA History, New College, 2020

What: I am an analyst on the capital introduction and business consulting services team within the UBS Investment Bank. Our clients are hedge funds that choose UBS as their prime broker, and for whom my team facilitates contact with potential allocators and consults on a variety of areas, such as asset-raising strategy and business development. My role as an analyst is spread across both introductory and consulting functions. This involves supporting the team's regular engagement with funds and investors, helping to organise and run conferences, and creating bespoke content that is interesting and relevant to our clients.

Why: Telling anybody that you studied history and now work in an investment bank prompts the inevitable 'Oh.' This is not without reason; while there are ways in which my degree has informed my ability to perform my current role — being able to rapidly consolidate unfamiliar information, shaping and structuring ideas and clearly communicating them — there is more that separates the two. This is, in fact, why I chose to pursue my line of work. I loved reading history and after three fascinating and rewarding years of doing so, to

avoid the ennui that sometimes grows alongside continuity, I felt I had to experience something entirely new. In this sense, a fast-paced, client-facing role with opportunities to learn a lot and put it into practice quickly was appealing to me.

Advice: If you decide to apply for internships and graduate programmes in finance, persistence is your friend. The process is challenging, and behind every example of success is a lot of free coffee in Canary Wharf waiting rooms. Also, there is no such thing as 'selling your soul', despite its endurance in the demonology of undergraduate culture. If T S Eliot refused to quit his job as a banker years after publishing *The Wasteland*, it is possible to find equal fulfilment in both your occupation and preoccupations. Just remember to read, much of the night, and go south in winter.





recruitment@davinciderivatives.com

Main location: Amsterdam, The Netherlands

About us: Da Vinci Derivatives is a unique firm made up of some of the brightest minds in the industry. We were founded in 2015 by a group of passionate professionals who wanted to do things differently. Every day, we work hard to build the best proprietary trading house in the world through our innovative approach to trading, culture and tech. We identify and trade opportunities in financial derivatives with short to medium term strategies focused on volatility. Our philosophy towards work is best captured by "Be good, work hard and great things will happen". We are meritocratic by nature and believe in empowering our colleagues. We aim at attracting the most talented people out there, continuously challenge them, give them room to experiment and provide everything they need to reach their full potential and, together, achieve our ambitions goals.

Opportunities available: Graduate roles for Traders, Quant Analysts and Software Engineers

Graduates sought: Bachelor's or Master's degree in Mathematics, Physics, Finance, Engineering, Computer Science or equivalent

Visa sponsorship: We sponsor visas for highly skilled migrants

Application advice: We hire continuously for our key roles.

Candidates are advised to apply through our website by uploading their CV and motivation: <https://davinciderivatives.com/careers/>

<https://davinciderivatives.com/>

NOTHING BEATS WINNING

"BE READY TO MAKE QUICK DECISIONS AND SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES."

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Vacation work: Internships available for penultimate year undergraduate or postgraduate students.

www.gsacapital.com/careers



Main Locations: London, New York, Hong Kong

About Us: Jane Street is a quantitative trading firm with offices worldwide. We hire smart, humble people who love to solve problems, build systems, and test theories. You'll learn something new every day in our office—whether it's connecting with a colleague to share perspectives, or participating in a talk, class, or game night. Our success is driven by our people and we never stop improving.

Opportunities available: Full time and Summer internship opportunities are available in Quantitative Trading, Software Engineering, Quantitative Research, and Business Development.

Graduates sought: Mathematics, Computer Science, Physics and other highly quantitative subjects are preferred. No finance experience is necessary.

Vacation work: Summer internships are available. We think of our internships as an investment in the future of Jane Street, and for good reason – a significant fraction of our new employees over the past several years were once interns!

Application Advice: Applications are open all year round, but early application is encouraged. Please submit your CV online via our website. A cover letter is not required, however, you have the option to add further info about yourself in the comments section of the application.

www.janestreet.com



Virtual

FINANCE FAIR

WEDNESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2021

STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30



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www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs



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Email: dubcampus@sig.com

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About us: SIG is a global quantitative trading firm founded with a growth mindset and an analytical approach to decision making. We bring together the brightest minds, the best tech, and the most expansive library of data in the industry. Only by tapping into our diverse perspectives, can we truly reach our potential. At the end of the day, by thinking together we achieve winning results.

Opportunities available: SIG's Internship and Graduate Programmes can be the start of a rewarding and challenging career. We have opportunities across Trading Operations, Quantitative Trading, Technology, and Research.

Graduates sought: We look for students with academic backgrounds in Mathematics, Physics, Actuarial Science, Engineering, Computer Science, Economics, and Finance, who are on track to achieve or have achieved a minimum grade of a 2.1.

Vacation work: Our Internship Programme welcomes students in their second and penultimate years of study, while the Graduate Programme is aimed at final years and graduates.

Application advice: We open our applications in early September. SIG recruit on a rolling basis and strongly encourage early applications. Please apply with CV and cover letter via our website.

www.sig.com

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BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

From multinational companies to city councils, business permeates all organisations. The range of opportunities spans a wide range of functions including strategy, HR, IT, finance, marketing, logistics and sales to name but a few.

Many Oxford graduates enter this sector for a career with prospects of early management responsibility, high salaries, excellent benefits and the possibility of working globally.

Given the breadth of roles available within business and management, it makes sense to consider the type of business you want to work in (small tech start-up to major supermarket chain) and the sort of role that appeals to your strengths and interests but, generally speaking, management activities include:

- Defining objectives, allocating resources, meeting targets and taking responsibility for the business decisions.
- Project work.
- Recruiting, supervising, motivating and developing staff, to ensure effective teamworking.
- Effective communication.
- Controlling finances and managing budgets.
- Problem solving and dealing with complaints.
- Managing change.

The opportunity to enter general management is often seen as a stepping stone that in time can either remain as a standalone function particularly in a manufacturing or retail organisation, or to carve a particular professional route in one area. Graduates can be recruited by a variety of industries and sectors such as consumer goods, retail, energy, healthcare, transport and leisure. Management and leadership opportunities aside, job titles across 'business' can vary significantly and so deciphering what is involved in the role is crucial: if strategy and problem solving really appeal, look out for business analyst graduate roles; for growing a business (including sales), look out for business development executive roles.

Getting in and entry points

Many organisations offer management positions that specialise in specific areas, such as technology, marketing, finance, human resources or distribution, all of which have an element of general management work within them.

Other graduate schemes offer the chance to try different 'rotations' over the course of typically two years before deciding to specialise. Competition for these schemes can be intense. Many of these opportunities will open in August and September with deadlines on a rolling basis. Students who have gained commercial insight via an internship or position of responsibility during their degree are likely to be at an advantage when applying for graduate schemes or management roles. Demonstrating motivation for the business you apply to is essential, as is showing your ability to work with people and build relationships.

Deadlines for internship schemes, usually aimed at penultimate-year students, also tend to be in Michaelmas or early Hilary term. If you want to gain some experience in a company that doesn't appear to advertise an internship, approach them speculatively for some experience or a shadowing opportunity. While multinational corporations offer a number of internships and graduate roles, it's worth remembering that the majority of businesses are small or medium sized, in which case research businesses in your local area and find out if you can help out with any office tasks or projects during the vacation.

Looking further ahead, if your aim is to reach the managing director role in an organisation, most large companies will look for someone with experience in more than one management area and in more than one company so be prepared to work in different businesses across the industry.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Run a mini-business that has to turn a profit, such as a theatrical production or a college ball.
- Make use of the Oxford Foundry, the entrepreneurial centre for Oxford students.
- Sign up for **Insight into Strategy and Management**, to learn core elements of strategy, marketing and management and learn how to build a profit-and-loss account.
- Join **The Oxford Strategy Challenge (TOSCA)** for an insight into the challenges faced by real businesses and for the opportunity to help solve problems faced by local companies.
- Become a campus ambassador for a large company (many employers advertise these via CareerConnect).
- Sign up for other relevant student organisations such as the Oxford Strategy Group and Oxford Women in Business.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/business-management

Catherine Haigh

Sales Account Manager, Procter & Gamble (P&G)
BA Human Sciences, Keble College, 2017

What: People often ask me how I ended up in sales after doing a degree like human sciences – without having done a more specific degree. The answer, for me, is simple: people. If you don't understand your consumer, you're not going to get anywhere in sales. I currently work for P&G as a national account manager. I manage our Pampers & Gillette business with Amazon and Ocado UK. Put simply, I sell the nappies to Amazon, and Amazon sell them on to the consumer. Within this process, I have to forecast my sales (very tricky during the COVID-19 peak), negotiate with my buyer on launching new products, build longer-term growth strategies, manage my budgets and spend day-to-day and build a good relationship with my retail partners. The revenue of these businesses is worth over £45 million a year, and I'm accountable for that number (great when it goes up; harder when it goes down).

Work experience: I completed a ten-week sales internship in my company's Harrogate office in the long vacation between my second and third year at Oxford, and the experience was invaluable. I got to work on genuine, meaningful projects and received coaching. I was offered a sales account manager role upon completing my degree, which I chose to defer for a year.

In that year, I worked in Santiago (Chile) for three months, back-packed around India and started filming a documentary.

Top tips:

- Double-check the key details. The worst thing is to fire off an email only to realise two seconds later that you've addressed it to the wrong company or included someone else's product. I unfortunately sent off my Unilever application with the title 'Dear P&G' – no surprises, I never heard back. Ask the people nearest and dearest to you to proofread your application. Family, friends, or a careers adviser – most people will be happy to give your first stab at a cover letter a read. A second set of eyes can make a world of difference.
- STAR – this is not just another annoying acronym. Situation, Task, Action and, most importantly, RESULT. Too many applicants, when asked to provide a 'A scenario when you did X' are great at reeling off details on the situation, what the problem was and the action they took. However, don't forget to share the result of your actions.



Ann-Marie Jay

Business Analyst (IT Analysis and Design), REED Specialist Recruitment
Earth Sciences, Worcester College, 2017

What: My teammates and I are involved in all non-technical aspects of the software development process at REED – from analysis of a problem through to ensuring any development meets business stakeholder requirements.

Career path: After graduating, I worked at the Oxford Careers Service and as a private tutor while recovering mentally from completing my degree and figuring out what I wanted to do. I found the experience invaluable and it enabled me to mentally adjust to post-degree life.

How: In September 2018, I joined the REED graduate training scheme. My first role was as an employment adviser working on a government welfare-to-work programme; I loved the team but I interviewed for my current role when the opportunity came up to try something that was a better fit for me.

The business analyst role is not technical – I have absolutely no knowledge of coding – and it allows me to engage my problem-solving and creative-thinking skills. I'm also involved with projects across the business and am exposed to all aspects of the recruitment process; it provides valuable industry insights

and a huge number of connections. Although I no longer work in an operational role to support and enable people, I have been able to work with local universities to support their care-experienced and estranged students.

Lessons learned:

- Ask for help when you need it.
- Don't let fear stop you from making a change or taking on a new challenge.
- Taking a break is not necessarily a bad thing – it will allow you to refocus your energy.
- You can't enable someone who doesn't want to help themselves.
- Every opportunity to improve on yourself is a gift.
- Make the most of any careers/networking advice and support available to you – through the Careers Service, friends and family, and professional mentoring.



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www.careers.ox.ac.uk/micro

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www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs

BUSINESS WITH PURPOSE

The phrase 'business with purpose' is not a new sector in the traditional sense, but terminology that seeks to define the changes we are seeing within the business world.

There has been a huge shift in the business sector over the last few years, with a large proportion of companies putting a greater focus on sustainability initiatives, social and environmental impact, and employee welfare. As well as this section, take a look at the [business and management overview](#), [charity and social enterprise overview](#), and [energy, sustainability and the environment overview](#) in this Guide.

A huge range of roles exist in this area from operational, financial and managerial (eg sustainability manager, supply chain manager) to technical. Other roles use research or academic skills (eg climate science, sustainability knowledge, wellbeing at work) or involve consultancy, teaching or training or technical skills (material scientists, environmental scientists).

When conducting your job search, it is worth looking at the structure of individual companies to see if the organisation takes sustainability, environmental and social issues seriously by embedding them within company values and strategic planning. If there is someone in a senior position within that company, who is charged with leading on strategy for sustainability for example, this is a good indicator that the company is looking at its suppliers, customers, environmental impact, communities and wellbeing of employees alongside pure profit and shareholder interests.

One way of showing that you are a 'business with purpose' in a meaningful and recognisable way is by certifying as B Corp. This means that a company has undergone an evaluation process and impact assessment in order to be certified. These types of business are legally required to consider the impact of their decisions on their workers, customers, suppliers, community, and the environment. The majority of B Corps will also be working to ensure their business goals are aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. [There is more information on B Corps on bcorporation.uk](#).

The following insights and advice can also help:

- Develop expertise and relevant skills in a different sector before moving into a business with purpose, eg accountancy, marketing, teaching, graduate leadership schemes.

- Browse job adverts to understand which roles commonly require further study and qualifications. Investigate career destinations of graduates and tutors' backgrounds of further study courses.
- Ask alumni and others working in your preferred field for course recommendations.
- The vast majority of roles are advertised as individual opportunities – check organisations' websites, as well as [sector-specific job sites such as B Work](#).
- Consider the issues that are important to you. Research organisations on that basis. Do you want to work to minimise plastic use? Are you interested in the product side, innovating materials to be more eco friendly?
- Unilever, Danone and P&G are taking great steps to move big business forward in this area. However, do not just consider the big names. Look at Patagonia and Finisterre (outdoor clothing brands in retail/fashion sector), Ella's Kitchen (FMCG), Triodos Bank (finance) and Kickstarter (community and crowdsourced funding platform) for growth examples. See the [B Corp directory](#) for a list of certified companies.

Getting in and entry points

Competition for positions can be high so relevant experience on your CV is vital. Consider:

- Advertised internships and short-term seasonal jobs.
- Asking directly about jobs, internships or volunteering by networking and speculative approaches. Positions may not be advertised widely (or at all!).

Extra-curricular ideas

- Join or follow the work of relevant societies eg [the Oxford Climate Society](#) or [become a member of your college's Green Impact Team](#).
- Seek out companies within the Oxford area who are seeking to do business better. Look at [OXWash](#) and [certified B Corp ClimateCare](#) as a starting point.
- Submit articles for publications on issues relating to 'business with purpose'.
- Create a LinkedIn profile and follow business with purpose thought leaders like Paul Polman (ex-P&G, Nestle and Unilever) and Colin Mayer (Said Business School) to keep up-to-date.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/business-management
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/charities
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sustainability-environment
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-with-social-impact
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/entrepreneurship-social-enterprise

Jonny Walker

Project Developer, New Ground Coffee
 BA Theology and Religion, Worcester College, 2019

Why: I became interested in social enterprise towards the end of my time at Oxford. I realised that business is great at innovating and finding new ways of doing things, but primarily focused on the pursuit of profit. On the other hand, charity is brilliant at focusing on injustice in society, but isn't always the most strategic in its approach. So, what if we could innovate solutions to social problems – channelling the innovation and strategy of entrepreneurship to tackle issues of injustice in the world?

What: New Ground Coffee is a café and coffee roastery in Headington, providing employment and training to ex-offenders. 50% of ex-offenders are likely to reoffend within a year without work and 90% of employers immediately overlook them. We want to make really good coffee and in doing so empower that demographic.

I have been working on training programmes to provide those coming out of prison with the skills and motivation they need to get into work and get their lives back on track. Alongside this, I have been involved with policy work – collaborating with other social enterprises with a similar heart to raise awareness and tackle some of the systemic issues at the root of this injustice: poor education; insufficient housing; and excessive use of prison sentences to name a few. This has been an amazing opportunity to build communication,

networking and research skills, while working towards a worthwhile goal of transforming society for the better.

Advice: If you want to make a difference with your career, do not be afraid to jump straight in. So often people embark on the corporate route with the hope that somewhere down the line they will be able to 'transfer their skills' for good. Often this is an authentic hope to start with, and sometimes the approach works, but so often that passion gradually gets lost with the stresses of work and desire for career progression. So, while it might work for some, I'd encourage most people to find something they are passionate about, or a problem they want to solve. Spend time learning about this early on by getting involved with organisations already tackling the issue, and get to know real people with real struggles as you do. Perhaps later you might seek some more specialised experience and training to bring to your work, but by that point you will have caught the bug and always want to go back.



James Ghaffari

Director of B Corp Certification, B Lab UK
 PPE, St. Peter's College, 2012

What: At B Lab UK, we are creating a community of companies (B Corps) that want to put people and planet alongside profit and redefine what it means to a successful business. My role is to build this community by helping companies understand the importance of sustainability and manage the impact of their operations on their employees, suppliers and customers as well as society and the environment in general.

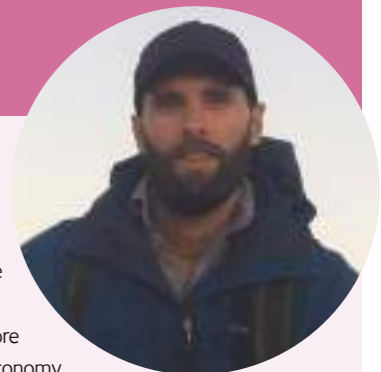
Working with these businesses across sectors is a great opportunity to understand the different ways in which companies can create positive impact through their business models and it is always intellectually challenging to explore how sustainability relates to food and drinks brands, construction firms or the financial services industry, for example.

Why: With a decade left to meet the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development that define how we can meet the needs of humanity within the means of the planet, I believe we must harness the power of business to create positive change. For too long, companies have been allowed to exploit people and degrade the environment, but now many are realising this system can no longer work.

I enjoy the pleasure of working with those who already understand this imperative and the challenge of convincing those who do not that we must make a just transition to a more equitable and regenerative economy.

Advice: Don't discount small companies and start-ups when looking for your first role. Working in these companies will expose you to a wide variety of different positions within the sector and force you to build a broad skill set at the start of your career. It will also give you the opportunity to see a direct link between the work you put in and the outcomes you create – something that can be trickier in a bigger organisation. Finally, start-ups are usually more agile and willing to listen to all voices in the company, so they can be fun and empowering places to work!

So find the smaller firms doing the exciting and experimental things in the sector in which you want to work and send them an email as they can always use an extra hand.



CHARITY AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

This sector offers: diverse roles; a chance to drive change; and the opportunity to work on a cause that matters to you.

Charities do not seek to make profits, and are usually funded through donations and grants. Social enterprises are businesses which trade for a social/environmental purpose, reinvesting profits to further this purpose.

There is a huge range of causes served, and workplaces range from small start-ups to big organisations with a more corporate culture. Charities and social enterprises have the same range of job roles as any organisation, such as marketing, HR, PR, IT, project management, fieldwork, finance, policy, and research. Charities often also have an extensive fundraising or 'development' department.

Getting in and entry points

The following options offer different ways into the charity and social enterprise sector:

- Internships – although paid opportunities are advertised, internships are often offered as unpaid volunteering. If it is not possible for you to volunteer, ask whether there's any way they could make the opportunity more accessible: fewer days or hours or working remotely to allow you to accommodate other paid work.
- Job opportunities generally will require some previous experience, such as volunteering. Administrative, project or case-work supporting roles can be a way into the sector. Check organisations' own websites and specialist job sites such as Charity Jobs, Third Sector Jobs, Guardian Jobs, Idealist and Social Enterprise UK.
- Contact organisations speculatively to find short-term roles and entry-level work.
- Graduate schemes are relatively rare and have been affected by the loss of funding caused by the pandemic but examples still include Gradunique (BHF and Macmillan Cancer Support), Wellcome Trust and Cancer Research UK.
- Some people transfer into the charity sector having gained skills and expertise in a private company first. This is particularly true of roles like accountancy or legal work where the charity or social enterprise might not have the resources to train someone.

- Further study – many roles are accessible without a further degree but this may be important for some roles (eg, policy).

If you are considering further study as part of your strategy, it is advisable to:

- Understand which roles commonly require higher qualifications by reviewing job descriptions and advertisements.
- Ask people working in your preferred area what qualifications they have and which courses they recommend for entry and progression (if any).
- Investigate providers and specific courses, including the background of tutors and destinations of recent graduates.

Extra-curricular ideas

Relevant experience is usually essential. Here are some ideas to try while you are here at Oxford:

- Explore volunteering opportunities through Oxford Hub, which also offers grants and training for those wishing to try out a social enterprise idea or find opportunities using www.do-it.org or OCVA.
- Join a cause-related student society: get involved in projects and committee or leadership positions or establish a new society serving a cause you care about.
- Participate in **The Oxford Strategy Challenge**: charities and social enterprises are among the clients seeking student advice.
- Look out for **Oxford Micro-Internships** which are often based in social enterprises and charities.
- Get involved with Oxford University Innovation social enterprises.
- Look for the Skoll World Forum activities and the fringe events such as Oxjam.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/charities

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/entrepreneurship-social-enterprise

“ The 'learn, do, retire' model of work is no more and I think now it's about taking opportunities in their various forms, working hard but staying kind. If you're looking for experience in the third sector and start-up world, come and volunteer with us.

— Beth Kume-Holland, Founder and Company Director, Patchwork Hub

Madeleine O'Connor

Outreach and Communications Officer, Oxford Hub
Biological Sciences, New College, 2020

“ **What:** Oxford Hub brings people and organisations together to conduct a wide range of community volunteering programmes. As outreach and communications officer, I coordinate the charity's communications (including creating social media content and attending publicity events) and support the Crankstart and Lloyds Scholars. As I was a Crankstart scholar myself, it's wonderful to be able to give back to other scholars by hosting events, one-on-one meetings and exclusive work experience opportunities.

Why: Throughout my degree, I was always drawn to opportunities that involved making a positive social impact; I helped at public engagement days at museums, and I loved access and admissions work. I found these experiences confidence-boosting and fulfilling, leading to the conclusion that I should pursue a career in the charity sector. I first heard of Oxford Hub through the Student Union and volunteered on their environmental programme Forest Schools which connected local children with the natural world.

Advice: The best way to demonstrate that you're a proactive, change-making person is to get out there and volunteer. University is a brilliant place to get involved, as there are so many college initiatives, university start-ups and like-minded people to connect with, so make the most of it during quiet terms!

It's noticeable when student volunteers are dedicated; a great way to get stuck in might be writing a blog post for a charity in the vacation all about your volunteering experience or representing them at the Freshers Fair. This can lead to great character references for future job applications. Finally, the Careers Service one-on-one sessions are excellent: they're great for CV advice and gave me motivating and personalised support when applying for my current role.



Beth Kume-Holland

Founder and Company Director, Patchwork Hub
BA History, Pembroke, 2013

“ **What:** Patchwork Hub is an accessible employment platform for anyone whose personal circumstances prevent them leaving the house. Through the online platform, a person can connect with employers offering tasks, projects or permanent employment. They can connect with training to upskill themselves and easily access the centralised resources and support they need.

How: I started Patchwork Hub after realising the number of highly-skilled people with various health conditions or personal circumstances that are working unsustainably or unable to work a conventional job. These are people who want to work for themselves and use their skills to build their career and income but there was no platform they felt able to use. I have been working hard with leading businesses, national charities and governments to develop this service and I love the work I get to do. I am also the audience and market insights lead for Scope, the national disability charity.

Why: The idea for Patchwork Hub arose from the disability advocacy work I got involved in after my disappointing experience as a disabled graduate student at Harvard University. I was so tired of faceless corporations having monopoly of tech platforms; I met so many disabled persons fed up of 'disabled' people always being an afterthought – a wheelchair logo and a separate

category added on it at the end of a document. So, I wanted to create something suitable for *all* users.

With the projected growth of online talent platforms in the next five years, I feel strongly that an accessible *social enterprise*, with sustainability and inclusion at its core, should be one of the market leaders. Accessibility doesn't always have to be an afterthought – it can and should be fully integrated into the future of work.

Top tips: It's OK to have no idea what you want to do or which sector you want to enter. Think about your passions, your motivations for the work you want to do and take as many opportunities as you can to try things out. Volunteering in the third sector is a great way to do this, you'll gain usable insights and experience of what you enjoy but will also be putting your time into something impactful. If you're looking for experience in the third sector and start-up world, come and volunteer with us.

The 'learn, do, retire' model of work is no more and I think now it's about taking opportunities in their various forms, working hard but staying kind.



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www.oxfordhub.org

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www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sip

Funded internship opportunities in the summer vacation, exclusively available to Oxford University students.

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CONSULTANCY

Management consultancy offers variety, intellectual challenge and the chance to work in high performance teams with big-name clients.

Critical skills include teamworking and communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, business awareness and ability to deliver results.

Consultants help client organisations improve their performance by, for example:

- assessing the business case for new products or expansion to new markets
- advising on scaling back, closing operations, reorganisations and cost-cutting, and
- all points in between, such as improving systems and processes, and building better teams.

Graduates are expected to be active and productive in projects from the start, working with staff at all levels, and can quickly gain experience across a wide range of industries. However, new entrants should also expect long hours, extensive travel and lots of time working on spreadsheet analyses and presentations – rather than strategising with the CEO in the boardroom.

Consulting firms range from large, multinational firms working across a variety of industries, to niche consultancies specialising in expert advice on a specific industry, such as healthcare, media or financial services. Broadly, firms work in two ways:

- 1. Strategy consultancy:** Understanding and finding solutions to strategic problems faced by an organisation: eg, understanding competitors; the market; and/or future drivers of growth. Projects tend to be fairly short, and roles often involve significant travel.
- 2. Implementation consultancy:** Developing a strategic idea or solution and making it a reality. Projects tend to be longer than in strategy consultancy and consultants are often based at the client organisation and ensure that all elements of a business – people, technology and processes – come together to deliver a successful outcome.

Getting in and entry points

Competition can be fierce and the assessment process is rigorous, typically including aptitude tests (online) and several rounds of interviews and/or an assessment centre, plus partner interview. Once the process starts it can move quickly, so prepare thoroughly in advance. Use individual firms' websites to understand their recruitment processes and timelines, and plan ahead.

For full-time positions, applications at most firms open in August or September and close in late October.

A few firms recruit all year round (e.g., Accenture and Newton Europe) or on a 'rolling basis', reviewing candidates and filling positions as applications are received. Lastly, firms usually only allow one application a year and so when applying for consulting at the Big 4 professional service firms this means deciding whether to apply for their 'management consulting' or 'strategy consulting' practice.

Internships are not offered universally (application deadlines fall between November and January), but are becoming more common. However, use commercial work experience in any sector to acquire and display relevant skills and enhance your business awareness.

Case study interviews are central to the process. 'Cases' challenge you to show you can think through business problems like a consultant and, generally, you will need to do a good job on every 'case' and an outstanding job on a couple of them. Use the available options to prepare thoroughly for case study interviews:

- Read our guidance www.careers.ox.ac.uk/case-study-style-interviews.
- Attend case study workshops at the Careers Service, or with student societies or run by companies.
- Practise a lot, with friends and societies.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Become active in a student society, such as the Oxford Management Society, CapitOx, the Oxford Strategy Group, Oxford Women in Business or the Oxford Guild.
- Sign up for [Insight into Strategy and Management](#) to introduce you to core business concepts and enhance commercial awareness.
- Check out the [The Oxford Strategy Challenge \(TOSCA\)](#), a team-based, experiential learning event. TOSCA is a chance for you to gain hands-on experience with local organisations. You'll work in a team on a project that's important to the organisation.
- Work as a consultant with other societies: eg Oxford Strategy Group, Oxford Consulting Initiative; Oxford Development Consultancy.
- Get involved with activities that provide business insight, teamwork and demonstrate impact, eg lead on sponsorship for a student society, participate in team sports or outdoor pursuits with different people, manage a recruitment drive for a society or improve the process of a virtual event/activity within your college.

More information

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Runsen Ma

Innovation Consultant, Innovia Technology
MEng Materials Science, St Catherine's College, 2020

What: Innovia is an innovation consultancy based in Cambridge that specialises in the front end of innovation. We work with companies to help them create, assess and test ideas for new products and services. Projects are done in multidisciplinary teams, so I get to work with people from a wide range of backgrounds, including natural scientists, engineers, designers and behavioural scientists. I've worked on projects from lots of different industries such as surgical implants, sustainable packaging, apparel and food. I'm always working on three to four projects at any given time and these change every few months. Work has never been boring!

Why: I wanted a role where I could use my materials science knowledge to solve real-life problems while also getting opportunities to learn about new areas and develop new skills.

I originally joined my company as a summer intern in 2019. At that stage I didn't know much about consulting – only what I'd picked up from conversations with friends and peers. Doing an internship allowed me to get some first-hand consultancy experience while also giving me the opportunity to figure out what was important to me in my future career. Working with

people that I genuinely get along with is very important to me and being a relatively small company, I got to know everyone quickly and felt very welcomed. In addition, I really appreciated the real responsibility given to me, even when I was an intern here. As the only materials scientist when I joined, I was given the freedom to spend time on the new offerings that I could bring to the company, rather than trying to fit into the system.

Advice: Don't be afraid to try new things. Every consultancy is different in what they do, how they do it, the opportunities that are available and the culture that they promote. Think about what is important to you and try to find a place that aligns with your aspirations and values. Reaching out to people who work at the firms that you are interested in for advice can be helpful for gathering information. Internships are also great for exploring different options and seeing what works for you and what doesn't.



Rachael Martin

Consultant, Bain & Company
Physics, University College, 2015

What: At Bain, we work with our clients to solve their most challenging business problems. I will lead on a distinct aspect of a project, and my role differs at each stage of a project. In the early stage, I will immerse myself in the client, interviewing clients and Bain experts, to get up to speed. As we develop a hypothesis, I work with my team to analyse client data and test our thinking internally before working with clients to refine our recommendations. I've worked across both the public and private sectors, on business problems ranging from high-level strategy through to how to make operations more efficient.

I am lucky to have the opportunity to get involved in pro bono projects with charities as part of my company's diverse social impact programme, as well as help with recruiting or organising office social events. Having volunteered with schools and educational charities at Oxford, I've been delighted to continue this at work, by helping education charities shape their strategy and recently by becoming a school governor through my organisation's governor programme.

Why: I was keen to find a role where I could develop quickly and which I would still find interesting after a couple of years. The local and global training programmes and flexibility of options are outstanding, and I have travelled to Cape Cod and Cancun and trained in teams in which everyone is from a different office. I have a mentor from outside my project team who acts as an independent source of advice. I have the option to transfer to another office for six months and take time off for travelling. I'm keen to do an MBA, which my organisation will sponsor.

Advice: Don't be worried if you don't have a business-orientated degree. The training teaches you everything you need at each career step. I recommend exploring as many career possibilities as you can; I only realised I was more interested in business strategy than finance through internships I had in banking.



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Marakon

Main locations: London, New York

About us: We are a leading strategy consulting firm that has helped CEOs and their teams build stronger, more successful organisations for over 40 years. We have worked with some of the world's best known companies, helping them tackle their toughest business challenges.

Opportunities available: At Marakon you will help solve organisations' biggest strategic questions. You will get early leadership responsibility and tackle varied and interesting problems across a range of sectors. We are a collaborative firm, and place huge emphasis on your development – both through formal training and early responsibility. Our project teams are tight-knit and everyone is encouraged to contribute to discussions – you will have a voice and make an impact from day one.

Graduates sought: Exceptional applicants with a minimum 2.1, from any discipline: structured, logical thinkers, comfortable voicing ideas; leaders with empathy and maturity; team players and excellent communicators; creative problem solvers; and lifelong learners eager to develop strong foundations in business strategy.

Visa sponsorship: Yes

Graduate salary: Highly competitive

Vacation work: 8-week Summer Associate programme for penultimate year students.

Annual vacancies: 4-6 graduate and 2-3 internship vacancies.

Application advice: Apply online with a CV and cover letter by 7th November 2021 for graduates or 6th February 2022 for internships.

www.marakon.com/careers

EY Parthenon
Building a better working world

Main locations: London

About us: In today's fast-paced world, business leaders must truly be effective at driving value creation across their organisation. With more than 6,000 professionals in more than 50 countries, the EY-Parthenon Strategy teams are continually answering the "What?" and the "How?" questions on the CEO agenda to help deliver long-term value across our clients' organisations by helping them consider their strategic directives and purpose. Our employees enjoy unparalleled contact with influential and highly experienced professionals across many sectors, including Advanced Manufacturing & Mobility, Education, Energy, Financial Services, Government & Infrastructure, Health Sciences & Wellness, Private Equity, Retail & Consumer Goods, and Technology, Media & Telecoms. Through formal and on-the-job training and mentoring, Associate Consultants acquire valuable analytical and interpersonal skills that not only make them effective at EY-Parthenon Strategy, but also equip them with expertise applicable to any career they choose to pursue.

Opportunities available: We recruit candidates from any degree discipline

Visa sponsorship: Will sponsor work VISAs for successful full-time applicants (unfortunately we cannot sponsor VISAs for internship applicants)

Graduate salary: Competitive

Vacation work: 8-week summer internship programme available

Application advice: To apply, submit your CV and cover letter to the website below. The full-time Associate deadline is the 21.10.21. The Summer Associate deadline is the 06.01.2022

https://www.ey.com/en_gl/careers/parthenon/join/uk

NEWTON

Main locations: UK-wide

About us: As specialists in operational improvement, we crack some of the toughest business and public sector challenges around. Not with reports or copy-and-paste thinking. But by pinpointing and helping to deliver the changes that will make the biggest difference to their clients. And we guarantee our fee against the result.

Opportunities available: Operations Consultants and Digital Consultants.

Graduates sought: Graduates from any degree discipline with a problem solving mindset and strong analytical skills, wanting to get to the root of any challenge with a hands-on approach. We're looking for effective communicators who have great interpersonal skills, a high degree of emotional intelligence and an ability to build and sustain positive, productive relationships with a variety of people whether they're a CEO or a social worker. Graduates should demonstrate a collaborative approach and have a desire to develop and progress, being happy to receive and act on feedback.

Visa sponsorship: Yes

Graduate salary: £45-50k package

Annual vacancies: 130

Application advice: Visit the website to learn more about the application process and apply. Early application advised.

www.workatnewton.com

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Who are we?

RBB Economics is an independent economics consultancy specialising in competition policy. We are one of the largest competition economics practices in the world, with offices in London, Brussels, Dusseldorf, The Hague, Hong Kong, Johannesburg, Madrid, Melbourne, Paris and Stockholm. Our work concerns the behaviour of firms with market power, and covers issues such as mergers, vertical agreements, joint ventures, price setting and the abuse of dominant positions.

We work in dedicated, multi-national teams which combine the experience and expertise relevant to each case. This enables us to respond to our clients' needs in a focused and flexible manner. We offer a hands-on service, supporting and working in partnership with our clients and their legal advisers.

Our working environment

The work at RBB is stimulating, challenging, demanding and rewarding.

We give our staff the opportunities they need to flourish professionally, including early responsibility for our work product and to engage directly with clients and their legal advisors as well as with competition authorities.

However, we always offer our staff support, guidance and career progression advice from more experienced team members.

RBB is meritocratic, not hierarchical and offers a supportive and highly sociable working environment that adds greatly to the enjoyment of working here.

Our clients

RBB have built up strong relationships with clients from all areas of industry and commerce as well as with all of the major law firms specialising in competition law. Over the years we have been involved in hundreds of the most high-profile competition cases around the world.

Our expertise is wide ranging, from industries such as energy, mining and steel, to the manufacturing of

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Our requirements

We're looking for exceptional, highly motivated economists to join our multi-national team. If you have outstanding academic credentials and flourish in the face of complex, intellectually challenging issues then we would love to hear from you.

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- ▶ EY-Parthenon virtual info session* Thursday, 07 October 2021, Time: 12:30 p.m.
Thursday, 14 October 2021, Time: 6:00 p.m.
- ▶ EY-Parthenon virtual skills session* Friday, 08 October 2021, Time: 12:30 p.m.
Tuesday, 12 October 2021, Time: 12:00 p.m.
Friday, 15 October 2021, Time: 4:30 p.m.

*To register for events, please visit the link below and navigate to the important dates section: https://www.ey.com/en_gl/careers/parthenon/join/uk

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EY-Parthenon teams work with clients to navigate complexity by helping them to reimagine their eco-systems, reshape their portfolios and reinvent themselves for a better future. With global connectivity and scale, EY-Parthenon teams focus on Strategy Realised – helping CEOs design and deliver strategies to better manage challenges while maximising opportunities as they look to transform their businesses. From idea to implementation, EY-Parthenon teams help organisations to build a better working world by fostering long-term value.

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Application deadlines

- ▶ Full-time Associate Consultant Programme: Thursday, 21 October 2021
- ▶ Summer Associate Consultant Intern Programme: Thursday, 06 January 2022

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NEWTON

Emily,
Digital Consultant

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EDUCATION

Education is one of the most popular sectors for Oxford graduates. Diverse areas including publishing, policy, administration, charities and NGOs, psychology, arts and heritage and academia may be relevant if you're interested in education. Here we look at teaching.

Teaching demands communication skills, energy and a commitment to inspire students. It offers an opportunity to make a difference, to use your subject and to advance your career in a variety of directions.

Teachers can rapidly specialise into managerial, pastoral or training roles in schools. Many also move into education roles in other areas.

Getting in and entry points

Teacher training options divide into two main types:

School-led: One- or two-year programmes based in school, some salaried, others funded by loans and bursaries, eg Teach First, School Direct, Researchers in Schools, some School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT), Premier Pathways, Engage Education, and some independent schools.

University-led: Usually one-year programmes based in university but with extended periods in partnership schools. E.g. PGCE, PGDE, SCITT. Funded via bursaries (level varies with teaching subject) and tuition fee loans.

Whichever route you choose to follow, it is important to gain some relevant experience prior to application. Applications for most UK teacher training courses are

“ Don't assume that you will simply be a good teacher because you have been to Oxford or that it will be a breeze because you know so much. Don't get me wrong, you will be an asset to any school you work in, but so much of what will make you excel is your ability to be humble and inspire.

— Simon Davies, Head of History and PSHE Curriculum Design, Wheatley Park School, Oxford

via UCAS or the new Department for Education Apply portal; others take direct applications.

There is no formal requirement for a teaching qualification in the independent sector and some will employ new graduates and offer on-the-job training. Others recruit recent graduates through graduate assistant roles, particularly in boarding schools. CareerConnect and the *Times Educational Supplement* (TES) are good sources of vacancy listings for independent schools.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and private tutoring are popular short-term occupations on leaving Oxford, but can also be longer-term careers. A degree from Oxford may be the only qualification needed for some teaching jobs, but experience is always helpful for applications, and a TEFL qualification may make it easier to find work abroad.

There are a few graduate training programmes in education policy and administration, some are run by universities, for example Imperial College has a long-standing graduate management and finance scheme. Education policy could form part of the Civil Service Fast Stream or local government schemes such as the National Graduate Development Programme. The *TES* and the *Guardian* are key publications for opportunities in the education sector.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Observe teachers at work in local schools. **Insight Into Teaching** run by the Careers Service, offers three days in schools around the UK. The government-run School Experience Programme also offers time in schools. Alternatively, approach schools directly to ask if you can observe lessons, or help in other ways.
- Get international teaching experience in the summer vacation through **The Summer Internship Programme**.
- Volunteer your time with local children through organisations such as Jacari, KEEN, Splash at Oxford or Oxford Hub's Schools Plus programmes.
- Develop pastoral skills by helping with Oxford University Scout & Guide Group, or volunteering with Sexpression Oxford to promote sexual health.
- Offer mentoring for UNIQ Summer School participants, volunteer with Oxford University Admissions or work with Target Schools to promote access to university, or with OxFizz to give interview practice, mentoring, or to run summer camps.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/tefl

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/teaching-in-schools

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Imogen Hobby

Maths Teacher
BA Philosophy, Politics and Economics, Pembroke College, 2018

What: I'm a maths teacher at a comprehensive school in Cardiff. I trained through Teach First and am now in my third year of teaching.

Why: I chose teaching because I wanted a career with a clear positive impact that would challenge me intellectually and personally. You'll quickly learn that your role extends far beyond imparting your subject knowledge. Seeing young people learn from you, both academically and emotionally, and develop over time is a huge privilege. There are loads of training routes, but Teach First was the right choice for me because it's hands-on from the start and has a strong social justice focus.

To succeed as a teacher in challenging schools, you will need a combination of excellent interpersonal skills and a love of your subject. Passion for your subject is a huge asset and you'll find that genuine enthusiasm will catch on with your pupils. I've also really enjoyed the opportunity to embrace my silly side and have perfected the art of getting a smile out of even the grumpiest of teenagers with a cringe-worthy maths pun.

Best bits: The reluctant Year 11 student who began to take an interest in maths after we explored its importance for his chosen career; the Year 8 student who has started to talk through her emotions rather than lashing out; when a student spots your 'deliberate mistake' on the board.

Top tips: Make sure you do your research before embarking on teacher training. It's a good idea to spend as much time as possible observing experienced teachers to get a feel for the skills you'll need. Lots of trainees worry about their subject knowledge, but in my experience it's the classroom management skills that take longer to pick up; talking to or observing great teachers is well worth the investment of your time.



Simon Davies

Head of History and PSHE Curriculum Design, Wheatley Park School, Oxford
PGCE (Oxford Department of Education), Lady Margaret Hall, 2011

What: I am the head of history and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) at a comprehensive school in Oxfordshire; part of a multi-academy trust across the county. I entered teaching through the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route, which is available to you through Oxford University's Department of Education. This September will mark ten years since I began my PGCE and the last decade has given me a worthwhile, interesting and varied career. I have taught in schools in London, Brussels and Oxford.

Why: I wanted to be part of a profession that could offer something to a community. I initially worked in Westminster after university, but soon became disillusioned and wanted to work as a driver for change. As well as this, I knew that teaching would offer a creative outlet through lesson design and allow me to engage with academic interests while at the same time enabling me to communicate these interests with a group of people on a daily basis. As time has gone on and I have taken on leadership roles, I have also found purpose and interest in developing as a leader and recognising that school environments are one of the best to test one's own capacity in leadership.

Top tips: Don't assume that you will simply be a good teacher because you have been to Oxford or that it will be a breeze because you know so much. Don't get me wrong, you will be an asset to any school you work in, but so much of what will make you excel is your ability to be humble and inspire. Don't go into any setting with the attitude that you are 'doing the kids a favour' – and if you go into a PGCE interview with that mindset, it will be spotted straight away! Always remember teaching is ultimately a human-facing profession: learn names quickly; take time to get up to speed on things; and gradually build your mastery in what is a complex but very rewarding craft.

Best bits: When you genuinely know you've helped someone achieve something they never thought possible. Whether it's helping a student use a difficult word in context or leading a Year 10 to a national debating championship final held at Windsor Castle, teaching never fails to give you something to smile about at the end of the day.



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Opportunities available: Volunteer as a tutor – work 1:1 with a child to improve their English skills and confidence. We also occasionally recruit for part time staff.

Graduates sought: Anyone with a high level of written/spoken English can apply to volunteer, you don't need teaching experience! You can be a current student or a graduate.

Vacation work: We may offer internships/work experience ad hoc, please get in touch with us to discuss if opportunities are available.

Application: We recruit volunteers in October and January each year. Please see our website for details of how to apply!

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ENERGY, SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

From global energy companies to specialist technology firms, regulatory bodies to think tanks, national power generation companies to micro-generation schemes, conservation charities to mining corporations, carbon consultancies to commodities traders: the range of opportunities in this sector is immense.

Students consider a career in sustainability, energy or the environment for a range of reasons. Many seek to make a positive impact and work for organisations whose values mirror their own.

Environmental-awareness is not limited to careers that are traditionally considered 'green'. Existing businesses are changing – consider the development of electric cars, or moves to increase sustainability in retail. Sustainability is an issue for all sectors, a new breed of firms exploiting the drive for business to operate in a more sustainable way has emerged, but in-house opportunities also exist in large established organisations. This diversity means that well-defined career paths in sustainability can be hard to find. Roles may have sustainability as the core focus, a main responsibility or just a small aspect.

Getting in and entry points

The diverse nature of this sector is reflected in the wide range of possible entry points. Graduate schemes offered by large companies and multidisciplinary consultancies tend to recruit students from any

“ Industry and businesses are increasingly required and motivated to engage with their impact on the environment, and there is huge potential for innovation – so it's an amazing time to be exploring roles in this area.

— Dr Alice Carrington-Windo, Policy Adviser (EU and Environment), Water UK

discipline, with closing dates towards the end of Michaelmas term or early in Hilary term. Many also offer internships to students in their penultimate year at Oxford. Look beyond the job title to establish if sustainability is incorporated into a role.

The renewable energy and environmental industries are dominated by small or medium-sized organisations with only occasional vacancies, and may require relevant expertise (perhaps gained through a relevant postgraduate qualification). It is important, therefore, that you take a proactive approach. Research firms that match your interests and connect with alumni working in relevant roles to learn more and build your network.

Build relevant experience to develop skills, showcase motivation and increase your knowledge of the sector and issues affecting it through student societies, volunteering, attending talks and completing internships. The [Micro-Internship and Summer Internship Programmes](#) often offer opportunities relevant to this sector and are open to students of all year groups.

Employers' responses to questions about their approach to environmental sustainability are available through CareerConnect.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Take an active role in relevant student organisations such as the Nature Conservation Society, the Energy Society, or Oxford SU's Environment and Ethics campaign.
- Stand for election for your college JCR committee, many colleges have an environment and ethics rep.
- Volunteer with charities such as the Oxford Conservation Volunteers, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, or with sustainability charities that work with Oxford Hub.
- See relevant sectors of this Guide for ideas to develop skills for roles in engineering, finance and marketing. If you are interested in a graduate scheme with a large energy company, see the [Developing Core Skills' advice](#) for ideas on how to develop leadership and organisational skills for project management.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/energy
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sustainability-environment

Josefin Malmberg

Sustainability Consultant, 3Keel LLP

MSc Nature, Society and Environmental Governance, St John's College, 2019

What: As a sustainability consultant, I assess the impact of organisations and systems on the environment and create solutions for a more resilient and sustainable future. Specialising in circular economy, I conduct carbon impact assessments for individual products or entire companies, facilitate collaborations for preventing and managing waste, and carry out research and analysis to develop roadmaps for entire sector transitions to circularity. One day I'm processing data on a retailer's packaging portfolio; the next I'm working on a survey exploring product consumption and user behaviours.

Why: I wanted a job dedicated to solving socioenvironmental challenges in a practical and tangible way. With this as a starting point, I was drawn to specialist sustainability consultancies where I could apply the principles and insights of my MSc research. I found out that being part of a smaller, rapidly growing and mission-driven team also can be an incredible opportunity for professional and personal growth, as you can get stuck in from

the get-go and work directly with both senior team members and clients.

Advice: Sustainability is an attractive and competitive field. Identify an issue of interest that differentiates you and seek out organisations and placements that allow you to explore that issue from different angles. Exposure to additional topics will come along the way as environmental challenges often are related to one another.

Top tips: You are at Oxford; there are thousands of experts, innovators, and change-makers to learn from. Make the most out of this by reaching out to the people that inspire you. Ask how they got to where they are and what advice they would have for you, and keep a notebook with insights.



ENGINEERING

Engineering and skilled engineers make a significant contribution to UK productivity as well as working towards mitigating the grand global challenges of climate change, food security, clean water and energy, artificial intelligence and robotics.

The engineering sector contributes 26% of GDP to the UK economy which is more than the retail, wholesale, financial and insurance sectors combined, with 5.7 million people employed in the sector across over 600,000 engineering companies. The engineering sector in the UK is expected to grow to £608 billion by 2022.

These companies are projected to have 265,000 annual job openings between now and 2024, and there is currently a shortage of qualified engineers graduating in the country.

The engineering sector includes a wide range of organisations. This includes vast, multinational corporations right down to small, independent engineering companies and start-ups; for example, 58% of engineers are in SMEs with fewer than 250 employees. Some of the biggest recruiters of Oxford engineers are Arup, Atkins, Mott MacDonald, Rolls-Royce, BAE Systems and Jaguar Land Rover.

Getting in and entry points

For technical engineering roles, a degree in engineering (or sometimes a related subject, such as physics, materials science or mathematics) is usually required, and the average graduate starting salary is around £30.5k. Non-engineering roles in these firms tend to offer similar starting salaries to their competitors in other corporate sectors. Roles are offered year-round, but many of the larger graduate schemes have deadlines closing each year around December/January.

More than 40% of UK electricity is from renewable sources. Energy consumption in the UK peaked in 2005 and is now down to 1994 levels due to energy efficiency. We need Oxford engineers to drive us towards a sustainable future.

— Dr Mike Moss, Career Adviser, The Careers Service, University of Oxford

Work experience is important, and it is worth bearing in mind that the Engineering Science course at Oxford is unusual in not having a built-in period of six or twelve months spent in industry. However, larger firms (many of which will attend the Science, Engineering & Technology Fair in Michaelmas term) often offer internships that will fit into a long vacation. Smaller organisations are often willing to offer work experience or internships – check on CareerConnect or contact particular firms speculatively to enquire. Internship opportunities are usually advertised a little later than graduate jobs, with deadlines tending to fall from December to February.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Join Oxford's Engineering Society, Biomedical Engineering Society or OxWEST (for women).
- Join UKSEDS (UK Students for the Exploration and Development of Space).
- Volunteer with Engineers Without Borders during your vacations to build your skills and take part in development projects. A branch has recently been started at the University.
- Take part in Oxford University Racing, run by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, to find the best race car. See info@oxforduniracing.com
- Read, and write a guest post for *Developing Engineers*, a blog written by young engineers.
- Share your passion for engineering with schoolchildren to also showcase your enthusiasm to future employers. There are a number of outreach programmes organised by professional bodies and the UK government, such as STEMNET.
- Join a professional engineering body as a young member – or represent students on their board.
- Enter the Institution of Civil Engineers' Communications Competition.



More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/engineering
www.engineeringuk.com/news-media/2017-engineering-uk-the-state-of-engineering-published

Alistair Duffey

Low-carbon Energy Consultant, Element Energy

MPhys Physics, Hertford College, 2019

What: Together with my colleagues at Element Energy, I work to provide clients with in-depth understanding on the future of low carbon energy. My work focuses on the alternatives to fossil-fuel heating in buildings. In my 18 months here, I have worked on projects for local and national government, the energy industry, and a leading university. Most of my work is quantitative modelling and analysis, using a combination of Python, Excel and QGIS. However, the consultant role is a generalist position, so I also write reports and do more qualitative research, as well as handling project management tasks like running meetings with clients.

Why: I wanted a job where I could make a positive impact on climate change, while being challenged and using skills I had developed through my degree. I also saw consultancy as a great way to gain experience and knowledge of the low carbon space, since I tend to be working on a new project dealing with a different topic every few months.

Advice:

- The low carbon energy sector is full of people motivated to help solve climate change. It's important that you can demonstrate in your application that you are on board with that mission.

- Be ambitious and apply widely. While this sector is competitive to get into, it's also expanding rapidly as more industries, organisations and policymakers begin to accept the need for deep emissions reductions in the near-term.

Consultancy: My experience is that job titles like 'consultant' hide a lot of variety in roles and responsibilities across different companies. Before applying, it's worth putting some effort into understanding the following:

- What does a typical project look like for this company?
 - What would my role be in delivering those projects?
- This should help in understanding whether you really want the position, and what skills and experiences you would need to highlight in an application. A chat with someone at the company before you apply is invaluable for this, but looking in detail through some recent reports on their website is also useful.



Dr Markus Wulfmeier

Research Scientist, DeepMind (Machine Learning and Robotics)
DPhil Engineering Science, New College, 2017

What: Together with my colleagues at DeepMind, I work to improve our understanding as well as ability to build intelligent systems. In particular, my work focuses on the intersection of machine learning (ML) and robotics, which means that not all of my work focuses on sitting in front of a computer. My average week focuses on: reading and writing publications; designing algorithms and programming; testing ideas in simulations and on real hardware; and many discussions with extremely smart and talented colleagues – the most enjoyable part.

Why: I did not plan to move into fundamental research for all of my undergraduate degree. However, I completed it – by pure luck – with a stint as visiting researcher at MIT. The type of responsibilities of a project related to NASA's MER missions and the type of creative work connected to it changed that in under six months. There are two main perspectives that make my field, the intersection of robotics and ML, particularly interesting in this context:

1. Robots acting in the physical world can greatly benefit from ML to handle the complexity of real-world data.
2. The embodiment provided by robotics and the connected access to rich and complex data can strengthen current ML models, which rely on breadth and richness of data.

When choosing an employer, I was motivated by the possibility to create a positive impact and the incredible team of colleagues and friends at DeepMind.

Advice: Motivation is key for many aspects of life and curiosity can be an excellent source thereof. Every model gets improved (or replaced) over time. Take some time to question the most basic concepts in your field and follow the line of reasoning that established them. There is a good chance that – depending on your field – some of the core ideas will considerably change in the next 5, 10 or 20 years.

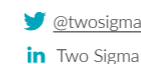
Academia and industry: Academic and industrial research positions will always differ in some aspects and you should get informed about which perspectives suit you the most. However, we're living in an incredibly privileged time where the additional benefits (eg. work stability) of industrial research in artificial intelligence come with very similar work.




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www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careerconnect



Dr Lakshmi Manjoosha Adapa

IT Consultant, Accenture
MEng Engineering Science, Jesus College, 2008; DPhil Engineering Science, St Edmund Hall, 2012

What: Based in Amsterdam, I am working as an IT consultant at Accenture as part of the service management team. We constantly design, deliver, manage and improve the way information technology is used within an organisation to ensure the right processes, people and technology are in place to help our clients. My job often involves conveying complex technical concepts from the development team to clients' business process owners and act as a facilitator to design and implement processes to improve and achieve client's business goals.

Why: After completing an MEng and DPhil in Engineering Science, I started working as a water technology market analyst at BlueTech Research, a leading think tank in water research. I was responsible for researching, analysing and formulating data into strategic reports to help the company's clients to make informed decisions on water technology market opportunities. Having developed strong technical and analytical skills, I then decided to pursue a career in the IT industry to improve my techno-commercial skills, to gain exposure to different industries and to understand how organisations work. This was a career change for me, however, I really enjoy the varied type of roles that I have and the multi-disciplinary teams that I work with.

Advice: After completing your PhD, don't limit yourself to academia or feel demotivated by the number of rejections. There will be very few opportunities related to your doctorate but there are plenty of other career paths where the skills gained during your doctorate will be valued. Sometimes a little change in career might open new doors, taking you to new heights that you would have never imagined. Hence, grab the opportunity and seek advice from the Careers Service from an early stage.

Top tips: Despite the challenging academic workloads, make time for extracurricular activities because the skills you learn here will be invaluable and help you later with your job interviews. Recruiters appreciate the extra effort and time that goes in these activities and enjoy listening to competency examples related to outside academia.



Virtual SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY FAIR

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www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs



Virtual

OXFORD UNIVERSITY CAREERS FAIR

TUESDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2021
STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30

Meet recruiters, attend presentations, browse jobs, and find out about different career options at our **careers fair for all sectors.**



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

The UK health and social care sector employs over 3 million people, of whom over 1.7 million work for the National Health Service, and the rest for public sector employers (such as local authorities), the private sector or for voluntary organisations.

The actual array of roles in the sector is vast, ranging from doctors and NHS managers, to social workers. The allied health professions alone include a huge range of roles such as art/music/drama therapists, dietitians, physiotherapists, radiographers, and speech and language therapists.

Getting in and entry points

A significant number of Oxford graduates each year study medicine as a second degree. Four-year 'fast track' medical degrees for graduates are offered at several UK universities, with some funding available. Applications for these courses are made through UCAS and close in October, and entry requirements vary: some only accept applicants with a degree in life sciences, some specify certain subjects at A level. Most use admission tests as part of the application process. Alternatively, you could apply for a second, full degree in medicine through UCAS. These have much more limited funding and therefore tend to be less competitive.

Many of the allied health professions can be entered by undertaking a two-year postgraduate qualification. Use the course finder on the NHS Health Careers website to check entry requirements and available funding. A science degree is normally required, with some exceptions. An alternative option for scientists is the NHS Scientist

“ In looking for other clinical applications of psychology I came across the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme and immediately realised I had found a viable alternative career path. Active listening is a real skill and it can be harder than you realise to sit with another person's distress. Volunteering for a mental health or social support charity can be a great way to get experience.

————— Bethany Doran, Trainee, IAPT

Training Programme (STP). Workplace-based and salaried, the scheme trains people to become specialists in various disciplines from microbiology to medical physics. Closing dates are normally early in Hilary term.

Social workers can qualify via either an undergraduate degree or a postgraduate qualification. Frontline's graduate programme (www.thefrontline.org.uk) offers a new route into children's social work by providing a paid, work-based course in which participants simultaneously complete a master's in social work. Likewise, Think Ahead (www.wethinkahead.org) have launched a similar course in adult mental health social work.

Students wishing to train as psychologists in the UK need first to obtain the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) from the British Psychology Society (BPS). This may be done either through an undergraduate degree in psychology or through a conversion course. Relevant work experience is then required before embarking on a doctorate in clinical psychology (currently funded by the NHS), or a doctorate or qualification in counselling psychology (normally self-funded).

The sector also has graduate management training programmes, which are open to graduates of any degree subject. The NHS programme allows specialism in general management, HR management, finance management and health informatics. Administrative roles are plentiful, and may be found alongside clinical roles at www.jobs.nhs.uk, or through many private sector websites.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Volunteer with local charities and community organisations to help the vulnerable or disadvantaged. Pastoral experience is useful for all roles in the sector. You could initially do voluntary work on a hospital ward, through student-run community groups, or through Oxfordshire volunteering organisations.
- Get involved in Oxford SU Mind Your Head campaign to promote mental health awareness.
- Become a Student Peer Supporter, a JCR Welfare Rep, or volunteer for Nightline.
- Arrange some work-shadowing in a hospital or health centre if you are thinking about graduate entry medicine, or apply to our [Insight into Medicine programme](#).

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/medicine-as-a-second-degree
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/psychology
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/public-health
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/social-care

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs

Freya Turner

Link Worker (Social Prescribing), Primary Care Network
MSc Comparative Social Policy, Green Templeton College, 2017

What: Social prescribing is a new movement within the NHS to give patients access to more holistic 'social' support through their GP practice. My role involves having coaching conversations with patients to elicit their motivations and concerns, and help put a plan in place to link them with local services and community groups who can help them solve problems and reach their goals. These could be related to housing, finances, social networks or healthy lifestyles.

Why: My previous role was in social research but I felt I wanted to experience a more frontline role while still working on the

'social' determinants of health. It's a great feeling when you have gotten to know a patient over a few months and can watch them develop the confidence to try new things. I am considering training as a psychotherapist in the future, and this job offers great experience of working one-to-one with people without needing a specific formal qualification.

Advice: I had not worked in a frontline role before, so I was nervous about whether I had enough experience. In my interview I talked about my volunteer work for a rape crisis helpline, which gave me lots of useful examples to work with. Volunteering really pays off if you are finding it hard to get paid work in a new field. My role can be quite emotionally demanding as patients often bring very complex problems into our sessions, so my top tip would be to make good use of supervision time, and step up your own self-care outside of work to make sure you stay resilient.



I had not worked in a frontline role before, so I was nervous about whether I had enough experience. In my interview I talked about my volunteer work for a rape crisis helpline, which gave me lots of useful examples to work with. Volunteering really pays off if you are finding it hard to get paid work in a new field.

Alicia Graham

Trainee Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner, South London and Maudsley NHS
BA Experimental Psychology, Brasenose College, 2019

What: Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services were created to address the lack of treatment options available for people who experience common mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression. Psychological wellbeing practitioners (PWWs) work in these services following one year as a trainee. I am trained through University College London (UCL), as well as working in an IAPT service, and will gain a PGCert in Low Intensity Cognitive Behavioural Interventions following completion of the course. My day-to-day role involves triaging, assessing and treating patients with common mental health difficulties using evidence-based cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

Why: In my final year at Oxford I decided to pursue a career in clinical psychology and therefore needed to gain some clinical experience. I first heard about the role during my MSc, and decided to apply as it seemed like a good opportunity to gain clinical experience but with more job security (and marginally fewer applicants) than assistant psychologist positions.

Pros and cons: The role is demanding and you quickly begin seeing a high number of patients per week. I currently treat over

30 patients each week through a range of group, one-to-one and online therapy programmes, so make sure you can provide good evidence of time-management skills and working to targets! It can be daunting to manage the safety of patients who present with risk, and working with people who are distressed makes the role rewarding but also stressful and emotionally demanding. There is a high turnover of PWWs, in part due to the intense nature of the role, and in part due to the very useful stepping stone that the role offers to becoming a cognitive behavioural therapist and getting onto the clinical doctorate course.

Advice: Make sure you understand what the role really entails and the type of patients you would be treating. Also, think of practical examples of when you have managed your workload well (thank you Oxford). Any experience working as a support worker, a crisis line volunteer or in a primary care service would be of great value.



INTERNATIONAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

Working in this sector involves developing policy coupled with practical implementation, that empowers people across the globe to improve their lives.

Practice areas are diverse and they encompass governance, healthcare, education, gender, disaster preparedness, infrastructure, economics, livelihoods, human rights and other associated issues.

You could be working in a think tank that seeks to address issues of global concern; in your country's foreign service to formulate and implement international policy; in the civil service of a regional organisation such as the EU; as a researcher in a political risk or international development consultancy; or in an international organisation (IO) such as the UN or World Bank. Alternatively, you could work for a global charity (see the [charity sector briefing for relevant advice](#)). As this is a popular sector, competition for employment can be intense, but it offers rewarding careers for those who persevere.

Getting in and entry points

Entry straight from an undergraduate degree can be difficult, as most organisations value specific expertise or transferable experience – whether in the private, public, or charitable sector, however, there are some graduate schemes available, such as the UK's Diplomatic Service Fast Stream.

Direct recruitment into a permanent role is also possible into NGOs and think tanks, but most require at least a master's qualification, and sometimes one or two

“ A thesis project or one or two longer internships are a great way to set foot into the sector and show how you can add value to an organisation. Top skills required are: empathy; curiosity; creativity; flexibility; frustration; tolerance; and humility.

Janita Bartell, Hygiene Specialist,
UNICEF

years' work experience. The precise master's course title doesn't always matter, but the course content/modules do. When making applications it's important to highlight the most relevant modules taken and to illustrate that you have very good knowledge of the subject, research techniques, technical skills, geographical regions, and relevant languages. Research-driven organisations and many think tanks may require that you have undertaken further study to the level of a doctorate, as well as having several years of professional experience.

You can spend time at Oxford building up insights into the sector and its range of organisations – both to increase your chances of securing a job and to help you work out which areas and employers are for you. Most think tanks are open to students undertaking short internships with them. These are not always paid, so you may need to try to set up shorter traineeships that you can combine with other paid work. The EU offers longer five-month paid traineeships to recent graduates. Internship schemes with larger international organisations are normally reserved for postgraduate students. Masters' or DPhil students may also be able to find paid part-time consultancy work with international development, or political risk consultancies and think tanks – especially those students with sector-specific knowledge, expertise and language skills.

You can enhance your 'insider' knowledge of the sector and hear of upcoming opportunities by [following our networking advice](#). Talk to speakers and employers at careers events and seminars, and network through LinkedIn, or college development offices.

Extra-curricular ideas

Spend as much time as you can gaining international experience and knowledge. Spend a summer on the [Careers Service's Summer Internship Programme](#) working on a relevant project, building your language skills and getting to know a region. Also:

- Write relevant articles for student newspapers, journals or blogs, to demonstrate that you can use research to inform and influence opinion.
- Take a course at the Oxford University Language Centre, to develop or improve a second language.
- Join university societies related to development.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/international-development
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/international-law
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/international-organisations

Emile Rolland

Junior Policy Analyst, OECD

MSc Modern South Asian Studies, St Antony's College, 2016

What: My work is shared between the Governance Network (GovNet) of the OECD, which brings together governance practitioners and experts to explore and promote more effective governance in developing countries, and the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP), an alliance of over 60 countries/organisations that focuses on evidence-based policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning on public sector management and institutional reform.

Trajectory: After an internship with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), headquartered in Kenya, I settled in Nairobi for three and a half years, working first in the housing unit of UN-Habitat on normative issues around the right to housing and housing finance. Subsequently, I worked with Altai Consulting on the Monitoring and Learning System of the European Union Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for the Horn of Africa. The latter focused on migration, with the company being responsible for monitoring the outputs and outcomes of different projects as well as conducting different lessons learned exercises to inform future programming in the region. This allowed me to travel in different countries (e.g., Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya and Sudan) to conduct key

informant interviews for our qualitative studies and meet our partners implementing projects on the ground.

Tips: Specialise in either a particular subject matter or a specific skill set to gain comparative advantage and transferability. Transferable skillsets in demand include being able to conduct advanced quantitative and qualitative research, notably through the use of software (e.g., Stata, SPSS, Python). Sectoral skillsets are related to different thematic areas in development (e.g., climate finance, urban development), and will provide you the entry point in the domain of your choice. Gaining experience in a developing country is crucial to better comprehend how international development project cycles function as well as better apprehending ground realities. Finally, working in the private sector for development consulting firms is likely to equip you with a broader skillset due to quick turnaround and fast-paced work.



Debasmita Boral

Environment and Climate Change Specialist, UNDP

MPhil Modern South Asian Studies, St. Antony's College, 2017

What: I have worked as an independent consultant focused on gender mainstreaming, climate action and environmental justice since May 2018. This has involved formative research and project development support for funding mobilization from multilateral climate and environmental funds (Adaptation Fund, GCF, GEF). I have also worked with civil financial aid organizations (AFD and USAID) and UN organizations (UNDP, UN Environment, WFP).

I have covered topics such as: livelihoods, land rights and community resilience; early warning systems and climate information products; climate and environmental action through ecosystems-based adaptation and nature-based solutions.

Why: The climate emergency is unfortunately here and has been for some time – particularly impacting vulnerable communities. We are dealing with a threat multiplier that has the potential to undo developmental achievements, while exacerbating energy, food and water insecurity and gender inequalities. I believe, therefore, justice and inclusion have to be a key part of climate change adaptation, and this is what motivates me every day.

Trajectory: I began my career as an intern with UN Environment's Gender and Safeguards Unit at their headquarters in Nairobi,

Kenya. This position was advertised through CareerConnect, which is a good resource, alongside DEVEX, Inspira and UNDP Jobs. I was fortunate to have built a network during the internship with project development and implementation teams as well as be guided by a knowledgeable mentor. This gave me the confidence to continue independently shortly after completion, while living in Nairobi – which is a hub for environmental and climate change-related international organisations and NGOs.

Tips: Live abroad, learn online and look around. Oxford equips you with a strong foundation for methodologies and research skills – my advice is to be able to add on to it by picking up sectoral knowledge, relevant languages and professional experience where your impact is clear and grassroots. The Oxford alumni network is a resource mine – do not be afraid to reach out and network with well-placed alumni, highlighting your interests, goals and expertise.



LAW

Intellectual challenge, a constantly changing environment and the opportunity to effect change are just some of the characteristics of the roles available within the UK legal sector. Opportunities are many and varied; you could be supporting a vulnerable child, advising a government minister or managing a newsworthy commercial deal.

Solicitors

The majority (65%) of the UK's 143,000 practising solicitors work in private practice law firms; these vary enormously in size and specialisation. There tends to be a division between firms that serve the needs of commerce and those that deal with clients with personal legal dilemmas. The remaining solicitors work outside private practice partnerships in a whole variety of different businesses and organisations.

Getting in and entry points

A new system for qualification as a solicitor will be starting from September 2021. The aim is that this new system will open up access to the profession and reduce the costs of qualification. In the new system you will need to:

- Hold a degree (or equivalent) – law or non-law.
- Pass two sets of centralised exams – the Solicitors Qualifying Exam (SQE) 1 and 2.
- Complete 24 months of qualifying work experience (QWE).

Employers and legal education providers and others are still planning how to integrate these changes into their academic, recruitment and training programmes. You are advised to keep up-to-date with developments by visiting the Solicitors Regulation Authority website and asking law firms for their latest updates.

Careful research into whether this option is the right career for you is vital. Wherever your final destination you are likely to be investing many hours and considerable dedication to further study and additional qualifications after leaving Oxford. Historically there have been approximately 5,000 training contracts available each year, and well over 90% of them lie within the private practice sector. The remaining positions are to be found in the Government Legal Department, local government, legal departments in industry and the Crown Prosecution Service. Short periods of paid work experience, known as vacation schemes, are available at law firms during the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays, as well as opportunities to attend 'Open

Days'. Increasingly, free to access online 'internships' are being offered by law firms too. In many firms the formal vacation scheme also forms a vital part of the recruitment process for a training contract.

Barristers

There are approximately 13,400 barristers at the independent (or self-employed) Bar, practising in 400 sets of chambers across England and Wales. A further 3,000 work in an employed capacity for numerous organisations, including the Government Legal Department and the Crown Prosecution Service, as well as in commerce and industry. Barristers practise in a wide variety of legal areas such as family, criminal, intellectual property and international border disputes. There can be considerable differences in the nature and lifestyle of a barrister's work; some almost never appear in court whilst others are in most days. Others may spend the majority of their time drafting pleadings and opinions. However, advocacy remains a vital skill for the barrister, and it is one of the most distinctive elements of this role.

Getting in and entry points

The Bar Standards Board (BSB) have also completed a full review of education and training. This has resulted in some changes to the qualification elements which are designed to improve access, flexibility and affordability. There are three components involved in qualification:

- The academic component. You must have a degree and, if this is not in law, you need to take a law conversion course (eg the Graduate Diploma in Law), which covers the seven foundations of legal knowledge.



- The vocational component. This is to provide you with the specialist knowledge required for practice at the Bar. Previously known as the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) there is now a greater choice of 'Bar' courses; some are available at significantly lower cost than before. Prior to getting on the course you must have passed the Bar Course Aptitude Test (BCAT) and joined one of the four Inns of Court.
- Pupillage/work-based component. This is your period of recognised training where you are supervised by a qualified barrister. The majority of pupillages are undertaken with chambers and are divided into two parts ('sixes'): the non-practising six months, during which pupils shadow a supervisor, followed by six months of practice when pupils undertake advocacy and other legal services. After this final stage of pupillage, a barrister can either apply for a permanent position as a tenant within chambers, or seek a role at the 'Employed Bar' (such as the Crown Prosecution Service or CPS) or elsewhere. At every stage of qualification, competition for places is intense. Approximately one in five students who apply for one of the Bar training courses will successfully complete through to pupillage. Careful assessment of your skills, motivations and academic credentials, combined with detailed research on the role will help you to decide whether this is the right option for you. Many chambers offer a few days of work shadowing in the form of a mini-pupillage, which can be extremely valuable.



Other options in law

Many Oxford law students decide not to go on to take the professional qualifications to become a solicitor or barrister, but are still keen to utilise their degree and do so through different sorts of legally related work. If, for example, you are interested in compliance or corporate governance, the role of company secretary might appeal. Secretaries are responsible for ensuring that an organisation complies with standard financial and legal practice, so must have a thorough understanding of the laws that affect their work. If working with individuals or causes is more suited to you, there are options working as campaigners, policy writers or case workers within the third sector, NGOs and government organisations working in areas such as immigration, housing, and many other social welfare and human rights related areas. Perhaps life in academia has caught your attention? If it has, there will be options for you, with the addition of further study, to work in teaching and research within higher education or other legal education providers or research institutes. These are just some of the possible options!

Extra-curricular ideas

- Join relevant student societies, such as the Oxford Law Society, the Bar Society or the Oxford Women Lawyers Student Society.
- Get involved with mooted competitions or join a debating society.
- Join the [Oxford Law Faculty's careers mailing list](#) to hear about events, mooted competitions and work experience. Law and non-law students can sign up.
- Volunteer for a not-for-profit organisation to help individuals, such as Citizens Advice or Asylum Welcome.
- If you are a law student, consider the Bonavero Institute Student Fellowships to contribute to a variety of legal organisations or engage with the Pro Bono Publico programme.
- Improve your commercial skills – get involved in one of the Careers Service employability programmes such as The Oxford Strategy Challenge (TOSCA), or Insight into Strategy and Management, or apply for an internship.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/barristers
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/solicitors
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/international-law
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/human-rights-public-interest-law

Courtney Step-Marsden

Barrister, Outer Temple Chambers
 LLB Law (Jurisprudence), Somerville College, 2018

What: I am a barrister specialising in civil law, in particular employment law and personal injury law. After graduating from Oxford, I undertook the Bar Professional Training Course at The University of Law, and then completed pupillage at Outer Temple Chambers. I started tenancy in September 2020. I appear in the Employment Tribunal approximately once a week and advise on a wide range of different matters.

Why: Throughout my degree, I enjoyed examining legal problems and undertaking legal research. I also enjoy the self-motivation that is required for a career at the self-employed Bar.

Top tips:

- **Academics:** While at university, focus on your studies to ensure that you get a high 2:1 or a first-class degree.
- **Extra-curricular:** Consider mooted or debating at the Oxford Union to build up your advocacy experience. Start looking at mini-pupillages to learn about life at the Bar. Do something that makes you unique and that you are passionate about –

be it a sport, drama or charity work. This will give you something to talk about in interviews and help you evidence relevant soft-skills for the Bar.

- **Funding:** Training for the Bar can be expensive (although recently the fees have been reduced). Look at applying for scholarships at the Inns of Court or advocacy scholarships at the Bar course providers. The scholarships from the Inns can be very generous, covering the cost of the Bar course. Also, consider taking a gap year after graduation to save some money and perhaps gain some relevant experience, such as through working as a paralegal.
- **Resilience:** Getting pupillage is hard. It is very competitive and you are likely to receive a lot of rejections. It can be demoralising, but persistence is key. Continue to build on your CV, network and apply for opportunities.



Larissa Wilson

Company Secretary, HSBC
 Jurisprudence, Brasenose, 2011

What: I'm an assistant group company secretary at HSBC, where I've worked for just over six years. The role of a company secretary really varies depending on the type of organisation and sector that you work in, but it is always focused on the governance of the organisation: the system of rules, practices and processes by which an organisation is directed and controlled.

In general, company secretaries help boards to deliver good governance and to meet compliance obligations. I've been lucky enough to undertake a variety of company secretarial roles at a variety of different organisations – the ability to move easily between sectors is definitely a perk of the profession! My current role is focused on Shareholder Governance, in which I'm responsible for making sure that HSBC meets its obligations in the jurisdictions it is listed, supporting shareholder relations, various corporate events and annual reporting.

Career journey: I'd be the first to admit that I had no idea what I wanted to do when I left university – I fell into this profession when I was asked to perform the role at a start-up I was working for at the time. Needless to say, I enjoyed my first taste of the profession and went on to train at Lloyds Banking Group, before moving to the Post Office, and then to HSBC.

I was also able to study for my professional qualification at the same time as working, which whilst not without its challenges, allowed me to get stuck into my career as soon as I decided that it was what I wanted to do.

Advice: If you're interested in finding out more about a career in governance then I'd encourage you to take a look at the Chartered Governance Institute's website and to attend a Governance Insight Day. The Institute also advertises internships and trainee opportunities.

Having a strong soft skill set is just as important as your technical skill set for this profession, if not more so, especially given that you often have exposure to the most senior individuals at an organisation from the very start of your career. Most roles will want someone who can show that they have the ability to work well in a team, as well as possessing good communication and influencing skills, strong organisational skills and attention to detail – so try and include evidence of that in your applications and any interviews that you have!



Marcus Maxwell

Associate, Farrer & Co
Literae Humaniores (Classics IA), St Benet's Hall, 2015

What: Farrer & Co is a private client law firm which advises individuals, families, businesses, financial services, educational and not-for-profit organisations on every aspect of the law. We have one office in London but work with trusted professionals around the world to deliver an international service.

Career path: I qualified in September 2019 and am an associate in the private client team. The training contract at Farrer & Co is notably different from other firms as it is composed of six four-month seats (instead of the normal four six-month seats). As a result I was exposed to a broad range of different practice areas. I did corporate tax and immigration as a split first seat, employment as a second seat, half way through which I was sent on secondment to the in-house legal team at Chelsea Football Club, followed by financial services, private client and rural property and a final second stint in private client. This sixth seat is really a pre-qualification seat in the department you are going to qualify into so you have the best opportunity to hit the ground running.

Advice:

- When applying for jobs, less is more. Identify the practice area or type of law firm you are most interested in and spend longer on fewer applications.
- Get your foot in the door or over the threshold. You can read *RollOnFriday*, *ChambersStudent* and *LegalCheek* till your heart's content, but in order to assess which law firm is the best fit for you, it is essential to meet the people who work there. Go to a careers fair, apply for a vacation scheme, attend an assessment day; whatever you can to get a feel for the firm and the people who work there.
- If at first you don't succeed, do not be disheartened. Training contracts are very competitive and it is always worth asking for feedback and reapplying.



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Alysha Patel

Trainee Solicitor, Clyde & Co
BA History, Lady Margaret Hall, 2018

Why: I applied to Clyde & Co for a training contract having attended an insight week and vacation scheme at the firm. The main draw was sector focus and litigious work. I like the tangible nature of the work particularly in relation to energy and marine sectors although, having said that, I am also really enjoying my current professional negligence seat. The multi-layered nature of dispute resolution makes it, in my opinion, exciting work. The underlying legal basis of the claims are interesting in and of themselves but on top of this are the commercial and political aspects as well as tactical negotiation considerations.

Top tips: Navigating the final year of my undergraduate degree as well as applying for vacation schemes and attending assessment centres was definitely challenging. My advice would be don't rush into it! Coming out with a secured job at the end of your degree is not the be-all and end-all. Take the time to attend insight days and research firms to better understand where you might like to work.

I also do not recommend ploughing on with a Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) and/or Legal Practice Course (LPC) if you have not secured a training contract. The fees are very expensive and risky as not all firms guarantee reimbursement. If you have

the chance to paralegal in that time, definitely take it – the experience will be invaluable. The same goes for opportunities to work abroad. While my firm offers a range of international secondments (pandemic permitting), there is a finite number and this may not be a viable option depending on what stage you are at in your training contract. Inevitably, there is never as much time or flexibility to travel once you start work, so if overseas experience is something you really want, I recommend seeking it out before starting your training contract.

Advice: Formal work experience can be hard to secure, especially in the current climate. I would get creative where you can. I spent a month or so each summer during my undergraduate degree volunteering with social enterprises and an international development charity as a legal intern. It was a great way to learn more about an area I was interested in and knew very little about as well as being something different to talk about at interviews.



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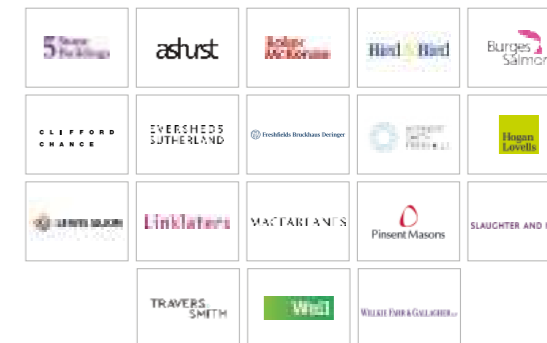
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50

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www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs

MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

Significant numbers of Oxford graduates find ways into this sector every year – entering journalism, TV, radio, film and media management.

Journalists, broadcasters and directors form the public face of the sector, but there are many other roles. Researcher roles are popular entry points for Oxford graduates: these can involve fact checking content and finding people to appear in programmes. A large proportion of people employed in the sector are freelancers, with many more employed on short-term contracts, so flexibility and a willingness to be proactive are definite assets. The impact of digital media is redefining both journalism and broadcast content, and having an awareness of multimedia platforms and tools is now crucial for graduates seeking to enter this sector.

Many are attracted to the sector for its 'creative' element, but there is increasing demand for graduates in the management side – such as in IT, sales, licensing, marketing, legal, financial, business development and consultancy.

Getting in and entry points

Experience, including work experience, is mandatory, and there are lots of opportunities to gain experience whilst you are at Oxford through societies and local media. Most people need to start in an entry level position, often as an intern or (in the broadcast media) a 'runner' for example in a TV or film company. For industry insights for the screen industries and career profiles, see www.screenskills.com.

Also, it is important to establish and cultivate professional contacts because those interested in this sector will often need to find (or create) their own openings by contacting individuals and organisations directly. See our advice on [networking](#) and speculative

“ I used to worry I'd never find a career that satisfied the two sides of my brain, [...] I discovered producing requires the perfect balancing of the two – applying the instincts of a manager or business person to an 'artistic medium'.

— Emily Everdee, independent film & video producer

approaches, and take steps to develop and cultivate your contacts – some great opportunities can arise this way.

As well as making speculative enquiries to build up experience, it is worth knowing about the other ways into the industry:

- Look for advertised runner/researcher roles on free sites eg: [The Unit List](#).
- Explore media graduate training schemes, such as the BBC and Channel 4's Graduate Programme, as well as occasional schemes with independent television companies.

There are also postgraduate courses which include substantial work experience, including master's programmes, the NCTJ for journalism or the NFTS for people with some film and television experience. It is important to do research and weigh the costs and benefits for individual situations: some people recommend them as a way to gain contacts and experience, but others do not consider them as necessary.

Extra-curricular ideas

Plan ahead to get an edge on the competition after graduation by accumulating experience whilst at Oxford.

- For graduate careers in journalism, candidates will need to build a portfolio of samples of your published writing, and a good record of relevant work experience.
- Take every opportunity to contribute to student media: student newspapers, Oxide Radio etc. Write; get editorial experience; take and select pictures; do layout work.
- Write a blog and/or produce video or comment pieces for other websites on topics of interest. Build a website/blog to showcase your portfolio.
- Become active on social media: develop essential skills and build your network.
- Join relevant student societies, such as the Oxford Filmmaking Foundation, Drama Society or TAFF (for theatre designers and technicians).
- Shoot your own documentary, short-film (on your smart phone), direct, produce, act, etc in a stage play.
- Create advertising copy/film to promote a project.
- Offer work and assistance to different kinds of media outlets: free, national, specialist. You are almost certainly an expert in something, so find a magazine for people with similar interests.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/journalism
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/music-radio
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/tv-film

Tony Diver

Political Correspondent, *Daily and Sunday Telegraph*
 History and Politics, Christ Church, 2018

“ **What:** I am a political correspondent at *The Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*, based in Westminster. I work on print and online news, live blogs, email newsletters and podcasts. I began at the *The Telegraph* shortly after graduating in 2018, and completed a two-year graduate scheme with the paper. That included training, work placements on other newspapers and at agencies, and working across different areas of *The Telegraph*. I then joined the Westminster lobby and have been writing about Brexit, coronavirus and all manner of political news.

Why: I have always been fascinated by news, and politics produces some of the most thrilling stories there are to write about. There are plenty of options (TV, podcasts, radio, magazines) and newspapers might look like an archaic career choice, but they are a great product with a proud history and consistently deliver Britain's best scoops on a daily basis. And seeing your own name in newsprint for the first time is a thrill you'll want to repeat.

First steps: My writing began at university, when I worked on *Cherwell* as a reporter, broadcast and news editor, and editor-in-chief. I would recommend getting as much experience as you can interviewing people – even if they are just other students – and writing up news stories that are fit to print. From there, you can begin

pitching news to national publications, using a network of Oxford contacts that London-based reporters won't have. Get as much work experience as you can, especially in the long vacation, and build up some industry contacts.

Early career: Plenty of people begin their journalism careers with a formal training course to get some skills. If you want to do that, make sure the course you choose is National Council for the Training of Journalists-accredited or a well-respected master's degree. From there, you can begin applying to entry-level jobs and getting experience, or to graduate schemes that accelerate you onto a national newspaper more quickly.

Skills: The most important skills are curiosity about the world around you, and a good nose for what other people might be interested in reading about. You can develop that by speaking to as many different people as you can, listening to their experiences and trying to learn from them. You never know where the next story might come from.



Esme Ash

Freelance Assistant Producer
 MSt in British and European History, 2017

“ **What:** I am an assistant producer, working freelance across observational and feature documentaries. My role involves research, finding contributors, filming on shoots, and working in the edit. I started out as a BBC production trainee in 2017 and went on to work in journalism and current affairs, before going freelance to work on documentary projects.

Why: I have always had a natural curiosity about other people's lives, and I love asking questions. In my job, I'm surrounded by people, constantly finding and building relationships with contributors, and working collaboratively and creatively to tell their stories. The variety and breadth of experience I get across different programmes is truly unparalleled, and I have met and worked with people from all walks of life.

Challenges: A key aspect of freelance work is the short-term nature of the jobs you take, usually three to six months at a time. While it means you're constantly on the lookout for the next contract, you can also design your own career trajectory, making

decisions about new roles and responsibilities. The nature of the industry also demands flexibility from you; long hours, frequent travelling or living on-location and fast turnaround projects often result in personal sacrifices.

It's not as glamorous as you might think! That said, everyone makes their own path as there's no single route through the industry, offering freedom from a predictable future.

Top tips: Most of my roles have come from recommendations and prospective emails rather than formal applications, so be proactive and enthusiastic about reaching out to people and companies you admire. Keep in touch with everyone you work with — talent managers, producers, executives — so you're in the front of their mind when they're crewing up their next production.



NATIONAL POLICY AND GOVERNMENT

Working in national policy and government offers variety, new challenges, and opportunities to do something that has a big impact on the public. This page concentrates on the sector in the UK, however, much of the advice can be extended to careers across the world.

A career in this sector appeals to those interested in making a social or legislative impact in their home country – working for a political party or think tank or becoming a civil servant at local or national level.

There are currently almost half a million people in the UK Civil Service, working in 250+ departments, services, agencies. Local government is an even bigger employer in the UK, with 1.2 million staff in over 350 local authorities.

Civil servants are officially apolitical, informing and implementing policies of elected representatives. Graduates may also work directly for elected representatives as advisers, researchers and assistants, which can be an effective route into a political career. You could even stand for election as a councillor or MP.

Think tanks are more concerned with policy than politics, but are sometimes aligned with a particular position on the political spectrum. They seek to influence public policy and debate through their research, the media, and via direct contact with politicians and organisations. For more about think tanks see [the 'International Policy and Development' section in this Guide](#).

Getting in and entry points

The Civil Service primarily recruits graduates through its 'Fast Stream' – in fact 15 'streams' ranging from Generalist, Diplomatic Service, Houses of Parliament, Science and Engineering, to Analytics, or Project Management and the Government Economic Service. The deadline for this falls in early Michaelmas term.

Fast Streamers usually gain experience in more than one government department and in more than one part of the UK and can have opportunities for secondment into the private sector, charities, and other public sector organisations.

Some departments and agencies also run separate direct recruitment schemes, including the Economic Service, Government Legal Profession, HM Treasury, the FCA, ONS, Security Services and GCHQ.

Individual, graduate-level vacancies in departments will be advertised on the Civil Service website as they arise. Other routes include temping and short-term project roles.

Internships are not generally offered, apart from the Summer Diversity Internship Programme (deadline in October) and Early Diversity Internship Programme. Some specialist programmes also advertise internships from January to March eg, Government Economic Service, Communications, and Operational Research.

In local councils, the Local Government Association runs a two-year graduate scheme: The National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP). This programme aims to provide local government with high calibre managers, training graduates through a series of placements within councils. Participants can gain experience in policy and strategy, customer-facing roles, and finance and operational positions. Since 2002, over 900 graduates have completed the programme, and many now hold influential managerial and policy roles. Direct entry positions can be found on council websites.

The website www.w4MP.org is the primary jobs board for positions working with MPs, political parties and campaigning organisations. Internships may well be offered (speculative applications can also work), though they tend to be London-based and unpaid.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Stand for your JCR/MCR committee or the Oxford SU executive – or get involved in Oxford SU's campaigns.
- Enter debate competitions in societies or the Oxford Union to sharpen your communication skills.
- Get involved with your local political party or student society branches and politics-related student societies.
- Join [The Oxford Strategy Challenge \(TOSCA\)](#): Oxford City Council is a frequent client.
- Get involved with student societies and volunteering through OxHub.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/government-public-services
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/think-tanks

Sam Banks

Graduate Training Scheme, Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)
 MMaths, Merton College, 2018

What: I am on the graduate scheme at the FCA, which regulates the provision of most financial services in the UK. As I'm on the market oversight stream, my main focus is on the UK's stock markets, but graduates are involved in everything from preventing financial crime through to making pensions policy.

My job has varied a lot across my different rotations. My current role involves programming and data analysis to help detect unlawful stock market activity, using the data we receive as the regulator. But in the past, I have worked on investigations into public companies' behaviour, internal strategy pieces, and thematic work on companies' reporting and governance.

How: I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after university but I knew I wanted to do something with more practical impact than pure mathematics (not too difficult!). I found out about the FCA's summer internship at the Oxford Careers Service Finance Fair, decided to apply and was successful. I really enjoyed it and was offered a place on the graduate scheme after the internship.

I really value the overview of particular industries that I get working at the regulator – in front line roles, you get to see how different companies go about their business. I also enjoy the different rotations on the scheme, which provide an opportunity to try different things out and learn new technical knowledge.

Pros and cons: Graduates are given a lot of trust and responsibility. I have helped to interview company directors as part of our investigations, and worked to develop the FCA's approach in new areas.

The scrutiny we are under as a regulator means that it sometimes takes a little while to make decisions. This can be frustrating at times, but it's better than making the wrong decision quickly. In spite of (or perhaps because of) the never-ending amount of work that the regulator could do, the organisation is really supportive of everyone having a good work-life balance.

Top tips: I would definitely recommend applying for summer internships – they're a good way to get to know an organisation, and can take the pressure off applications in your final year.

I think being up front about my motivations really helped me – working in public life is about considering the right principles and the people affected, as well as being technically good.



Nicholas Linfoot

Supervising Officer, HM Prison Service
 BA History, Lincoln College, 2019

What: I am on the Prison Service Graduate Scheme, Unlocked Graduates. This is a two-year graduate scheme where you work in prisons as a frontline officer. I started working with addiction services in prison but now manage a wing of around 80 prisoners. My day consists of handling security reports while designing and implementing new custodial schemes. I've also been able to write policy papers and take on a range of secondments.

How: I applied for the Civil Service Fast Stream and got an offer and wasn't sure what to do. However, the Fast Stream has a list of approved programmes that allow you to defer a Fast Stream offer and Unlocked was one of these. I deferred so I know that I'll be able to bring my frontline experience into central policymaking, which will give me a different perspective.

Pros and cons: You build fantastic relationships: it is fundamentally a people-focused role. But you do have to be mentally tough and resilient. There are a wide range of career options: you could specialise in drug work; security; violence reduction;

counterterrorism; or working with women or children. The Prison Service also has a range of promotional opportunities, giving you a lot of responsibility early on.

It's a public sector role so pay is probably what you would expect. In London it starts at £30,000; outside London, pay starts at around £22,000. Prisons are challenging, often violent and dirty. They aren't for everybody but, if you're up for a challenge, you can have a career like no other and it's certainly a job that gives you plenty to talk about.

Top tips: Get practical experience if you can: criminal justice charities and Independent Monitoring Boards give you a chance to make a difference and increase your understanding. Spend some time working out what you care about; being clearly committed to your principles is important for getting the right people and ensuring you get the most out of the public sector.



PUBLISHING

Do you have a creative mind, a proactive and resourceful nature, good organisational skills and a passion for creating content? If so a career in publishing may be an interesting option for you.

The UK publishing industry employs 29,000 people directly in the UK and is the largest exporter of books in the world. It divides into three main fields, with academic publishing being the biggest of the three:

- **Trade or consumer publishing:** fiction and non-fiction books that are published through the book trade to a general audience.
- **Academic publishing** makes scholarly research available via texts and journals.
- **Education publishing** produces school textbooks and English Language Teaching (ELT) materials.

There are a huge number of publishing companies in the UK, with the three largest companies (Penguin Random House, Hachette Livre, HarperCollins) taking around half of total UK customers sales. Other large employers include Macmillan, Pearson Education, Oxford University Press (OUP), Bloomsbury, Simon & Schuster, and Wiley, with many other smaller independent publishers.

Generally, the processes of publishing are divided into editorial, design and production, sales and marketing, distribution, contracts and rights, and finance. Specific job functions range from commissioning editor to content editor and marketing assistant to web developer as the rapid growth of online and digital publishing drives change across the industry.

There are also literary agencies, which act as intermediaries between trade publishers and writers. Normally working in small firms, agents have exposure to the whole publishing process: editing books with authors, convincing publishers to buy them, and dealing with contracts and media enquiries.

“ Try to get some work experience. As well as formal internships, publishers may also offer work experience on an ad hoc basis. There are also many different areas that work together to make a successful publishing company so consider all your career options, such as marketing and finance as well as editorial.

———— Naomi Crookston, Publisher,
Oxford University Press

Getting in and entry points

A few of the larger publishers run formal graduate schemes. Most, however, recruit graduates for specific entry-level jobs such as marketing or rights assistant, and the majority of people in publishing start in administrative positions and work their way upwards.

For any job, a demonstrated interest in the sector is extremely important, and having relevant work experience can be a real advantage. A few large players offer formal internship schemes, but outside of these, you can make speculative approaches to seek work experience at any publisher.

CareerConnect is a useful source of vacancies for jobs and work experience in the sector. Key external job sites include The Bookseller, Oxford Brookes' list of publishing jobs and internships (they run three publishing masters' degrees), and the Independent Publishers Guild (IPG) job board. Many companies, particularly smaller publishing companies and literary agencies, do not formally advertise vacancies, which means you need to get in touch speculatively to enquire and follow their social media pages.

The Publishers Association website www.publishers.org.uk provides lots of information on the industry, roles and careers.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Join the Society of Young Publishers (Oxford). Run by professionals in the sector, it holds regular networking nights and careers events.
- Demonstrate interest by joining other related student societies, such as the Oxford University Society of Bibliophiles.
- Gain experience by working for a student publication, eg, *The Oxford Student*, *Cherwell*, *Isis*, *The Oxford Scientist* and so on. Many offer experience in editorial and technical roles.
- Choose a topic you are interested in and blog about it. Developing a regular blog is a good way to demonstrate relevant publishing skills.
- Offer to help in your department or college, for example, to support the production of conference materials and reports, internal documents or promotional material.
- **Sign up for the Careers Service's Insight into Publishing programme.**
- Working in a bookshop will give you useful insights into the consumer market.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/publishing

April Peake

Commissioning Editor, Bloomsbury
English Language and Literature, Lady Margaret Hall, 2015

“ What: I'm responsible for building up a list of academic books written by the best authors that will make a significant impact on research within the relevant fields. I identify potential book topics and writers; assess proposals; present commercially viable projects at internal board meetings; negotiate deals with authors; and generally support the publishing process.

Why: I enjoy editing, project management, building relationships with authors, and working in a team. The most fulfilling part of my role is list-building; my publishing area is art history and visual culture. I have to understand the needs of readers in this market, track any shifts in the discipline, and develop our programme to keep it topical.

Career path: I got involved in student journalism at Oxford and served on the board of Oxford Student Publications Limited in my final year. After a short placement at Oxford University Press (OUP), I decided to make a career in publishing. I started out as an editorial assistant at Cambridge University Press but progressed into acquisitions roles in the humanities and social sciences at OUP and Routledge.

Advice: Internships are a super way to get relevant experience, but if you don't manage to get one, try to learn as much as you can about publishing in other ways: subscribe to *The Bookseller* for industry news and engage with the community by joining the Society of Young Publishers or attending Book Machine events.

Publishing is competitive so it's rare that your first role will perfectly align with your personal interests. Certain functions are oversubscribed – most people decide they want to work in trade or editorial without considering other options. When applying for entry-level positions, determine which departments may suit you best and spend your early career refining a broad skill set – you'll be better placed to apply for your ideal position when it becomes available. Once you're in a company, it may surprise you how many different paths there are in publishing and which direction you choose to head in when you have first-hand experience.



Kyriaki Kyriacou

Editorial Assistant, Osprey
Mst English and American Studies, Kellogg College, 2019

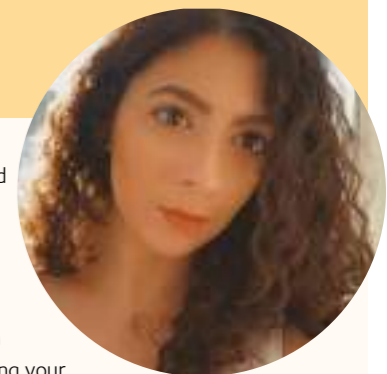
“ What: As an editorial assistant at Osprey (an imprint of Bloomsbury), my job involves a lot of admin: organising weekly publishing meetings; writing minutes; sending out advance copies of books; booking freelance copy editors and managing the editorial inbox. I read proposals from prospective authors and support the editorial team with proofreading and cover checks. When you first begin in publishing, you often don't have the opportunity to work immediately on a manuscript – that comes later, once you've received copy editing and proofreading training and gained greater responsibility.

Why: I studied literature at university, but it was my love for commercial fiction and interest in bookselling as an industry that really encouraged me to pursue a career in publishing.

Getting in: It's no secret that publishing is extremely competitive. With 1,000 applicants sometimes applying for a single entry-level position, finding a job in the sector can seem impossible. To make yourself stand out, I would recommend getting as much experience as possible. I completed a Careers Service Micro-Internship with Lantana Publishing just after I completed

my degree. It gave me the opportunity to network and discover what working in publishing was really like. If you can't find a publishing internship, extra-curricular activities also look great on your CV. For example, editing your college newspaper demonstrates attention to detail, time management and organisation skills; all are vital in publishing.

Advice: Get involved with the publishing community as much as possible. The Society of Young Publishers is a great organisation that regularly puts on CV and publishing skills workshops, advertises job openings and allows you to network with other hopeful publishers. Subscribe to *The Bookseller* to keep in touch with the latest industry news. Remember, loving books is not enough – you need to prove that you understand that publishing is a lucrative business. Finally, persist. Rejection is inevitable, but you will eventually find a job that is the perfect fit for you.





SYP OXFORD
JOIN THE SOCIETY OF YOUNG PUBLISHERS!

Careers in publishing are a lesser-trodden path from Oxford, but The Society of Young Publishers has lots to offer students looking for guidance and insight into the publishing sector. With opportunities to hear from industry experts, gain career support and network with passionate and like-minded people, joining the SYP shows demonstrable interest to future employers, and unlocks access to an exclusive SYP jobs board and network.

Providing skills and training sessions including interview masterclasses, inclusion and access events, and introductions to the full scope of publishing roles, SYP Oxford aims to demystify the publishing industry, and make it a career choice accessible to all.

For advice from industry professionals such as Rose Tremaine and Corie Platt, or the way to personalised support through our mentorship scheme, visit us at thesyp.org.uk and 4SYP_Oxford, and look out for our upcoming events taking place in person around Oxford!



The Summer Internship Programme
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sip

Funded internship opportunities in the summer vacation, exclusively available to Oxford University students.

UK and international internships available in a wide variety of sectors, carried out in person or remotely.

SCIENCE

There are many opportunities in this sector, including careers in research, creating new technologies, developing or refining manufacturing processes, or innovating medical solutions. So make sure you quiz Oxford scientists about the options while you're here, as many have connections outside academia.

Scientists are likely to be involved in research, development and analysis. Opportunities in industry range from the research divisions of global companies to niche technology firms. Other options include government- or charity-funded research institutes, hospitals, and university research.

Science and technology span diverse disciplines and so too does the range of opportunities in the science sector. Roles for hands-on scientists exist in manufacturing, energy, medicine, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, environment, defence, aerospace, transport, electronics, space technology, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), and many more areas.

The sector also needs science literate graduates who can use their knowledge in other ways: eg, making scientific ideas a commercially viable reality, or communicating research to investors or the general public.

You may primarily be driven by your subject interest, but you should also consider the environment that would most suit you. For example, working in a small startup technology company is likely to give a very different experience from joining a large graduate scheme with an established employer.

Getting in and entry points

The first step for many scientists wanting to pursue a career in science is a PhD (DPhil in Oxford). Do not be put off if a PhD is not for you at this stage; many organisations offer science roles that do not require a PhD.

“ Make the most of expertise around you. Quiz Oxford researchers and lecturers about their career and collaborations – many have connections that reach far beyond academic research labs.

— Dr Abby Evans, Careers Adviser, Oxford University Careers Service

In general, only major companies have graduate schemes. The earliest deadlines are before Christmas, but many recruit on a rolling basis. Gaining employment with well-known firms can be highly competitive (particularly in the pharmaceutical sector) and relevant industry experience is always useful.

Many large firms offer internships to penultimate year students. More opportunities exist with smaller, less well-known companies, which usually recruit for specific vacancies – either directly or through specialist recruitment agencies. Small scientific companies are often clustered on science parks. Check their websites for vacancies, register with relevant recruitment agencies, and also make speculative applications for jobs and for getting work experience.

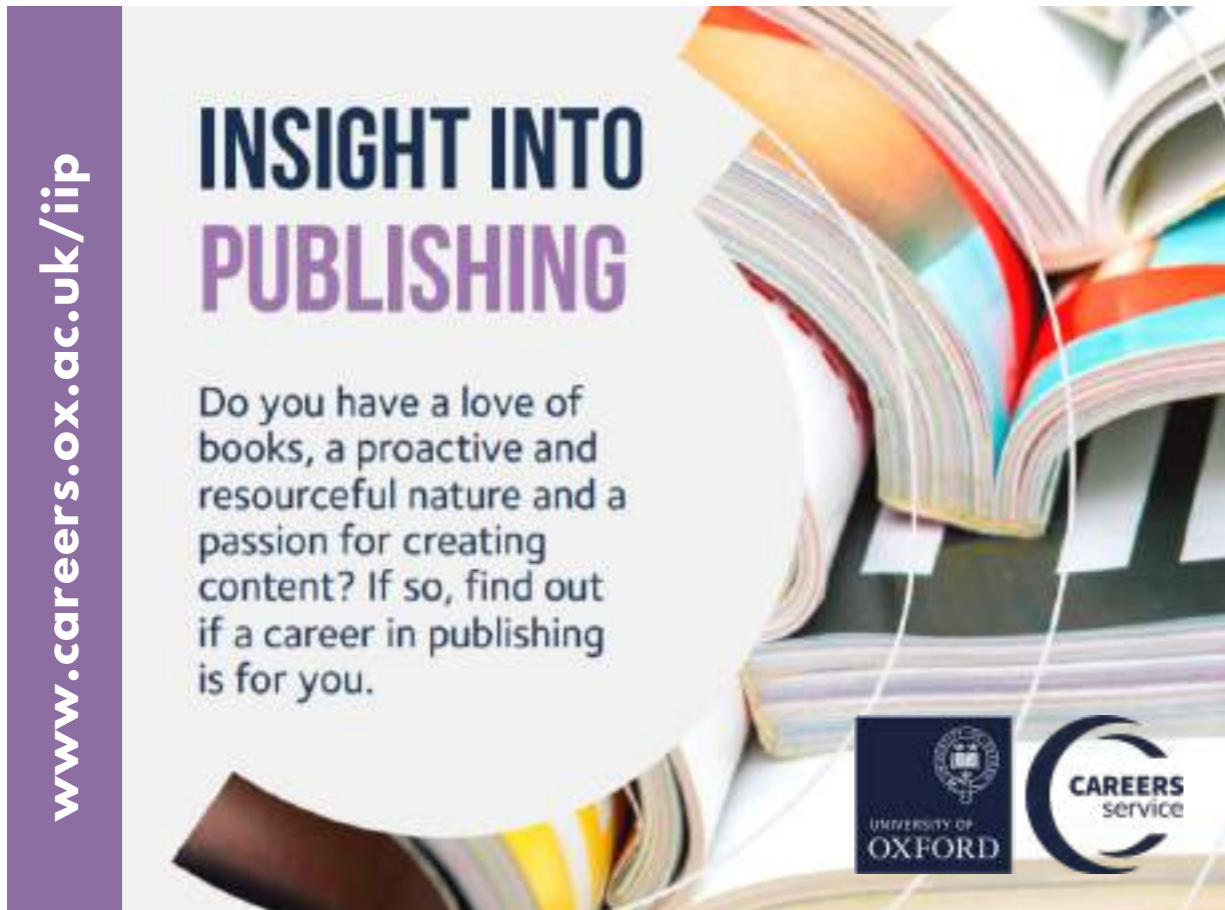
The availability of work in government agencies and independent research institutes varies according to subject. DSTL (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory) runs a graduate scheme across most scientific disciplines. DESG (Defence Engineering and Science Group) is focused mainly on physical scientists and engineers. Independently funded research institutes – such as those operated by Cancer Research UK and the Wellcome Trust – are more common in life science disciplines. For some jobs it can be an advantage to have a relevant PhD, and some roles will require them.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Join subject-based student societies, and others such as the Scientific Society, OxWEST (for women) or the Energy Society.
- Volunteer to do outreach work, for example, with the MPLS Division's School Liaison Officer, or Science Oxford.
- Seek a summer research assistant position at your department or through your tutors' contacts.
- Write for *The Oxford Scientist*, Oxford's science magazine.
- Become a student member of a relevant professional scientific society – many offer networking opportunities.

More information

- www.careers.ox.ac.uk/pharmaceuticals-biotechnology
- www.careers.ox.ac.uk/science-alternatives
- www.careers.ox.ac.uk/science-rd



www.careers.ox.ac.uk/iip

INSIGHT INTO PUBLISHING

Do you have a love of books, a proactive and resourceful nature and a passion for creating content? If so, find out if a career in publishing is for you.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD CAREERS SERVICE

Dr Joanna Bagniewska

Senior Lecturer in Environmental Sciences, Brunel University London. Communications and Public Engagement Officer, Department of Paediatrics, University of Oxford; DPhil in Zoology, Lincoln College, 2013

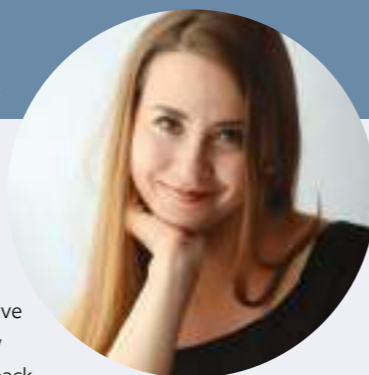
What: I split my time between an academic career in zoology, and a research support role in communications and public engagement. For half the week I lecture, design curricula and do research; for the other I prepare newsletters, build and maintain websites, write press releases and plan public engagement activities. In my spare time, I also do freelance science communication and coaching.

Career path: After my DPhil, I lectured at Nottingham Trent University and the University of Reading, while pursuing science communication as a hobby. I won FameLab Poland, which led to collaborations with journalists and science writers, and gave me an understanding of how the media works. I presented at TEDxWarsaw and Soapbox Science, taught at summer schools and began performing science stand-up comedy – and learnt a lot in the process! Even though academics sometimes consider public engagement to be a ‘distraction’ from ‘real work’, the experience I gained landed me my first permanent position at Oxford University.

Why: Having a multi-pronged career offers more job security, provides diverse learning opportunities and means that I don't

have to sacrifice any of my interests. I was not prepared to give up zoology – but simultaneously I acknowledged that it is a difficult and highly competitive field, and I needed to use my transferrable skills to find a back-up plan. My current jobs complement each other: I use my communications and public engagement expertise in lectures, and my research background to better understand the scientists I work with in my communications role. However, sometimes the work adds up to more than one full-time job!

Advice: Your degree is more than just academic skills, it's an opportunity to try out a range of new activities. Do it – you never know what will come in handy! Use diverse, unusual experiences to your advantage; they will set you apart from other applicants. And finally, always ask yourself: Why am I doing this? What is my goal? How do I measure my success?



Sam Hatfield

Scientist, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts
DPhil Environmental Research, Jesus College, 2020

What: I conduct research into different methods of simulating the Earth's atmosphere and oceans on computers in order to improve the quality of weather forecasts. In particular, I study the interface between meteorological science and supercomputing, a burgeoning area of computational science that will have real importance in attempting to adapt to climate change. My day-to-day work involves computer programming and data analysis, but also plenty of communication with colleagues and at conferences. This makes for a good balance all round, similar to that of a postdoctoral researcher in a university but without so much pressure to obtain funding and write papers.

Career path: I wanted an application for my physics and computing experience with a demonstrable benefit to society and chose the field of weather and climate prediction. Over the four years of my DPhil I made sure to conduct research that wasn't just interesting to me but also topical, keeping in mind my future career prospects. In tandem, I started to make connections with researchers at my current workplace. As I was

finishing up, I was very lucky that my current position, which is closely related to my DPhil research, became available, so I applied and was accepted.

Advice: Firstly, remember that graduation is not the end of the learning process. In many ways I learned more about “how things work” in the first year of my post-graduation job than the previous eight years of higher education. Secondly, it's perfectly okay if you don't know if the job you start with is right for you – it's not a lifelong commitment. You will have plenty of other things on your mind when finishing your degree, so to begin with just try to find something that broadly suits you. Finally, when approaching recruiters, try to have a clear example to demonstrate each of the skills that you are marketing. For example, a school outreach talk to demonstrate communication skills, or perhaps an open dataset you help maintain to demonstrate data analytics skills.



Charlotte Martin

Trainee Patent Attorney, Boulton Wade Tennant LLP
MEng Engineering Science, Mansfield College, 2019

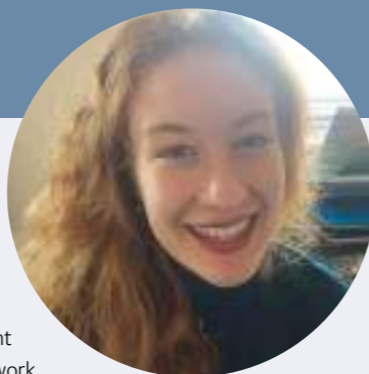
What: Patent attorneys are specialist legal agents that combine an in-depth understanding of intellectual property law with strong scientific and communication skills. We assist clients in seeking patent protection for their inventions and advise on infringement of existing patents. I am a trainee patent attorney working in the high-tech and electrical department of one of the larger European intellectual property law firms.

My day-to-day work involves reading about a wide variety of emerging technologies to identify the novel features and commercial value of an invention. I then distil this information into arguments, designed to overcome objections raised by the patent office examining a patent application. Other tasks include corresponding with our clients and drafting new patent applications. The profession is definitely worth considering as an alternative to a career as a scientific researcher, academic or engineer.

Why: Towards the end of my degree, I was considering three potential career paths: academia, engineering, and patent law. I chose patent law over academia and engineering because of the range and diversity of work. I typically only work on one invention for a day or two at a time, before switching to focus on something new. In the past month alone, I have worked on aircraft control systems, blockchain networks, juicing devices, micro LED

arrays and much more. Patent law also affords clear and structured career progression. It takes between three and five years of on-the-job training to become a chartered patent attorney, during which you work on real cases and are closely supported by supervisors who value your technical input.

Advice: For those interested in patent law, I recommend applying for the vacation schemes and open days offered by most large patent firms. These vacation schemes and open days provide an opportunity to learn all about the firm, its people, and its culture, so can be really helpful in deciding where you want to apply. They may also give you application hints and tips, or an opportunity to informally meet the partners who will be interviewing you. I would also say it is worth getting your application in early. I started applying for trainee roles at the end of my third year and was able to secure a job before starting my fourth year. This meant I could focus on my studies, and never had to worry about fitting job applications or interviews around my lectures and tutorials.



Ulrike Künzel

Senior Research Scientist, AstraZeneca
DPhil in Pathology, Lincoln College, 2017

What: As a scientist in early research and development in the pharmaceutical industry, I work on the very early steps of the drug discovery process: the identification of new drug targets for a variety of diseases. The diseases I work on can vary depending on the project, and range from cancer to metabolic diseases. Therefore, I research a variety of different cell types and disease phenotypes which are analysed with high-throughput fluorescent microscopes. My day-to-day job involves planning, performing and analysing experiments, meetings with my project team (which includes experts from other departments), group or departmental meetings, as well as operational tasks such as writing risk assessments. My work is very collaborative, and I interact frequently with scientists from other disciplines that are involved in the data analysis or experimental design. We also collaborate with academia and attend and present at scientific conferences.

Why: I chose a career in the pharmaceutical industry because I wanted to apply the scientific skills that I had acquired at university to projects that have an impact on patients. I also wanted to learn about the process of drug discovery and be involved in novel exciting science applied to a variety of diseases.

Career path: After my PhD I secured Medical Research Council funding which allowed me to stay in my PhD lab for an additional six months, before moving into my first industry position as a scientist in a contract research organisation (CRO). CROs perform research and development for other companies, which enabled me to contribute to several projects for different pharmaceutical companies. The insight into the industry, as well as the research and project management skills I gained at the CRO, helped me to secure my current position in a pharmaceutical company.

Advice: Successfully applying for the first position outside of academia is often difficult. It helps to be flexible as there are many ways into industry positions, such as postdoctoral and graduate schemes and collaborations. Consider taking a transition step to reach your desired job, e.g. through a CRO or start-up company to acquire more skills that are applicable for your next career steps. Use your network to learn more about the day-to-day work, as well as open positions in the companies you are applying for.





Main location: Oxford, UK

About us: The Oxford Biochemical Society (OUBS) was founded in 1964 and is the official student association affiliated with the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Oxford.

The primary goals of OUBS are to promote understanding and discussion of exciting and current topics in biochemistry, to increase cohesion between students within the department, and to introduce students to different career pathways. OUBS achieves these goals by regularly organising scientific talks, careers talks and social events, which are open to students, postdocs and senior members within the Department of Biochemistry.

Opportunities available: We are always looking for enthusiastic members to join our team, from IT Officer to Treasurer to Social Secretary.

Graduates sought: All members must be postgraduate students (MRes or DPhil) of the Department of Biochemistry of the University of Oxford.

Interested in finding out more about our exciting events or joining us? Check out our website oubiochem.web.ox.ac.uk and feel free to reach out via oubs@bioch.ox.ac.uk. We look forward to meeting you!

oubiochem.web.ox.ac.uk



WHO ARE WE?

OxWEST is one of the largest student-led societies in Oxford. We promote gender equality in STEM subjects by supporting women studying or working in these fields, spreading awareness of diversity issues in STEM, and encouraging community members to become advocates.

WHAT WE DO?

Term events - We organise various workshops and events, to build skills and connect you with sponsors and our community

Conference - Each year we organise our conference with industry leaders and academics holding talks, workshops and discussions

Mentorship - Connecting our members with professionals in their desired industries for insights into career paths

HOW TO JOIN US?

Find our stand at the Freshers' Fair or find us on social media (click the icons below). We're always happy to talk, so get in touch if you have any questions!



Who we are: Established in 1882, Oxford University Scientific Society (OUSS) is the oldest student-run scientific society in the world. We are on a mission to connect the brightest ideas and the brightest students.

What we do: We invite researchers, technologists, thinkers, and writers from all over the world to expose their ideas to our society members. Our list of past speakers boasts many accomplished scientists, including several Nobel laureates – and goes back to near-mythical figures, like Lord Kelvin and Sir William Ramsay, who were regular speakers in the 19th century.

What you can do: We are looking for several enthusiastic Oxford-based students to join our committee and help us organise our weekly events. The positions we are advertising are:

- > Treasurer
- > Events Officer
- > Publicity Officer
- > Membership Officer

How to get in touch: If you would like to join our mission, please contact us at scientific.society@studentclubs.ox.ac.uk, where we will be happy to answer any questions. Candidates will be interviewed near the end of the summer.

www.ouscisc.org

Virtual
**SCIENCE,
ENGINEERING AND
TECHNOLOGY FAIR**

MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021
STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30

Find out about the variety of career options available across the science, engineering and technology sectors.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs

START-UPS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Becoming an entrepreneur is a popular aspiration for an increasing number of students, as is founding or working for a start-up or spin-out.

The priority when it comes to a career search is to get round pegs in round holes, and nowhere is this more true than in start-ups and spin-outs. The adventurous opportunists who will thrive in this activity are passionate and committed and work to be not just commercially aware but business savvy.

There are many things to consider when starting a business. A **good way to understand all the business elements is to complete a Lean Canvas**, which helps you to plan out what problem you are trying to solve, what your solution is, who your customers are, how you will be sustainable, and who your competition is. This provides a strong foundation to develop your business further.

This will give a good first step for anyone thinking about starting a business.

Working for yourself

There are many different ways to set up and run your business, depending on whether you want to have a traditional for-profit business, a social enterprise, or a non-profit, or something in between. Whether you want to operate as a sole trader, limited liability partnership (LLP), or private limited company (PLC), there are plenty of resources in the University and beyond to help you get started. You will need to think

“Hone your persuasion skills. This often comes down to being a good storyteller. Whether it's applying for a job, or motivating people to join your team, many important decisions are made through compelling stories. Being a good listener is equally important – to be able to mirror back people's desires in ways that align with yours.

— Sultan Murad Saidov, Co-founder, Beamery

about market research, funding, recruitment, and who your customers will be. As a self-employed person, you will have flexibility and independence, but in addition to delivering your service, you will need to do business development (sales) to obtain new customers. This is why many people choose to go freelance later in life when they already have a network of contacts that acts as a readily available customer base. In this respect you will need to consider how you market yourself, your business name, website, brand equity, competitive edge, etc.

More information

Ideas

Enterprising Oxford: www.eship.ox.ac.uk

The Oxford Foundry:

www.oxfordfoundry.ox.ac.uk

Oxford Hub: www.oxfordhub.org

Oxford Entrepreneurs:

www.oxfordentrepreneurs.co.uk

Hands-on

Oxford University Innovation Startup Incubator:

innovation.ox.ac.uk/startupincubator

The Oxford Foundry Elevate:

www.oxfordfoundry.ox.ac.uk/about-oxfo-elevate

OX1 Start-Up Incubator Programme:

www.ox1incubator.com

Student Entrepreneurs Programme (StEP):

unistep.org

Spin-outs, space and support

Oxford University Innovation: innovation.ox.ac.uk

Begbroke Science Park: www.begbroke.ox.ac.uk

OSEP: www.osep.org.uk

OxLEP Business:

www.oxfordshirelep.com/business

“Oxford University Careers Service run The Student Consultancy Programme (now known as TOSCA) that provides student consultancy to local businesses. As a student, I joined the programme and worked with the Story Museum on opening up their coffee shop.

— Agne Milukaite, Founder, cycle.land

Elin Roberts & Christopher Kong

Co-founders and Head of Marketing (Roberts) / Head of Business Development (Kong), Better Nature Brasenose, Experimental Psychology, 2017 (Roberts) / Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry, 2018 (Kong)

What: Better Nature is an innovative meat-free brand on a mission to make protein without compromise – plant-based proteins that don't compromise on people, the planet or animals. We do this using tempeh – an all-natural protein powerhouse from Indonesia that's high in fibre, great for the gut and packed with micronutrients.

How: We met during our first year studying at Brasenose: Elin was already vegan and a passionate environmentalist, while Chris was very into his sports, as an avid rower and boxer, and keen to do his bit to protect the planet. After learning more from Elin about the devastating impact of animal products on people, the planet and animals, Chris went vegetarian (then later vegan) – and the rest is history! We then went on to meet Driando, a passionate tempeh scientist from Indonesia, and Fabio, a product developer from Italy with a deep love for tempeh, and Better Nature was born.

Advice:

- Always be ready to listen and learn: the most useful skill we've developed is a constant drive to learn and do better. Whether a great piece of feedback from a customer, an insightful article

or a thought-provoking webinar, always be on the lookout for opportunities to broaden your knowledge.

- Be ready to make mistakes: it sounds clichéd but it's true – you're doing something totally new and are only human, you're bound to make mistakes! Don't beat yourself up, just keep calm and figure out how you could avoid making the same mistake again in future.
- Be clear on why you're doing what you're doing: there will always be challenges, so it's important to know and remind yourself of why you care so much about what you're working on. Tap into that inner drive and motivation when you need it.
- Look after yourself: you can work hard while still preserving your wellbeing. Regularly check in with how you're feeling, put practices and boundaries in place to protect your mental and physical health and make sure you're always getting enough sleep, food, rest and so forth. You can't sustain any role if you don't sustain yourself!



Mehak Mumtaz

Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder, iLoF MSc Biochem, St. Hilda's, 2012, DPhil Pathology, St. Edmund Hall, 2017

What: iLoF is a healthtech company which uses photonics and AI to develop next-generation digital biomarkers to provide screening and stratification tools for complex heterogeneous diseases. Our mission is to democratise personalised medicine through rapid, cost-effective and patient-centric solutions.

How: I was always passionate about scientific discovery which led me to pursue a DPhil. Towards the end of it, I found myself drawn towards the intersection between technological and life sciences, and was fascinated by the myriad of start-ups and scale-ups spun out of the Oxford ecosystem. I ended up exploring this space as a health innovation fellow at Oxford, aiming to bridge the gap between technology providers, hospital systems, research institutes and patient organisations to improve care for rare cancer patients. This was a turning point for me and provided a first taste of innovation and entrepreneurship. Driven by the desire to gain commercial acumen, I spent some time as a strategy consultant at EY-Parthenon, which opened my eyes to a different world. Soon after, I gained a place on a ten-week EIT Health 'Wild Card' programme, a European accelerator for health companies, where I met my co-founders, validated an idea, and

secured investment from EIT Health. The decision to leave consulting and commit to the venture full-time was not a difficult one to make, and despite the roller coaster journey I have not regretted it since.

Top tips: Make use of the Oxford ecosystem. There are many opportunities to find out what different careers actually entail; work on diverse projects; meet like-minded people; visit the Oxford Foundry; or gain additional skills. Step out of your comfort zone, stretch yourself, explore and enjoy!

Network – find and talk to different people, discover what their jobs are like, and most importantly develop authentic relationships. These will last you well beyond your first few jobs.

Don't be afraid of failure. Often fear of failure can hold budding entrepreneurs back. However, think of the worst that can happen if you fail; you move on with some incredibly useful transferable skills, a bunch of friends, and lots of interesting stories for your resume.



Oxford University Biotech Society



CONNECT WITH SCIENTISTS, INVESTORS & INNOVATORS

Events with leading figures in the biotech space across R&D, investing and entrepreneurship

START-UP COMPETITION & BIOHACKATHON

Entrepreneurship programme with speaker events & mentorship from experienced biotech professionals

NETWORKING & SOCIALS

Meet other students from diverse backgrounds driven by an interest in biotech – you may find a future co-founder!

<http://oxfordbiotech.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/oxfordbiotech>

<https://twitter.com/OUBiotechSoc?s=20>



THE OXFORD STRATEGY CHALLENGE

Get real-world client work experience on our hackathon-inspired consultancy programme.



www.careers.ox.ac.uk/osc

The Micro-Internship Programme

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/micro

Get short-term work experience in variety of sectors during the vacation periods.

Placements last between two and five days and take place either remotely or in person.



TECH: IT, DATA, AI AND MACHINE LEARNING

Computing and IT jobs exist in all sectors and all types of organisations – in fact, more than 40% of all IT professionals work outside the sector.

Demand for people is high and growing quickly, with many entry opportunities open not only to those with proven IT skills, but also to anyone with the right interests and potential.

Within the IT sector there is a huge range of jobs, roles and job titles – from software engineering, to website production; cloud computing and systems development to cyber security specialists. The rapid expansion of AI, data analyst and data science roles is adding to demand. The sector also employs people across the full variety of non-technical roles – eg, sales and marketing, legal services, HR, and finance.

Outside the IT industry, technical roles exist across all industries because computing, IT and data underpin critical processes in nearly all organisations. Some sectors recruit particularly heavily into IT roles, notably in advertising and marketing, banking and financial services, games development, consultancy, manufacturing, retail and public sectors. In parallel, the growth in tech start-ups is creating significant extra demand for technically skilled graduates and, at Oxford, hiring is increasing in rapidly expanding fields such as ‘data analytics’ and ‘FinTech’.

The volume of employment opportunities for IT professionals is growing fast and firms can struggle to fill positions. As a result, people with proven programming and analytical skills are highly sought after, and many companies actively recruit people without technical skills who have the potential to learn and develop quickly once in post. Companies provide excellent training and support

“ Try to understand what you’ve enjoyed about your studies so far. In my case, programming was a by-product of my research but turned out to be the basis of the rest of my career.

— Dr Francis Newson, Scientific Software Analyst, Tessella

for new graduates, from an initial intensive ‘bootcamp’ to on-the-job development. Starting salaries, even for those without technical skills, often exceed £30,000.

The IT consultancy industry is also growing fast, and organisations will train new recruits fully before embedding them with clients to work on specific projects. Some major players operate globally, offering strategic advice, systems development and implementation. Tread carefully though: some firms offer ‘free training’ linked to a contracted 2-year period as a consultant, but if you want to leave before the end of that contracted service companies can demand very large repayments (up to £20,000) for the training.

Getting in and entry points

Companies visit Oxford throughout the autumn to run events and attend our SET Fair, Careers in Computing, and Jobs for Mathematicians Fair. Deadlines tend to fall either side of Christmas, running into late January/February. However, jobs continue to be advertised year-round to fill empty seats.

Whilst computer science graduates are in high demand, many opportunities are open to anyone who demonstrates potential and a keen interest in the field. Having technical experience is very useful, even if this is self-taught or from your extra-curricular experience, so consider how you can provide evidence of your interest and, if you struggle with this, find opportunities to get involved now to gain some experience.

Extra-curricular ideas

- Join societies and attend events: try CompSoc, Oxford Women in Computer Science (OxWoCS) and AI Society.
- Enter competitions or attend a hackathon, including the annual Oxford Hackathon in November.
- Attend free courses run by societies and CodeFirst: Girls.
- **IT Services offers free access to LinkedIn Learning’s** vast online library of video-based courses.
- Try free, open source self-directed learning at www.codecademy.com and similar sites. Popular languages include C, C++, HTML, Java, NET, Python and SQL.
- Showcase your programming skills on open-source platforms such as GitHub or take part in competitions run by companies and via [Kaggle.com](https://www.kaggle.com).
- Volunteer for an IT-related project/responsibility with your JCR/society/club or local charity.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/technology-data-machine-learning-ai

Matthew Noble

Data Scientist, Beamery
DPhil Materials Science, Oriel College, 2017

“ What: I’m a data scientist at Beamery, a tech start-up designing and building the world’s first talent operating system. We help the world’s largest companies to attract, engage and retain talent at a global scale by applying the fields of predictive-marketing and data science to recruitment. Our AI and data science team research and build the AI models used in the platform. Problems such as “suggested candidates”, “organisation name standardisation” and “likelihood to change careers” are examples of things we are actively working on and refining.

Why: After my DPhil, I wanted to keep researching and investigating new problems with real impact. Data science was the intersection of my ‘transferable skills’ – mathematics and computer coding. I taught myself the gaps in my knowledge by enrolling in online courses at DataCamp and becoming an active member of online communities on Kaggle and Reddit.

Challenges and experiences: When I first joined Beamery, there wasn’t an AI and data science team – I wasn’t ‘a’ data scientist at the company, I was ‘the’ data scientist! However, I rolled up

my sleeves and wore my many hats as I built the solutions that were needed. The mentorship of my colleagues meant I had the support to grow, learn and most importantly to fail in a supportive environment. To date, I’ve applied myself to data analytics, data engineering, DevOps, cloud infrastructure, data visualisation and most recently machine learning and neuro-linguistic programming. Joining a tech start-up had its risks, but I was fortunate, and in the end, the juice was worth the squeeze.

Advice: Not knowing the answer immediately is par for the course. Trust in your formal training of being able to research the unknown and absorb new concepts quickly. Build proof-of-concepts, iterate and stop once a minimum viable product solves your current problem.



Will Moyle

Senior Data Analyst, Zoopla Property Group
MMath Mathematics, St John’s College, 2012

“ Why: Modern companies have a vast quantity of data at their fingertips – but few are truly able to make the most of the incredible opportunity this presents. The role of a data analyst is to turn data that businesses have at their disposal into meaningful strategic insights. This helps people make the right decisions for the future of the business.

In my role at Zoopla, I am able to utilise data from millions of website visits and app sessions, as well as details of millions of property listings across the UK in order to help build a property platform that enables people in the UK to find their dream home.

Why: My path has taken me from studying maths at Oxford, through working as a strategy consultant at Deloitte, to a master’s degree in computer science, and finally to a career in analytics: a field which combines the best of my passions. Analytics includes a large amount of experimentation and testing, which builds on my maths and statistics background, as well as coding in SQL, Python and R, which I began learning during my master’s.

However, the most interesting aspect of the field is the human element. In order to be an effective analyst, it’s important to understand that the data are not just numbers, but that they represent real people and real human behaviour. This is key to developing ideas and gaining insights that affect business decisions.

Similarly, the role requires more than technical know-how. Analysis by itself holds little value without its results and recommendations being effectively communicated. This ability to work and communicate with people, as well as to understand their motivations, is what makes an effective analyst and is why I love my job.

Top tips: I’d advise anyone to learn basic database coding skills. Datacamp, for example, has free beginner courses in Python and SQL. Similarly, the free ‘Google Analytics Academy’ provides a fantastic grounding on the fundamentals of analytics. Even these introductory courses will give you an edge in interviews and might inspire you to delve into the career, as they did for me. Finally, take every opportunity to practise public speaking. This advice applies to almost every career path: the ability to clearly and effectively communicate ideas (especially to a non-technical audience) really sets people apart and is something I wish I had done more of earlier in my career.





Main locations: Harpenden, Uxbridge and Feltham.

About us: #WeAreCisco, where each person is unique, but we bring our talents to work as a team and make a difference. We embrace digital, and help our customers implement change in their digital businesses. Some may think we're "old" (35 years strong!) and only about hardware, but we're also a software and a security company. We even invented an intuitive network that adapts, predicts, learns and protects. No other company can do what we do – you can't put us in a box! But "Digital Transformation" is an empty buzz phrase without a culture that allows for innovation, creativity, and yes, even failure (if you learn from it.) So, you have colorful hair? Don't care. Tattoos? Show off your ink. Pop culture geek? Many of us are. Passion for technology and world changing? Be you, with us!

Opportunities available: Software engineering, Associate Solution Engineering and Consulting Engineering roles for graduates, summer interns and micro-interns.

Graduates sought: Any STEM related degrees. Some of our teams accept applications without programming skills.

Graduate Salary: Competitive. Including extensive compensation plan – bonus, pension, 5 days to give to your preferred charity, birthday off – on us and much more.

Vacation work: Summer internships and micro-interns.

Annual vacancies: About 20 graduates and 20 internships, but we will always consider exceptional candidates.

Application advice: CV application; see our website for details & deadline. We accept applications all year, but focus mostly on Michaelmas term.

www.cisco.com/careers

NEWTON

Main locations: UK-wide

About us: As specialists in operational improvement, we crack some of the toughest business and public sector challenges around. Not with reports or copy-and-paste thinking. But by pinpointing and helping to deliver the changes that will make the biggest difference to their clients. And we guarantee our fee against the result.

Opportunities available: Operations Consultants and Digital Consultants.

Graduates sought: Graduates from any degree discipline with a problem solving mindset and strong analytical skills, wanting to get to the root of any challenge with a hands-on approach. We're looking for effective communicators who have a high degree of emotional intelligence and an ability to build and sustain positive, productive relationships with people, whether they're a CEO or a social worker. Graduates should demonstrate a collaborative approach and have a desire to develop and progress, being happy to receive and act on feedback. Our Digital Consultants work on the most technically demanding aspects of a project, whether it's building new digital tools or harnessing the power of advanced data science, to give our clients clarity and confidence.

Visa sponsorship: Yes

Graduate salary: £45-50k package

Annual vacancies: 130

Application advice: Visit the website to learn more about the application process and apply. Early application advised.

www.workatnewton.com

Virtual CAREERS IN COMPUTING FAIR

MONDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2021

STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30



Attend presentations, browse jobs, and meet top recruiters in the IT and computing sector.



www.careers.ox.ac.uk/fairs



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We are widely recognised for being the **most established, dynamic, active and professional society on campus** for students looking to apply for internships/jobs and are renowned for our experience. We have demonstrated consistent success in providing effective recruitment and brand awareness opportunities and services for organisations we work with. **We help a huge range of companies from Amazon, Facebook and iwoca to startups, scaleups and more, to increase the quality, diversity and quantity of their applicants.** We host a number of workshops on technical skills, including ML and SQL.

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Virtual SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY FAIR

MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021

STANDS LIVE: 12:30-17:30



Find out about the variety of career options available across the science, engineering and technology sectors.



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Oxford Computer Consultants

We are a lively, growing software company based in the centre of Oxford. We develop custom software in health, research and engineering, while our products are used to manage the delivery of social care.

Graduate positions: Our graduate positions will see you working with a team of front- and back-end developers on our social care finance system or developing innovative commercial applications.

Our graduate onboarding programme allows you to work in a positive and collaborative environment with capable and self-motivated people.

We offer a generous training budget, which is tailored to suit you, as well as many other benefits, including flexible working, social events, company bike scheme and much more.

Graduate recruitment criteria: Students who hold or are on track to receive a 2:1 degree or higher in a STEM subject and have knowledge of an object-oriented language such as C#, Java or SQL.

Application process: Apply through our website for our graduate role. You can also view our other vacancies through our careers page, oxfordcc.co.uk/careers

recruitment@oxfordcc.co.uk

Summer internship: We offer a 4 to 8-week internship programme, exclusively available to Oxford students.

We are open to candidates from STEM subjects interested in software development or currently undertaking a degree in computer science or a related subject.

Our internship programme will give you the opportunity to collaborate with experienced technical professionals, attend team meetings and contribute to our projects.

Application process: Our advert is published in February for a month. We immediately begin interviews and we would have two interns join us at the beginning of summer. When advertised, the link will be made available through our CareerConnect page, oxford.targetconnect.net

Other careers

Beyond the industry sectors listed on the previous pages, there are many more opportunities – some of them are quite niche, and some are in rapidly expanding fields at the edge of current knowledge.

Do not feel restricted by the range of graduate jobs that normally get promoted, and think creatively about what would best suit you. Jobs exist now that were not around a decade ago; from YouTube content creator to drone operator. Sometimes it can feel as though everyone at Oxford ends up working in 'the City' but graduates go into a whole range of job sectors such as acting; emergency services; religion (particularly from Oxford's Permanent Private Halls); fine art conservation; managing clubs and music venues; executive search; libraries; translation; and many more.

Other options

If you are aiming for a route less travelled you may need to think more widely and be more creative in how you source information, find contacts, and build and develop your network. If you are interested in a career that does not get much exposure around Oxford, the Careers Service is very happy to help: careers advisers will be happy to work with you on a one-to-one basis to provide support and ideas to help you move forwards.

Even within the core sectors covered on previous pages there are unusual individual roles. For example, if you are passionately interested in the world of online gaming but do not fancy a technical or coding type role, leading UK companies also employ historical researchers, writers and storytellers, artists, technical support for live motion capture, as well as the full range of business managers such as sales and marketing, HR and finance functions.

Finding out more

- There are a number of strategies you can follow to find out more about any role or industry. In some ways, the more niche your specific interests are the more focused you can be. If you can find a good starting point – especially a supportive contact or mentor – they might help you to make a lot of progress quickly, for example, by helping you to identify and contact leaders in your chosen field.
- There are some 400 different job profiles covered by www.prospects.ac.uk for roles as diverse as glass blower/designer, toxicologist, youth worker,

patent attorney, hydrologist, animator and company secretary. Each profile offers links to professional bodies, sources for vacancies and suggested courses and professional development.

- Identify the professional body or society for your field of interest.
 - Their website is likely to include masses of useful information, including industry news, company and event listings, and job vacancies.
 - Professional bodies frequently also publish an industry magazine (often with vacancies), and run industry or sector awards which you can use to find leading practitioners.
- Examine vacancies to understand the common requirements such as key skills, qualifications and experience sought, as well as industry norms and terms (jargon).
- Find websites for your niche, eg working for an MP: www.w4mp.org; Space Internships Network (SpIN) via the Catapult Programme: www.catapult.org.uk; for animators: www.cartoon-media.be
- Use social networks to the full – follow bloggers and experts on Twitter and ask to join specialist groups on Facebook and LinkedIn and see who is part of the conversation and who the opinion leaders are.
- Make yourself visible online: start your own blog or website; showcase your portfolio; make sure your LinkedIn page reflects your goals and relevant experience; comment in discussions, ask for advice and make contacts.
- Specialist recruitment agencies can be another route to finding out information about particular sectors and sourcing vacancies.

More information

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/other-sectors
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/library-information-work
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/business-management
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/translating-interpreting
www.careers.ox.ac.uk/networking



The Summer Internship Programme

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sip

Funded internship opportunities in the summer vacation, exclusively available to Oxford University students.

UK and international internships available in a wide variety of sectors, carried out in person or remotely.



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