

Starting Points: Finding graduate jobs

What is a graduate job?

For students on vocational degrees, locating appropriate sources of vacancies can be relatively clear. For other graduates, your degree, interests, experience and aspirations will all play a part in directing the scope of your job search.

It could be said that a graduate job is a job that a graduate is prepared to do. Certainly in some industries (TV/film for example) the runner will often be a graduate looking for their entry route into the industry. Whereas for some creative and entrepreneurial graduates self-employment is the best career route.

Small and medium sized companies (companies with less than 250 employees) form the majority of employers in the UK. However, it is the larger organisations in the both the public and private sectors that recruit graduates in large numbers on an annual basis.

Graduate Schemes - what are they?

Graduate schemes can last one or two years with a major employer. Most employers will offer the opportunity to work in different departments before specialisation. Graduate schemes are very competitive. The recruitment processes often contains a number of stages that can take many months. Many prestigious employers will have closing dates in the December before graduation. An increasing number of the 'Times Top 100 Graduate Employers' will recruit graduates who have previously worked with them during a placement year. Some schemes may not guarantee a permanent job, however, successful completion of a graduate scheme is more likely to increase your chances of employment when jobs are advertised.

Reactive job search

Most graduate schemes are advertised. Employers may target specific university careers services and recruitment fairs. Careers Central jobs and events (located on shuspace under the employability tab) houses vacancies from employers interested in Sheffield Hallam students. There are also specialist graduate recruitment websites such as Prospects, TARGETjobs, Milkround and graduate-jobs.

Advertised vacancies may be found via any of the following:

- national graduate recruitment websites
- university Careers services and recruitment fairs
- regional graduate vacancy websites
- national newspapers
- recruitment Agencies - general and sector specific
- professional Bodies, journals and sector skills organisations
- company websites
- advertising in careers journals, TV, radio and social media

Paid internships and projects

Internships are a useful step into a graduate role. These offer you the chance to test out a particular role or company without obligation. Some internships can be as competitive to secure as regular graduate roles. Internships can be for a few months or up to a year in length. For international students a paid internship with a 'host' organisation is permissible under a Tier Five

Visa for 12 months. Careers Central jobs and events on shuspace advertises numerous opportunities for students looking for internships in the UK and overseas. Watch out for the 'RISE' internships that offer local opportunities in small and medium sized companies (SMEs). The Rise programme is a partnership between SME's Sheffield City Council and the two Sheffield universities.

Another option could be a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP). This is a three-way project between a graduate, an organisation and a university/research organisation/further education institutions (known as the 'knowledge base'). Covering a huge range of projects, KTP is one of the largest graduate recruitment programmes across the UK.

Supporting graduate diversity

Graduates should also look out for companies that encourage diversity amongst their employees by offering specialised recruitment packages and/or training for internships or graduate roles. An example of this is the 'two ticks' scheme that guarantees an interview to applicants with a declared disability if they meet the essential criteria on the personnel specification.

Proactive job search

According to employer surveys, the majority of vacancies (particularly in SMEs) are never advertised. Employee recommendations are ranked highest as their preferred recruitment method. Utilising your networks allows you to tap into the hidden job market where there are far fewer applicants to compete with. Social media (particularly LinkedIn), alumni networks, employer contacts met via careers talks, work placements or voluntary work in addition to family and friends could all lead you to your ideal job. Knowing how your preferred work sector operates is the key.

Finding graduate roles abroad

Multinational companies can often lead to graduates securing roles that involve spending time abroad for short or long periods of time. Skilled professionals such as health workers or engineers as well as linguists, English teachers and business professionals can often spend part or the majority of their career abroad. There are a number of websites that specialise in this area.

Useful resources

- <https://www.shu.ac.uk/careers> - job search links via degree subject area plus jobs and events listings with graduate roles. Includes Go Global website for global job search.
- prospects.ac.uk - UK's official graduate careers website.
- targetjobs.co.uk - Major graduate recruitment and advice website.
- milkround.com - Major graduate recruitment website.
- intergrad.co.uk - International graduate recruitment.
- yorkshiregraduates.co.uk - Regional vacancies including the Rise internships.
- ktponline.org.uk - Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.
- employ-ability.org.uk - Companies that support graduates with disabilities.
- nationalcareersservice.gov.uk - All career profiles listed with links to professional bodies and sector specific job search sites.
- gov.uk/tier-5 - Information about the temp internships/placements visa regulations.

Want to talk it through? Contact Careers and Employability for further advice and support:
Phone: 0114 225 3752 Email: careers@shu.ac.uk