

Starting Points: Planning your future

Deciding on a career can be difficult but awareness of your skills, interests, motivations and individual circumstances is an important part of the process. Knowing the kind of person you are and trying out different things can really help you decide what you want to do next. Understanding your personal values and identifying those which are most important to you can help you achieve the right balance in your life, both inside and outside of work.

Here are some questions you could ask yourself...

Do you know what you want to do?

- Check out Planning Your Future and Options with your Subject on Careers Central.
- Consider your skills and motivations - identify jobs that could suit you by looking at Prospects Planner and TARGETjobs Careers Report.
- Reflect on how personality affects your career choices by trying the Profiling for Success Type Dynamics Indicator, and Graduates First self-assessment exercises (available online via Careers Central)
- Discuss your ideas with a Careers Consultant at the Careers and Employability Centre.
- Come to one of our Careers Focus sessions in the Centre: 'Help! I don't know what to do?' bookable via UniHub.
- Do you want to build up your work experience?

Contact your Faculty Placement Team

- Does your course offer work based learning (WBL)?
- Find out about Venture Matrix real life projects through your course.
- A part-time or temporary job can develop skills that will be valuable at a later stage, and some employers offer undergraduate internships.
- Take advantage of your existing experience and find out how transferable your skills and experience are by talking to an Adviser or Consultant.

How involved are you?

- Join university clubs and societies in the Hallam Union or in your faculty.
- Become a student or course rep.
- Do some volunteering that sits around your studies: contact Hallam Union Volunteering or look at do-it.org.uk

What are your options for employment?

- Check out Finding a Job and Getting Experience in Careers Central.
- Find out what former students on your course have gone on to do using eGEMS on Careers Central.
- See the Vacancies, Part Time and Campus Jobs on Careers Central.
- If you are considering self-employment, visit the Enterprise Team which supports students interested in starting their own businesses full details in Careers Central.

Do you have a network of contacts?

- Ask about our Career Mentoring Scheme - more information on Careers Central.
- Use your existing network of friends, family and tutors.

- Join student societies and LinkedIn Groups.
- Attend employer events and recruitment fairs.

Do you know where to look for vacancies?

- Look at Finding a Job on Careers Central. Set your preferences to receive fortnightly bulletins.
- Use the suggested links to find other graduate recruitment websites.
- Come in to the Careers and Employability Centre or your faculty and speak to an Employability Adviser about job hunting techniques.
- Come to one of our Careers Focus sessions in the Centre: 'How to find a graduate job' - bookable via UniHub.

Are you considering further study?

- Check out options via online prospectuses and professional bodies.
- What courses do your current studies lead on to?
- Find out if your preferred professions require vocational qualifications or accreditation.
- Check out Careers Central Postgraduate Study pages for study and funding information.

Have you prepared a CV/application form or LinkedIn profile?

- Working on your CV or profile can help you take stock of where you are and inform your decisions.
- Check out CVs/Applications/Interviews on Careers Central.
- Have your draft CV or Application checked by an Employability Adviser.
- Look at the CV examples folder in the Careers and Employability Centre.
- Come to the LinkedIn drop-in sessions in the Careers and Employability Centre.

Do you have a plan of action?

- Set yourself a SMART* action plan (*Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-specific)
- Talk through your plans with a careers consultant - whether you have a clear direction or not, speaking to a careers consultant will help you plan for the future.
- Plans can be modified and reviewed, so keep in touch with your Careers Consultant.

Checklist

There is no strict timescale to the process of choosing a career. People start making choices at various stages but this is what you can do

- Get involved.
- Reflect on the sort of person you are - your skills, abilities, motivations and values. These will change as you progress through your course but track these changes using your portfolio or PPDP record.
- Begin to research possible career areas and what you need to get into them.
- For your placement year, think about what the experience can teach you about yourself and what you want out of a job.
- Develop your networks and profile.
- Try to develop those skills that you feel you need to work on.
- Update your CV to record these improved skills.
- Speak to an adviser and start early.

Contact Careers and Employability for further advice and support:

Phone: 0114 225 3752 Email: careers@shu.ac.uk