

# Getting Started



Many university students have no clear idea about what they want to do for their future career. The Employability and Careers Centre is here to help students and graduates at whatever stage they are at in their career planning and you are very welcome to book a careers guidance interview with your careers adviser in order to help you generate some ideas. However there are other ways to help you get started and having a go at some of these may well make your careers interview more effective. The purpose of this leaflet is to help you get started on the process.

## Career Planning

This is a process which involves thinking about:

- ▶ Where you are now
- ▶ Where you want to be
- ▶ How you will get there

### ▶ **Step 1 - Self Awareness**

This means understanding yourself and what you are looking for in a career by thinking about your skills, strengths, values, interests and personality.

### ▶ **Step 2 - Research Opportunities**

Find out what options are available with your degree by looking at destinations information on previous students from your course and looking at careers which are related to your degree and those which accept any degree discipline.

### ▶ **Step 3- Take Action**

Think of ways in which you could try out your ideas. This could be by doing a placement as part of your course, some work shadowing, voluntary work, vacation employment, work experience/internship or temping.

## Self-Awareness

There are various online tools which can help you understand more about yourself and help you to relate this information to possible careers.

- ▶ **Prospects, Career Planner** - An online job exploration tool for higher education students and graduates, it helps you find out what motivates you in a job, identifies your skills and desires, and matches this information to related occupations. [www.prospects.ac.uk/planner](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/planner)
- ▶ **Myers Briggs Personality Type Indicator** - A self-report questionnaire which helps to enhance your understanding of yourself, your motivations and natural strengths. It will also help you appreciate people who differ from you. A careers adviser can help you relate this information about yourself to career choice. Workshops are advertised on the Employability and Careers Centre events calendar on our website and you will need to complete the questionnaire in advance by calling into the Employability and Careers Centre and registering for the workshop.
- ▶ **Type Dynamics Indicator** - is a similar tool to the Myers Briggs and is available online for University of Surrey students only via [www.profilingforsuccess.com/take-an-assessment.php](http://www.profilingforsuccess.com/take-an-assessment.php). Please see our *Online Practice Tests* leaflet for the login details or email [careers@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:careers@surrey.ac.uk).
- ▶ **Career Interest Inventory** is also accessible via this site - a tool that helps you understand your interests and the type of work that may be a good fit for you.
- ▶ **Career Assessments on Surrey Pathfinder**  
A number of Career assessments are also available that focus on Personality, Work Place Culture, Strengths, Motivation, Learning Style and Temperament. To access these assessments: Go to [www.surrey.ac.uk/pathfinder](http://www.surrey.ac.uk/pathfinder). Scroll down to the Current Students or Graduates Menu (whichever applies). Then select from the menu the link to Development Tools. Then select from the Assessments tab.
- ▶ **National Careers Service, Skills Health Check** – A series of questions online that help you think about what you would like best about work, what motivates you and your personal working style. It will give you a report which includes suggestions of jobs to investigate. It is suitable for people with all levels of qualifications and you can select the level that you are currently at. <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/tools/skillshealthcheck>

If you wish you can discuss your reports with a careers adviser.



## Did you know?

You can access our leaflet series and further resources on Surrey Pathfinder:  
[surrey.ac.uk/pathfinder](http://surrey.ac.uk/pathfinder)

## Research Opportunities

- ▶ Having found out some suggestions of jobs which might suit you the next step is to investigate what these careers involve in terms of activities, qualifications, skill requirements, prospects and availability. There are some really good resources available to help you:
- ▶ **Prospects website:** Has a list of **Career Options** for most degree subjects so you can find the one that you are studying or a similar title on: [www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree)
- ▶ Prospects also has a database of **Job Profiles** covering over 400 graduate level jobs including: a job description, entry requirements, training, where to look for vacancies and case studies: [www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles)
- ▶ **TARGETjobs website:** Has a section on various **Career Sectors** such as 'Advertising and PR' with hints and tips about how to get a graduate job in that specific sector: <https://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors>
- ▶ **The National Careers Service web-site:** Has a database of over 800 job profiles including those which are not traditionally considered to be graduate level careers: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/job-profiles>
- ▶ **First Destinations data** – to find out what UK graduates with your degree subject do after leaving university, look at the HECSU Report 2017-18 '[What do graduates do?](#)'
- ▶ You will also find an **Events Calendar** on Surrey Pathfinder with details of our careers fairs, employer led workshops, networking events, all of which provide excellent opportunities to find out more about jobs and employers.
- ▶ **Employability and Careers Centre, Careers Library:** We have a series of Useful Information leaflets outlining useful careers resources for different subject areas available on Surrey Pathfinder

## Take Action

- ▶ The only way to find out for certain whether or not a job would suit you is to give it a try. There are various ways to do this by doing a professional training year, or other shorter placement/internship, finding a vacation/part-time job, volunteering, work-shadowing or taster days. Employers are increasingly asking for relevant work experience and a good degree, although essential, is no longer enough. So we would advise you to try to make the time to gain some first-hand experience.
- ▶ It would be worth looking at our other leaflet *Job Seeking – The Hidden Job Market* for advice on how to approach employers. As a bonus you may also meet some helpful people who can advise you on how to get going in your career. It is a good idea to write an action plan of what you need to do when.
- ▶ You will find Job vacancies on Surrey Pathfinder and our leaflet on *Job Seeking – advertised vacancies* will help you get started in finding other useful websites for job vacancies.

- ▶ If you decide that further study is an option that interests you, then the [‘Postgraduate Study’](#) pages of the Prospects website or [TargetPostgrad](#) are a really useful starting point. It is important to think about your reasons for continuing your studies, funding issues and where the course might lead you.

### **Finally:**

Don't forget we are always happy to help you with every aspect of your career planning and development whatever stage you are at.



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