

# Making the most of careers and recruitment fairs

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Attending careers and recruitment fairs is an excellent way to find out more about:

- different job sectors
- specific employers and the people who work for them
- specific vacancies for internships
- graduate positions

They provide good opportunities to network. Some fairs cover a wide range of occupational areas, while others are specific to a particular sector.

Several careers fairs are held at the University of York. Information about these is available at [www.york.ac.uk/careers/fairs](http://www.york.ac.uk/careers/fairs)

You can find lists of other fairs throughout the country on:

[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) – go into *Careers advice*, then *Open days and events*.

[www.gradjobs.co.uk](http://www.gradjobs.co.uk) – various national graduate recruitment and work placement exhibitions.

## Before the event

Preparation is the key to making a visit to a careers or recruitment fair worthwhile.

- Look at the range of exhibitors and make sure that the fair is relevant to you
- Research all of the exhibitors, not just the names you know
- Decide on your 'priority' employers and do your research, using their websites (and related websites in order to show that you have targeted the employer)
- Make sure your CV is up-to-date and appropriate for the employers with whom you plan to speak. You may have a few versions if you are keen on a range of career areas.
- Some fairs offer CV checking/reviewing clinics on the day, but try to have your CV reviewed at Careers and Placements beforehand so you can be prepared on the day
- Think about the questions you want to ask. You may want to ask different questions depending on who you speak to, i.e. recruitment staff or those actually doing the job, e.g. trainees (however, you should make sure that the answers are not already provided on the employer website or associated literature).

Questions might cover:

- The roles available in the company
- Vacancies and the recruitment procedures
- Skills, experience and qualities sought
- Career development/ training schemes
- Qualifications you might study for
- Company ethos
- Think about the questions which employers might want to ask you. Questions might cover:
  - What attracts you to a particular role
  - What experience/skills do you have which might be relevant
  - What do you know about the sector/industry
- Some fairs also offer workshops and seminars on a range of recruitment process subjects. Consider which seminars it might be useful to attend and if necessary book your place in advance.

For further help with preparing for careers fairs, speak to a member of staff at the Careers and Placement Information Desk.

### **At the fair**

- Arrive early, dressed appropriately. Suits are not usually necessary, but don't be too casually dressed
- Have copies of your CV with you
- Consider which employers you will approach first. Don't leave your targeted ones until last, but you may want to approach others first for practice!
- Do not forget to smile and use a firm (but not too strong!) handshake when meeting the employer's representative(s)
- Engage in meaningful discussions with people on the stands
- Take paper and a pen, and when you have finished a conversation, note who you talked to and any useful information you gathered
- Remember other students want to talk to employers too. Keep your discussions focused
- **Don't** wander aimlessly, collecting freebies!

**Your overall aim should be to use the time to explore the opportunities available to you and to make a positive impression on anyone you meet by sounding confident and asking intelligent questions.**

You may find the CV Guide and the Interview Guide (on [Yorkshire VLE](#)) useful in order to help you to prepare your CV and covering letters, and to help you prepare for interviews

See our information sheets ([www.york.ac.uk/careers/infosheets](http://www.york.ac.uk/careers/infosheets)) on

- Getting Work Experience
- Networking

**Please note:** The websites listed here are not intended to represent a comprehensive list. Careers and Placements cannot be held responsible for the content of external websites.

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[york.ac.uk/careers](http://york.ac.uk/careers)

 [UoYCareers](https://twitter.com/UoYCareers)  [facebook.com/yorkcareers](https://facebook.com/yorkcareers)