

Using recruitment agencies

What are recruitment agencies?

- They provide services to employers and jobseekers
- They make profits by successfully placing jobseekers into specific jobs and charging the employer
- They cannot charge jobseekers for their job search service, although they may charge for specific services, such as CV reviews or training
- They may deal with full time, part time and temporary jobs, and may be generalists or specialists in specific job sectors.

Why do companies use recruitment agencies?

For a variety of reasons, for example the company:

- does not have the staff to handle their own recruitment
- has an urgent need for particular staff
- has specialist vacancies (the agency might already have a list of interested people)
- is not well known and feels that a reputable agency may attract more applications
- may want to save time by allowing the agency to do the initial sift of possible recruits.

Are recruitment agencies helpful in finding a job?

- They can give you access to many jobs which are not advertised
- Many agencies have an in-depth knowledge of a particular occupational area, industry sector and national and international labour markets
- Agencies can be very proactive on your behalf (especially if they are impressed by you!).

What agencies are there?

High Street agencies -deal with a wide variety of work, with many opportunities for temporary, contract or permanent positions. They may focus on local opportunities.

Specialist agencies or consultancies - who deal with a particular occupational area, industrial sector or particular company. They may have national or international vacancies.

On-line agency sites - these may vary. Some may be merely the provider of a jobs database, where you submit your application to vacancies which interest you. Others may include the opportunity to register your details and CV, so that a consultant can match you to an employer's vacancy.

Working with agencies

- Be clear about the types of vacancies which interest you
- Make sure the agency deals with these types of vacancies
- Ensure your CV is up-to-date and likely to be effective
- Check if there are likely to be any costs for reviewing your CV or providing training
- Try to speak by phone or face-to-face with the consultant who will be dealing with your CV
- Find out what policies and procedures are in place for submitting your details to an employer
- Ensure that the agency will keep you informed of where they will send your CV
- Keep in touch regularly to make sure the agency is still working proactively on your behalf

- Build up a good rapport with your consultant – remember they will be not only be putting your CV forward, but sometimes making preliminary selection decisions for the company and even running the assessment centre
- Make sure you respond quickly to the agency, especially if they contact you with an opportunity.

What to bear in mind

- Some agencies may have very few employers who are relevant to you on their books.
- Not all agencies will be particularly proactive
- Not all agencies will be focused on your interests or objectives when offering advice – their role is to provide a person the employer needs for a specific vacancy or task
- You should never be asked for a fee for an agency to find you employment; the client (employer) is charged for each successful placement
- When you pass your CV to an agency you may lose a degree of control over where it goes and who sees it
- If you are offered psychometric tests, check that you will be offered personal and professional feedback
- The Recruitment and Employers' Confederation (www.rec.uk.com) represents the recruitment industry and has a code of practice, which their members will sign up to. However, there will be other agencies which are not members, but are also reputable
- There are many reputable online agencies, but it is worth being cautious about providing personal information online and you should never give out bank details unless you are sure that they are going to a genuine employer. For more guidance see www.jobsite.co.uk/worklife/find-job-safely-protect-yourself-online-11113/
- Some agencies have hinted at an association with university careers services. Careers and Placements at York does not endorse any particular agency
- Do not rely solely on recruitment agencies. Use them as one of many methods in your job hunting process. Download our information sheet Finding Graduate vacancies from www.york.ac.uk/careers/infosheets - Job Hunting tab for lots more ways to find employment

Useful resources

www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/getting-a-job/recruitment-agencies Further information on using recruitment agencies

www.rec.uk.com/about-us/for-jobseekers - information on using agencies and your rights as an agency worker

www.agencycentral.co.uk - search for agencies by sector or location

www.onrec.com – online recruitment resource

www.yorkrecruitmentagency.co.uk/ - recruitment agency covering the York area

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.