Getting started with Careers

Careers offers support to all University of York students and graduates, assisting you in making informed decisions and plans about your future, and developing the skills and experience you will need to be successful. Whatever stage you’re at - whether you want to enhance your skills, start considering your future, or look for part time work, internships, volunteering opportunities or graduate vacancies - our team of professional, friendly staff can help.

This information sheet will show you how we can support you during your time at York and how you can gain the experience, and develop the employability and personal skills that employers and course providers tell us they want to see evidence of. You can find out more about employability and why it’s important at www.york.ac.uk/careers/employability.

It is important to realise:

- Your degree is important but it is usually a basic entry requirement. Employers also expect you to have gained work experience and developed your employability skills in addition to your degree
- Careers is here to offer support, opportunities, advice and information, but we can’t make you employable. Only you can do that by being proactive during your time at York
- Don’t put off thinking about your future until your final year – start early, there’s a lot to do and the final stages of your degree may take up more of your time
- There are a wide range of opportunities for you at York – take advantage of them (see the Make the most of your time at University pages at www.york.ac.uk/careers/skills for some ideas)

Getting started – our resources

Start exploring opportunities and making plans for your time at York and your future:

- Our website www.york.ac.uk/careers offers a comprehensive range of information to help you explore your options and is a great starting point for all things careers related. There are links to career planning tools and all our information sheets (www.york.ac.uk/careers/infosheets) are downloadable
- In Careers you can talk to staff if you need help finding information or just need to know how to get started. We also have reference books, professional journals, free employer directories and careers magazines
- For up-to-the minute news and opportunities follow us on Facebook and Twitter: www.york.ac.uk/careers/socialmedia
- If you’re looking for graduate jobs, internships or part-time work while you study, we advertise thousands of vacancies each year via Careers Gateway www.york.ac.uk/careers/gateway

Careers Gateway is your personalised Careers account where you can:

- Search for all kinds of job vacancies and set up email alerts for new vacancies
- View our events programme and find further details of courses and workshops
- Book your place on events, courses and workshops
- Book advice/information appointments or CV/application reviews
- Send us a query

Talking to us
1) Careers Information appointments (20 minutes)
If you need help finding information, or researching a particular career question, book an Information Appointment. The Information staff won’t give you specific advice about your career, but can make sure you are able to find all the information you need.

They can also answer questions about:
- The York Award
- Internships/work experience
- Finding part-time/vacation work
- Finding work abroad
- Information to get started with preparing a CV/covering letter/application form
- Assistance with searching Careers Gateway if you’re having difficulties

Student Feedback
“Extremely helpful and went out of their way to provide additional help”
(Information room visit, Autumn 2014)

2) CV/Application appointments (15 minutes)
The competition for internships/work experience and graduate jobs is fierce and it’s important that you know how to prepare a strong application. Use our CV Guide (accessed through the VLE http://vle.york.ac.uk), workshops and online information sheets to prepare your application, and then bring it to your CV/Application appointment for review. Please bring a printed copy of your application with you. Please note: The purpose of these appointments is to give you feedback on layout and content. The adviser will highlight errors, but will not proofread your application.

3) Careers Advice appointments (20 minutes)
For advice on all other careers issues you can talk to a Careers Consultant – for example:
- Generating career ideas
- Preparing for an interview
- Support with decision making about your future
- Developing your skills and experience for the career you want
- Considering your next steps
- Marketing yourself in applications

4) Mock Interview (30mins)
This is an opportunity to practice general and competency based interview questions and receive feedback on your interview performance. As these appointments can be booked at short notice the Careers Consultant will not normally be able to tailor your interview questions to a specific employer/opportunity but will discuss with you at the start of the interview what you would like to practise.

Remember: To get the most out of your appointment, it is important to do some work researching your options beforehand – see www.york.ac.uk/careers/options.

Student Feedback
“Clear explanations, very friendly and professional advice” (Careers Appointment, Spring 2012)

How to book CV/application, careers advice, career information or practice interview appointments
You will need to book the appointment through Careers Gateway and they are usually available Monday to Friday in term time. Appointments can be booked from 8:00am a day in advance, for example, if you wish to book an appointment for Monday you can book from 8:00am on Sunday. Some times of year are particularly busy (Autumn term, for example) and appointments fill up very quickly. A limited number of appointments are also available during vacations.

5) Email Advice
Face-to-face appointments are usually the best way of getting advice and feedback. However if you are not based in York, are on placement or your personal circumstances make it difficult to book an
appointment; you can use our email **Query** system from within **Careers Gateway**. Your query will be tracked and responded to within five working days. Please note we strongly encourage undergraduates in York to book a face-to-face appointment, rather than sending us a query via Careers Gateway.

**Careers Events**

A really important way you can develop your employability and learn more about different careers is by attending some of the wide range of events we run each term.

1) **Departmental events**
We work with each department to put on careers events specifically for its students. Events may include CV workshops, careers appointments, networking sessions and career days. Each department has a Careers Liaison Officer (CLO) who works closely with the Careers Consultant with responsibility for your department, to organise these events for you.

**Student Feedback**
“The Biology Careers Day was amazing - hugely successful, if not invaluable. I feel much more confident about the application process now.” (Spring 2012)

You can find out about them through your department (on your timetable and through the **Careers news blog**), and they are listed on **Careers Gateway**.

*Remember these events have been arranged with your department specifically for you and they are an important way to help you plan for your future. Find out when they are and go along.*

2) **Employer events**
Hundreds of employers visit campus each year. You can find them at our big Autumn recruitment fairs, at on campus recruitment events or some work with us to offer practice interviews or deliver skills training. The opportunity to meet and talk to graduate recruiters is invaluable. Use these events to find out about graduate jobs and internships as well as getting tips on skills development and your application. Check out who will be on campus this year ([www.york.ac.uk/careers/events](http://www.york.ac.uk/careers/events)). Employers also sometimes attend events run by YUSU societies which have a focus on careers.

3) **Networking events**
Each year we work with YUSU and the Alumni Office to organise large networking events which give you the chance to meet recent graduates who are working in a variety of job sectors. These events can be a great way to get first-hand information about different career areas and learn more about the individual career paths of York alumni. Talking to someone doing the job you are interested in, or working in a company you would like to work for, is a way of getting information that you may not be able to access in any other way. Alumni also attend other events during the year, including departmental careers events.

4) **Skills workshops**
We run a programme of skills workshops throughout the year and these can help you boost skills that it may be difficult to develop through your other activities. Our courses are open to all students and you can collect York Award points by successfully completing them. If you want to develop skills such as communication, presentation, team work, project management and negotiation, check out our **skills courses**.

5) **Recruitment workshops**
We run a series of information sessions to get you started with the basics such as writing a CV, preparing for an interview and working while you study. These are usually hour long sessions and you can find dates, times and further details on our events list in **Careers Gateway**.

**Student Feedback**
“Good presentation, to the point, good practical exercise” (How to Impress at Interviews workshop, Spring 2012)

**Opportunities at York**
There are many ways that you can develop the skills that will make you more employable. Graduate employers value these skills and they will also be relevant for entry to many postgraduate study programmes. It's not all about your CV though – getting involved in a range of activities will also allow you to get to know other students, try out new things, get more involved in the local community and enrich your life.

It's also a great chance to find out more about yourself – what you’re good at, what you enjoy doing, your strengths and weaknesses - and maybe develop some new interests. These things are all important when you're ready to start thinking about your future.

**Build up your work experience**

Work experience is a great way to gain some real life experience and make yourself more employable. You can gain valuable experience through part time work, internships, placements or through voluntary work. We advertise thousands of opportunities on Careers Gateway. These opportunities are also fed through automatically to Facebook and Twitter: www.york.ac.uk/careers/socialmedia

1) **Part-time work**

It is easy to think that part-time work in shops, restaurants, bars, etc won't be valued by graduate employers. This is not true; employers look for candidates who make the most of any work situation and recognise the skills they are developing. This type of work can be a great way of developing customer service, time management and communication skills. You may also be using or developing your problem solving skills and team working abilities. Every work situation can help you develop skills. Temporary work can also increase your understanding of how a business operates – commercial awareness is very important to many employers. Talk to your manager and other staff to get a better understanding of this.

- Careers advertises part-time and temporary jobs including some campus vacancies www.york.ac.uk/careers/work
- The university occasionally advertises campus vacancies for part-time and vacation work suitable for students www.york.ac.uk/jobs
- Download *Finding part-time and temporary work in the UK* from the Work Experience section of our information sheets page www.york.ac.uk/careers/infosheets for lots of links to vacancy sources and useful information on finding work during your studies.

2) **Insight Days/Open Days**

Many large companies offer Insight Days (particularly targeted at first year students) or week long Insight Programmes where you spend some time with the company. They are a great way for you to start to build a relationship with an organisation, find out more about the undergraduate and graduate opportunities available and take advantage of any training offered. Check company websites to find out more, or look for listings on www.prospects.ac.uk or www.targetjobs.co.uk

3) **Work experience/Internships**

- Our StudentInternship Bureau (www.york.ac.uk/careers/sib) advertises paid internships with local organisations. These include vacation and term-time opportunities and are exclusively available to University of York students. You can search for these vacancies through the Careers Gateway www.york.ac.uk/careers/gateway
- Careers also advertises other work experience opportunities and internships, offered throughout the UK and overseas from other sources – use Careers Gateway to access these
- Other general websites include www.prospects.ac.uk/work_experience.htm, www.e4s.co.uk, www.ratemyplacement.co.uk
- For more specific advice on how to find opportunities in different sectors use our information sheets or contact Careers for advice

Note: some internships offered may be unpaid. Before starting an internship you should be clear about the length of the internship, pay and conditions, what you will be expected to do, and what you will gain from the experience.

4) **Volunteer**

- In some sectors, such as environment, media, heritage and social care, volunteering is one of the main ways to build up relevant work experience. It can also be a good way to build up experience and skills for other sectors where it is difficult to find paid employment or work experience
• We run several team based community projects each term, for which there is a competitive application process
• We also advertise volunteering opportunities for a number of local organisations, to which you can apply directly. Find out about projects and individual volunteering at www.york.ac.uk/careers/volunteering
• **York Students in Schools (YSIS)** is a way to gain work experience in a local primary or secondary school. Anyone can take part – you don’t need to be thinking about teaching as a career! Find out more at www.york.ac.uk/careers/ysis
• **YUSU** also runs some great volunteering projects https://www.yusu.org/opportunities/volunteering
• Other information about volunteering opportunities across the UK is available at www.do-it.org.uk

5) **University activities**
Getting involved in student led clubs and societies is a great way to broaden your interests and develop your skills:

- Student clubs, societies and media www.yusu.org/societies
- Sports www.yusu.org/sport
- There is also a wealth of opportunities in college and departmental activities (Junior Common Room Committee, RAG, Board of Studies Rep, etc.)

6) **Develop Specific Skills**
- Learn a language or build on your current language skills with a Languages for All (LFA) course www.york.ac.uk/lfa. The Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT) offer opportunities for non-native English speakers to improve their language skills www.york.ac.uk/celt.
- Develop your IT skills – there’s a wide range of courses on offer with Student IT Training www.york.ac.uk/it-services/training/students
- Develop your enterprise skills. Join York Entrepreneurs to find out about competitions, training, talks and other events. Use the workspace to develop your ideas or even start up your own business www.york.ac.uk/careers/enterprise

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<tr>
<th>What we can do for you</th>
<th>What you can do for yourself</th>
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<tr>
<td>Provide extensive information and resources</td>
<td>Visit our website: <a href="http://www.york.ac.uk/careers">www.york.ac.uk/careers</a> and have a look at the information available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give advice and feedback</td>
<td>Use your plan to think about activities that would help in your next steps</td>
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<td>Provide opportunities for work experience and skills development as well as graduate jobs</td>
<td>Seek our support as and when you need it</td>
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<td>Bring a wide range of employers and alumni on campus</td>
<td>Make use of all the resources we provide</td>
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<td>Offer a wide range of events to help you develop new skills, centrally and in your department</td>
<td>Be proactive – don’t wait for someone else to make things to happen</td>
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<td>Help you reflect on your experiences at York through careers appointments and the York Award</td>
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<td>Assist you in making informed decisions about your future</td>
<td>Take the opportunities we provide to talk to employers/ask questions</td>
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<td>Offer a free cup of tea or coffee when you are using Careers or waiting for an appointment!</td>
<td>Use our York Profiles and Mentors to contact alumni to find out about their experiences and see what you can learn from them <a href="http://www.york.ac.uk/careers/profiles">www.york.ac.uk/careers/profiles</a></td>
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Your feedback
We welcome your feedback on all our activities and are always happy, where possible, to take this on board. Each term we run a Feedback Fortnight where everyone using any part of our service can tell us what they think. We publish the results of this online each term and let you know what we are doing differently as a result of your feedback. If you have any additional comments/suggestions or ideas on how we can help you please email careers@york.ac.uk.

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