



Guide to...

graduate

opportunities



TYPES OF GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES

GRADUATE JOB A job may be considered 'graduate level' if the role requires someone with a university education who is undertaking defined professional level job responsibilities. Some, but not all, opportunities may feature the word 'graduate' in the job title e.g. *Graduate Marketing Assistant*.

GRADUATE SCHEME (OR GRADUATE PROGRAMME) A type of graduate job, usually offered by large organisations, with a structured training programme over 1-2 years. Such opportunities will be clearly described as graduate scheme programmes.

The availability of graduate schemes changes year-on-year. For some sectors, such as business, graduate schemes may be common, whereas the creative sector, for example, is less likely to offer such schemes. It is important to do your research!

GRADUATE INTERNSHIP A medium term entry-level position aimed at those with no or very limited experience in a certain sector or role. The availability of graduate internship opportunities across sectors varies. Some opportunities may be advertised with 'graduate intern' in the job title, e.g. *Graduate Marketing Intern*.



	ORGANISATION SIZE	TYPICAL DURATION	WHO CAN APPLY	WHEN TO APPLY	SALARY	TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES
GRADUATE SCHEME	Typically large national and multinational employers	One to two years, followed by chance to continue with the company	Graduates meeting job criteria – many schemes open to any degree subject	Schemes can open as early as autumn for a start date the following summer	Attractive	Emphasis on learning and development which may involve formal training or additional qualifications
GRADUATE JOB	Large, medium and small employers	Permanent or fixed-term	Graduates meeting job criteria	Open year round, but employers targeting recent graduates may advertise in spring, with a summer start date	Varies	Formal or on-the-job training
GRADUATE INTERNSHIP	Large, medium and small employers	Fixed-term short contract (one to six months)	Graduates meeting job criteria	Open year round, but employers targeting recent graduates may advertise spring, with a summer start date	Varies (some roles are unpaid)	Typically on-the-job learning

WHEN AND HOW TO APPLY

GRADUATE SCHEMES

It is common for schemes to open early, for example, schemes open in autumn for successful candidates to start the role the following summer. Some schemes have specific closing deadlines and some have a rolling application period.

As graduate schemes attract a high number of applicants, employers tend to set out the recruitment process in stages. Initial application is usually an application form. An example of recruitment stages might be: Application form (>150 applicants); online tests (100 applicants); assessment centre (60 applicants); interviews (30 applicants); job offer (five applicants).

GRADUATE JOBS AND GRADUATE INTERNSHIPS

Unlike graduate schemes, graduate jobs and internships are typically advertised later in the academic year often during Spring or Early Summer for successful candidates to start the role after summer graduation. Roles are usually advertised with a specific closing date for applications.

The recruitment process for graduate jobs and internships varies between employers but is often a two-stage process involving CV/cover letter or application form, followed by interview.

YOUR CRITERIA

Searching for graduate opportunities can feel overwhelming, so before you start, consider your criteria:

- **What type of role are you looking for?** Do you have a specific career or job role in mind?
- **What industry sector(s) are you interested in?** Some careers are directly linked to a sector (e.g. teachers working in the education sector), but other careers are relevant across sectors (e.g. a human resource officer could work in any industry).
- **What type of opportunity are you looking for?** Graduate scheme, job, and/or internship? Why?
- **Size of organisation?** Whilst graduate schemes are typically offered by larger employers (250+ employees), small (<49 employees) and medium sized (50-249 employees) organisations make up 99% of UK businesses (source: [FSB](#)) so be open-minded about the size of employer you'll consider.
- **Location?** Are you/can you be flexible with location or are looking in a specific geographic area?
- **Training, qualifications and support?** This varies for each employer but consider what training and/or support you are seeking in a new role.
- **Salary and other benefits?** How important is this to you? Would it determine the type of opportunities you might wish to apply for?

RESEARCHING EMPLOYERS

RESEARCHING EMPLOYERS SUPPORTS YOU TO:

- Identify employers you might like to work for
- Help decide the type of opportunities to apply for, e.g. if a particular graduate scheme is a good fit for you
- Enhance your commercial awareness about the employer and sector in which they operate
- Enhances future applications by demonstrating to employers you have researched them

STRATEGIES FOR RESEARCHING EMPLOYERS:

- Employer website and social media channels
- For larger organisations, explore their careers pages – some employers have specific 'early career' websites aimed at university level and post-university level opportunities.

Websites to research large employers:

- [TargetJobs UK Top 300 Employers](#)
- [The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers](#)
- [JobCrowd Company Reviews](#)
- Finding employers by location using keyword searches on [yell.com](#) business directory and/or Google Maps e.g. "*finance companies/design agencies/charities*"
- Professional associations – some sectors have a professional body with member lists available for identify relevant employers. To find professional associations relevant to a particular career see [Prospects Job Profiles](#). For example, if someone wanted to work in the arts, looking at a job profile for [arts administrator](#) provides a link the [British Arts Festivals Association](#) (with membership list)
- Research specific employers mentioned in the wider media
- Check employer reviews on [Glassdoor](#) and [JobCrowd](#)
- Attend employer talks or information sessions.
- Attend Graduate Fairs to speak to employers (see [Prospects Events](#) for open events)
- Look out for networking events relevant to the sector you are interested in or use LinkedIn to connect with those who work for employers that interest you

JOB SEARCH STRATEGY

There are three main ways to secure graduate employment:

1. applying for advertised positions;
2. approaching employers speculatively;
3. securing opportunities via contacts and networks.

Certain types of employers, based on size and sector, may have preferred recruitment processes. For example, some large employers may not accept speculative applications and rely only on advertised positions to recruit, while some small employers may not have the resources to advertise roles, instead relying on speculative applications and their networks to seek new talent.

Do your research!

1. ADVERTISED POSITIONS

There are a variety of methods through which employers may formally advertise their opportunities and hundreds of job listing websites. In using job websites, we recommend:

- Sign up to email alerts on job websites that reflect your preferred sector/role – email alerts help you understand and monitor how often the role you are looking for is advertised
- Keep a record of job websites you are signed up to and/or will regularly check for opportunities
- Use keyword searches and filters to find opportunities based on your criteria
- If you find an opportunity advertised on a general job website, check if it is also advertised on the employers website to ensure you have all the information you need to apply
- Save job descriptions for roles you apply for, so you have them to help prepare for interviews

Company websites and social media channels

Many larger employers with their own in-house recruitment teams will advertise on their own company careers pages and promote their recruitment drives via their own social media channels.

Graduate Jobsites:

There are also many jobsites aimed specifically at recent graduates. Examples include:

- [TargetJobs](#) and [TargetJobs Hiring Organisations](#)
- [Prospects](#)
- [Milkround](#)
- [GradTouch](#)
- [GradSouthWest](#)
- [Guardian Graduate Jobs Board](#)
- [Job Crowd Jobs](#)
- [Graduate Jobs](#)
- [Grad Jobs](#)
- [Give a Grad a Go](#)
- [Graduate Recruitment Bureau](#)
- [Inspiring Interns](#)
- [Save the Student](#)

General Jobsites:

General job websites advertise opportunities across all sectors and for all level of applicants. It can be harder to find opportunities that suit your criteria, so use filters and keyword searches. Examples include:

- [Indeed](#)
- [Total Jobs](#)
- [Reed](#)
- [Jobsite](#)
- [Direct Gov Find a Job](#)
- [Guardian Jobs](#)

Sector Specific:

Some job websites specialise in advertising roles for a specific industry sector. Use [Prospects Job Profiles](#) to identify if there are sector specific websites for the career role that interests you. Examples include:

- [Charity Job](#)
- [Jobs Go Public](#) (public sector)
- [NHS Jobs](#)
- [Arts Jobs](#) (visual/performing arts and heritage)
- [Green Jobs](#)
- [Marketing Week](#) (PR, advertising and marketing)
- [Eteach](#) (schools and education)

Professional Associations:

Professional associations are linked to a specific industry sector or professional role, although not all sectors/roles have one. Some professional associations host their own jobs boards. Use [Prospects Job Profiles](#) to identify a professional association related to your career interests. Examples include:

- [Dietitians Jobs](#)
- [Jobs in Psychology](#)
- [People Management CIPD Jobs](#)
- [British Association of Social Workers Jobs](#)

Social Media:

Using social media channels such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram can be a great way to find opportunities. As a professional work network, some employers will use LinkedIn as the main way to advertise their opportunities. For information, see [Prospects Social Media and Job Hunting](#).

Recruitment Agencies:

Some employers may make use of a recruitment agency to advertise, source and shortlist candidates. Be mindful that recruitment agencies are working for and paid by their clients (the employer), so they have an employer-focused agenda. For information, see [Prospects Recruitment Agencies](#). To find agencies use [Agency Central](#) (database of agencies) and [Recruitment Employment Confederation Directory](#).

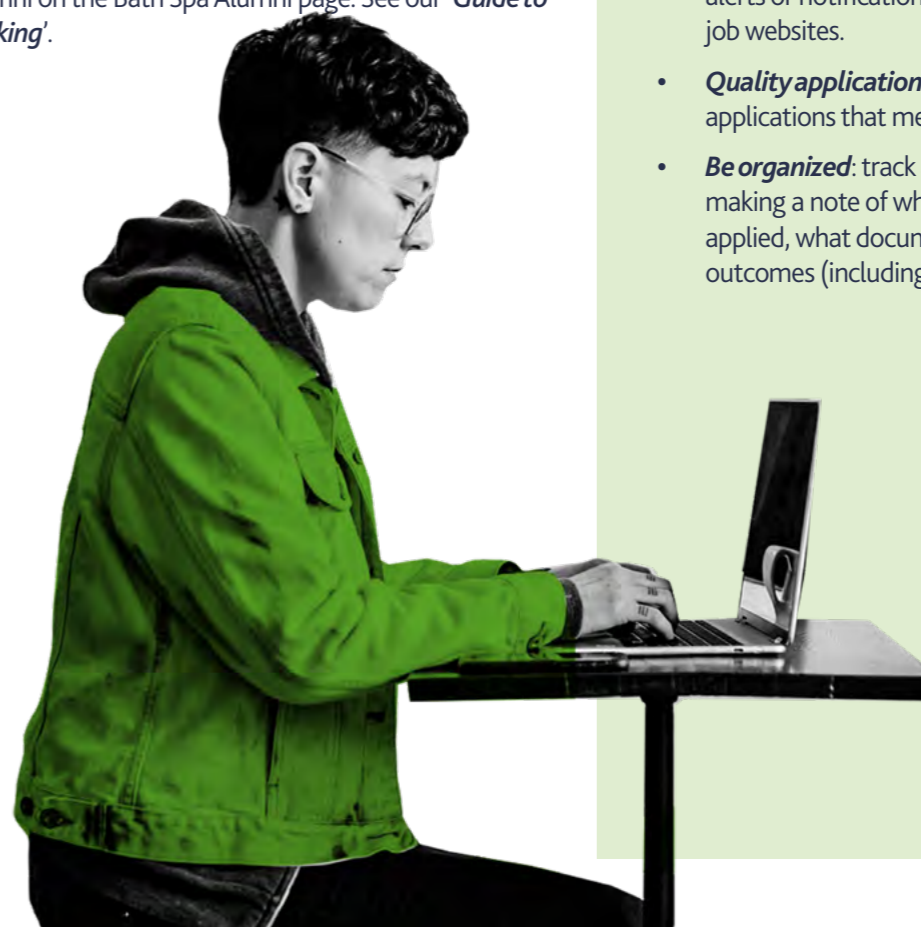
2. APPLYING SPECULATIVELY

It is estimated as many as 70% of jobs are not formally advertised, so you are encouraged to contact potential employers speculatively, to enquire about possible opportunities, rather than waiting for them to advertise a role that might suit you. Do your research and identify a list of companies you want to approach. Bear in mind some employers may not accept speculative applications, so check their websites. The secret to an effective speculative application is a planned and thoroughly researched approach using a tailored CV and cover letter. See the Bath Spa Careers '[Guide to Making Speculative Applications](#)'.

3. CONTACTS AND NETWORKING

Given as many as 70% of jobs are not formally advertised, finding and securing opportunities through your contacts and networks can be a useful strategy. Think about who you already know and speak to them about what type of opportunity you are looking for. It's possible they themselves know someone who has links with that industry or type of career. Start with family, friends, lecturers, work colleagues (part-time jobs / volunteering), and people you know through your hobbies.

If your current contacts are limited, consider developing your network. LinkedIn, for example, is a great way to search for and connect with people who work in the type of industry or role that interests you. Search for previous Bath Spa Alumni on the Bath Spa Alumni page. See our '[Guide to Networking](#)'.



TOP TIPS!

Whatever type of graduate opportunity you are seeking, planning ahead will help you feel prepared, particularly when managing your job search alongside your final year of study.

- **Start early:** it is never too early to start preparing and some larger employers even offer specific placement experience programmes for first and second year undergraduates to gain experience. Take time to understand what employers are looking for and consider how you meet requirements.
- **Enhance your employability:** consider opportunities to develop your employability within and beyond your studies, so you can demonstrate your skills and experience to employers.
- **Keep a record:** write down examples of your experiences, achievements and skills gained during your time at university, as these will help you with preparing application documents.
- **Be flexible:** adopt a range of search strategies including; seeking advertised roles, approaching employers speculatively, and tapping into and/or developing your network.
- **Create a list:** write a list of employers you intend to research. Bookmark websites and/or create email alerts or notifications on employer or national relevant job websites.
- **Quality applications:** allow time to write quality applications that meet the employer's criteria.
- **Be organized:** track and review your progress by making a note of what you applied for, when you applied, what documents you used to apply, and any outcomes (including feedback provided).

Bath Spa Careers and Employability is here to help you get a great start to your career. We are open year round, so to find out more about how we can support you go to: www.bathspa.ac.uk/careers

As a student or recent graduate, *MyCareer* is your online portal for booking events, accessing appointments, submitting queries, and searching for jobs and placements.

You can also follow @bathspacareers on social media:
Facebook | Twitter | YouTube | LinkedIn | Instagram

Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this resource guide is accurate but we recommend that you check all details carefully.

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