

GET THAT JOB

Get a job top tips

Getting your first professional role will not happen by chance. You need to think ahead to plan what kind of job you're looking for and what you will need to do to find it. Don't wait until your third year to start seriously thinking about your employability.

Gaining experience

It will be much easier to produce an interesting CV and covering letter or write a personal statement as part of an application form if you have accumulated some sort of work experience.

Some ways to gain valuable experience are:

- **Paid work** - This could be through part-time or holiday jobs. It doesn't matter what the job is, all work experience proves that you are employable.
- **Volunteering** - Volunteer for charities or other organisations. You can find out about the latest volunteering opportunities from the UEL Employability Team.
- **Work placements/internships** - Companies and organisations offer a range of placement and internship opportunities. Even if it's not related to your degree, a placement can help you develop useful, transferable skills.
- **Roles and responsibilities** - Become a Student Rep or Student Ambassador. These experiences can provide more opportunities to demonstrate your employability skills.
- **Mentoring** - At UEL you can be mentored by a private or public sector professional or mentor other students.
- **Career events** - The Employability Team organise career events where you can take part in CV workshops and mock interviews.

Researching the market

Most people will tell you that they didn't have a clear career plan both whilst they were studying and when they graduated. However, researching the sectors, organisations and roles that appeal to you early on will make your job search easier and more meaningful.

You can find out more about specific job markets from:

- **The Internet** - You can find out about occupations and key employers from online resources like GTI Journals, Hobsons Casebooks and Inside Careers. 'Prospects', the UK Graduate Careers website, has occupational profiles detailing what many careers actually entail.
- **Company websites** - Virtually all businesses now have their own websites with lots of information about the organisation and how they recruit and develop their staff.
- **Talk to people** - Try to make contact with people who work in an organisation you're interested in.
- **The Media** - Newspapers have good business sections with background information on different sectors and companies. Trade and industry magazines, such as PR Week,

Harvard Business Review and Community Care can give you a sense of what it's like to work in that area.

- **UEL Employability and Enterprise Team** - UEL's experts can offer you invaluable advice on different careers or how to start a business and have extensive connections to a wide range of employers and contacts that may be relevant to you.

Searching for jobs

When it's time to start looking for a job, the right opportunity is not going to come knocking at your door. You need to search effectively, develop a plan and aim to apply for a set number of vacancies every day.

The graduate job market is very competitive and you will be out there searching at the same time as many other students. You will find more opportunities by using a range of ways of searching:

- **Press/advertising** - Most newspapers have job sections including the free London papers. Most newspapers advertise vacancies for a specific sector each day.
- **Websites** - There are many websites that advertise job vacancies. Some are run by agencies, some by newspapers and others are dedicated jobsites. You can also find jobs advertised on employers' own websites.
- **Recruitment agencies** - There are literally hundreds of agencies in and around London that specialise in every type of work. You need to register first and generally have to supply references as well.
- **Job centres** - They now provide you with extensive support on how to find yourself a job. They offer an online service which gives you up-to-date information on available jobs and upcoming events and useful tips to help secure yourself a job.
- **Career events** - These are usually organised by the Employability and Enterprise Team but your School may also organise these.
- **Job fairs** - Look out for the annual National Graduate Recruitment Exhibitions. You can find out about other job fairs in the job sections of newspapers and trade magazines.
- **Word of mouth** - One of the key things to do is to talk to people. The people you know and the people they know could have valuable information.

Networking

Networking can get you a job, as well as work experience or a placement opportunity. Contacts are everywhere and all around you. Never miss out on the opportunity to talk to someone.

Good ways to network

- Professional bodies or the Chamber of Commerce organise events.
- Council-run events for local businesses, often advertised in local papers.
- Take your CV to job and career fairs.
- Keep in touch with managers from previous jobs and work experience.
- Contacts from volunteering.
- Friends and family and their contacts.
- Through groups or social activities such as sports centre, church, mosque, clubs.
- Online networks - Facebook, your own website, My Space, LinkedIn etc.

You will get better results from networking if you pay attention to these golden rules:

- **Be polite** - Be courteous at all times and thank your contacts for any help, no matter how small. Remember they are busy people.
- **Do your homework** - Research your contact's job and employer beforehand even if you're only asking them for information. The more informed you are the more seriously they will take you.

- **Don't ask for the whole world** - Start with a short meeting before you ask for a week's work experience. Mention the person who gave you your contact's name – this could mean they are more likely to help you.
- **Think about what you can offer them** - Take your up-to-date CV with you to meetings. Have a card with your contact details printed to create a business-like impression.