

**Top tips for students
*on becoming an
employable graduate***

Prepare to be a
Graduate *with more*



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Why you need to read this guide

Although today's job market is highly competitive, there are excellent opportunities for well-prepared, flexible and determined graduates.



Students hard at work in one of our learning centres.

But it's no longer enough to have 'just' a degree. Your course and the skills you gain from it are at the heart of your future success. An employable graduate is someone who can offer a degree and more. And it's this 'more' that we want to introduce you to in this guide.

You shouldn't wait until your final year to get involved in activities that will boost your CV. Start thinking about what you can do now and you'll have an impressive track record when you graduate.

Employers are looking for hard evidence that you've got the skills that they're looking for. Although many of our courses include modules that give you work-related skills, you should also take advantage of the opportunities outside your degree.

This might include getting part-time or voluntary work experience, or joining leadership development schemes or student societies. Any experience that shows employers that you've gained the qualities they want most.

By starting now, you have time to build up an impressive range of skills and experience that will make you stand out. Whether you know what sort of job you're interested in, or you're still figuring it out, now is the time to start. Because the earlier you begin, the more experiences and skills you can gather – and the more impressive your CV will look when you leave.

This guide is part of a range of expert support that can help you find a career you're really interested in. Use it to find out about the exciting opportunities available to you, to start thinking about where you want to be, and to begin planning the steps you need to take now.



Getting started

Here are the key activities that you should consider straight away to give you that ‘more’ we’ve already talked about. **Begin now, and you’ll build up a very impressive CV by the time you start applying for jobs.**



Careers staff can help you think about the type of job you might want.

Think about where your course might lead you

Deciding what you want to do or what type of career to aim for can be difficult. But the sooner you start researching what you want to do, the more focused and motivated you’ll be – and the more likely you’ll be to succeed.

Your course may lead to a particular career or job sector, so you may have already started your career journey. But if not, think about your interests, personality, skills and values and match them to a career that might suit you.

Knowing what you’ve got to offer gives you the best chance of finding work that’s fulfilling. And it gives you the confidence to promote yourself to potential employers.

Your lecturers and careers staff will help you, sometimes through personal and professional development sessions or other modules on your course. Regardless of what stage you’re at, you’ll get all the support you need.

There are also useful tools such as Prospects Career Planner www.prospects.ac.uk or Profiling for Success and Careers Central – search on the employability tab on shuspace. The Careers and Employability Centre also has lots of other resources to help you.

Get a part-time or temporary job

By gaining work experience alongside your studies, you’ll be more prepared for the world of work when you apply for graduate jobs. And employers really want that experience.

We advertise a huge range of part-time, vacation and voluntary opportunities on shuspace.

Some jobs may relate directly to what you’re studying or the career you want. But the skills you develop in most jobs – such as teamwork and time management – will be valued by all future employers. Visit Careers Central via the employability tab on shuspace – and check it regularly.

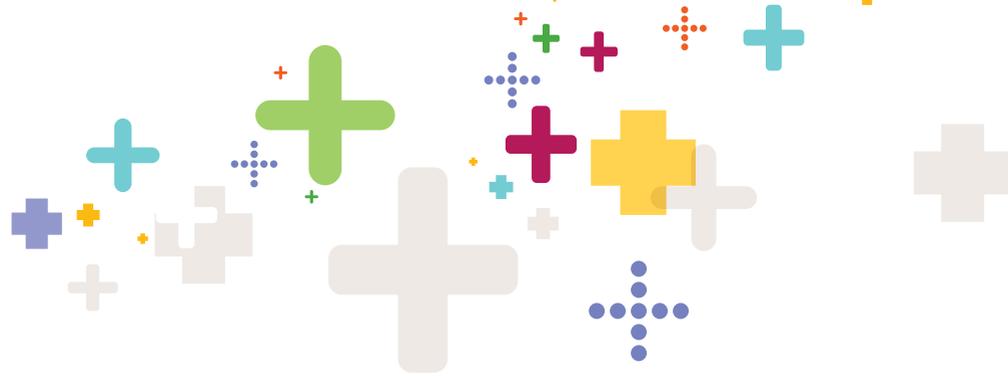
Plus you can also earn money while getting work experience on campus. Campus Jobs recruits students for a wide variety of part-time roles within the University. Roles include events assistant, student ambassador, mentor, administration assistant, student photographer and marketing assistant. See ‘Campus Jobs’ under the employability tab on shuspace.

You can also work for yourself part-time. Our Research and Innovation Office can give you advice and support – see www.shu.ac.uk/startup

‘It’s a great idea to either get a part-time job, volunteer or join a society. Anything that shows you’re able to do things off your own back. It’s invaluable in setting you apart from the thousands of students who do only the bare minimum.’

*Clare Young,
BA (Hons) English graduate*

We recommend that you don’t work more than 15 hours a week to allow you time to concentrate on your studies.



Do some volunteering that fits round your studies

Volunteering is an excellent way to get work experience. Plus having volunteering on your CV shows you can handle extra responsibilities. You'll also develop transferrable skills that employers are looking for. And because you're making a real difference to people's lives, you'll get a great sense of pride and fulfilment too.

Visit www.hallamunion.org/volunteering to find out how you can get involved. You can also check out the national volunteer sites, such as www.do-it.org.uk and vinspired.com

'I'd strongly recommend volunteering with Hallam Union. They have loads of voluntary places so you can get experience to make you stand out from the crowd.'

*Abbey Kelsey,
BA (Hons) Sociology graduate*



Gain valuable work experience as a volunteer.

Become a student or course rep

You can represent your course or faculty to the University through the Students' Union. This role develops communication, leadership and organisational skills, which will give your CV a real boost. Find full details at www.hallamunion.org/studentreps

Get involved in clubs and societies

Many clubs and societies give you the chance to practice your administration, marketing and promotional skills. And being part of or leading a team offers opportunities for development. Hallam Union offers a huge variety of activities. Visit www.hallamunion.org/sports or www.hallamunion.org/societies to find out more.

Find out about part-time and voluntary opportunities on our events section on the employability tab on shuspace.

Many of the activities can count towards the Hallam Award.

Find out more at www.hallamunion.org



Other ways to become more employable

As well as the opportunities we've already talked about, there's much more you can do to increase your chances of getting the job you want when you graduate. Have a look at our suggestions, and give them a go. It's worth going the extra mile to give yourself that extra edge.

Take advantage of opportunities on your course

Many of our courses have work experience or work-related projects built in, and some include a whole year's work placement. Take full advantage of these opportunities and learn as much as you can while you're there. They're a great way to get a taster of the type of career you might want to follow, and to gain valuable workplace skills.

Placements and internships

Most employers prefer to take on graduates who've completed a placement or internship. So if your course offers this opportunity, grab it with both hands. Our statistics show that they significantly improve your chances of getting a job – often with the employer that offered the placement.

Many employers are using this as a chance to get a good look at you – in effect using it as an elongated selection process.

Venture Matrix

You can gain sought-after work experience on an increasing number of our courses through our exciting Venture Matrix scheme. This is a fantastic opportunity to work on real life projects and get practical experience.

Find out more at www.shu.ac.uk/venturematrix



Top – Check out opportunities at our employer and industry events.
Middle – Gain valuable experience through a placement or internship.
Bottom left – Work on real projects through Venture Matrix.
Bottom right – Develop your skills through part time work on campus.

Make the most of your holidays

Some larger employers offer structured holiday schemes which are very competitive but offer excellent experience. More and more employers are using them as part of their recruitment process. We'll advertise them under 'part-time' jobs on shuspace as they appear – check out the employability tab.

Try and get some work, whether it's paid or unpaid. You may be surprised at the skills you've gained when you reflect on them. You could even arrange some work shadowing to get an insight into the role or sector you might be considering. It'll also give you valuable experience to add to your CV.

Visit our virtual summer experience fair at www.sheffieldcareersfairs.ac.uk to see the range of options out there, and use your friends and family contacts and networks to source your own.

Start networking on social media

Professional and social media such as LinkedIn – www.linkedin.com – are really useful ways to network, gain insider knowledge of your discipline, and get possible job leads for the future. Find out more at one of our presentations, come to one of our LinkedIn surgeries, or ask your faculty employment adviser or careers adviser for information about subject-specific networks you can join.

Join our nationally accredited Career Mentoring Scheme

This is a fantastic opportunity for you to meet a professional from an organisation or job role that interests you. Or just to gain an insight from someone who is in work, and can offer you support with your plans. Students really value our mentoring scheme, so apply early for a place to get your pick of mentors, and spend as much time as possible with them. Ask for a leaflet and application form at the Careers and Employment Centre, or get more details via the employability tab on shuspace.

Attend employer events and recruitment fairs

Our employer events are a great way to meet graduate recruiters and find out exactly what they're looking for. We run a full programme of employer-led company presentations, employability skills sessions and on-campus interviews in the Careers and Employability Centre. Check the latest events on the employability tab on shuspace.

You can meet over 100 national and international graduate recruiters in one afternoon at one of our recruitment fairs. Visit the Sheffield Universities Recruitment Fairs website at www.sheffieldcareersfairs.ac.uk

Your faculty or department may also organise smaller recruitment events for specific sector areas.

Discover more about becoming self employed

If you have dreamt of becoming self employed or have a business idea now, you could develop it with the free specialist advice and resources of the Research and Innovation Office. Find out more at www.shu.ac.uk/startup

Don't forget to keep a record of everything on a master CV as you go.

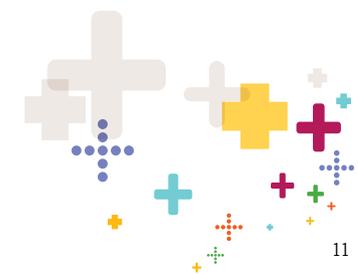
Make sure you create a CV and regularly update it with the skills and experiences you're gaining. You should also include this in your Personal and Professional Development Planning (PPDP) portfolio or the equivalent system used by your course area. This will be the main source of information for every job application you make – making it a lot easier when the time comes. An adviser at the Careers and Employment Centre can help you put your CV together and you can pick up some useful hand-outs.



Silver Top Brewery – 2012 winners of the Enterprise Challenge business start-up competition.



Meeting other student mentees at a networking event.



The range of support available

One-to-one support

The careers advisers who are linked to your course can give you specialist guidance about exploring your career options and becoming more employable. You can discuss your options, and talk about the steps you can take to ensure you have a strong CV by the time you reach your final year.

Once you're more certain about what you want to do, your faculty-linked employment advisers are here to help you get what you want – whether it's finding a placement or work experience opportunity, or a graduate level job. And they can help you make well-informed career decisions and develop a fulfilling career in the longer term. Or advise you about progression onto further study.

They can also help you present and market your unique set of skills and experiences effectively when the time comes, so employers know exactly what you've got to offer.

In addition, your tutors will support you throughout your time here. They're happy to help you with your plans for the future, as well as your academic progress. And student support staff in each faculty can also help steer you in the right direction.

Students have consistently fed back that our individual careers guidance and job-seeking support sessions are incredibly useful. You don't have to wait until you're about to leave before you make an appointment with them.

'Without the help I got from the careers team, I'd be pretty clueless about job hunting and applications. I found the service particularly useful for developing my CV. I've designed a skills-based CV for part-time work and a more in-depth CV to use when I'm looking for full-time work.'

*Madeleine Roach,
BA (Hons) Public Relations and
Communications graduate*

Help tailored to international students

We run weekly career coaching sessions in the Careers and Employability Centre and regular career planning workshops in each faculty – specifically for international students.

Support for students with a disability

We strongly encourage you to make early contact with your faculty careers or employment adviser for any advice and support you might need. They can discuss any questions you may have – such as how, when or where to disclose your disability to an employer – and may refer you to see our specialist disability careers adviser.



Where to go for more information



Whether you want to find the information for yourself or speak to someone in person, there's a lot of help available.

Careers and Employability Centre

Our brand new Careers and Employability Centre is the main hub for all employability activity within the University. You'll find everything you need to help you plan your career – from initial thoughts about what to do right through to applying for jobs, further study and taking time out.

There are regular presentations from the careers team, visiting employers, and external speakers (often former Sheffield Hallam students). Come and see what we've got to offer.

Shuspace

Select the employability tab and click through to Careers Central.

Facebook

Our Facebook page enables you to stay up to date with careers-related news, vacancies and events. Find us at www.facebook.com/SHUCareers

Opening times

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
9am–5.15pm

Wednesday
10.30am–7pm

Friday
9am–4.45pm

See shuspace for opening times during holidays.

City Campus Careers and Employability Centre

Howard Street
(next to the main entrance)
City Campus
Sheffield S1 2LX

Phone 0114 225 3752
Email careers@shu.ac.uk

Collegiate Campus

Contact the Careers and Employability Centre or call in to Student Services in Collegiate Learning Centre.

Phone 0114 225 2491



Top – Access advice and support at our Careers and Employability Centre.
Middle – There are opportunities to network at our employer events.
Bottom – Take time out to think about your career plans in our fantastic facilities.

