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# The career starter



**A guide to  
breaking into  
the jobs market**

The career starter

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**Introduction**  
**Coco Khan**



*You can find a fulfilling career in a changing world*

**B**ritain's 18-24 year olds are the most educated generation in history. They're digitally savvy and hold an immense potential for business. But this same generation is also some of the hardest hit by our rapidly changing world of work, in particular by the rise of the gig economy. Too often, young workers can find themselves locked into insecure and low-paid work while also shouldering massive student debt. How then, can younger people land a fulfilling role that will set them on a lifelong career path? In this supplement we'll look at entering the public sector in teaching, policing and nursing - how to do it, and what to expect - as well as finding a foothold in the private sector through placements and apprenticeships. We'll ask how worthwhile grad schemes are as a career accelerator, as well as hearing from young people themselves who have found their work passion. Elsewhere, we'll hear from experts in the field of youth employment and workplace diversity. Our cover story dives into the rarefied sphere of publishing, and explores how to break into the elusive world of books (spoiler: you don't need to study English). And we'll look at life as a young worker, navigating psychometric tests as part of job interviews and managing budgets in expensive cities. The jobs market may be rapidly changing, but there is still an abundance of opportunity for the UK's young workforce.

# Graduate schemes

## A route to the top - straight after leaving university

While grad-training schemes offer a career fast track, historical diversity problems still need to be addressed

By Tess Reidy

**T**here are many ways for a young person starting their career journey to break into the jobs market. You'll need qualifications - through colleges, university or degree apprenticeships - and a finely honed CV. But it may still not be enough to earn potential candidates a place on a highly sought-after grad scheme.

While grad schemes are a great way to receive well-paid, on-the-job training, the application process is hard. It can include pages of questions on your strengths and suitability and psychometric testing. "You have to set aside a lot of time to apply," says recent graduate, Mathilda Frampton, 22. Competition is fierce. Salaries start at about £19,000 and the schemes cover a broad range of sectors from banking, law and engineering, to retail and hospitality. In 2018, the NHS said they had 17,000 applicants for 200 spaces on one scheme. Freshfields, one of the top five City law firms, says it gets about 1,300 applications for 80 training contracts. Grad schemes are not, however, the only option, so are they worth it?

▼ Many grad schemes involve a cohort of trainees starting together, which often creates social benefits  
PHOTOGRAPH: STOCKSY



**Comment**  
**Laura Gardiner**



*'Despite the challenges of job insecurity for young people, there are things to feel hopeful about'*

**I**t's been a turbulent decade for the labour market - especially for young people. For one, the impact of the financial crisis a decade ago has lingered. Those who graduated in the midst of a recession - between 2008 and 2012 - were by far the unluckiest. They face higher unemployment, lower pay and worse job prospects up to a decade later. And while real wages are rising at their fastest rate in two years, growth remains weak by pre-crisis standards. At the Resolution Foundation, we found the UK's continuing poor performance on productivity - which was down 0.2% year-on-year at the end of 2018 - may limit the scope for faster pay growth. That this has not yet recovered is unprecedented. And young people are still bearing the same scars: they're experiencing housing insecurity, and having less secure pensions than previous generations. Today, young people are much more likely to work in lower-skilled, lower-paying occupations. And that has had long lasting effects on the labour market, because we're not seeing people move out, move jobs, and move up their career ladders as fast as they used to. The rates of people moving from one job to another are well below pre-financial crisis levels. And that's actually really worrying because moving jobs, especially when you're young, is one of the best ways to get paid better and progress your career. This has led to an increase in zero-hour contracts, part-time working, and agency working. And it's not decreasing as fast as we'd expect, given record high employment, which has been driven by relatively low-employment parts of the country catching up. Despite the challenges of job insecurity for young people, there are things to consider and feel hopeful about when looking at the future of work. Firstly, we shouldn't be scared of the robots! In a technology-driven world, there is a lot of fear about robotics and artificial intelligence disrupting the labour market. But in the long run, these things tend to be complementary to labour, and we won't have robots replacing all jobs. Of course, automation is going to become a bigger feature of many industries, so the types of jobs that exist will undoubtedly change. And that will put an emphasis on employees having adaptable skills. In short, it will hopefully make jobs more interesting, and less monotonous. While productivity growth has been lacking, I don't think we're heading for a stagnating future. I think that the continued up-skilling of the younger generations - who are the most educated generations in history - will mean more highly-skilled employees, and better, more interesting job opportunities. We can't predict what jobs will look like in 10 years' time. But what we will see is technology bringing many new job roles and opportunities into the market. The jobs of the future might not be the jobs of the past. But I'm confident there will be jobs - challenging, rewarding, enjoyable jobs - available for young people. My main advice to those entering the labour market is to find ways to be adaptable with their skills, have grit, and learn to roll with the tide.

*'We can't predict what jobs will look like in 10 years' time. But what we will see is technology bringing new opportunities'*

"Definitely," says Raph Mokades, founder of Rare, a recruitment agency for ethnic minority graduates. "Grad schemes are a leg up and the company invests in you." Graduates agree. "It's been challenging and I've learned new skills that I feel proud of," says Elena Waite, a software engineer at a wellness tech startup in Manchester. Many grad jobs give you the chance to rotate through divisions within the company to get the best sense of what you want to do and the goal is to retain you once you finish. They tend to last one to two years and you often start at the same time as others, and many enjoy the social benefits of this. Tarique Chowdhury, head of communications from the NHS Graduate Management Scheme, says it will be offering 500 placements this year. "Trainees get frontline experience, strong support and we educate them throughout," he says. Grad schemes do historically have a diversity problem and intakes tend to be white and middle-class. According to the Institute of Student Employers, more than 70% of employers now see tackling social mobility as a key priority. Many are targeting a broader range of universities and there has been a recent drive towards contextual recruitment, which means each applicant's achievements are assessed in the context of their socioeconomic background. Mokades thinks this is evidence that progress is being made. "It used to be that everyone had great grades so they took the ones with the flashiest work experience," he

*'They used to take the ones with the flashiest work experience, now they understand why you only have Primark on your CV'*

**Raph Mokades**  
Rare Recruitment

says. These days, if you went to a school in a disadvantaged area and you haven't got work experience or climbed Kilimanjaro, recruiters will "totally understand why you only have Primark" on your CV, he says. Others are sceptical and think those from privileged backgrounds

still dominate. "We get students who have never done an interview in their life," says James Catchpole, director of the Legal Practice Course at the City Law School. Although he thinks big organisations are interviewing a more diverse range of candidates, he questions how many jobs are really available to them. With organisations such as the Sutton Trust and the Social Mobility Foundation working hard to help young people from less advantaged backgrounds into graduate jobs, Mokades says recruitment practices are changing. "Twenty-seven percent of those getting training contracts are from disadvantaged backgrounds," he says. "How has that happened? By organisations working to up-skill people so they are on a level playing field."

**The UK labour market**

Since 2016, while full-time work opportunities have grown, and unemployment levels for young people are low - a part of this is as a result of an increase in "atypical" roles. Two-thirds of the growth in employment since 2008 has been in roles such as self-employment, zero-hours contracts or agency work. Unemployment rates, like wages, are lower than they were before the financial crash. While real wage growth is on course to strengthen further this year to 1.5%, the pay growth is still well below the rate from before the financial crash, which was 2.3%.

In some sectors, employment rates have dropped. For one, the retail industry's share of the UK workforce has shrunk, with 320,000 jobs being cut since 2003. But on the flip side, this has led to job creation in other sectors - from social care, to hospitality. And thanks to technology, there are new roles being created, too. Rather than replace young people and other workers in the labour market, AI, robotics and other forms of smart automation have the potential to bring an abundance of new, creative roles. **Rossalyn Warren**



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# Publishing

## Why there's no such thing as a career done by the book

Long seen as a traditional industry giving out 'jobs for the boys', publishing is now making great efforts to recruit more diverse talent

Anne Cassidy

Book publishing is considered a rarefied world and a tough industry to get into. A report this year showing that the industry is failing to reflect the UK's regional and racial diversity, does little to dispel that view.

But, increasingly, publishers are making efforts to attract diverse job applicants from a variety of backgrounds. New ways in are opening up for the next generation of book publishers and many of the big names, such as Penguin Random House, no longer require job candidates to have a degree. If you want turn your love of books into a career, here's an expert guide.

### Find the routes in

Many publishers offer paid traineeships, graduate schemes or internship opportunities, which are often publicised on their social media channels.

Georgina Ugen is a new starter in the industry who didn't take a traditional path. She has a degree in dance and cultural studies and was a property manager before applying to the HarperCollins' BAME traineeship scheme two years ago. She was offered the role of digital sales assistant and has since been promoted to digital sales manager.

"I found out about the BAME traineeship at HarperCollins through LinkedIn," she says. "I didn't get one of the two places on offer but was asked to apply for an entry level role,

*I was asked to apply for an entry level role. If you don't succeed at first, take the opportunity to make contacts'*

Georgina Ugen  
HarperCollins

which I got. If you don't succeed at first, take the opportunity to make contacts."

When you do see a role advertised don't be put off by the job description, Elizabeth Briggs, editor and marketing manager at Saqi Books, advises. "Never be disheartened if you see something on the job description you haven't done yet. What experience do you have that might make you stand out? It can be something from your personal life, particularly at entry level," she says.

### Network and do your research

Not up to speed on what's going on in the publishing world? Ruth Howells, the Publishers Association's deputy director of external affairs, has these words of advice: "Research, research, research."

"Go into bookshops and see how products are marketed and displayed. Find opportunities to network at relevant careers events or industry insight days," Howells adds.

Engaging with publishers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram can be a good way to make connections, says Ugen. "Don't jump in asking for a job, join in conversations on books and authors."

Joining the Society of Young Publishers, which supports people trying to get into publishing, is another starting point.

### Consider different areas of publishing

Editorial jobs tend to be in high demand, but publishing spans lots of areas, including legal, production, marketing and audio. Decide what sort of job you want and what type of publisher you want to work for, be it consumer, academic or education.

Job roles are varied, from developers and rights analysts to commissioning editors. "All areas of the industry are looking for a range of different skills," says Howells.

Specialising in a particular subject can help, depending on the role you're going for. "STM [science, technical and medical] graduates will have an advantage if they are applying to a STM publisher," says Eloise Cook, publisher for trade, consumer and professional business at Pearson.

No matter what area you go into, a genuine love for books is a key requirement. John Athanasiou, director of people at HarperCollins UK, says: "What we really want to see is a passion for the industry."

▼ Sophie Harris, left, and Suzanne Dean both work in the design department of publisher Vintage

PHOTOGRAPH: RICK PUSHINSKY



## Experience

### 'I still get excited when a manuscript is handed to me'

What's it like to work in publishing? An award-winning creative director and junior designer reveal all

Interviews by Anne Cassidy

Think of publishing and you may imagine the author is everything, but the industry is made up of many more roles. One is that of book design. Here, we discover life as a junior designer and meet the creative director who mentors her.

story. She invited McEwan to help her oversee how the mannequin's face should be painted and its wig styled for the cover image.

Her unconventional and experimental designs are likely to inspire a double-take. Her cover for *The Largesse of the Sea Maiden* by Denis Johnson involved intricately piecing together hundreds of pencil shavings so that they would resemble waves. "The best part of designing a cover is when you get

### Suzanne Dean

Creative director, Vintage

Styling a mannequin with the help of Ian McEwan is one of the more surreal tasks Suzanne Dean has undertaken as part of her job. Dean is the creative director at Vintage, an imprint of Penguin Random House, and has designed book covers for some of the world's bestselling authors, including McEwan, Julian Barnes, Haruki Murakami and Margaret Atwood.

For McEwan's latest novel *Machines Like Me*, Dean trawled through a factory of mannequins to find a suitable one to represent Adam, the robot at the centre of the

*'The best part of designing a cover is when you get a buzz of recognition - you know when you've cracked the idea'*

Suzanne Deane  
Vintage

*'I didn't know anyone in publishing. What mattered most was that I had ideas and I was enthusiastic'*

Sophie Harris  
Vintage

She advises designers wanting to get into the trade to be willing to experiment. "I'd suggest they get a portfolio together that includes their own version of books they've read and enter competitions like the Penguin Random House student design award."

### Sophie Harris

Junior designer, Vintage

Long before she got into publishing, Sophie Harris was captivated by book covers. "I've always been fascinated by how you can distil a whole book into one single image," she says.

This fascination led to her dream job three years ago at Vintage, the Penguin Random House imprint, as a junior designer on creative director Suzanne Dean's team.

Harris is currently working on the covers for four soon-to-be reissued Margaret Atwood titles: *Bluebeard's Egg*, *Dancing Girls*, *Life Before Man* and *Bodily Harm*, with the illustrator Celia Jacobs. "The best part [of the job] is feeling like you've done a service to the author and the story, and created something sensitive and considered that excites people," she says.

Harris, who is 26, studied graphic design while at university and got her first experience of book cover design during an Erasmus placement in Germany which offered a module in the subject. During the course, she got the chance to work on real briefs that had been submitted by commercial publishers. One of her cover designs - for the book *Ich Wolte Einhörner* by Alina Simone - was chosen and published. After university, she interned at a few graphic design agencies and then spotted a job opportunity at Vintage. "In my mind I always wanted to be a book cover designer," she said. "Then the job [at Vintage] came up. I've never looked back."

Harris's first high profile cover design at Vintage was *How To Stop Brexit* by Nick Clegg. She has since designed covers for other notable titles, including *Our Rainbow Queen* by Sali Hughes and *Invisible Women* by Caroline Criado Perez. "Invisible Women is a really important book so I knew it would be a challenge for me," says Harris. "When it became a top 10 bestseller it was a big moment."

Harris advises anyone wanting to get into book design not to be put off if they feel they lack experience or haven't got the right contacts. "I didn't know anyone in publishing," she says. "What mattered most was that I had ideas and I was enthusiastic."

## Routes into work

### Internship, grad scheme or apprenticeship?

It can be hard to decide where to start when it comes to launching a career, so we've put together a myth-busting guide to help you get off on the right foot

Tess Reidy

There can be a lot to think about for job seekers during summer: top employers are on the lookout for interns, grad schemes are available in everything from banking to retail, and with more than 1,500 job roles to choose from, there is a wide range of apprenticeships to consider.

To get you focused, here's a myth-busting guide on what to consider before you commit to a career.

### Internships don't pay

Unpaid internships are illegal, and most people doing any kind of work experience for longer than two weeks are entitled to the national minimum wage. In fact, law firms, banks and consultancy firms can pay as much as £500 per week for vacation schemes.

Although they typically last for one to three months, there's a growing number advertised for up to a year, and they have become a way to impress employers and figure out what suits you.

Unfortunately, many companies still offer them unpaid or run them under the guise of volunteer work. "In the arts, there is this genuine

belief that you are lucky to have one because 100 other people have applied," says Millie Jones\*, 21, who did a four-month unpaid internship for a film festival. "You can end up doing 16 hour days. I felt I couldn't say no or put my foot down because I didn't want to lose the contact."

Jones, who was not paid expenses, funded herself with a childcare job at the weekends and evenings. She thinks employers take advantage of people like her. "One intern ended up doing maintenance round the office, like changing light bulbs," she says.

### Apprenticeships are low-level

People often think apprenticeships are just for specific trades, such as construction, or that they are in some way not academic. This isn't true. They cover a range of sectors and levels. Over the past decade, they have become an alternative to academic education and there are now apprenticeship routes into becoming a solicitor, an accountant, an engineer, or business manager.

According to Stephen Isherwood from the Institute of Student

*You could end up being the boss: 'A large number of business leaders are former apprentices themselves'*

Dave Fagan  
MakeUK

Employers, many high-profile companies now recruit apprentices. "Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to gain a degree-level qualification whilst working and not incurring student debt," he says.

You can also end up being the boss. "A large number of business leaders in the sector are former apprentices themselves", says David Fagan from Make UK, who points out that the average pay for a craft apprentice is £11,000, rising to £20,000 in the fourth year.

### Apprentices miss out on the uni experience

True, as an apprentice you'll enter the world of work earlier than your uni mates. You'll also be trained very specifically within a sector, so you need to be dedicated to that from the offset. But this doesn't mean you won't be part of a shared experience. Most organisations take on more than one apprentice, so you will usually have a network of similar aged colleagues.

Corey Bueno-Ballantyne, a mechanical engineering apprentice from Telford, says a big part of going to uni is making friends and you get that from apprenticeships. "We're together every day, we go out for drinks," he says. "We spent our first and second years living together in a hotel."

### Grad schemes are for recent grads

Getting hired is competitive. According to the Institute of Student Employers there are 41 applications for every graduate vacancy. A common misconception is if you don't get one straight away, you've missed out. Plenty of people apply for consecutive years, do a post-university gap year, or even work in a different sector before starting a grad scheme.

"It's likely you'll start your grad scheme with lots of young people who have just graduated, but you don't have to be fresh out of uni to do one," says Becky Kells, editor of AllAboutSchoolLeavers.

\*Name changed for confidentiality



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▼ It's hoped a new Ofsted regime will help teachers to spend more time teaching than on admin

PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY



## Teaching Could a new strategy encourage more grads to stick with a career in the classroom?

With teachers leaving the profession in record numbers, it's hoped the Early Career Framework will increase retention

Lucy Jolin

Teaching is constantly evolving, but what does the future hold for the profession? There are, of course, big challenges: workload being one of the biggest. "Right now there is greater scrutiny on teachers than there has ever been, causing such high workloads," says James Zucollo, director at the Education Policy Institute. "We found 20% of teachers saying they work 60 hours or more in a week."

That workload is linked to another problem: teachers leaving the profession. "I see, on social media, numerous examples of the unalloyed excitement and joy when

a new teacher secures their first job," says Prof Colin Diamond, professor of educational leadership at the University of Birmingham. "It's brilliant to capture the energy and drive that they are bringing to the profession, but will they remain so enthusiastic? Record numbers are leaving in the early stages of what should have been long careers."

But things are changing. Earlier this year, secretary of state for education Damien Hinds unveiled a new strategy to not just recruit more teachers but, crucially, retain them. This includes the Early Career

Framework, a two-year package of training for teachers beginning their careers. The application process will be simplified, and bursaries will be reformed to include retention payments. Reducing workload is also on the agenda, with help to get rid of unnecessary paperwork and making sure that Ofsted consider teacher workload when they're inspecting a school.

Matt Hood is director of the Ambition Institute, a graduate school for teachers and school leaders. He believes that the Early Careers Framework is a big change for the better. "If you are going to be an accountant or a doctor, you spend much of your early years in a pre-qualified state. It's an important change in the way we are thinking about equipping teachers at the start of their career and setting them up to be successful in the long run."

The government is also listening about workload, says Zucollo. "Ofsted says they will no longer look at internal data provided by schools. This sounds like a minor change. But a lot of the collection of data in schools has been to satisfy a potential Ofsted inspection. So hopefully this will reduce stress and increase job satisfaction."

And there's also tremendous potential for the right technology to improve both the student and teacher experience. "AI can certainly help to reduce teacher workload, but it is more than that. It challenges us to redefine the role of the teacher in the light of emerging technologies," says Diamond. But it won't replace teachers, he points out. "Rather, it puts the teacher in a hugely responsible position of helping young people make informed decisions about what they learn and how they learn it. Exciting times."

**I see, on social media, numerous examples of the unalloyed excitement and joy when a new teacher secures their first job'**

Prof Colin Diamond  
University of Birmingham

Comment  
Lisa Boorman



*'Teaching is about supporting children to have great opportunities in life'*

Back in 2003, I was head of the maths department in a very successful school and our results had improved tremendously. I'd progressed rapidly in my career, becoming head of maths just four years after I finished my PGCE at Plymouth Marjon University.

But now I had a problem: I didn't know what to do next. Joining the senior leadership team didn't appeal to me at the time. And I didn't want to just carry on doing what I was doing. It wasn't anything to do with the school - I just wasn't sure if teaching was for me or not. So I decided to quit and do something different.

I thought about what I enjoyed, and I've always loved diving - I'm a Padi scuba diving instructor. I joined the Teign Diving Centre, training would-be scuba divers. In between, I travelled to exotic dive sites. I had an amazing time. I absolutely loved it.

But I actually really missed the kids. I really missed being part of something that made a difference. I thought a lot about teaching maths and what it is, and it's about more than just a subject. When you first go into teaching, you don't fully understand the implications and the responsibilities that you have. It wasn't until I stepped out of that environment that I realised what a great opportunity I had to help children.

My own schooling was not great. I'm very lucky to be very good at maths so I had a pathway. But there are kids who haven't found their niche. And it's our job to help them do that. Teaching is about supporting children to have great opportunities in life. And I started to think: I want to get back into teaching.

So a year later, I joined King Edward VI community college in Totnes as head of maths. The headteacher was incredibly supportive of my career break, and, later, through two periods of maternity leave, and going part-time after my second child was born.

I'm now headteacher at Plympton Academy in Plymouth, Devon, and I have no regrets whatsoever about going back to teaching. It's a hard job, it can be all-consuming, and when you are doing it day in day out, you can forget why you went into the job in the first place.

The break really helped me to think about why I became a teacher. And consequently, as a headteacher I always try to make sure that we reflect as staff on why we have come into this job, and what it is that gets us up in the morning.

Lisa Boorman is principal of Plympton Academy. As told to Lucy Jolin



► Deep dive: Lisa Boorman took a sabbatical from teaching to travel to dive sites across the world  
PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY

# Midwifery

## The healthcare role that delivers a 'very rich career'

While applications to study midwifery have dropped over the past six years, it remains a much sought-after and fulfilling profession

Kim Thomas

When she was growing up, Memuna Sowe wanted to be an air hostess. But it was

accompanying her aunt, a community midwife, on her rounds that made Sowe realise a career in midwifery would suit her much better.

After taking a three-year midwifery degree at the University of Luton (now Bedfordshire), Sowe qualified in 2007. Six years ago, she returned to work in her native Croydon and is now a specialist midwife for Homeless Health, a team offering healthcare to homeless people, including newly-arrived refugees. Sowe has to build a relationship with clients so they can "trust me enough that they are actually seeking care and receiving care" - something that can be challenging when some conversations have to be carried out through an interpreter. But recognition of her achievements led last year to her winning the British

Journal of Midwifery's Midwife of the Year award.

Although applications to study midwifery have dropped in the past six years, competition for places is nonetheless intense, says Michelle Lyne, education adviser at the Royal College of Midwives. Universities typically require five GCSEs, and at least two A-levels (ideally including biology) or an equivalent level 3 qualification. Many universities also like applicants to have work experience in healthcare. "You need to be able to work with other people - you're part of a team as well as an individual, so you need to learn to delegate," says Lyne.

An academic year in midwifery lasts 45 weeks rather than the usual 30 weeks, and you'll spend at least 50% of your time in clinical practice doing a full working week that may include night shifts. It's not a course for those who want to party. Since the abolition of bursaries in England

**No two days are the same, especially on a labour ward: no two women are the same, no two births are the same'**

Jonathan Cliffe  
Midwife

two years ago midwifery students have had to rely on tuition fee and maintenance loans. (Bursaries are still available in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, however.)

Once qualified, you can expect to work 12-hour shifts. You could be working in the community, seeing women antenatally and postnatally, or in the labour ward. Some midwives choose to specialise in areas such as fetal medicine, gestational diabetes or perinatal mental health. Later, you could move into a senior practitioner role such as consultant midwife, which involves running specialist clinics and conducting research. "There's a lot of scope for a midwife to have a very rich career," says Lyne.

Jonathan Cliffe, who has been a midwife at Warrington Hospital for four years, works on the labour ward. It's a demanding job, but one that he loves: "No two days are ever the same." He says a midwife needs to work alongside obstetricians and anaesthetists to make sure that the woman and baby are safe if a complication arises. "Midwives support women to make informed decisions about the care that they want to receive," he says.

If midwifery is a demanding job, then it's also a fulfilling one, says Cliffe. The part he finds most rewarding is when a woman meets her baby and he sees her "look of adoration and amazement at what she's achieved. There's no other job in the world that compares to that."

▼ Stephen Jones works as a staff nurse at a south London NHS trust

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPHER L. PROCTOR



## Nursing

### It's time for more men to make a mark on the ward

Historically nursing has been seen as a career for women but, as more men enter the profession, the gender imbalance is being addressed

Joanna Moorhead

Nursing, says Stephen Jones, is a brilliant career: loads of job satisfaction, a not-bad salary, and plenty of scope for specialising and for work progression. He qualified in 2014, and he's now a staff nurse for Oxleas NHS trust in south London. "When my mum, who's also a nurse, suggested it might be what I'd like to do I did initially have all these stereotypical thoughts about

nursing being for women," he says. "I'm so glad I got over that, because it ticks all the boxes for what I want to do with my life."

There's probably never been a better time to be a nurse, with so many potential directions and opportunities. And, says Wendy Preston, head of nursing practice at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), it's such a diverse career, and the NHS needs a nursing population that reflects society. But one of the hardest areas to get parity, traditionally, has been from a gender perspective: because only around one in 10 nurses in Britain is male. Earlier this year there was a report that the number of men applying was on the up, with a 9% increase in university applications; and those responsible for recruiting nurses are acutely aware of the need to attract more men.

In Scotland, the ambition is to have a 25:75 male:female split

in nursing by 2030. Dr Heather Whitford, senior lecturer in the school of nursing at the University of Dundee, says many of the issues at play are historic. "If you go back far enough, in monasteries and in the army, many nurses were men," she says. "But when Florence Nightingale set up her schools of nursing in the 19th century, they were only for women." There was an emphasis, she says, on the "feminine" aspects of nursing; and though that's way out of date, it's been difficult for the sector to shake off. "There aren't enough role models, although we're much better these days at using gender-neutral images in portraying nursing," she says. In many trusts, including all those in Scotland, "female" terms such as "matron" and "sister" have been replaced

with terms such as "charge nurse" and "hospital manager", and the RCN has warned that female-centric terminology militates against men joining the profession.

David Wood, principal lecturer in adult nursing and public health at Sheffield Hallam University, says there are issues about not only recruiting more men to nursing, but also supporting them through their training and professional life. "In the university, we now try to cluster tutor groups to ensure they always include more than one man," he says. "We've also set up a Facebook group called Men in Nursing Together (Mint) and it's really taken off and is flourishing."

Why, though, is it so important to encourage more men into the profession? What it comes down to is patient choice: we are all patients, at some point in our lives, and we have the right to a choice about who cares for us. "If you're a man and you need personal care, you might prefer to have it from a male nurse, just as there are women who'd prefer to have a female nurse," says Wood. What's more, he says, opening up nursing to men will have the knock-on effect of boosting numbers generally - and that's much-needed. "We have a shortage of nurses across the board, so encouraging more men into the profession helps on that front too," he says.

**I had stereotypical thoughts about nursing being for women ... I'm so glad I got over that, because it ticks all the boxes'**

Stephen Jones  
Nurse

### How nursing is changing

Think a nurse's job is all about mopping brows and changing bedpans? You couldn't be more wrong. These days nursing is a highly specialised profession, and you'll find nurses doing everything from writing prescriptions to running surgeries - or even conducting research.

To become a registered nurse, you'll first need to take a three-year nursing degree, typically requiring at least two A-levels or equivalent level 3 qualification, and GCSEs that include English, maths and a science. You will specialise from the outset in one of four fields: adult, children's, mental health or learning-disability nursing. It's a demanding degree that involves alternating between periods of academic learning and full-time clinical placements.

Since bursaries were abolished in England in 2017, nursing students now have to fund themselves by taking out student loans. As it's such a busy course, you're unlikely to have time for a part-time job, so you'll need to keep tight control of your finances - but do check whether your university offers any top-up scholarships. Another option is to take a nursing degree-level apprenticeship: instead of taking out a loan, your employer will pay for you to study. However, few universities are offering degree-level apprenticeships in nursing and, usually, employers prefer to fund existing employees, such as healthcare assistants, who want to progress their career by retraining as nurses.

If you aren't ready to do a full nursing degree, another option is to take a two-year foundation degree apprenticeship to become a nurse associate, a new role that bridges the gap between healthcare assistants and registered nurses. Once in post, you can choose to undertake extra training to become a registered nurse.

As a registered nurse, you'll be able to take your career in different directions: clinical, management, research or education. Choose the clinical route and you could become a nurse consultant with expertise in illnesses such as diabetes or Alzheimer's. Opt for management and you could, says Karen Buckwell-Nutt, dean of nursing and allied health at Buckinghamshire New University, "become a director of nursing of a hospital trust, regional chief nurse, or chief nurse of Health Education England". Choosing research will take you down the route of recruiting patients to trials and collecting data. If you prefer teaching students, then you could rise to professor of nursing at a university.

Then again, as Buckwell-Nutt points out: "You don't have to progress. You can remain by that bedside and deliver the highest care you can give." There will still be plenty of opportunities to learn and develop, she adds: "It's a lot about evidence-based care now, which means it's forever changing. It's a lifelong career."

Kim Thomas

## Budgeting

### How to find a balance between thrills and bills

Emma Featherstone

So, you've got your first proper job, how can you ensure that you are using your (perhaps limited) monthly earnings effectively? Personal finance experts all stress the importance of budgeting. As Laura Whately, author of Money: A User's Guide, puts it: "See budgeting and saving as a form of self care. Like exercising or eating well, it is not always easy but it makes you feel in control of your own destiny, and much better in the long term."

**Know the common finance pitfalls**  
Competition to look good and to have the latest gadgets makes it harder to make sensible, long-term choices about your money, says Iona Bain, author and creator of the Young Money Blog: "Social media has put one-upmanship on steroids."  
Avoid using loans or credit cards to increase your spend on more frivolous purchases.

**Practise budgeting techniques**  
Preventing personal debt is better than cure, says Bain. "Approach your budget like it's your friend. Check in with it once a week - schedule a time, even - and make some decisions." She suggests setting simple boundaries, such as a spending limit on nights out.

The Money Charity offers a budget building tool, but with some quick research, there are many high-tech offerings to be found.

Bain's other savvy tips include becoming master of a "capsule fridge" (buying ingredients that work in many dishes) and mixing and match your wardrobe - think hard-working basics and vintage (charity shops in wealthy areas can be a treasure trove).

**Learn the finance basics**  
Having a clear idea of whether you're being paid and taxed correctly is the first step. Stephanie Fitzgerald, head of young people programmes at The Money Charity, says not understanding how payslip and tax works is a common slip-up. "Don't be afraid to ask your employer or HR to explain them to you."

Student debt can be a daunting prospect, but remember it's a different beast to credit card or bank debt, says Whately. "It operates more like a tax on being a graduate, you only pay back the debt once you earn a certain amount."

Credit cards can help build a credit rating, but should be handled with kid gloves says Bain. "Try to have a specific expense in mind if you take out credit, pay off the full amount each month and don't keep credit cards lingering around."

**Learn to shop around**  
Comparing financial products seems like a chore, but failing to do so could lose you money. Fitzgerald says: "Don't stay with the same bank just because it's the same one you had your student account with. Do your research to find the best deal for you."

Be prepared to engage your negotiation skills. Haggling is "an essential tool in the financial armoury," says Bain. Her first stop? Calling up your mobile phone provider and asking for a better deal.

**Start to save**  
Bain advises setting up a direct debit to a savings account - her recommendation is 10% of your salary. "If you're self-employed, try to save a chunk (however small) every time you get paid. Do it straightaway without thinking about it - it will get easier."

Fitzgerald's tip? "When you get a pay rise, set up a standing order for the extra money to go into a savings account. You can continue to live without it."



Apprentices earn upwards of £14,000 a year and get to continue their education

# Another way to work

Full-time university isn't for everyone – for those looking for an alternative, higher and degree apprenticeships offer a work-study combination that's hard to beat

Graduating from university with a good degree is not the only route into a successful career these days. Employers across a swathe of industries are offering alternative paths to the top that don't involve running up sky-high debts and sitting through another term of academia.

School-leavers can combine work and study by taking a higher apprenticeship, co-funded by an employer and the government, to kickstart their professional careers. Degree apprenticeships, which take between three and six years to complete, and lead to a bachelor's or master's degree in a chosen field, are another option.

This is good news for young people who don't fancy spending three years solely at university, perhaps fearful of student debt or itching to get their first foot on the career ladder. They can still find professional success in fields such as accountancy, engineering, teaching, senior management or nuclear technology.

Stephen Isherwood, chief executive of the Institute of Student Employers, a professional body representing 300 of the UK's biggest employers, says: "Young people today have many more options when choosing their career paths as they come out of school and go into higher education. Whereas in the past, the focus has been very much on A-levels and going to university, what we are finding now is that many employers have different entry routes that will ultimately get you into the same position."

Going straight from A-levels on to a degree-level apprenticeship gives school-leavers real-life work experience, an annual salary upwards of £14,000 and a three- or four-year career head start on graduate recruits. That can supercharge professional development, enabling apprentices to reach a senior position within the organisation.

Apprentices typically work 30 hours a week in an organisation and spend at least 20% of their time in off-the-job training, or studying at a university. Some of the training may be delivered through residential courses.

The first step for school-leavers looking to succeed in professional careers without going to university is getting hired by an employer who will fund their apprenticeship. They should highlight

## 'Don't let your career come to you. Have a think about what you want to do with your life, what you enjoy'

any relevant experience they have when applying for an apprenticeship and explain how it is relevant to their chosen career. Perhaps they had a part-time job at a restaurant or in retail, showing that they have understood the basics of the business. Maybe they have been given some responsibility. They may have had to deal with difficult situations with customers.

Employers like hearing about those examples from apprenticeship candidates, as they show they have transferable skills. "It doesn't have to be work; it might be involvement in sports teams, or it could be the Duke of Edinburgh scheme or volunteering. Employers will ask what you have learned from those experiences that can be applied to the job," says Isherwood.

Employers like recruiting school-leaver apprentices as they feel they are more focused, having made up their minds at a young age about what they want to do. However, the relative youth of school-leavers compared with graduates means they have little experience of life and may lack a clear idea of career goals.

Graduates, on the other hand, can sometimes struggle to make the transition to work and may find that their courses are of little relevance to their chosen career.

A survey of 156 major UK employers – all ISE members – showed that 56% have started to develop apprenticeship schemes to cover work that would have previously been undertaken by graduates. The ISE Student Development Survey found that employers saw little difference between graduates and apprentices in areas such as resilience, leadership, dealing with conflict, self-awareness, career management and emotional intelligence. But the survey, which examined 76,000 entry-level staff hired by the employers over the past three years – including graduates, apprentices and school-leavers – found some significant areas of difference. Graduates were viewed as having better skills in presentation, analysis, IT, writing and problem solving.

Isherwood advises anyone thinking of becoming an apprentice to "do their homework" and consider where they want to be in the future. "Don't let your career come to you. Have a think about what you want to do with your life, what you enjoy, what you are good at, what stimulates you, and get some work experience if you can," he adds.

To learn more about the ISE and how it could benefit your organisation visit [ise.org.uk](http://ise.org.uk). Follow ISE on Twitter @loSEorg

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# Policing

## Could you be part of the changing face of the force?

A recruitment drive hopes to attract a more diverse range of people into policing to take on a host of new roles

Heidi Scrimgeour

After years of cuts driven by austerity that saw the number of police officers in England and Wales drop by 20,000 between 2009 and 2017, the workforce is finally increasing.

In 2018, there were 200,448 workers employed by the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales; an increase from 198,388 in 2017. This included 11,029 special constables and 8,131 police support volunteers.

While crime has generally been falling over recent decades, certain types of crime have been increasing. For example, UK residents are more likely to fall victim to cybercrime than any other type of crime, and around 4.6m cybercrimes were committed in England and Wales in the year ending December 2018, according to the UK Office for National Statistics. And this "new" type of crime is changing the way the police recruits and trains its workforce, which has to adapt to the changing needs of society.

"Previously we didn't cover cybercrime in initial training of new recruits, and protecting the most vulnerable in society wasn't covered in as much detail as it is in our new entry training programmes," says Jo Noakes, director of workforce development the College of Policing, which sets the standards for entry routes into policing.

But as well as making policing more complex, these developments have opened up the number of

policing careers on offer. From graduate schemes such as Police Now – an independent social enterprise that recruits, trains and develops police officers and detectives in some of the country's most deprived communities – to the ever-growing number of support roles that are key to effective policing, there has never been so many diverse ways into the force.

Traditional roles into the police are changing, too, according to Noakes. "In the past there was only one route in for officers – everyone came in as a police constable and did a two-year probation through an initial training programme – but there are now many more routes into policing," she says.

Some of these new routes are being rolled out over the next year and the hope is they will attract more people to careers in policing.

Noakes says: "It's really important that policing represents the community that it serves and the more entry routes in, the more different kinds of people will consider it as a career option."

For someone looking to join policing as a constable, the college has developed three options. "Someone who wants a career in policing but doesn't want to go to university can now join the force and still achieve a degree-level qualification," says Noakes. School leavers can apply to join policing as a constable on a three-year apprenticeship, working towards a degree-level qualification in policing while on the job.

Graduates who have a degree that's unrelated to policing can apply via the degree-holder entry programme.

The third option is the two-year pre-joined degree programme for people who want to go into policing or a related field and have a policing-specific degree. Their initial training is more practically-focused because they'll have covered some of the educational learning required for a policing career.

What's led to the creation of these new routes into policing? Noakes says "a range of factors" are at play, including a commitment to ensure that new recruits are equipped with the skills to cope with policing in the modern world.

"It's vital that we attract and develop the talent needed for policing today. There are so many roles both as officers and support staff; policing offers a fantastic spectrum of careers."

▼ Tackling cybercrime and protecting vulnerable people now form a much bigger part of police training

PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY



## Experience

### 'The most satisfying part was identifying fingerprints – it meant justice for victims'

Rhonda Perry spent more than 20 years working for the police in forensic roles. She explains why policing can be such a fulfilling career

Heidi Scrimgeour

There's much more to solving crime than walking the beat and apprehending suspects. From analysing data to preparing lab reports, support roles are a vital part of the policing puzzle.

Rhonda Perry spent 15 years in a specialist forensic role with the police, and a further five years working in biometrics. She now works in recruitment and has helped clients secure policing roles as both officers and support staff.

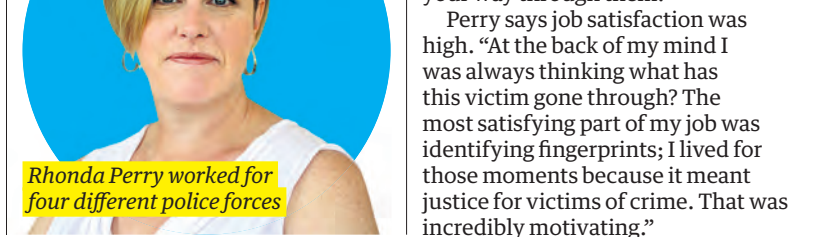
A fingerprint expert for 16 years, Perry originally replied to an advert in her local newspaper for trainee fingerprint officers, and worked for four different police forces before moving into biometrics.

Perry also worked in the fingerprint laboratory, examining exhibits found at a crime scene for latent prints, using a variety of techniques to try and enhance the prints. The role also entailed giving evidence in court, producing statements, or attending court to give evidence as an expert witness for the police. On occasion, Perry went to the mortuary to help establish the deceased's identity via fingerprints.

Despite the depiction of similar police support roles on TV, 90% of Perry's role was office-based. "When I first started in fingerprints the role was a lot broader; we used to look at things like handwriting and ballistics and I did a lot of scene-of-crime work in the beginning, but fingerprinting eventually became very specialised and very much an office-based role," she says.

"It's nothing like CSI; you're not dealing with one case until you've solved it. It's volume crime, mostly. The 'interesting' jobs like murders don't come along that often. I mostly dealt with car crime and break-ins. You might be working on 20 cases at once and you're in the office working your way through them."

Perry says job satisfaction was high. "At the back of my mind I was always thinking what has this victim gone through? The most satisfying part of my job was identifying fingerprints; I lived for those moments because it meant justice for victims of crime. That was incredibly motivating."



Rhonda Perry worked for four different police forces

## Employability

### How lifelong learning will land you a career you love

In a jobs market where technical know-how trumps experience, the ability to pick up new skills fast is essential

Sabrina Faramarzi

When it comes to what makes someone employable, there are some universal pieces of advice you just can't afford to ignore - get an education, work hard, be nice to your colleagues. However, in a fast-changing landscape that has been transformed by technology and the digital world, it seems that the list of things required to be "employable" just keeps getting longer. "It's not just about looking at all the current skills needed now, but also looking at all of the skills that will be needed in the future," says Richard Gahagan,

founder of Adam Recruitment. "The lifespan of a career is changing and people are beginning to learn that employability is now about knowing how to manage a diverse number of jobs." It can be overwhelming with more career changes than ever before but employability, it seems, is all about having the ability to learn. As industries change, knowing how to learn new things will end up trumping previous experience.

Although education is linear - you go to school, then college, then university - careers are not, and many people have found themselves shifting from permanent to freelance and from senior to junior across their career. Which is why meeting people - and keeping their contact details - is key to being able to stay fluid with the changes. "I always say to students make sure that you keep a record of all your professional contacts," says Sarah Sheikh, placements manager at the London College of Communication, who helps place 300 students a year in work. She also believes that you can get ahead on building contacts



by making the most of your time at university. "We calculated that on average, it costs a student £100-£150 a day to be at university. They're not going to be in class for most of that time so they should go to every single careers workshop and networking event the university

has to offer," she says. "Without sounding harsh - the good students will do it, it's the students who need those contacts who are the ones that end up not attending." If you're not at university, go to all of the events and conferences of the industry you want to work in.

▼ Attending networking events and keeping the details of contacts is essential for career-seekers

PHOTOGRAPH: STOCKSY

But what does it really mean to be employable? "At its core, it means possessing hard skills, soft skills, and commercial awareness. What has dramatically changed is how one goes about developing those," says Tommaso Dolfi from Pathfinder, a platform that helps people plan their careers and figure out what professions best suit them. "To become employable, we must embark on lifelong learning and embrace the ongoing development of skills."

Pathfinder uses psychometric testing - a sort of personal quiz that measures a person's suitability for a role by assessing their mental capabilities and personalities - to help its users figure out the best career for them. Many companies are now using psychometric testing in their recruitment processes, but others are rapidly adopting new technologies to make the recruitment process more rigorous and streamlined. There are now apps to measure a candidate's problem solving skills and virtual reality games to test how candidates think.

However, even if you have all the right skills, don't feel down if you keep getting rejected, it doesn't mean you're not employable. "We've all been there, even if it doesn't make it easier to deal with," says Sheikh. She advises people become more creative in their search. "The vast majority of jobs are never advertised, especially in the creative industries, so you have to make your own roles - and that's exciting too."

Comment  
Sheree Atcheson



*'To create a better future for all, the tech industry needs to build diversity into everything we do'*

If the technological revolution is to work for everyone, it needs the input of all groups - especially the group that makes up 51% of the population: women. As women, our insights and experiences will be different to those who identify as male, so including women in the process means that we are able to create more rounded solutions. It isn't just air conditioners that were built to be sexist (most are set to the needs of the average man whose body temperatures is naturally higher, freezing out women in the office), other technological mishaps that ignore women's needs are far more problematic. Seat belts, for example, are designed to the height of a man and do not factor in breasts.

Solutions will ultimately be better when we have more diverse groups involved. Tech is continuously evolving and is part of every industry. It's really important that young people - especially young women - consider working in tech to shape the future.

When we look at the data, we see companies that have at least one woman on the board are 20% less likely to go bankrupt. We also know that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are likely to outperform their competitors by 15%, and those in the top quartile for ethnic diversity are likely to outperform their competitors by 35%. So it's clear that when we have a mixture of people in the room we end up creating better solutions and happier teams. As an industry, we need to build diversity into everything we do in order to have challenging conversations and, ultimately, come up with better solutions.

For example, many voice-recognition technologies at first did not recognise female voices (despite many AI assistant's voices being female) because the design teams did not include women. Many voice-recognition technologies still today do not recognise different accents because they are designed by native English speakers, and weren't made by a team with different backgrounds. If we create diversity in the teams making our groundbreaking technologies, then we are more likely to have a successful business and employees.

When we look at how broad the tech industry is, many people can use their varying degrees (that don't necessarily need to be in computer science) to move around different roles until they find one that fits their personality and their values. The tech industry is also lucrative. An important part of tech is that people have financial stability because tech is consistently evolving and only getting bigger. However, there is still work to be done - eight in 10 UK companies still pay men more than women, and this needs to change.

A recent study found that 89% of people anticipate a skills shortage in the UK tech sector - a quarter say it will be significant. That's why more women and people with diverse backgrounds need to consider technology. Whether you're using your phone or watching TV or tapping your bank card to make a payment, technology is already embedded in everyday life. If you're a person considering a career in tech, how exciting is it that you can create something that might affect hundreds, thousands or even millions of people?

Sheree Atcheson is an ambassador for Women Who Code, a non-profit organisation dedicated to inspiring women to excel in technology careers. As told to Sabrina Faramarzi



## Diversity and inclusion

### For young job seekers, potential workplaces have to be woke

▲ When an organisation has a diverse workforce, 69% of millennials and generation Z say that will make them want to work there for five or more years  
PHOTOGRAPH: STOCKSY

If you want to work for a company that embraces diversity, here's what you should be looking out for

Emma Featherstone

What are young workers looking for in an employer? Workplace culture is a high priority, behind only work-life balance and pay, according to a 2018 Confederation of British Industry survey of 1,000 17-23 year olds.

Both millennials and generation Z say diversity is also key to workplace loyalty, with 69% agreeing they are more likely to want to stay five or more years if working for employers perceived to have a diverse workforce, according to Deloitte's 2018 Millennial Survey Report.

But what is a diverse and inclusive culture? Jill Miller, diversity and inclusion policy adviser at the CIPD (The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development), describes an inclusive culture as "supporting people to perform at their best as they will be able to be themselves and know their contribution is valued".

And at the heart of inclusion is tolerance. A tolerant workplace is built on a diverse workforce, suggests Miller. "People with a diversity of identities, backgrounds and circumstances bring with them different perspectives, which can lead to more innovative ideas."

Asked in the survey which three areas most urgently needed to be addressed to improve diversity in business, young people showed a broad spread of concerns. In order of most-selected were: educational background, age, gender, disability, ethnicity, social background and social status, LGBT and religion.

Young workers believe that only formal legislation can adequately advance diversity, according to the survey. This includes mandatory gender pay gap reporting.

Some companies have also started voluntarily reporting their BAME

pay gap - an important step towards racial equality at work, says Miller, as it opens up the conversation on race. She adds: "It's only when employers examine the data to unpick the core issues in their organisation and take action to address them that we will see change happen."

According to a Resolution Foundation study BAME workers are losing £3.2bn a year in wages compared with white colleagues.

Aside from gender and BAME pay gap figures, what helps determine a commitment to diversity? Bex Bailey, a spokesperson for the Young Women's Trust, says: "Check out an organisation's sexual harassment policy and complaints procedures." She also suggests posing questions on its culture at a job interview.

Miller, meanwhile, suggests checking for the following: a commitment to flexible working; promotion of paternity and shared parental leave; a diversity statement combined with diversity within the organisation; the existence of employee networks or resource groups who work with the employer.

For young workers who want to help improve their workplace's diversity, Miller suggests joining networks or resource groups, if they exist - or setting one up, if they do not. "You can also look for role models - people in the organisation who inspire you and who you can learn from."

*'It's only when employers examine the data and take action to address the issues that we will see change happen'*

Jill Miller  
CIPD

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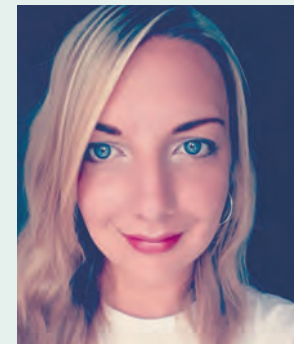
Our colleagues are at the heart of our services within Priory Group; this is why we have developed Priory Career Pathways that supports colleagues ranging from those at the beginning of their career to those who are looking for the next step into the many roles we have available. This may be a route into our senior management team or into one of the many specialist roles we have within the Group. Whatever your dream role is, we can support you to achieve it.

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Lisa Kirby, Service Manager

Lisa began her career at Priory as a Support Worker, which was her first role in care. Working across the site she took on additional responsibilities and gained confident in her role. Lisa was promoted to a senior member of the team where she was given the opportunity to work within another service and this provided her with the experience she needed to progress to her current position of Service Manager.

**"I have completed a Level 3 in Health and Social Care and am currently completing my Level 5 in Leadership and Management"** Lisa has had a lot of mentoring from her current manager who has been excellent in providing her with support and guidance on a regular basis and has given her the opportunities to be able to progress to this level.

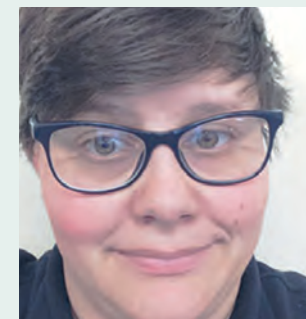
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CAREER PATHWAYS



Rebekah Lambden, Qualified Teacher

After A-levels, Rebekah joined the team at Tadley Court School as a Learning Support Assistant. She was working towards her Level 4 in Education and Training when she started with Priory Group, two years later she has completed her level 4 and level 5 and is now a qualified teacher. "Seeing a student develop independence and confidence within themselves makes all the hard work worthwhile!"

Some of the Apprenticeships we are currently delivering include the Nurse Degree apprenticeship, an Integrated Therapy Degree, Teaching, Health and Social Care apprenticeships specialising in either Adult care or Children's care and for our office staff Business Administration, Human Resources or IT. We support all levels, up to Masters Level.



Callum Wheatley, Apprentice

Callum is currently undertaking his nurse degree apprenticeship which runs for four years, with four placements at either a suitable Priory site or an external placement where necessary. When not in study or on placement, he works in his current Priory role as a Healthcare Assistant, carrying out his normal daily duties.

When the course is completed, he will have a registered nurse degree. "It's been incredibly rewarding learning and developing within my place of work. I would advise any colleagues to take the opportunity and run with it, it has its challenges but I couldn't imagine completing this without the support of my colleagues"

## Starting out Top tips on how to land your first 'proper' job

Five people who are just starting out in their careers explain how they got their big break - and share some invaluable advice

By Tess Reidy

Looking for jobs or deciding on your next move can be incredibly daunting. While some young people may automatically know what comes next for them in their chosen career, many others, however, feel penned in by the decisions they've already made and the qualifications they hold, both

academic and professional. It can feel nerve-wracking when it seems like everyone else is applying for jobs and you're not. You may well have an idea, but have you got a plan of action?

There may also be some competitiveness among your peers over what everyone has applied for and who is going for interviews. But remind yourself that it's OK to do things differently to everyone else. From networking events and online application forms, to formal graduate recruitment schemes and apprenticeships of various levels, there are any number of routes into getting a job and it doesn't have to happen straight away.

With this in mind, we spoke to five people at the beginning of their careers to find out how they got there and what bit of advice they can share.

▼ When your friends are all applying for jobs, it can become difficult to concentrate on your own job hunt

PHOTOGRAPH: STOCKSY



**'Working through my studies definitely helped, but I would say go to employability events'**

Onwa Wonci, Accounts coordinator



Onwa Wonci, 24, From Basingstoke

I've just got a job as an accounts coordinator at Enterprise Rent-A-Car, based in Winchester. I did a year's internship there during my second year at university and then worked as a late shift manager for a different branch. I was originally looking at internships at banks and accounting firms, but I spoke to one of the HR managers at a careers fair and it made me think outside of the box. Working through my studies definitely helped, but I would say go to employability events at uni, get tips from your careers service and get help with your CV. There are lots of free resources available.

Rose Thorogood, 20, From Folkestone

I've just finished a degree in marketing and events management at the University of Chichester and I now work for Ashford borough council as a graduate in their cultural team. I started looking on the Arts Council website and followed #artsjobs on Twitter and this is one that came up. It was something that was interesting and local and the more I looked into it, the more I thought it looked really good. Although big cities are great, you have to remember that there is so much more going on in the rest of the country. You can get similar jobs and similar pay in regional areas.

**'I followed #artsjobs on Twitter and this came up. It was interesting, local and looked really good'**

Rose Thorogood, Cultural events trainee



**'Apprenticeships offer a really good career plan and just like uni, you still meet people and make friends'**

Corey Bueno-Ballantyne, Engineering apprentice



Corey Bueno-Ballantyne, 23, From Telford

I qualified last year as an apprentice in mechanical engineering. I went to university first but I only did a year in the end because I didn't enjoy it. I wanted something that would give me a career and this actually pays quite well. I'm on £15,000 which, if you're living at home, is a proper salary to get started on. Before I started the apprenticeship I was probably a bit snobbish, I didn't know they could lead to a proper competitive career. Now, I'd definitely recommend doing it. There's a really good career plan and just like at uni, you still meet people and make friends.

Emily Hope, 24, From Kent

When I was still studying at college I did work experience at a local law firm. They then offered me a temporary role during summer holidays doing paralegal and admin work. After that, as a result, I got a training contract. Work experience in anything - even if it is doing something quite basic like photocopying - can prove that you're interested and competent and can lead to other things in the future. There are advantages to applying for jobs outside of big cities. You get a lot of support and responsibility. I run my own cases and go to court. That's a big benefit.

**'Work experience in anything can prove that you're competent and can lead to other things in the future'**

Emily Hope, Trainee solicitor



**'I treated applying for jobs like a full-time job. I'd recommend applying through LinkedIn as it's easy'**

Alex Graham, Account manager



Alex Graham, 26, From Buckinghamshire

I studied business management and marketing at Middlesex University and now work in digital marketing. After uni, I would get up, have breakfast and start looking for jobs. I'd have a lunch break and then start looking again. I treated applying for jobs like a full-time job. I'd recommend applying through LinkedIn as it's easy to send over your CV and cover letter. I filled in quite a lot of long-winded application forms elsewhere, but nothing really came from them. I would also say go to free networking events that are in industries you're interested in.





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