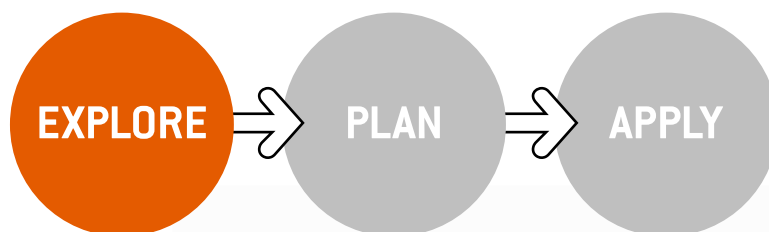


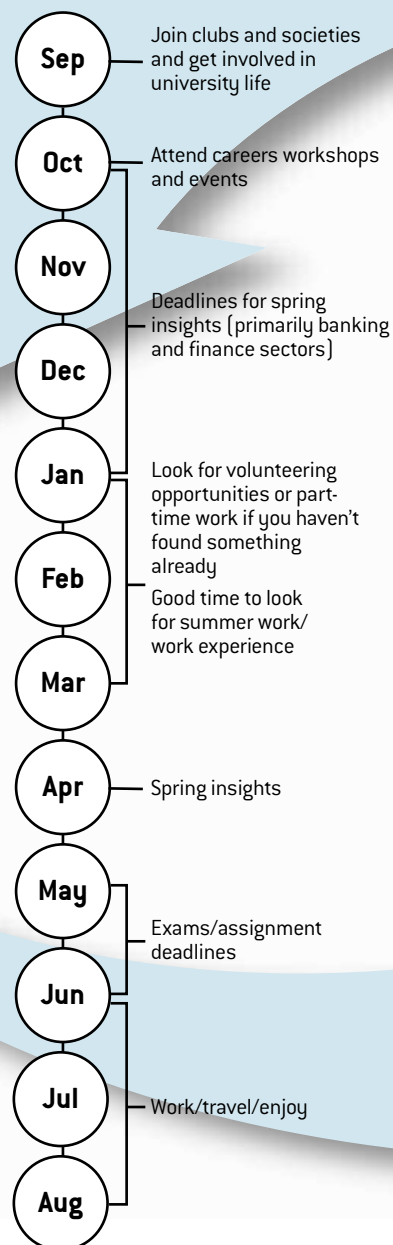
# STEPS TO SUCCESS

THERE ARE MANY THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAXIMISE YOUR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF YOUR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE.



The more networking and work experience you do, the more you will find out about different jobs and employers. This could lead you to change direction and re-start the cycle by exploring again.

## First-year timeline



### TYPICALLY, DURING YOUR FIRST YEAR

#### Get involved in university life

Join activities, clubs, societies, make friends, build your confidence, broaden your horizons, learn new skills. For example you might develop your teamworking skills, learn to build and maintain a website, or manage your society's accounts.

#### Find out about different possible careers

Attend events, read up on different sectors, visit company and careers advice websites. Learn as much as you can about the variety of opportunities that exist.

#### Volunteer

Whether for one-off events or long term. Not just for those who want to work in the charity sector – volunteering can give you valuable experience of organising things, getting on with people, managing your time and much more. Choose something you care about and get involved. It could be life-changing for you as well as helping others.

#### Gain experience of a work place

This could be through a part-time job (but avoid committing too many hours), summer work, work experience, internship (usually in the summer before your final year), or placement as part of your degree.

### Definitions

#### Employability

Quite simply, how ready you are for a job.

#### Graduate scheme

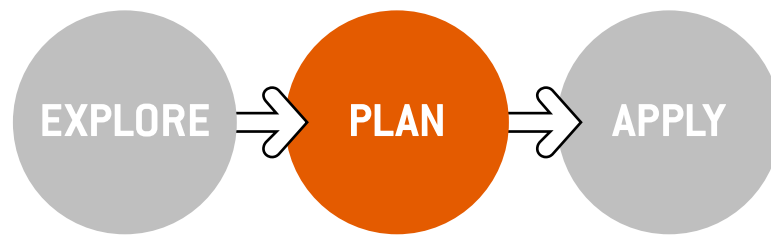
Structured programme, usually with one of the bigger employers, with lots of training and leadership development opportunities. Graduate schemes are usually the most highly promoted and visible opportunities but actually represent only a small proportion of graduate jobs. They also tend to be the most competitive to get into.

#### SME

Small-to-medium-sized enterprise (fewer than 250 employees). Many graduate opportunities are with SMEs but they may not be household names so be ready to do your research to find out about them.

#### Graduate job

Individual job that requires a degree, but is not a position on one of the structured graduate schemes. Many jobs within SMEs will be graduate jobs rather than part of a graduate scheme. They can be excellent opportunities to take on a diverse range of responsibilities.



**TYPICALLY, YOU WILL BE AT THIS STAGE DURING THE SECOND YEAR OF YOUR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE.**

You may find yourself returning to the explore stage as you change plans or think of new possibilities.

## Second-year timeline

### Start attending careers workshops

To find out about job-hunting, CV writing, applications and interviews. These may be run as part of your course or by the careers service.

### Continue to explore job sectors

Look beyond the obvious to make sure you don't overlook the very career that might be a perfect fit.

### Get your CV checked

But remember it will need to be adapted to tailor it to each position you apply for.

### Apply for summer internships opportunities

If your course has a placement year, apply for placements.

### Attend careers fairs and other employer events

Workshops, mock assessment centres, presentations will really help you understand how employers select candidates as well as giving an insight into different jobs and sectors.

### Keep on volunteering and taking part in extra-curricular activities

This could be university-based or elsewhere.

### Consider your priorities and your skills

An appointment with a careers consultant could be helpful at this stage – you do not need to have worked out a career plan before booking an appointment.

### Build (or update) a LinkedIn profile

Use LinkedIn to research and follow organisations, join groups and make connections with people in industries which interest you (always add a note to personalise a request to connect).

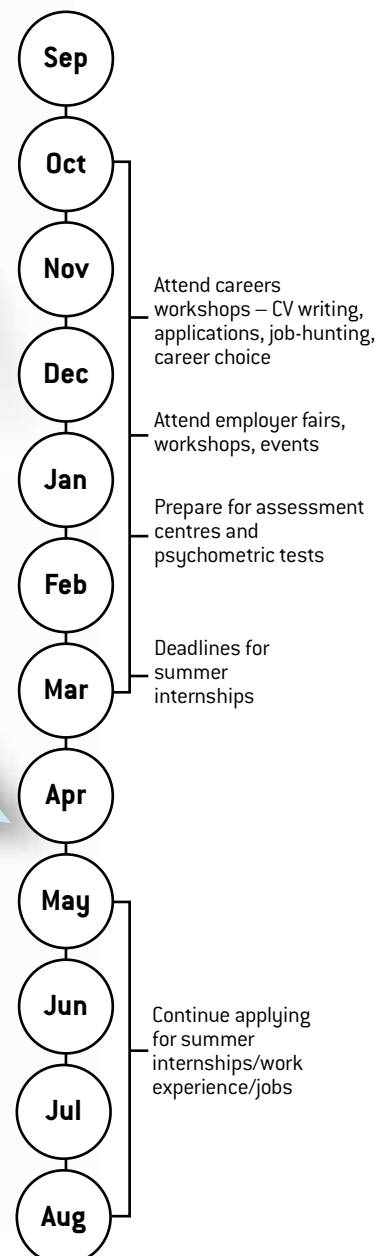
## Definitions

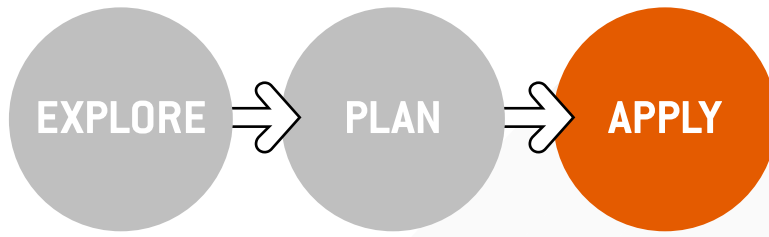
### Competencies, skills and strengths

Recruiters often select according to 'competencies' or 'strengths'. A competency is a skill you can demonstrate and you may be asked to give an example on an application form (or at interview). A strength highlights a natural affinity for a specific activity, and will often reflect what you enjoy doing.

### Transferable skills

Simply skills you have gained in one situation which can be applied in another. For example, teamwork skills gained from being on the committee of a student society will be useful in almost any workplace.





TYPICALLY YOU WILL BE AT THIS STAGE DURING THE FINAL YEAR OF YOUR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE.

**Attend careers fairs to talk to employers**  
 These mainly take place in the autumn term. Find out what they are looking for in applicants and what their selection processes involve.

**Attend careers workshops**  
 To hone your job-hunting, CV writing, application and interview skills.

**Practise for online tests and for assessment centre tasks**  
 Using online practice materials and/or attending workshops run by your careers service.

**Work hard on your degree!**  
 Employers' emphasis on a 2:1 or above is decreasing but strong results still help.

**Think about your skills and priorities for your next step.**  
 You may find yourself returning to the 'explore' stage as your ideas may shift and develop. This might be as a result of reflecting on a work placement or internship. A placement which makes you realise you do not want to pursue that particular career is just as useful as one which confirms your original idea. Be open to exploring next steps you may not have thought about before – it is not too late.

**Build networks**  
 Maximise your contact with employers, through attending employer-led events, workshops and presentations.

**Definitions**

**Assessment centre**  
 A common part of the selection process for graduate schemes and many graduate jobs. Typically a day or half-day of exercises, which may include giving a presentation, taking part in a group exercise and individual tasks such as an e-tray exercise.

**Video interview**  
 You are required to record your answers (within a set time) speaking to a computer screen.

**Psychometric tests**  
 Test different aptitudes (such as numerical and verbal reasoning), usually online. May include tests to assess your personality type and/or situational judgement questions.

**Final-year timeline**

Relevant for final-year undergraduates and for students on one-year postgraduate programmes

