



Personal Tutors

personaltutor@abdn.ac.uk

Level 5 – Employability: A Quick Guide for Personal Tutors (September)

This 'at a glance guide' has been designed to provide Personal Tutors with the key information needed to support and signpost their tutees to relevant career planning support to enhance their employability.

The 'Quick Guide' is not meant to be prescriptive; it is designed to provide a source of information on the topic of employability along with a series of prompts which might be useful when interacting with your tutees.

Final year is a busy one and flies by for most students. For this reason encourage your tutees to think about what they are going to do after graduation as soon as they come back from their summer vacation. Most large graduate employers recruit in the first-half session, with some closing their vacancies as early as December. Interviews and assessment centres for these recruiters take place between February-May, with jobs starting between June and September. Smaller businesses tend to recruit only as the need arises, with jobs starting within a few weeks of a successful application. Although students may not apply to these employers until spring/summer, it helps if they can network with a range of employers throughout the year.

Many employers visit the University in both the first-half and second-half sessions. Employer-focused events can help students explore their 'fit' with a particular employer, and get advice on recruitment. Some students are keen to pursue a postgraduate course, this can also be competitive. Applications should be submitted as early as possible, this is especially the case if the student is keen to secure funding. The University's Careers Service is open throughout the year and supports students considering all types of employment areas as well as postgraduate study.

Some students may have left careers planning until the last minute – the first half-session is really their last chance to get to grips with their career planning so they do not miss opportunities or deadlines. Some students find it hard to decide on their direction after university – encourage students to use the Careers Service to help them get started or to explore their career ideas.

What is employability?

The University uses the term 'employability' to describe the set of skills and attributes that make graduates likely to gain employment and be successful on their chosen career path.

How do your tutees access support for their employability and career planning?

The Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance to support students with career decisions and career planning. The Service is located on the 2nd Floor of the Hub, and is available to all students at the University of Aberdeen and this is also extended to recent graduates and alumni. Appendix A presents a summary of the Careers Service provision.

Level 5 Personal Tutor Meeting: Employability

September

Suggested Meeting Agenda

- Remind students about the opportunity to discuss their options and job-hunting strategy, or lack of them, with a careers adviser.
- Discuss the importance of work placements/study abroad to employers, and the importance of communicating this experience to recruiters.
- Encourage students to search and apply for vacancies in the autumn, whether this is for work or further study.
- Remind students that they can meet employers to find out more about what they offer at careers fairs and employer presentations.

Ensure students are aware that they can receive feedback and advice on their applications before they submit – the [Careers Service](#) has a 15 minute quick query service (bookable online) from 10.30-4:30pm every weekday with an extended service until 7.30pm on Tuesday in term-time.

Suggested questions to use at your meeting:

- What did you enjoy most about your work placement/study abroad? How has the experience changed you?
- What are your ideas about what you would like to do after you graduate? How will your work placement/study abroad experience help you with your career planning?
- Have you signed up to receive email vacancy alerts from the Careers Service? (<http://abdn.prospects.ac.uk/>)
- Which careers fairs or employer presentations are you planning to attend on-campus?
- How do you plan to make use of the resources and support available to enable you to create an up-to-date and targeted CV, write effective applications and prepare for interviews?

Appendix A: Careers Service Provision

- **One-to-One Careers Guidance:** including 15 minute discussions with the Duty Adviser ([bookable online from the day before](#)) and 30 minute careers guidance appointments. During term-time there are extended opening hours on **Tuesdays** with appointments available until 7.30pm. In addition, on Thursday mornings during term-time there are 30 minute appointments available at Foresterhill. Students should visit the [About Us](#) section of the Careers Service website for full details.
- **Vacancies:** The Careers Service participates in a shared vacancy service with most other HE institutions in Scotland. This service ensures students have access to a wide range of vacancies (internships, placements and graduate positions). In the first instance students need to visit the [jobs & events service](#) and follow the short registration process. Registration will allow students to receive regular email alerts of opportunities relevant to them. The Service advertises approximately 5,000 vacancies each academic year. Additional information and advice on [finding graduate employment](#) is also available.
- **Employer Presentations:** A wide range of organisations visit campus throughout the academic year. Students can sign-up for these events through the [jobs & events service](#).
- **Self-employment Advice:** A range of support is available to students who are interested in [starting their own business](#), in conjunction with organisations such as the Scottish Institute for Enterprise and Business Gateway.
- **Further Study and Funding Advice:** [Support and information](#) for making applications to taught and research postgraduate courses and other further study options.
- **Recruitment/Employer Fairs:** These are held annually and include the Law Fair, the Engineering and Technology Fair and the North of Scotland Graduate Recruitment Fair.
- **Making Effective Applications:** Support regarding [CV writing](#), [covering letters](#), [preparing for interviews](#), free online [psychometric tests](#) and [assessment centres](#).
- **Virtual Careers Adviser Service:** This service offers [online CV and application form checks](#), [career planning advice](#) and [online career discussions](#).
- **Information:** The Careers Service has a well-stocked library within its open plan area on the 2nd Floor of the Hub. Students can find information on occupations, further study, work experience and making effective job applications. This is complemented by comprehensive [online resources](#), including researching [career options and ideas](#), [statistics on graduate first destinations](#) and [current labour market trends](#).

The simplest way for your tutees to keep up-to-date with Careers Service events, news, competitions and much more is via the [MyAberdeen careers tab](#).

