

The Professional Development Programme For BSc students



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Welcome to your Placement Experience at the School of Management, University of Bath.

Your Career starts now!

We take practical experience very seriously in the School of Management and we pride ourselves on our success in placing students, our strong relationships with organisations, and more importantly your commitment to getting work experience by choosing a course in the School of Management. Companies come back to us and work closely with us because Bath has strong students, who are well prepared. This handbook is a key supporting tool designed by your Placements Team to help you through this competitive process. By ensuring you partake and maximise your learning experience in placements you can choose the right career path.

Please do feel free to come and talk to your Placement Team, the better they get to know you the more they can help you.

Wishing you lots of luck!

The School of Management Placements Team

The Professional Development Programme

“ The PDP programme was invaluable. It provided fantastic advice about how to improve my CV, write a covering letter that stood out and prepare for interview questions and processes. ”

Zoe Cruddos, BBA 2015 Graduate

At Bath we want to ensure our students gain more than an academic qualification from their time here. The Bath Advantage means our students acquire enhanced skills helping them to achieve higher levels of employability. We have incorporated the Professional Development Programme (PDP) into your timetable to support your skills and career development.

The Professional Development Programme consists of two main elements:

1. Weekly timetabled sessions to assist with the recruitment

process and skills development delivered by company representatives, Management staff and the Careers Service.

These will often include application forms, CV and covering letters, interviews and assessment centres, team-working and leadership, presentation and communication skills. In addition, drop in advice appointments and mock interviews are provided.

2. Sector-based sessions which give an overview of different industries and professions. This handbook is intended to give a brief overview of the Professional

Development Programme. More information and guidance will be given at the weekly sessions and drop in appointments.

We pride ourselves on our excellent links with employers and on the employability of our graduates – the School's Business, Management and Marketing programmes recently achieved 89%, joint second place in the league table, for Career Prospects (The Guardian University Guide 2015). The Programme provides opportunities for you to find out about different careers, companies, industries and the

skills required, helping you to make informed and targeted career choices and job applications.

Our strong, well connected alumni network provides another link between the School and a wide range of different industries. Our graduates appreciate the high calibre of teaching and research in the School and maintain a close relationship with us throughout their career.

Outline of the Professional Development Programme:

Sessions may be subject to change, and often there may be guest companies coming in to present and give out application advice during the semester, so it is vital that you check your University email regularly for updates.

Outline of the potential content of the sessions:

Introductory Session

This session is designed to give you an overview of the placements process and introduce you to the PDP programme.

CV Writing

Understanding the purpose of the CV, how to know what to put on it, creating the raw materials. Refining the content, presenting information, selling yourself and language used. You will be required to submit a draft CV via email as a result of these sessions. The Placements Team will provide feedback and guidance to help you perfect your CV.

Covering Letters and Online Application Forms

Looking at why companies request covering letters or use applications forms. Understanding how to write a covering letter and tips for answering those difficult questions when completing online applications.

Interview Skills

Providing pointers on preparation and research as well as some tips for the interview itself. Covering the different interview formats that are used and preparing you for each one.

Aptitude Tests

Examining why companies use aptitude tests, advice on how to prepare for and approach the test plus the opportunity to try some practice questions.

Mock Interviews:

February for BBA1 students, November for BAF2 and MgtSuite2 students. Interviewers from industry, many of whom offer placements, provide you with the opportunity to experience a professional interview. You will receive invaluable feedback on your application and interview technique before attending real placement interviews.

Previous interviewers have included: L'Oréal, Zurich, Vodafone, Morgan Stanley, Grant Thornton, Accenture, PwC, Royal Mail, Intel and UBS.

Recruitment Process Starts

Often there are a number of company presentations that take place. Valuable chance for you to ask employers questions about

their recruitment process, company values and industry. Venues and dates to be confirmed.

Pre-Placement Briefings

These sessions, organised in conjunction with the Director of Studies, look at how to effectively manage your placement.

“ The PDP programme gives structure to something that initially feels very un-structured. The programme enables you to walk into an interview with a good understanding of what the employer is looking for. ”

Harry Fielder, BBA 2015 Graduate



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Student Profile

Harry Fielder
BBA 2015 Graduate

First Placement
BNY Mellon

Second Placement
umi Digital

Describe your main tasks and responsibilities on your first placement

I was at BNY Mellon in the risk management department. I was personally responsible for assigning risk ratings to new and existing clients based on their investment strategy, borrowing limits and other factors.

Describe your main task and responsibilities on your second placement

At umi Digital, I was part of a four person sales team responsible for bringing in all the business for the company.

How did you decide where to work on your first placement?

I made around 7-10 applications for my first placement, most of which were in financial services, an area that had always interested me.

What were the most challenging aspects of the recruitment process for either placement?

The most challenging aspect for me was dealing with the initial failures in searching for my first placement. Each failed interview seemed a blow, but in hind sight, it was one of the most valuable lessons I have learned throughout BBA.

During the placement recruitment processes what were the most valuable skills that you enhanced?

Learning that you should always ask for feedback. If you don't know where you went wrong, how can you ever improve?!

Have you secured a graduate role?

I have been offered a job at umi Digital. I hope to grow with the company and have a senior role in the business within three years.

What would be your top tip for students about to commence the placement process for the first time?

My top tip would be to always be realistic about your own time and abilities. It can seem very impressive to commit to hundreds of tasks, but ultimately overselling yourself will either lead to letting people down.

Demonstrating Competencies

“ In general skills are learnt and thus can be taught on the job. What really differentiates is an interest in understanding why things are the way they are (from a commercial perspective). If you can support this with the ability to diagnose problems and structure arguments and conclusions, all the better. ”

Liam McGuinness, BBA 2006 Graduate, CIL Management Consultants

What are competencies?

Competencies are skills and behaviours. Employers often list the competencies they are looking for in job descriptions and examine them in applications and at interview. For undergraduate placement roles employers do not necessarily expect you to have the level of previous relevant work experience or the technical knowledge that is required from experienced hires. Instead employers may ask you to demonstrate competencies: to provide examples of when you have

utilised certain skills or behaviours that are important for the role they are advertising.

For example, they might ask you to provide evidence of a time you have been flexible in your approach. Being flexible is important for many roles and organisations. You could provide an example from a university group project, previous work experience in a different sector or a club or society you were involved with. It is always important to support assertions you make with a tangible example.

How to demonstrate competencies: CAR (Context Action Result)

Employers seek applications from students who have developed competencies through a broad range of experiences which would be useful in the workplace. The job description will usually specify the competencies the company is seeking, therefore ensure that your application demonstrates that you are a well-rounded individual who has developed an appropriate range of skills.

It is not enough to just state that you possess certain skills or competencies; you need to provide evidence – an example

of a situation where you have demonstrated a particular skill. Use the CAR (Context Action Result) approach to demonstrate your experiences. The CAR structure is relevant for describing work experience, examples from university and extra-curricular activities on CVs, for online applications and at interviews. Often companies seek similar competencies so it is useful to develop several examples of each competency, showing variety and depth. The examples can then be adapted to a variety of contexts and applications. These sets of examples can then provide the foundation for your CV, cover letter and interview answers.



Context	Where and when did this experience happen? Marketing and Events Coordinator for Bath University Management Society 2013-14.
Action	What did you do? If you were working as part of a team, emphasise your contribution: I was responsible for organising a club night and marketing the event to students and the wider community using posters, Facebook, email etc...
Result	What were the project and personal results? What did you gain from the experience? Our event attracted over 200 participants, raising £500 for charity. The experience enhanced my time management and organisational skills as we worked to short deadlines.

Sometimes the STAR technique (Situation Action Task Result) is used instead of CAR. Both techniques work in the same way to provide you with a structure to demonstrate competencies.

“ Networking is a key skill which you need in the business world, and you never know, it may open your eyes to an option you hadn’t considered before! ”

Aimee Hendrickson, BAF 2015 Graduate

How to develop competencies

Attending company presentations and alumni events will help you to understand the skills and values required for particular roles, companies and industries. University is a great time to develop your skills. Get involved in clubs, societies, volunteering and other training activities and show employers that you have been developing your employability skills from a broad range of areas.

The Students’ Union provides a wide range of activities you can get involved with – visit them in Norwood House Level 3 or at www.bathstudent.com to find out more. You can use these experiences to gain the Bath Award www.bathstudent.com/bathaward

Industry sector specifics

At this stage you may not have a clear idea of what type of role or industry you would like to work in, this is not necessarily a negative thing. Opening your options to a variety of roles and potential future pathways will enable you to be as informed as possible and to make the most of the recruitment process.

The Prospects website provides an excellent overview of different

types of industries and roles within them, as well as the employability skills that employers require for success in the role. The website is an excellent start point when beginning recruitment and also a valuable future resource to retain as well. www.prospects.ac.uk/sectors.htm

What skills are employers looking for?

According to Target Jobs (the graduate job, scheme and internship website) the Top 10 employability skills most employers seek in applications are:

1. Commercial Awareness
2. Communication
3. Teamwork
4. Negotiation and Persuasion
5. Problem Solving
6. Leadership
7. Organisation
8. Persistence and Motivation
9. Ability to work under pressure
10. Confidence

It will also be important to remember that most roles will seek:

- Specific role-based skills
- Technical knowledge
- Particular values which are important to each company

Alumni Profile

Liam McGuinness
BBA – 2006

Current Employer/Role
CIL Management Consultants – Associate Director

What attracted you to this career path?

Initially I wasn’t sure which industry or sector I wanted to work in. However, what I did know was that I had a genuine interest in business and an inquisitive mind. Consulting seemed like a good fit.

What skills are most important in your job?

In general skills are learnt and thus can be taught on the job. What really differentiates consultants is an interest in understanding why things are the way they are (from a commercial perspective...). If you can support this with good stamina and the ability to diagnose problems, while being able to structure arguments and conclusions, all the better.

Placements undertaken during degree

I worked for a small cinema seating manufacturer (niche!) and an online advertising business. I come from an entrepreneurial family so working for large companies has never sat right with me.

Your top tips/advice to our current first year undergraduates

Think about what you enjoy in your studies and why you enjoy it. Then try and match that to a job. This is probably much easier to say than in practice (and to be fair I certainly didn’t do it), but I suspect there could be some value in grading yourself against various career characteristics. For example, take 10 generic work-based characteristics (e.g. numeracy, team-working, independence, stamina, presentation skills), then score yourself on a 1-5 basis on both i) capability and ii) personal enjoyment (with 1 being bad). Then apply this to the different industries /career paths you’re interested in to see what matches and what doesn’t. If numeracy is low on the agenda – I suspect a career in consulting / investment banking isn’t for you. After that...be different. Make yourself stand out from the rest. Everyone applying for professional services jobs has straight As and a degree from a top university like Bath. What makes you different?

📍 Research shows that without work experience 52% of graduate employers rate your chances of receiving a job offer as “not very likely”.

www.ratemylacement.co.uk/placements

CV Writing

“ Making an impression at an interview is a great step towards getting a job, but first you have to make an impression with your CV. So if your CV is dull, full of mistakes or doesn't tell a story about you, then you'll be overlooked and won't even get as far as an interview anyway. ”

James Caan, www.career-advice.monster.co.uk



CVs are commonly used to support job applications. Your CV should reflect the skills, technical knowledge and personality attributes required for the role as well as mirroring the values of the company. It should therefore be tailor made for each role or company that you apply to. Companies receive thousands of applications for roles and a generic, standard and un-tailored CV will be discarded.

The Purpose of a CV

- To provide evidence of how your academic background, previous work experience and extra-curricular activities match the skills and knowledge required for the role.
- To show how your profile and background fit with the culture and values of the company you are applying to.
- To demonstrate complementary generic employability skills.
- To list RELEVANT achievements and experiences on your CV that make you perfect for the role in question.
- A marketing tool to sell the idea that you are suitable for the role and get you the chance to shine in an interview.

CV Layout tips and tricks

CVs are first and foremost a marketing tool to sell your services to a potential employer. With modern technology some applicants fall into the trap of substituting clean text based layouts with complex visually attractive layouts. The style of your CV is important, however employers look first and foremost at CONTENT. They will soon see through a “bells and whistles” approach to CV design. This doesn't mean that you have to have a boring and dull CV. Use the following tips to create a clear, clean and concise CV.

- Don't write “CV” or “Curriculum Vitae” as a title. Instead use your name in a large (possibly stylised) font.
- CVs are two pages long and sometimes one page long for finance/banking roles. Any longer than this and the employer will lose focus and discard it.
- Capture the attention of an employer by making your CV stand out from the crowd.
- Maintain consistency with formatting and language throughout the CV to ensure the document flows from beginning to end.
- Vary font size and use bold/ italics to accent certain key words or ideas.
- Do not have large blank spaces on your CV. It is wasting valuable space that should be used to sell yourself.
- Break up blocks of text with short paragraphs, bullet points or subheadings so it is easy to read.
- Ensure you have impeccable spelling and grammar.
- Use positive and professional language and ensure you explain any acronyms.
- Avoid overuse of the personal pronoun “I” in order to maintain professionalism. Use power words instead (see next section).
- By converting the CV into a PDF you ensure that it will open and remain as you designed it. Try sending it to someone else to ensure it looks the way you want once opened on another computer.
- Switching between a Mac and a PC can cause formatting issues. This can also be the case if a company does not use the same version of the software you have created the CV in.

“ It sounds obvious but without a polished CV and covering letter you are really hurting your chances of finding employment. ”

Dariya Silko, BBA 2015 Graduate

CV structure

Personal Details

- Name, address, phone number and email.
- Do not include date of birth, gender, marital status or a photo on UK applications.
- Ensure your contact details are correct and professional (voicemail messages and email address).

Education and Qualifications

- List in reverse chronological order i.e. most recent first.
- List relevant course modules, actual and projected grades and relevant projects.
- Include any academic awards achieved.

Work Experience

- List in reverse chronological order.
- Include name of company, location, role and dates of employment.
- Describe what you did, what results you achieved and the skills you developed and how these would benefit the prospective employer.
- Part time, holiday or voluntary roles can be excellent opportunities to showcase skills and personal attributes you have, although it is wise to group these or only pick those with the most relevant skills for the particular application.

Activities, Positions of Responsibility and Achievements

- To add value this section must be more than just a list. State what you have achieved and what skills you have gained in previous posts or during previous life experiences that would make you the perfect candidate for the role you are applying for.
- Identify relevant and interesting information.

Additional Skills

- Include languages (and ability level); Training Courses; IT skills; non-academic qualifications e.g. driving licence, First Aid.

Referees

- Write "References available upon request" to save space and keep a clean aesthetic. Or give name, address, phone and email contact for one academic and one character referee.



Student Profile

Dariya Silko
BBA 2015 Graduate

First Placement
Scott Bader

Second Placement
Vodafone

Describe your main tasks and responsibilities on your first placement

During my time in Scott Bader I was entirely responsible for managing the reconstruction of the company's global website.

Describe your main task and responsibilities on your second placement

I managed, promoted and increased usage of Vodafone Group's market intelligence portal as well as supported the network of competitor intelligence teams.

How did you decide where to work on your first placement?

I was looking for a placement that would be challenging, interesting and rewarding as I wanted to learn as much as possible.

What were the most challenging aspects of the recruitment process for either placement?

I had to learn how to construct my CV, write and polish cover letters. Additionally, overcoming my nervousness and appearing calm and collected during the interviews was easier said than done!

How valuable was the PDP programme in helping you secure both placements?

I really enjoyed attending company presentations and events organised by the Placement Office and Career Service. I feel they helped to get a better understanding of the companies and industries, answered a lot of questions and gave me an opportunity to network with potential employers.

During the placement recruitment processes what were the most valuable skills that you enhanced?

I found it useful that BBAs are required to work on CVs for both placements. When compiling it for my second placement and looking through previous CVs and cover letters, I could see clear areas of improvement.

What would be your top tip for students about to commence the placement process for the first time?

Do not let rejections discourage you! It isn't easy finding your placement. Some of your applications may result in rejection or you simply won't hear back. The important lesson is to constantly review your applications and ask yourself each time what you could have done better.

Example CVs

BBA 2 page CV – applying for 1st placement

Polly Jones

Home Address: 14 Apple Avenue, Southampton, SO10 6XF
Term-time Address: 5 Pultney Street, Oldfield Park, Bath, BA1 5AT
Mobile Telephone: 07950 565555
Email: pollyjones1001@bath.ac.uk

Education and Awards

University of Bath, School of Management: BSc (Hons) Business Administration, 2014- 2018.

Four year, thin sandwich course with two mandatory 6-month industrial placements.

This degree provided me with a broadly-based foundation in basic management in my first year and enables me to specialise in areas of my own interest for the remainder of the course.

1st year modules include:

- Business Data Analysis, People & Organisations, Introduction to Business Accounting, and Business Economics.

Team Projects throughout my first year have enabled me to develop teamwork, communication, time management and research skills and the experience to work out practical and creative solutions to business problems.

Shurdington College, Southampton, 2007-2014

- **A-Levels-** Economics A*, Biology A, French A*, Geography A.
- **AS Levels-** Chemistry B.
- **GCSEs-** Mathematics A*, English A*, English Literature A, Double Science Award AA, French A*, Music A, Geography A, Religious Studies B, Information Technology B.

Awards

- Silver UK Mathematical Challenge Award 2012
- Shurdington College Prize for Overall Excellence in Attainment 2014

Work Experience

Jack Wills, Bath – Customer Assistant (Part time) October 2014- Current

A clothing retailer which specialises in creating quality goods designed to reflect British heritage and style.

Responsibilities:

- Work on a sales floor serving and advising customers.
- Fully trained in till operation, and in a position of trust dealing with cash handling, sales and refunds, accepting all tenders and receiving bank giros.
- Handling stock, from delivery to display.

Skills gained:

- This gives me a useful insight into the retail sector.
- Constantly developing my skills in communication and numeracy.
- Increased my understanding of improving customer service as the company is highly customer orientated.

Voluntary Work

RSPCA Cats & Dogs Home, Bath, Volunteer, October 2014- current

- Volunteer at the local Cats & Dogs Home which is conveniently located on the University of Bath campus.
- Walk dogs twice a week, which are kennelled awaiting re-homing.
- Assisting in the marketing of their up and coming 'Staffordshire Bull Terrier Information Day' by putting posters round campus and forwarding their Social Networking Group to other members.
- Find the impact of my volunteering very satisfying.

Additional Skills

- **Duke of Edinburgh Silver** – Participating in DofE taught me the significance of team work and how communicating competently was essential in achieving results. Grasped the importance of each member using their individual skills to further team progress whilst undertaking a variety of tasks. Encouraged cooperation and negation within the team. Also planned expedition routes, motivated team members and made active decisions during activities.
- **National Pool Lifeguard Qualification Bronze Medallion and Life Support 1 First Aid Award-** Completing this first aid and life guarding award improved my ability to stay calm under pressure. Combined mental and physical strength to potentially save a life. Assisted coaching others in the award once I had passed, allowing me to demonstrate knowledge and improve my teaching skills.
- **ABRSM grade 8 in both piano and flute** – I have played both these instruments for 12 years now. Reaching grade 8 took a great deal of time, effort and dedication, but it was definitely worthwhile.
- **Word, Excel, PowerPoint Literate** – Gained these skills at GCSE level and have continued to use them frequently during my time at college and university

Languages

- Native English
- Fluent French, achieved an A* in A-level French and regularly develop this skill as I visit France 2-3 times a year.

Interests

- **Sports** - Frequent runner and swimmer. Also a member of the University of Bath water polo team which I greatly enjoy. I find that sports greatly improve my stamina, endurance and concentration as well as being a good way to socialise and go on tours.
- **Travel** - Greatly interested in travelling all over the world and keen to experience other cultures/working conditions in other countries. Particularly love Paris and French history.

Referees

Available on request

John Francis

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11 Student Avenue
Oldfield Park
Bath
BA2 1AA

Education and Qualifications

University of Bath, BSc (Hons) Business Administration, September 2013 – July 2017

Currently in my third year of studying BSc Business Administration. A four year course incorporating two mandatory six month placements.

First Year Average: 1st

Second Year Modules – Business in Society, Business Economics, People & Organisations, Introduction to Business Accounting, Quantitative Methods, Personal Computing, Law in Context

Oxford Freeman's School, Oxfordshire, September 2011 – July 2013

A-Level Grades Achieved:

A	Business Studies	A	General Studies
A	Mathematics	B	Economics

Manor House School, Stonesfield, Oxfordshire, September 2000 – July 2011

GCSE Grades Achieved:

6 A* Grades: Biology, Chemistry, French, Geography, History, Physics.

4 A Grades: English, English Literature, IT, Mathematics.

Academic Awards: Bronze and Silver Awards– UK Maths Challenge

Work Experience

Office of Government Commerce, HM Treasury, London: Communications Intern, eCommerce

July 2014 – January 2015

Organising Government Events:

- Supported and assisted planning events and workshops, attended by many members of the government procurement cadre. Duties included locating practical and appealing venues, creating delegate packs, liaising with the venue and attendees, and promoting the events through different media.
- Assisted in the production and implementation of our team's key messages, which meant building relationships with other departments.
- Gained insight into meetings with senior management on promotional events and workshops.
- Attended a **Project Management Skills** training course to enhance my skills and assist my learning.

Other Duties:

- Shadowed the Chief Executive and accompanied him to a Public Accounts Committee.
- Helped to maintain the eCommerce website, ensuring it was up to date and easy to use.
- Ran a fundraising event throughout the London Office and team events.

Marks and Spencer: Sales Advisor, Oxford, November 2012 – August 2013

Duties:

- Operating tills, cashing up, dealing with customer service issues, tracking customer orders.
- Opening customer accounts, making sure that our department's targets were met.

Skills Gained:

- Given a useful insight into the retail sector, developing my skills in communication and numeracy.
- Working within the organisation for this period of time developed my understanding of customer service and how it can be improved.
- Gained knowledge about the company's ethos towards keeping staff motivated and also observed marketing strategies within numerous departments.

BMW GB: Work Experience, Series 1 Launch July 2012

Observed and participated in operations at all levels in this large organisation, from national sales down to the retail sector in the dealerships.

- Clerical duties and analysing spreadsheets of predicted delivery figures for imported cars at the British HQ.
- Worked on launch day with a dealership, customers and the press. Discussed and answered customer queries on a product about which I was fairly knowledgeable.
- Insight into marketing and PR, plus interpersonal skills developed.

Additional Skills

COMPUTER LITERACY:

- **City and Guilds IT Qualification:** Level 1 DISTINCTION
- Literate in Microsoft Outlook, PowerPoint, Word, Excel, Access and Project.
- Designed my own website and created a database with useable interfaces.

LANGUAGES:

Native English, Fluent French and Intermediate Portuguese.

Activities and Positions of Responsibility

SPORTS & ACTIVITIES:

- **Vice-captain: Hockey Society:** At the University of Bath, since my first year of study. Train at least twice weekly and compete in tournaments nationwide on the weekends.
- **Swimming:** Utilise the swimming pool on campus.
- Keen to improve my **Portuguese language skills** and am planning on spending my summer period working and living in Portugal in order to achieve this.

POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

- **MAUS Society member:** Frequent attendee of University of Bath management society events and contributor to continual improvement of the course
- **Student Ambassador:** Organising and representing the University at open-days with staff, discussing improvements to the school.
- **Head of 6th Form charities committee** – co-ordinating and organising many events.

VOLUNTARY WORK:

- **NSPCC Volunteer:** Helping to run their own stall at their annual local Christmas Fair for several years.
- **C.S.V Tutoring Scheme University of Bath:** Go into a local school weekly to assist in their classroom. Really helped improve my communication and organisational skills.

References available upon request

William Hawkins

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University of Bath
Bath, BA2 7JY

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

University of Bath, School of Management

BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance, 2013-2017

- Currently in my second year studying Accounting and Finance at the University of Bath, which includes a year-long placement.
- Have achieved a strong first during Year One; averaging 72%
- Currently studying: Management, Accounting, Intermediate Macroeconomics, Organisational Behaviour, Principles of Finance and Accounting Information Systems.

Chosen Hill School, Birmingham, 2008-2013

A Level Results (June 2013)

Mathematics	A
Economics	A
Biology	A

AS Level Results (June 2012)

German	B
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GCSE Results (June 2011)

Mathematics	A*	English Language	A	English Literature	A
Biology	A*	German	A	Chemistry	A
Physical Education	A	Religious Studies	B	Drama	B

WORK EXPERIENCE

Marks and Spencer, Birmingham - Customer Assistant - September 2011 to July 2013

Part time role taken during Sixth Form. Responsibilities included:

- Till operation and administration
- Dealing with customer queries and complaints
- Organising part time staff rota and managing stock levels
- Mentoring new part time employees as required

Achievements and transferable skills gained:

- Interpersonal skills improved through customer and staff contact
- Team working skills - worked collaboratively within a busy team environment
- Worked under pressure whilst maintaining excellent levels of customer service
- Balanced a part time role with demanding A Level studies

Cadbury's, Bourneville, Birmingham - 'World of Work' Project - June 2011

Two weeks work experience assignment:

- Helped develop my employability skills
- Experience of the real world of work
- Insight into the manufacturing process, Human Resources and recruitment processes and Health & Safety in the workplace

ACHIEVEMENTS AND POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

University of Bath Management Society (UBMS) - 2013 onwards

- Member of Management Society on campus which involves career-driven students.
- Help to create links with companies and raise awareness of existing career opportunities.
- Involved in organizing events for our members on campus with guest speakers.

Young Enterprise - 2012

- Appointed by my college group as Managing Director to a profit-making young enterprise company.
- Required to organise, represent and motivate the group.

Prefect and School Representative - 2011-2013

- Acted as a mentor for Year 7 and Year 9 students at Secondary School. I was required to be available as someone to talk to, set targets and give advice and encouragement through exam periods.

Primary School Hike - 2012

- Helped to organise and then run a 2-day hike for a local primary school, looking after a group of 8 children on the walk and ensuring their safety.

Primary School Software - 2012

- Created a piece of mathematical software for a primary school. This involved liaising with teachers to discover what they required and ensure that the software worked in practice.

House Captain - 2012-2013

- Appointed as a school house captain to help organise and run house events.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS AND INTERESTS

IT Skills

- Excellent knowledge of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access and Macromedia Dreamweaver.
- University module in Business Computing, including Access database design and Excel programming.

Sports

- Keen runner - have recently taken part in several Half Marathon and Marathon runs to raise money for Cancer Research, which is a charity I actively support.
- Currently organizing a running group with fellow University of Bath students.
- University of Bath Football Team - have competed in both 5-aside and 11-aside competitions on campus.

Music

- Have played piano since the age of 8, reaching Grade 7.
- Self-taught guitar - played in a band during Sixth Form.

Languages

- Spoken and written German to A Level standard
- Currently attending a Spanish course on campus to increase conversational skills.

References available upon request

Anna Banks

Home address

101 Bourne Hill
Middleton
Salisbury, SP1 3UZ

Email: abanks@bath.ac.uk**Telephone:** 07712 345678**Term time address**

10 Silk Lane
Oldfield Park
Bath, BA2 7PT

Education and Academic Awards

University of Bath, School of Management, Sep 2014-Jul 2018**BSc (Hons) Management**

Four year, thick sandwich degree with industrial placement in penultimate year of study.

This degree equips me with theoretical business knowledge and enables me to apply this in a practical context during my studies.

- First year modules include: Business Analytics, Introduction to Business Economics, Principles of Organisational Behaviour and Introduction to International Business.
- First year grade average: 72%

King William's School, Salisbury, Sep 2007-Jul 2014

- A Level Grades (Jun 2014): Economics A, Politics A, History A
- AS Level Grades (Jun 2013): Sociology B
- GCSE Grades (Jun 2011):
 - 4 A* Grades – Mathematics, English Literature, History, Business Studies
 - 6 A Grades – Chemistry, Physics, Biology, French, German, Information Technology

Academic Awards

- Silver Award in the UK Maths Challenge
- King Williams School Award for Outstanding Academic Efficiency

Work Experience

The Body Shop, Bath, Customer Service Assistant, Sep 2014 – Current

An international cosmetics retailer specialising in natural and ethical products.

Responsibilities held:

- Assisting and advising customers on the shop floor using in-depth product knowledge.
- Receiving stock deliveries, distributing stock in store and taking lead on creating displays to showcase new product lines.
- Dealing with sales and refund transactions, operating the till to complete all transactions and handling cash and card payments on a regular basis.
- Responsible for training new members of the customer service team on the shop floor.

Skills gained:

- Strong communication is crucial; important to help the customer feel welcome and supported whilst in the store.
- Numerical ability was constantly developed, particularly when assisting customers with applying different loyalty packages to make larger purchases cost effective.
- Ability to clearly explain elements of my role to new team members when providing in-house training.

The Circus Bar, Salisbury, Waitress, Jun 2012-Aug 2014

Responsibilities held:

- Daytime working front of house meeting and greeting customers, taking food and drink orders, delivering prepared meals to tables.
- Handling all money transactions and completing cash purchases with individual money float.
- Working behind the bar during the evenings and serving customers quickly and accurately in a noisy and pressurised environment.

Skills gained:

- Taking ownership and full responsibility for my tables and ensuring customers were happy with all elements of the service.
- Ability to make difficult decisions quickly in a busy environment.
- Dealing with potentially challenging customers during evening work in a tactful and diplomatic way.

Achievements and Positions of Responsibility

University of Bath Netball Team, Social Events Coordinator, Nov 2014-current

Play netball in the University team and coordinate all social events for the team. Organise 3 events per semester giving the team the opportunity to see each other outside of training and matches and keeps team morale strong and helps comradery.

University of Bath Management Society (UBMS), Nov 2014-current

Member of UBMS which is an active group supporting Management students and building links with local, national and international companies to help career opportunities and industry understanding.

Three Peaks Challenge, Jun 2013

Completed a sponsored three peaks challenge and successfully reached the summit of Ben Nevis, Snowdon and Scafell Pike in under 48 hours. Raised £500 for Cancer Research UK.

Additional Skills and Interests

Languages

- **English:** Native speaker
- **German:** continued to build on understanding from initial learning at GCSE level. Proficient in both spoken and written word at business level.
- **French:** conversational ability at a basic level.

IT Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Have created comprehensive presentations using PowerPoint to display data and explain findings from group project work.
- Used InDesign package to create fundraising poster for Cancer Research UK.

Hobbies

- Practice yoga weekly and spent two weeks in Mumbai, India learning more about the exercise and developing my cultural awareness.
- Enjoy outdoor pursuits and regularly spend time rock climbing, bike riding and horse riding.

References

References available upon request

Martin Smith

Home: 139 Small Lane, Guildford, GU2 7PF

Term: 67 Winterview Road, Bath, BA2 0KL

LinkedIn: uk.linkedin.com/in/martinjsmith

Email: mjsmith@bath.ac.uk

Telephone: 07896 543210

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

University of Bath, School of Management, Sep 2014-Jul 2018

BSc (Hons) Management with Marketing

Four year, thick sandwich degree with a compulsory placement year in a marketing function or industry.

First year modules include: Principles of Marketing, Business Analytics, Business Context, Introduction to Business Economics and Introduction to International Business Environment.

- First year mark average: 68%

Guildford Sixth Form College, Surrey, Sep 2011-Jul 2013

A Level Grades Achieved:		AS Level Grades Achieved:	
Business Studies	A	Sociology	B
Politics	A		
History	A		

Queen Victoria School, Guildford, Surrey, Sep 2006-Jul 2011

GCSE Grades Achieved:

Mathematics	A	History	A	Graphic Design	B
English Literature	A	Business Studies	A	German	B
Science (Double Award)	BB	Physical Education	B		

WORK EXPERIENCE

Teach First, Campus Brand Ambassador, Oct 2014-current

Responsibilities held:

- Raise awareness about Teach First amongst fellow university students; providing information about the company, promoting their range of opportunities and representing Teach First with professionalism.
- Liaising with university departments, eg. Careers Service, Students' Union. Pitching key initiatives to carry out on campus, such as promotional flyering afternoons, publicity stands with giveaways to encourage interest.

Skills gained:

- Communication skills: when speaking with a variety of different audiences; including fellow students, university staff and academics and Teach First colleagues, in order to solve any problems that arise from my publicity events, answers questions and understand what is expected of me and my role.
- Negotiation skills, use of initiative, creativity and problem solving ability: through pitching and coordinating Teach First publicity events.

Burrows Communications, Wallington, Surrey, Office Assistant, Aug 2013-Apr 2014

Responsibilities held:

- Provided crucial support to the Office Manager in the busy back office; carried out key administrative tasks.
- Created and distributed the fortnightly internal newsletter detailing completed and current design projects.
- Regular communication with graphic designers based out of the office to track progress, field issues and maintain the strong team environment, particularly when team members work remotely.

Skills gained:

- IT skills: regular use of Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and MailChimp package to carry out my work efficiently, developed good understanding of the capabilities of each package.
 - Communication and analytical skills: when collating information from across the business and presenting into a condensed, coherent format that is interesting and informative.
 - Professionalism and telephone manner: when often being the first point of contact for potential clients.
-

VOLUNTARY WORK

St Teresa of Calcutta School, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Teaching Assistant, Jul 2014-Aug 2014

- Travelled in Sri Lanka for two months during my gap year and volunteered at a local primary school.
 - Taught basic level English to children of 7 – 9 years old and planned fun activities that allowed them to use English words. Introduced them to some British customs and taught them some simple history of England.
 - At the end of the month the children acted out a simple play to the rest of the school to illustrate their learnings.
-

ACHIEVEMENTS AND ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Sports

University of Bath Hockey Club: play in the University team and regularly get involved with social events.
Hockey: played for the Guildford Sixth Form College Hockey Team, competed in local and national matches.

IT Skills

Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint. Developed my knowledge of Microsoft packages whilst working at Burrows Communications. Have presented large amounts of information to audiences using PowerPoint and have developed and distributed mailshots using MailChimp software.

Music

Have played the bass guitar for 7 years and am a member of a band in Guildford. I have played in many venues throughout the city to audiences of up to 70 people. The performances have resulted in 3 summer wedding bookings.

Fundraising

Whilst in Sri Lanka I ran the Colombo Half Marathon to raise money for St Teresa of Calcutta School. I raised over £400. With this donation the school were able to fix a part of the roof that had been damaged by a recent tropical storm.

INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

Water Sports

I enjoy surfing and diving and spend my spare time taking part in these activities. I have completed my PADI Open Water Diver course and have been on a number of open water diving holidays.

Photography

I have attended 3 photography courses to develop my understanding and expertise in this area. I thoroughly enjoy taking photographs and hope to continue my learning.

REFERENCES

References available upon request

ALEXANDER DERVISHI

Address: 10 Student Road, Bath, BA2 5HL

Telephone number: 07123 987654

Email address: adervishi@bath.ac.uk

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

University of Bath, School of Management (Sep 2013–Jul 2017)

BSc (Hons) International Management: *Four year, thick sandwich degree with a mandatory year abroad in the penultimate year.* Relevant modules: Business Analytics, Introduction to International Business Environment, Principles of International Finance, International Market Development and Trade, Consumer Behaviours, Law. First year grade achieved: 72 Second year grade average: 70

Champion School, Athens, Greece (Sept 2007-Jul 2013)

International Baccalaureate Diploma (Sep 2012-Jul 2013): achieved mark of 38 (out of possible 45)

IGCSE (Sep 2007-Jul 2012): 2 A* grades, 5 A grades, 1 B grade

WORK EXPERIENCE

Metaswitch Networks, Enfield, Shipping and Logistics Operations Intern (Jul 2014-Sep 2014)

A global company working in the advancement of communications technology and infrastructure.

- Responsible for supporting the wider team and maintaining efficient and high-quality service to the large client base.
- Solely responsible for a number of national and international shipments and managed logistics procedures to ensure that all stages of shipment delivery went well.
- Created and distributed weekly in-house communications to the wider team.

Thomas Lintern Properties Ltd, Bath, Lettings Negotiator (Nov 2013-Jul 2014)

An established sales and lettings agency dealing with high mark-up properties in Bath and Somerset county.

- Supported the busy team with the documentation against all lettings agreements made on properties over the preceding week. Managed key administrative tasks to ensure paperwork was collated and made available to relevant parties.
- Met with potential tenants at new rental properties to facilitate property viewings, answer questions and assist with early discussions about the tenancy.
- Addressed early queries from property landlords, fielded to colleagues or resolved under my own initiative.

POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY, ACHIEVEMENTS AND SKILLS

Assistant Group Supervisor for Grow Aware (Apr 2013) A registered Greek charity working with 13-15 year olds teaching about other countries, customs and culture. Assisted supervision of 15 children on an overnight expedition to Bari, Italy. Created and delivered activities to teach about Italian history and culture.

Sports

- Awarded Gold for the Cross-Country Running Champion School Under-16s Tournament (April 2011).
- University of Bath Athletics Team: I regularly compete in the track races and long distance running events.

IT Skills

- Advanced level in Microsoft Word, Excel and Access and am competent with Macromedia Dreamweaver. Used this application to build additional pages on the Champion School website detailing sporting activities.

Languages

- English: native speaker
- Greek: business level ability including professional spoken, written and reading.
- German: conversational level proficiency. Attending classes to degree to build ability to an advanced level.

INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

- Keen interest in the stock market and regularly check the FTSE 100 and Dow Jones; a good awareness of current financial markets directly strengthens my understanding and success in my studies.
- Strong sense of adventure and thoroughly enjoy travelling and experiencing new cultures, particularly countries in Asia Pacific and Europe.

References available upon request

MINGAILE PETRAUSKAS

Tel: 07786 406000 Email: mp888@bath.ac.uk
Address: 3 Student Road, Avon, Bath BA2 9NP

EDUCATION**University of Bath, School of Management BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance 2013-2017**

- **Year One Modules:** Achieved high marks in Business Accounting **98**, Corporate Finance and Investment Appraisal **93**, Core skills for economists: Mathematics **78**, Financial Markets **79**. **Average of the year - 74.75**
- **Year Two Modules:** Management Accounting, Economic Analysis of Financial Decisions, Financial Accounting and Reporting, Advanced Corporate Finance. On track for a 1st Class average grade

Vilnius Lyceum, Lithuania Secondary Education Maturity Certificate 2009-2013

- Achieved maximum grades in all subjects and National Exams (Lithuanian, English, Mathematics – 100% in each)

WORK EXPERIENCE**'Vilnius Waters', Vilnius, Lithuania – Intern September 2014**

Employed by the company within the Project Control Department which is responsible for financial analysis and appraisal of investment projects related with regional development of sanitation and water supply services

Duties involved:

- Financial analysis of investment projects including calculation of operating costs, revenues, return on investment and capital
- Presenting findings to the supervisor and providing the head of the department with a written evaluation

Skills developed:

- Enhanced the ability to quickly convert numerical information into concise evaluation and to present sophisticated arguments to the team
- Learnt how to assimilate large amounts of material and to incorporate bodies of theoretical knowledge into practice
- Successfully cooperated with people from different backgrounds and age groups

Carluccio's Cafe, Canary Wharf, London – Waitress June 2014 to September 2014**Duties involved:**

- Waitressing and delivering excellent customer service
- Working at the till and handling cash

Skills developed:

- Team work – fully integrated in a team of 15 people through allocating specific tasks to each member of staff and supporting my colleagues to achieve a common goal
- Communication and interpersonal skills – improved by discussing and resolving various issues during staff meetings and dealing with customers' queries and complaints
- Self-discipline – learnt how to cope successfully with large workloads and stress in a pressurised environment

ADDITIONAL SKILLS / ACHIEVEMENTS

- Received a commendation and a medal from **The Prime Minister of Lithuania Mr. Andrius Kubilius** in 2013 for outstanding academic achievements and scoring 100% in each of the three state exams taken
- Languages: Lithuanian (mother tongue), English (fluent in written and spoken)
- IT skills: An intermediate user of Microsoft Office (Excel, Access, Word, PowerPoint)
- Have acquired an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) certificate with a score of 7.5 out of 9
- Completed English language courses for advanced users at Soros International House in 2012, which mainly included giving presentations on economic and financial topics
- A member of an events organising team at school, which involved public speaking, establishing contacts with goods suppliers and supervising the team's overall performance. The role developed my confidence when given responsibility for major events
- Was elected as a treasurer of the Lithuanian Society at Bath University this year

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

- A skilful piano player with 8 years of experience. Have attended a number of music competitions across Lithuania
- Have been following a fitness plan and a diet, tailored by the Health Centre of Natural Medicine of Lithuania, for the last four years
- Enjoy travelling and have already attended four International Summer Camps – there seized an opportunity to improve communication skills and to learn about different cultures

References are available upon request

Covering Letters

“ During the recruitment process the most valuable skills I needed were communication, analytical skills, performing under pressure and decision-making skills. ”

Zoe Cruddos, BBA 2015 Graduate

Employers usually ask for a covering letter in addition to a CV. The covering letter is a major contributor to success. It should show how your skills and experience match the job description as well as generate interest and encourage the employer to want to find out more about you. For online applications the information contained in a covering letter is often asked for in the Motivation or Supporting Statement section.

Layout of letter

- One page maximum
- Use legible font (Arial or Calibri, from size 10 or 12)
- Clear, concise and passionate
- Ensure spelling, grammar and punctuation is perfect. Be professional. Business format – your address in the top right hand corner followed by the date. The company address should be beneath this on the left hand side
- It is always best to address the letter to a named person – in which case you should end it with “Yours sincerely”
- If you do start with Dear Sir/ Madam then you should conclude with “Yours faithfully”

Structure of letter

Introductory paragraph	Describe your current status and the role you are applying for.
Why you want to work for this company	Demonstrate enthusiasm for the company's values, clients, successes and projects. You may also want to mention a relevant news article to display strong commercial awareness. If you have attended a company presentation or carried out some research on the company you should mention this. You should show evidence of research but do not simply lift text from the company website – let them know how this research is relevant to your experience, skills and career goals.
Why you are interested in and suitable for this role	State why you are interested in this role, what made you apply for this particular opportunity? Highlight what makes you suitable for this role by referring to (but not repeating) experience described in your tailor-made CV. Ensure the content of your CV is consistent with your letter. Ensure the skills and knowledge you describe match those detailed in the job description.
Concluding paragraph	Reiterate your interest and state what you can bring to the position. End on a positive note (e.g. I look forward to hearing from you).
If applicable	Deal with any gaps in your CV – always use positive rather than apologetic language.

Further Resources

- Covering Letter PDP workshop
- More example covering letters available on PDP Moodle site
- Careers Guide: www.bath.ac.uk/students/careers/docs.bho/cvguide.pdf
- Attend a 1:1 session with the Academic Skills Centre to have the English in your covering letter checked
- More information and more example letters on the Prospects website: www.prospects.ac.uk/cover_letters.htm

The Power Word List

These words and phrases may be useful in your applications. Choose them carefully and only if they are relevant to a particular skill or situation.

- More than ... years extensive and diverse experience in
- Expertise and demonstrated skills in
- Extensive academic/practical background in
- Experienced in all facets/phases/aspects of
- Knowledge of/experienced as/in considerable training/involvement in
- Proficient/competent at
- Initially employed to/joined organisation to specialise in
- Provided technical assistance to
- Worked closely with
- Constant interaction with
- Promoted to
- Succeeded in
- Proven track record in
- Experience involved/included
- Successful in/at
- Reported to
- In charge of
- Now involved in
- Familiar with
- Employed to
- Assigned to
- Edited
- Established
- Formulated
- Initiated
- Implemented
- Managed
- Instrumental in

Applying for a Placement Speculatively

“ Learning how to pick yourself up, having not been offered the job, is a very important life skill. ”

Harry Fielder, BBA 2015 Graduate

Many vacancies are filled by candidates who approach organisations on a speculative basis. This usually involves an initial phone call or email enquiry then sending of a CV with a covering letter. A good introduction is essential to encourage the employer to consider you for an opportunity that may exist now, or in the future (it should be so interesting that the reader moves onto your CV feeling very positive about you). The initial email or telephone call is crucial if your application is a speculative one and you are not applying as part of the normal recruitment cycle. In these instances you will probably not have a job description so you will need to carefully research potential role requirements and company values yourself. You should target your application toward the appropriate line manager or a HR manager if possible.

Writing a speculative cover letter

How Long?

One page of A4 is enough. Your priority is to produce a letter that is legible and focused with no grammatical or spelling errors. You need to outline early your reasons for approaching that organisation.

How should it start?

You need to be very clear about the purpose of the letter. It is important to do some preliminary investigation to find out more about the organisation and its employees. Use the internet, printed materials, professional associations, trade journals, contacts etc. If your research produces a name it is much better to use than “Dear Sir/Madam”. If not, then address the letter to a Head of a specific Department or

Service e.g. Human Resources or Personnel Department. It may also be valuable to give your letter a general title to draw attention to the type of employment and training, or work experience that interests you.

Why them?

You should explain why you have chosen to approach that the particular company. You may have read an article in the newspaper, analysed their annual report or worked on a relevant topic for a university project. Your letter should not read like a mail shot- the employer should feel they are being targeted for a good reason. If you cannot find out much about the organisation then mention what attracts you to that sector or job area.

Why you?

As it is a speculative approach make sure you know what relevant

knowledge and skills are likely to be required. Use your research to match your profile to the type of activities the organisation is involved in. Do not lift whole sentences from your CV but highlight areas that may be of particular interest and relevance. You may need to produce variations of this letter for different situations, tailoring each one to the specific employer or sector.

How should it end?

Be positive- you would not be approaching them unless you thought you had something to offer. You might say “I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.” Include that you will follow up with the employer and then be sure to chase the status of your application at an appropriate time after submission.



Alumni Profile

Sam Holmes
BBA, 2010

Current Employer/Role
Strategy Manager, Accenture

What attracted you to this career path?

The diverse, challenging and creative nature of the job, combined with the opportunity to work with a diverse range of very bright people in interesting locations across the globe.

What skills are most important in your job?

Adaptability, creativity and honesty

Placements undertaken during degree

Lehman Brothers, Finance Analyst Mumbai and Accenture, Consulting, London

Your top tips/advice to our current first year undergraduates

Work hard from day one and throw yourself into everything and anything - you will not regret it!

Example Covering Letters

Responding to a job advert

Penguin Pharmaceuticals Marketing Communications Student, Marketing Operations, London.

Job Title: Marketing Communications Student
Department: Marketing Operations (Europe-French division)
Location: European HQ, London.
Reporting to: Director of French Marketing Communications
Hours: 9:00am - 5:00pm

Overall Purpose of the placement

To support the Marketing Operations team activities; which includes communications, publications, media relations, collateral, emarketing/web marketing and event planning across the French region. This role will give the successful candidate excellent exposure to all parts of this busy department, presenting many opportunities to participate in all aspects of the departments work. The student will report to the Director of French Marketing Communications.

Main Accountabilities

- Marketing Communications: work with the Marketing Operations Team on publications and other in-house collateral, event management, market research, web marketing and product Communications
- Marketing: To assist Marketing Managers in various aspects of Marketing for the French region including go to market planning for new launches, audience mapping and competitor tracking. In particular with:
 - a. Account level Marketing in support of two of Europe's largest pharmaceutical companies
 - b. Quarterly updates on financial information for pharmaceutical companies
- Communications: To assist the Communications Director in actively maintaining an integrated France-wide communications strategy that encompasses thought leadership and media that is aligned to Penguin Pharmaceutical's global, regional and local marketing and communications priorities and working closely with Business Line heads. Also to assist with the company's internal communications strategy to support key corporate change and development programmes.

Candidate Requirements

- Excellent organisation skills
- Good written and spoken English skills essential, with a flare for writing clearly and succinctly.
- All round familiarity with Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint,
- Excellent interpersonal skills with a friendly and confident approach.
- Ability to liaise with people at all levels within this complex organisation.
- Fluent French would be preferred.

Applications

Applications should be addressed to Mr. Anthony Harris and should include a covering letter and current CV to placements@management.bath.ac.uk

44 Main Road
Oldfield Park
Bath
BA2 3PH
07912 000000
anexample30@bath.ac.uk

Mr Anthony Harris
Graduate Recruitment Manager
Penguin Pharmaceuticals

Monday 15 September 2014

Dear Mr Harris

RE: Marketing Communications Internship

I am writing in response to your advertisement for a Marketing Communications Internship, as advertised through the placements office. An up-to-date CV is enclosed with this letter as requested.

I am currently studying BSc in Business Administration, a degree which has two six month compulsory placements. The course so far has laid the foundations for a wide variety of skills needed in the business and management environment, but it has been the modules on marketing and communications that I have found to be the most fascinating and enjoyable. It is for this reason, as well as the excellent stature and reputation of Penguin Pharmaceuticals, that I believe this job opportunity would be a rewarding, advantageous and interesting way to undertake my second 6 month industrial placement.

I have excellent organisational skills honed from balancing University work and my other passion, tennis, for which I train on a daily basis. I am positive I that I could lend this skill to support the Marketing Operations team. As a keen competitor I meet people all over Europe and consequently am confident in speaking with new people and am sure I could liaise successfully with people at all levels at Penguin Pharmaceuticals.

As my A* in A-level English should demonstrate, I have a passion for writing and would be really keen to apply this at Penguin Pharmaceuticals whether on in-house publications or assisting with the internal communications strategy. I also achieved an A in A-level French which will no doubt come in useful for the Marketing Communications role in the French division.

My enthusiasm and appetite for success make me a strong candidate for this role, as well as my ambition to work in a thriving and social environment and my strong passion for marketing. I would relish a placement opportunity at Penguin Pharmaceuticals, and I feel that I could make a valuable contribution to your company.

I am available for interview upon request, and I look forward to hearing from you regarding my application

Yours Sincerely,

Lisa Example

Speculative application

Edward Charles
42 Park Road
Eccles
Greater Manchester
M5 4ZZ

Tuesday 10 February 2015

Mr S Thomas
Human Resources Manager
Hinleys
Trafford Park
Manchester
M12 9SP

Dear Mr Thomas,

I am currently studying for a BSc in Business Administration at the University of Bath, a degree which has two six month compulsory placements. I am hoping to secure a role in Human Resources, starting in July/August, for my first industrial placement. If you would like to read more about the placements scheme I have enclosed a "Placements & Projects Brochure" and "Guidelines for Employers" for your perusal.

Since embarking on my University course I have been determined to pursue a career in this area. I have successfully achieved over 80% in both of the People and Organisations modules completed in my previous year of study. I will continue to further my knowledge in this area next year by reading both Human Resource Management and the Psychology of Organisations. I am especially interested in working for a company which has extensive involvement in the development of IT solutions, and in particular within the telecoms industry. I believe that working for Hinleys in your Human Resources department would provide me with an insight into the recruitment process of IT professionals as well as the vast elements that contribute to the Human Resources sector.

My work experience as a Sales Assistant at Topman has developed my interpersonal and communication skills, which I believe will be vital when dealing with companywide colleagues, as well as applicants. Furthermore, the degree course has improved my organisational skills and attention to detail which will be essential when working in a busy environment. My work as a Student Ambassador at the University of Bath has strengthened my communication skills further. I am a very well organised individual who has balanced excellent academic results with a range of extra-curricular activities and I am certain that I will be able to manage any tasks given in a professional, accurate and timely manner.

With an appetite for success and a strong passion for Human Resources, I would relish a placement opportunity at Hinleys and genuinely feel that I could make a valuable contribution to your company. I would be very grateful if you would consider my application for any roles that you feel would be suitable. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Charles

Advertised vacancies – example 1

3 Hill Lane
Bath, BA1 7HB

5th January 2015
Mr Edward Thompson,
Accenture
Coronation Avenue
Newbury
Berks, NH3 6JK

Dear Mr Thompson,

Re: Graduate Project Management Analyst, Accenture, Newbury

I write in application to the above position. I am currently completing BSc Management at the University of Bath. This role with Accenture would provide me with an unparalleled opportunity to apply my broad theoretical business knowledge to business reality and gain exposure to my primary field of interest – project management.

My degree courses have prepared me to think creatively and envision goals in order to become an effective problem solver. Modules such as Project Management, Strategic Management and Organisational Behaviour have helped me to develop a basic knowledge of project management, which have fuelled my desire to experience the practicalities of the project management sector that this placement offers.

My previous experiences and activities have developed a skill set which would prepare me well for this Project Management Analyst role. My experience, for example, in the Special Events Department at The Hilton Hotel, Cardiff, provided me with a micro-insight to project management. This experience required me to co-ordinate aspects of high profile events, participating in their planning and time scheduling and working quickly to accommodate any unexpected circumstances, whilst acting as a part of a highly pressurised team. I have been proven to work effectively as a team member and individually. The project based assignments and the client facing nature of this role appeal to me greatly, as do the challenges the Project Management Analyst position will present.

I naturally occupy leadership positions, as seen through the Vice Presidency of University of Bath Rowing Club and undertaking roles of project leader. I am a highly motivated and focused individual with a thirst for knowledge and a desire to succeed, and have demonstrated academic excellence at every educational level. My level of social confidence is deemed an asset when leading university presentations, undertaking public speaking at large events and when listening and interacting with people from different walks of life. These strengths, combined with deep and varied employment experience prepare me to make a strong and immediate impact at Accenture.

My main interest in applying for this role stems from Accenture's impressive reputation as an outstanding company. The prestige of the firm is best captured through its regular decoration as one of the top companies to work for. This role would provide me with the chance to learn from leading-edge project managers in exciting projects, and to develop on both personal and professional planes. Accenture's global consumer base and its involvement in many diverse projects will enable me to further develop as a leader, and learn from experienced individuals.

I am a highly motivated, proactive and enthusiastic individual and feel Accenture would be the ideal environment for me to further develop my career. I appreciate your taking the time to review my credentials and experience. Again, thank you for your consideration,

Yours sincerely

Claire Brodowski

Advertised vacancies – example 2

James Hardwick
9 White Oak Gardens
Chichester
West Sussex
PO15 8WE
Mobile: 07989 026711
Email: jh352@bath.ac.uk

11th December 2014

American Express
Belgrave House
76 Buckingham Palace Road
London
SW1W 9TQ

Dear Sir or Madam:

Re: Junior Financial Analyst Position, London

I am writing in reply to your advertisement for a Junior Financial Analyst Position available in London. Please find enclosed my Curriculum Vitae.

I was immediately attracted to a placement at AMEX because of its reputable brand name within the financial services sector. I believe that AMEX's global customer base and exposure to a variety of financial projects will enable me to further develop my skills and increase my knowledge of the business world. Having spoken to previous placement students and attended your on-campus presentation, I have been impressed by the supportive culture provided by AMEX and the opportunity to take on early responsibility. Also with the company's position as a 'Top 10' employer (The Sunday Times Best Big Companies to Work For), I feel that this would provide the opportunity to work in an excellent business environment. The role of Junior Financial Analyst is described as management accounting based, which is part of my degree and an area which I am particularly interested in. The responsibilities in this position will give me the opportunity to hone the skills which I have already learnt, at a practical level.

It has always been my plan to work in the financial service sector. I am currently studying a BSc in Accounting and Finance at the University of Bath and have chosen the option of my third year to be in an industrial placement. Whilst studying Management Accounting, Financial Accounting, Corporate Finance and Macroeconomics, I have further developed the skills needed for a role in the financial section. Working as a commercial analyst at the Autobar Group Ltd in the Summer of 2014 has familiarised me with MS Excel and given me first-hand experience of manipulating and analysing data. Through both leisure and work experience I have learnt to prioritise and work to strict deadlines when dealing with multiple projects. I have held many positions of responsibility including Finance Officer for the University of Bath Accounting and Finance Society and Captain of Rugby at Chichester RFC which have allowed me to develop strong communication, team working and organising skills.

I believe working at AMEX on a 12 month industrial placement would be the first step towards a prosperous career in the financial services sector. I am available for interview at your convenience and look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours Sincerely

James Hardwick

Recruitment Process

🕒 The recruitment process is designed to ensure that your skills, experience and knowledge are best matched to the role that you are applying for.

The recruitment process consists of a number of steps which enable the employer to explore your skills, character and suitability to the role. The process also gives you the chance to check if the company and role are right for you. The whole process varies in length. Sometimes it can span over a number of months, whereas on some degree programmes, such as BSc Business Administration, the placement recruitment process is compressed, spanning over a number of weeks. The intensity of the recruitment process can also vary depending on the industry you are applying to.

Stages of the recruitment process

The recruitment process is designed to explore and assess employability skills, verbal, writing and listening skills, numerical and technical ability and overall character suitability. It achieves this assessment through a number of stages. The process will not necessarily include all of these stages, particularly if recruitment is for an undergraduate opportunity. See the relevant pages for more detail about each stage.

Initial Application: CV and Covering Letter / Online Application Form (see pages 6-7, 20-21 and 27-28)

Online Testing: Aptitude and Psychometric Testing (see page 29)

Initial Contact: Telephone Interview (see page 32-33)

Assessment Centre: Online Testing, Group Exercise, Case Study, Presentation, Interview (see page 30-31)

Final Contact: Final Interview (see page 32-33)

Alumni Profile



Charlotte Matthews
Business Administration, 2013

Current Employer/Role
Anheuser-Busch
InBev – Employer Brand
Manager Europe

What attracted you to this career path?

I think always knew I wanted to do marketing and advertising. After I graduated I was lucky enough to get onto the marketing graduate programme at Red Bull in the International advertising team. It was a great 18 months, which led to the opportunity to manage ABI's employer brand for Europe – the perfect opportunity to lead the creation and management of a brand.

What skills are most important in your job?

Having analytical skills and being able to look at a whole situation and decide where it is best to invest time and money to win where it matters. Being a people person and being able to work with a wide range of

people and having a good knowledge of marketing theory and principles.

Placements undertaken during degree

First placement – Qubit – Digital Analyst Intern (in their first year as a start up, so was one of 7 employees)

Second placement – Google – Marketing

Your top tips/advice to our current first year undergraduates

Don't worry if you have only had a bar job when applying for your first placement! That's all I had. At this stage of your career an employer is looking for your raw untapped talent. Just relax, be yourself, show your passion to learn.

Don't obsess about wanting to go and work for a large multinational company on your first placement. One of the best professional decisions I have ever made was going to a start-up for my first internship – you have real responsibility, more visibility and you learn quickly because you have it! If you go to a large multinational afterwards they will love that you worked at a small company, it gives you a real competitive edge.

Listen in lectures. I know the Thursday morning 8.15 lecture after Score isn't your finest hour, but everything you are taught at uni is 100% valuable for your professional career.

Online Application Forms

“ Don’t worry if you have only had a bar job when applying for your first placement. At this stage of your career an employer is looking for your raw untapped talent. ”

Charlotte Matthews, BBA 2013 Graduate, AB InBev

In addition to the traditional CV and covering letter submission placement applications can also be submitted as online application forms. Online applications are time consuming to complete especially at first so allow plenty of time.

Preparation

Before you start an application ensure you:

- Meet the essential selection criteria (e.g. UCAS points, nationality, eligibility) – check with the company if you are unsure
- Research the company and role – do your skills, values and experience match what they are looking for? Company career websites usually explicitly state what they are looking for; alumni and company presentations are other good sources
- Have time to meet the deadline

Longer answers

Many sections of the application form will require you to answer open questions in full sentences. Your answers will provide the company with a lot of information about you – both from the content and the style of your answer.

- You should ensure your answers match what the company is looking for and that your examples come from a variety of contacts (academic, work and extra-curricular) to demonstrate a broad range of experience
- Answer each question fully but concisely using the CAR (Context Action Result) approach

Content and layout of forms

Application forms vary considerably between companies but there are common features to most application forms.

Section	Information requested	How to prepare
Administrative details	Personal details and contact information.	Ensure your dates are consistent with your CV.
Factual information	Education history; work experience (list in reverse chronological order).	Ensure your information is consistent with your CV.
Career motivation	Why are you interested in this role/company/sector? Often this section will include a broader commercial awareness question such as “what do you think are the key challenges faced in this profession?”	Do not simply quote from the company website. Use your knowledge of commercial awareness to sell your skills. Include details of relevant research that you have undertaken.
Interests and experience	Assessing your fit with the essential skills for the role and the values of the company.	Use your company research and the CAR approach (Context Action Results) to demonstrate your suitability as a candidate.
Personal statement	Use this opportunity to summarise and demonstrate how your skills/experience makes you a strong candidate for the role.	A personal statement format may have the same elements as a covering letter.

- Use a structured approach to organise answers to more open questions (e.g. SWOT analysis, CAR)
- Use active, positive language rather than passive or negative statements
- Language should be formal and business as well as professional, avoid “text language”
- Check your grammar and spelling are accurate

“ Constantly review your applications and ask yourself each time what you could have done better. Do this, and the quality of your applications will keep improving and eventually you will get a fantastic placement that will surpass your expectations. ”

Dariya Silko, BBA 2015 Graduate

“ The recruitment process was very competitive, competing against students from other universities and your fellow course peers. ”

Zoe Cruddos, BBA 2015 Graduate

Practical issues

- Read all instructions carefully
- Ensure you keep a note of your online application log in details and password
- Download a copy of the application form, make a note of any word limits and formulate draft replies offline until you are happy to submit the final version
- If you can include a CV, ensure that it is consistent with your application
- Leave no questions unanswered – put N/A (not applicable) if you do not need to answer a question
- Avoid cutting and pasting answers from other

applications: each application should reflect the requirements and values of the particular company. One way to test this is to read your application out loud replacing the company name with a direct competitor – if the application still makes sense it is too generic. Some content can however be used to form the basis of future applications (as long as it is reviewed and amended)

- Check formatting so it still makes sense after it has been submitted
- Keep a copy of your final application so you can read it again if invited to interview

Further Resources

- Make an appointment with a Placements Officer or Careers Advisor to look through your application before you submit it
- ‘Application, CV and cover letter guide’ produced by the Careers Service provides more information and tips for success: www.bath.ac.uk/students/careers/docs.bho/cvguide.pdf
- More information and example answers at: www.prospects.ac.uk/applying_for_jobs_application_forms.htm
- Careers events around the campus
- Employer recruitment presentations often provide invaluable advice and tips around applying and application processes

“ Think about what you enjoy in your studies and why you enjoy it. Then try and match that to a job. ”

Liam McGuinness, BBA 2006 Graduate, CIL Management Consultants

Student Profile



Zoe Cruddos
BBA 2015 Graduate

First Placement
L'Oréal

Second Placement
Accenture

Describe your main tasks and responsibilities on your first placement

At L'Oréal, I was responsible for producing and analysing the weekly EPOS data for senior management. I developed a strategic plan to improve Garnier's skincare presence online.

Describe your main task and responsibilities on your second placement

At Accenture, I provided weekly tracking reports and created a consolidated view of the team's actions. I also assisted with mapping out new end-to-end business processes and managed the delivery of training sessions to employees.

How did you decide where to work on your first placement?

I thought it was a fantastic opportunity to get experience at a global company. I wanted a placement where I would gain high exposure and responsibility.

What were the most challenging aspects of the recruitment process for either placement?

The process was very competitive, competing against students from other universities and your fellow course peers. It's challenging to keep up with coursework at the same time as fully preparing for multiple interviews.

How valuable was the PDP programme in helping you secure both placements?

The PDP programme was invaluable. It provided fantastic advice about how to improve my CV, write a covering letter that stood out and prepare for interview questions and processes.

During the placement recruitment processes what were the most valuable skills that you enhanced?

Communication, analytical reasoning, performing under pressure and decision making skills.

Have you secured a graduate role?

I have secured graduate offers from both L'Oréal and Accenture.

What would be your top tip for students about to commence the placement process for the first time?

Make sure you're well prepared, do lots of research on the company, plan responses for interview questions and ask for feedback. At interviews, keep calm and give it your best!

Psychometric and Occupational Tests

🕒 **Formal, timed, online tests that usually operate in a multiple choice format and are designed to objectively filter out a high proportion of applicants.**

Psychometric and occupational tests are widely referred to as 'Online Tests' and are a common recruitment selection technique. They are generally administered shortly after you have submitted your application but can also be administered at the final stages of the selection process. Organisations will often use a range of tests that often taken online. On occasions they may require the test to be taken by filling in a printed answer sheet. You may be asked to complete numerical tests for roles that are not numeracy based. Therefore, it is important to practice and improve on each type of test.

Tips for tests

Practice

- Use online practice tests to get used to the range of question types. Many tests have similar types of questions so the more you do, the better you should perform.
- The Careers Service holds several timed practice tests and gives feedback. These sessions are very popular so book early. They also have tests you can access online.

Brush up on your maths skills

- Attend a Maths for Aptitude Tests session (organised by the Careers Service).
- You can also access one to one help for individual maths queries from the University's Mathematics Resource Centre, MASH www.bath.ac.uk/study/mash or try www.mathcentre.ac.uk.

Give yourself the best chance of success

- Make sure you are physically and mentally prepared for the tests. Do them when you are rested and will not be disturbed.

Types of tests

Test	What is being assessed?	Question types
Verbal reasoning	Ability to understand, analyse and interpret written information.	Short passages followed by <i>true/false</i> statements based on the text. There is only one correct answer to each question.
Numerical reasoning	Numerical skills; ability to read statistical information accurately; understanding of graphs.	Facts and figures presented in statistical tables or graphs with a series of multiple choice questions – only one will be correct. Check in advance if you are allowed to bring a calculator.
Diagrammatic reasoning	Ability to understand visual information and solve problems with visual reasoning. These are often called spatial awareness tests.	Infer a set of rules from a flow chart or diagram and apply these to a new situation. There is only one correct answer.
Personality questionnaires	Creates a profile of your motivation, interests and working style. Assesses how well you would fit into a particular role or the company.	There are no right and wrong answers to these tests. You cannot practice for these tests and should answer honestly. Don't try to second-guess 'correct' answers.
Situational judgement tests	Ability to choose the most appropriate action in workplace situations; how you would handle situations that could arise in your chosen role.	Reading about a scenario or watching a scenario unfold and then choosing the response that best deals with the scenario.

- Advise the employer if you have any special requirements (e.g. dyslexia) as you are often allowed extra time or are graded differently.

When taking the test

- Follow instructions carefully and ask for clarification if you are unsure.
- It is important to work as quickly and accurately as possible. If you are stuck on one question, move on to the next and come back to it if you have time. You may not be expected to complete all the answers so scoring as well as possible in the time you have is important.
- Do not just guess answers. Sometimes marks are deducted for incorrect answers.

Practice websites

- SHL formulate many of the tests for companies. You can practice different types of tests and receive feedback: www.shldirect.com
- Practice tests and answers – www.kent.ac.uk/careers/psychotests.htm
www.assessmentday.co.uk
www.theonlinetestcentre.com
www.psychometricinstitute.co.uk/
- Personality questionnaires: www.myersbriggs.org
www.keirse.com
www.teamtechnology.co.uk/myersbriggs.html
- Books and leaflets are available as a good source of information: for example, *Ultimate psychometric tests* by Mike Byron (Kogan Page 2008) or *All About Psychological Tests and Assessment Centres* by Jack van Minden (Management Books 2000)

Assessment Centres

🕒 **Assessment centres vary in structure from employer to employer, but their core purpose is to create an environment in which you, along with other candidates, demonstrate key workplace skills.**

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/assessment-centres>

Assessment centres are generally used by larger companies as the final selection stage. They consist of a range of tests and exercises designed to simulate a business environment and generate information about applicants. These tests will assess you against the required skills and the values of the company. They can last from a few hours to two days, with the company providing accommodation where necessary.

Possible Activities:

- **Psychometric or Occupational Tests**
These will provide an objective score for important skills (e.g. verbal reasoning, numeracy). You may also be asked to complete a personality inventory to create a profile of your working style and motivations (turn to 'Psychometric and Occupational Tests' for more information).
- **Interview**
There may be several interviews with different formats – some may be held on a one to one basis, others may be panel or group interviews. There may also be a more technical interview with a line manager at which they will also be assessing your potential fit within the organisation or a particular team (turn to 'Interview Skills' for more information).
- **Case Study**
A series of questions based on a hypothetical business problem. Usually there is no right or wrong answer. The interviewer is interested in your ability to analyse, problem solve and communicate. Asking the right clarification questions is also important (turn to 'Case Studies' for more information).

- **Group Exercise**

This can take many forms but is usually a discussion with a group of other students. There will be several assessors observing the group to see:

- Who demonstrates the competencies and values sought by the company
- Who helps the group stick to timeframes and objectives
- Whose points are accepted or ignored
- Who listens and analyses before contributing
- Who talks too much, dominating, interrupting or squashing other contributions
- Who encourages others to participate and builds on and adapts ideas

You may be asked to role play and sometimes applicants will be given different pieces of information. You are not necessarily in direct competition with the other group members so work together. Try to attend a mock group activity organised by the Careers Service or as part of the PDP.

- **Presentation**

You may be given a topic in advance to prepare or your presentation may be part of the case study or group exercise task. Presentations are usually 5-15 minutes long – make sure you don't over-run. Engage with the audience rather than lecture them and invite questions. Ensure your body language is positive and your delivery is concise and clear.

- **E-tray Exercise**

This is a business simulation task where you are given emails and other information to deal with. Designed to test your ability to analyse and prioritise information as well as your written communication and time management skills. You can

practise at www.gov.uk/civil-service-fast-stream-how-to-apply#open-access-tests-practice-tests

- **Lunch/Dinner/Networking**

This is still part of the assessment so it is important to network with current employees. This is a valuable

chance to demonstrate your enthusiasm for and interest in the company and role as well as your interpersonal skills. Try to relax and be yourself but keep in mind that you are still being observed so remain professional at all times.

Key notes

- Research and preparation into the different assessment centre activities is crucial and will help you deal with each element of the process.
- Assessment centres give you a valuable opportunity to find out more about the company and the role

Further resources

- *Assessment Centre* PDP workshop and mock group activity
- Companies usually provide information on what to expect at their assessment centre – ask them if you are not sure
- The Careers Service has many resources including DVDs on assessment centres, reports from previous students who have attended assessment centres and examples of case studies and e-tray exercises
- The 'Interviews and Assessment Centres Guide' provides more information and tips: www.bath.ac.uk/students/careers/docs.bho/interviewsassessmentcentres.pdf
- Information on all aspects of an assessment centre: www.prospects.ac.uk/interview_tips.htm
- Prepare for the different elements of the assessment centre by attending mock interviews and group activities; practising psychometric tests and e-tray exercises; attending presentation skills workshops; and researching the company and role from a variety of sources



Case Studies

“ Assessment centres, there is definitely a ‘skill to them’. I attended various sessions provided by the Placements Office to ensure I had as much experience as possible and be confident I could stand out (for a good reason). ”

Aimee Hendrickson, BAF 2015 Graduate

Case studies are becoming more and more commonplace in recruitment and are typically used as part of assessment centre processes. Case studies are often open ended questions that are designed to test candidates approach to and analysis of a problem.

Typical case study types and questions

Business Strategy

“A small recruitment start-up is struggling to be successful in a competitive marketplace. How could it improve its market share and profitability?”

Market Sizing or Estimation

“How many people visit supermarkets in the United Kingdom every day?”

Brain Teasers or Puzzles

“What is the probability of two football pitches having the same number of blades of grass?”

Miscellaneous

“What would you do if you were Prime Minister of the United Kingdom?”

Tips for case study success

- Read and re-read the question and any supporting material that you are given initially to ensure that you are clear of the question that you are answering.
- Frameworks e.g. SWOT or PESTLE analysis can be utilised but are designed to provide you with guidance, the employer is seeking a specific answer to the question.

- If it is a group case study position yourself in the middle of the group. Contribute and lead the discussion where appropriate but also ensure that you listen as well as invite others into the conversation. Employers will be considering team fit.
- It is important to be accurate but the process and your analytical ability is what is under scrutiny.

How to solve the problem

1. Begin by ensuring that you are clear on what you are trying to answer, do not be afraid to ask questions.
2. After initially considering the question develop some hypotheses and, using credible reasoning, accept or reject your initial thoughts.
3. Think “outside the box”, be creative in your consideration but also apply common sense.
4. Draw a conclusion based on your method, ensure that you clarify which ideas you accepted and rejected justifying why.

Key factors to consider when analysing a business problem include: customers, competitors, cost, marketing, growth, revenue and market share/size.

Additional Reading

The Prospects website provides some useful guidance on how to be successful with case studies www.prospects.ac.uk/interview_tips_interview_tests_and_exercises.htm

Alumni Profile



Craig Lynch
Business Administration, 2014

Current Employer/Role
CIL Management Consultants – Analyst

What attracted you to this career path?

I was drawn to management consultancy as a career path after having been developed a keen interest in business while studying at Bath and undertaking my placements. Management consultancy focuses on what businesses do, where they are placed within their market and how they can improve and grow, which are very tangible and interesting subjects to be thinking about on a day-to-day basis. Additionally, you are able to get great exposure to lots of different businesses and industries as well as acquire some valuable skills at the start of your career.

What skills are most important in your job?

In most jobs communication, initiative and pragmatism are essential, and being able to break problems down logically to help analyse them is particularly useful. In terms of hard skills, becoming literate in Excel and PowerPoint is also very useful.

Placements undertaken during degree

My first placement was at Towers Watson and my second placement was split between LGV Capital and Legal & General Investment Management.

Your top tips/advice to our current first year undergraduates

Take the opportunity to read about the business world to find out about how different businesses work and how they all interact with one another. Reading the newspapers and The Economist are very useful in building up a base of commercial awareness. Also, taking any opportunities to speak to people about what they do is beneficial – understanding what you will be doing from a job description on paper can be very ambiguous!

Interview Skills

“ Make sure you’re well prepared, do lots of research on the company, plan responses for interview questions and ask for feedback. At interviews, keep calm and give it your best! ”

Zoe Cruddos, BBA 2015 Graduate

Different types of interview

Interviews may take place in person, over the telephone, using Skype or occasionally using digital recording software (known as a Video Interview). They can involve a panel of interviewers or several interviewees (group interview). Interview questions can be divided into different categories – most interviews will contain a mixture of question types but it is sensible to ask the recruiter what format the interview will take to help your preparation.

Distance Interviewing

Advances in technology have helped interviews take place over long distances and even when availability is problematic. Overseas employers will use telephone and/or Skype to conduct interviews. Some employers will use video interviewing software which requires you record your responses into a computerised system and submit the all responses to the employer. Treat each format in the same manner as a face to face interview and use the tips on this page to guide you.

Question types

Competency based questions

Recruiters will often use competency questions when interviewing for placement and graduate role. These questions assess the skills or competencies you are likely to need for a particular role. The competencies that are sought by employers are often listed on the company website and stated in the job description. It is important you prepare possible answers from a variety of contexts (academic, work and extra-curricular). Use the CAR (Context Action Result) model to structure your answers.

“This role involves working as part of the Consulting Team. Give an example of a time you worked as part of a team to achieve a common goal.”

“Time management is a key skill required for this role. Talk me through a time when your ability to time manage was invaluable.”

“This role involves the ability to respond positively to challenge. Give examples when you have responded positively to a challenge.”

Biographical/chronological questions

Based largely on your application form or CV, these interviews concentrate on your academic and work experience to date, as well as your plans for the future.

“What is your greatest achievement to date?”

“What has been the most difficult situation you have ever found yourself in and how did you cope with it?”

“What goals do you have? Where do you see yourself in 5 years’ time?”

Case study

A series of questions based on a hypothetical business problem. Usually there is no right or wrong answer. The interviewer is interested in your ability to analyse, problem solve and communicate. Asking the right clarification questions is also important (turn to ‘Case Studies’ for more information).

Technical

Often the line manager of the particular role will ask questions designed to gauge candidates’ technical knowledge, skills or their

capacity to meet the particular demands of the role. These questions may be included in a general interview or you may be given a separate technical interview. It is more important to show your thought processes and logic than to get the right answer so don’t worry about getting the question wrong. Talk the interviewer through your thought process and admit to any gaps in your knowledge, stating that you are keen to learn. The questions will focus on both your understanding of and interest in the role, and on your knowledge of the industry more generally.

“How do you measure Return on Invested Capital?”

“What is the Dow Jones today?”

Maintain good eye contact with the interviewer(s).

- Consider taking examples of relevant work to show off in the interview
- Be prepared to talk about several examples that illustrate each criterion
- Make sure you have several possible questions to ask at the end of the interview. If your questions were answered during the interview, let the interviewer know that. This shows you are interested in the company

“Will I have my own project area or area of responsibility?”

“Will I be assigned a mentor?”

“I understand you have had students in this department in the past, is my placement likely to be similar in content?”

“Does the recent change in (something you have seen in the news) affect your business?”

In the interview

- Try to relax
- Be enthusiastic and remember to smile
- Listen carefully to the question and make sure you answer what you have been asked
- Allow yourself time to consider your best possible answer, rather than using the first example that comes to you
- Ask for clarification if you are not sure what you are being asked
- Speak clearly and not too fast (this is often difficult if you are nervous) – the CAR structure will help to structure your answers
- Be concise and specific in your answers
- Answer questions positively – even if you are asked about a weakness, failure or disappointment show what you have learnt from the experience
- Show your passion for and interest in the role and company
- Body language is important – shake hands at the beginning and end of the interview.

After the interview

Think about how it went; consider your own performance. Think about questions you were unhappy about and also things that went well. Most employers will offer feedback if you ask the placements staff. Learn from your mistakes and work on aspects of your skills that you want to improve on next time. Use the whole experience as a learning one and do not be discouraged if you have several interviews before securing a placement. If you feel you need extra interview guidance then contact the Careers Service – www.bath.ac.uk/careers/student – or ask your Placements Officer.

“ Each failed interview seemed a blow, but in hindsight, it was one of the most valuable lessons I have learnt. ”

Harry Fielder, BBA 2015 Graduate

Key notes

- Look over your original application and ensure you are fully briefed on the role/company/industry
- You should be commercially aware and therefore familiar with any recent mergers, acquisitions or divestitures or any recent news events related to the company, industry or wider economy which could have implications for the company
- It is important to use more than one source of information and that you form your own opinions on these issues and are confident to discuss them
- Ask the employer what format the interview will take
- Prepare answers to all possible kinds of interview questions, reflecting on your research and commercial awareness. Prepare bullet points about why you want to work for this company in this role. Make the reasons relevant to you – not just quoting from the company website
- The Careers Service and Placements Office have feedback from students who have previously attended an interview/selection process with various companies so read through these files in their offices
- The Management Alumni Team can also try to put you in contact with alumni who can give an insight to the selection process in their company
- Make sure you know where you are going and allow plenty of time to get there
- Make sure you have a suitable, clean and ironed interview outfit so that you can make a good first impression. You should be smart but comfortable so you can relax. If you are unsure what to wear, go more formal

Further resources

- *Interview skills and Group Exercise* PDP workshop
- Attend a mock interview with a company representative – some will be available through the PDP and you can also book one through the Careers Service
- Watch your own mock interview! The Careers Service has software which allows you to be recorded answering 15 different interview questions (you can choose which one you want to practice) and then play back your interview to see how you perform. To access the software book a 30 minute slot www.bath.ac.uk/careers
- The 'Interviews and Assessment Centres Guide' is a useful document prepared by the Careers Service www.bath.ac.uk/students/careers/docs.bho/interviewsassesscentres.pdf
- More information and tips about interviews: www.prospects.ac.uk/interview_tips.htm
- Company websites often have information on their interview process



Commercial Awareness

“ Take the opportunity to read about the business world, find out how businesses work and how they all interact with one another. ”

Craig Lynch, BBA 2014, CIL Management Consultants

What is commercial awareness?

Knowledge of the company, its clients and the industry as a whole, for example: who are the company's competitors and what external factors affect them. A general awareness of current affairs and the ability to articulate your opinion is also essential. Commercial awareness is measured at all stages of your application – in your application, at first interview and during any subsequent stages such as assessment centre. Thorough research is necessary before and whilst applying but it is also equally important to keep your knowledge up to date throughout the selection process.

Sources of information

Company websites

- 'About us' section of a company's website for information on structure, company values, mission statement, history and plans for the future
- The tone of voice, presentation and the style of the website can also tell you a lot about the company's values and culture
- View competitor's websites – is the company typical of the industry?

Website and newspaper articles about the company and industry

- Try to read broadsheet newspapers regularly so that you can stay up to date with current affairs. "The Financial Times" in particular is a valuable resource

Example questions

Commercial awareness will be assessed differently at each stage of the application process.

Stage of application	Example Questions/tasks to measure commercial awareness	Tips and preparation
Initial application	Who would be an ideal client for our company? Why? What services could we offer to this client?	Make sure you reflect the values of the company you are applying to in your answer.
First stage interview	Why did you apply to us? What do you expect to be doing in the first year with us? How are we different from our competitors?	Speak to someone working in the company to find out more about the culture.
Assessment centre	Case study – various company materials given for you to analyse. Make recommendations to a client about which company to invest in.	Often there is no one right answer; the company is interested in how you analyse and present information. A SWOT analysis can be appropriate for these questions.
Final stage interview	Justify the ideal client you referred to in your original application. Justify your recommendation for investment in the case study. How would you deal with a particular news event if you were CEO of the company/Prime Minister?	Again the recruiter is interested in your ability to analyse and communicate your ideas.

- Use the internet to search for news articles about key facts, ensure that you use credible sources such as www.bbc.co.uk/news avoid websites such as Wikipedia where content may not be totally accurate
- Keep up to date with business stories from more than one source e.g. newspapers, online, industry websites
- Set up Google alerts for particular companies or industries you are interested in applying to
- Don't just quote information from the websites – show what it means to you and your application

- Get involved in debates and discussions at University to practice your communication skills
- Don't be afraid to stand up for your opinion if you are challenged during an interview. The interviewer wants to see that you have analysed the situation carefully and are willing to support your opinions

Online business databases (e.g. MarketLine, FAME)

- These tools combine industry and company information meaning you can access a wide range of different information from one website
- Free access for all students from the library website

“ I believe the most challenging aspect of the application process for both placements was just organising my time to be able to research companies on a daily basis and send applications regularly around my normal university schedule. ”

Dariya Silko, BBA 2015 Graduate

International Placements

“ Think about the diverse, challenging and creative nature of the job combined with the opportunity to work with a diverse range of people in interesting locations across the globe. ”

Sam Holmes, BBA 2010 Graduate, Accenture

Working overseas can provide you with an exciting and challenging opportunity to enhance your employability skills and cultural awareness and develop your character and personal attributes. Many companies have global operations, therefore, often placements incorporate international opportunity into the role or, in some cases, the role can be entirely based overseas. This a challenging undertaking for a placement student, however it can be a good springboard for successful placement students.

Skills development

The placement may not require language skills but even when the language in the workplace is English there will be many customs particular to that country that you are not familiar with. To live in an unfamiliar place and learn to deal with work and day to day life develops many skills and attributes, such as communication, tact and diplomacy, flexibility, adaptability and confidence.

Cultural awareness

Working and living in another country gives you a unique insight into the culture and customs of that country and crucially the chance for you to develop your cultural awareness. The opportunity to work and socialise with people from different backgrounds is very important and this demonstrated cultural awareness and acceptance will develop your team work skills and ability to communicate effectively.

Living and working overseas

Many of the challenges surrounding living and working overseas arise not only during the experience but before entering the chosen country. There is a lot of preparation that needs to be done to enable you to enter the country and work there, access your money to support you, researching areas to live and find accommodation. This needs time and planning, particularly when needing to get certain documents like VISAs and work permits.

Student Profile



Aimee Hendrickson
BAF 2015 Graduate
Nike

Describe your main tasks and responsibilities on your placement.

As a Financial Analyst Intern at Nike UK/Ireland, my main tasks included working closely with the 'Brand Teams', arranging monthly meetings in order to update their forecasted monthly/quarterly spend. I worked closely with the UK Financial Planning Manager to ensure the Brand Teams kept within their budgets and to report any variances to budget & the prior forecast to the UK Finance Director.

How did you decide where to work for your placement?

I took advantage of the vast range of company presence there is on campus. I attended numerous company presentations to help learn more about individual companies and the roles they had to offer. I also met with my Placement Support Mentors, who helped me hugely in narrowing down to the sort of role I thought would best suit me.

What were the most challenging aspects of the recruitment process?

The Assessment Centres. There is most definitely "a skill to them". I attended various sessions provided by the Placements Office and the Careers Service and took whatever opportunity I could to ensure that I had as much experience as possible.

How valuable was the PDP programme in helping you secure your placement?

I would give the PDP programme 5/5. The mock interviews were hugely useful. It's fantastic that the University had people in from various companies as it gave you the true experience and the feedback was highly constructive.

During the placement recruitment process what would you say were the most valuable skills that you enhanced?

Communication, team work skills and timekeeping.

What would be your top tip for students currently going through the placement process?

Take advantage of the company presence on campus, they are great for experience, you learn lots about the company, and different roles within them and you can chat to students currently on placement, grads and people from the company. Networking is a key skill in the business world and it may even open your eyes to an option you hadn't considered before!

Getting started

- The Placements Office are a good starting point to discuss an international experience.
- Research employers with global operations or are based in another country may advertise opportunities on their website.
- Bath Alumni are located throughout the world and the School of Management has connections with many countries through these alum. This can often offer a good starting point when finding an international placement. Turn to 'The Bath Management Alumni Community' for more information.
- Existing networks are a great resource and if you have friends/family in another country consider speaking to them about any opportunity there.

Graduate Careers

“ I hope my graduate role will allow me to learn a lot and gain a better understanding of the business functions I would like to work with in the future. ”

Dariya Silko, BBA 2015 Graduate

Much of the information provided in the Professional Development Programme is orientated to applying for a graduate role in the UK but many of the selection processes may be similar in other countries, especially if you are applying to a multinational company. Many of the key points will also be relevant regardless of the company, location or role. Use your time at Bath to develop your skills and knowledge as much as possible. Attend the Careers Service sessions. Use the Management Alumni network and Careers Service to find out more about the experiences of Bath graduates and help you to prepare for interviews.

Do your research

Applications are more time consuming than you might expect. A typical graduate application process may take several months and include:

- Online application
- Aptitude tests
- Video or telephone interview
- First interview
- Assessment centre with presentation, group exercise, written exercise and more interviews

Employers can detect generic applications easily so ensure you research each company and role and tailor your application to the skills and values required. Structure your answers so that they are concise and answer the questions fully. During employer events organised by the Careers Service and Placements Office you can hear about different companies, their opportunities and what they look for in applicants.

Apply early

Before applying, ensure you have thoroughly researched the company. Large companies often advertise graduate opportunities one year before the role commences. Applications are processed on a rolling basis so the earlier you apply, the more opportunities there should be. Some UK companies can sponsor work visas for international students but often the number of visas is limited so it is especially important for international students to apply in good time. Additional companies will advertise later in the year. Bath is very well targeted by employers so keep checking the Careers homepage for new opportunities: www.bath.ac.uk/students/careers

Get involved with activities outside your academic studies

Employers are looking for candidates with excellent academic results, work experience and involvement in extra-curricular activities. Analyse your existing skills and work on any gaps whilst you are at University. The Students' Union provides many opportunities to get involved and enhance skills such as team working and leadership. See www.bathstudent.com for more information. You can use these experiences to work towards the Bath Award which recognises your involvement outside the academic sphere - www.bathstudent.com/bathaward

Learn from feedback

Employers will usually provide feedback from interviews and assessment centres so ask for this and make sure you use this feedback constructively, seeking further advice where appropriate.



Key notes

- Research the company and role thoroughly before you apply
- Tailor your applications to each company
- Be aware of your own skills and how to further develop them
- Answer questions in a structured way
- Practise for the different stages of the recruitment process

Further resources

- The Careers Service www.bath.ac.uk/students/careers provides a wealth of excellent resources and advice to support you through the recruitment process including:
 - Careers guidance and advice
 - Workshops and other resources to help with the recruitment process
 - Listing of graduate, temporary and internship vacancies
 - Reports from previous students on company recruitment processes
 - Enhanced support for international students
 - Signposting to other careers related resources

The Bath Management Alumni Office can put you in contact with alumni working in different companies and industries see <https://alumni.bath.ac.uk/netcommunity/bath-connection/home>

“ Make yourself stand out from the rest. Many applicants for graduate jobs have straight As and a degree from a top university like Bath. What makes you different? ”

Liam McGuinness, BBA 2006 Graduate, CIL Management Consultants

The Bath Management Alumni Community

📍 A supportive network of more than 13,000 graduates living in over 100 countries and working in a wide range of industries and professions.

Our alumni community

Alumni are graduates of a degree programme or university – you will automatically become our alumni when you graduate. You are now studying at one of the best business schools in the UK and our alumni recognise the advantages they gain by staying connected with us. Our alumni have a lifelong relationship with us – one that benefits them and the School. A strong and well connected alumni community reflects well on the School, helping to advance its external perception. Our alumni are proud to have studied at Bath and enjoy being part of raising the reputation of the University.

How do our alumni stay connected?

We organise business and social networking events that allow alumni to benefit from the Bath community. There are opportunities within the School for alumni to continue their professional development and to stay up to date with the latest research and ideas in their field. The Management Alumni Team acts as a central point for the network and helps alumni to connect with each other. Our alumni are happy to offer advice to other graduates and enjoy the opportunity to share their knowledge and experience. Many of our students are international and will return to their home country after graduation.

How does the alumni community benefit me as a student?

Alumni and other external contacts are important contributors to the Professional Development Programme and give real insights into potential

Bath Alumni Networks

Our alumni networks help our alumni living outside the UK to stay connected to the University.



future careers. The Management Alumni Team invites alumni back to the School from a range of professions and industries reflecting the broad range of careers pursued by Bath alumni.

Alumni sessions may cover:

- Consulting
- Investment banking
- Risk management
- Marketing
- Business operations

This list is not exhaustive – if a group of students expresses interest in a particular sector, the Management Alumni Team would be happy to discuss organising another session.

Bath Connection

Bath Connection is part of Bath Alumni Online, our graduates' online community. It is a joint initiative with the University Careers Service. This digital platform enables current students to network with the alumni volunteers and gain answers and guidance to their key careers-focused questions; anything from information about the volunteer's role and the company they work for to information about their experience in the recruitment process.

Management Alumni

Team contact:

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The Professional Development Programme For BSc students

Contact us

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www.bath.ac.uk/management



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