

# Careers Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Geography UGs and PGs

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Here is a summary of the most frequently asked questions for careers related matters. If you can't find the answer to your question here then please check out the Employability website [www.exeter.ac.uk/employability](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability) or book an appointment to see me or one of the other Careers Consultants.

## 1) I'm not sure what I want to do. What help and advice is available for me to decide what careers might be suitable for me?

Lots! Firstly, don't worry – knowing that you don't know what to do isn't a problem as long as you are prepared to do something about it!

The following online resources can be helpful starting point:

- *Prospects Planner* [www.prospects.ac.uk/links/54](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/54) is a useful online tool which can help you identify careers that you may be suited to by asking you questions about your strengths, weaknesses, interests and values. You will probably need about 45 minutes to undertake this.
- *Adult Directions* is another online careers guidance program. It uses an individual's work-related interests, skills and desired occupation level to identify suitable careers. You can access this resource for free by registering for it through Employability and Graduate Development at Reed Mews (opposite the Health Centre) or phone on (01392) 724493 (you'll need to provide your email address and think of a temporary password in order to register).
- The next stage will be to undertake some preliminary research into occupations of interest to you. The 'Explore types of job' section of the Prospects website is helpful [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) or click on 'Your Career Suggestions' in Adult Directions for more information which you can then compare and contrast.
- Exepert Scheme - Have you thought of the University's alumni (Exeter graduates) as possible employers and career mentors? Whatever the area of work you're considering, there are bound to be Exeter alumni there already. Many of them have said they'd be delighted to help current students with top tips about getting a foot in the door. You can find out about alumni who may be able to help you by contacting the Alumni Relations office on 01392 723141 at [alumni@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@exeter.ac.uk) or submit an online form [www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/careerplanning/exepert/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/careerplanning/exepert/)
- Talk to a Careers Consultant. Ian Hodges is the Careers Consultant for Geography and he will be more than happy to discuss your career ideas with you. You can see Ian in the Geography Department during term time (Mondays between 10 and 12). Book an appointment at the Geography Office. If you can't make Mondays, you can also see Ian or one of the other Careers Consultants, at our main office in Reed Mews (opposite the Health Centre) Monday - Friday, term time and the vacations. To make an appointment at Reed Mews phone (01392) 724493 the day before you'd like the appointment.

## 2) Is there a list of jobs that I can do with a Geography degree?

Geography is a very broad-based subject with many career paths available to you but there is a list of some of the common careers that people tend to go into if you are keen to make use of your Geography degree subject and the following resources highlight some of these. The Royal Geographical Society [www.rgs.org](http://www.rgs.org) have some very useful careers information which you may want to take a look at to help you find out more about career options with a Geography degree – ‘Going Places with Geography’ is a particularly useful RGS document to download.

*Options with your subject* on the Prospects website – click on ‘Geography’  
[www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Options\\_with\\_your\\_subject/p!eXbLc](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Options_with_your_subject/p!eXbLc)

*‘What do graduates do?’*

[www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/What\\_do\\_graduates\\_do\\_/p!efebppm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/What_do_graduates_do_/p!efebppm)  
gives details of destinations of graduates nationally by subject, six months after graduation.

*What can I do with my degree in Geography from Exeter?*

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/graduatedestinations/geography/6months/>  
provides details of destinations of graduates from the University of Exeter six months after graduation

However, these are not the only career options open to you – see below.

### **3) I don’t want to use my degree subject. What jobs are open to graduates from any subject?**

At least 40% of the vacancies the Careers and Employment Service receive state that the positions are open to any degree subject. So, if you want to use your Geography degree to move into other fields, there is ample opportunity. Many employers view the Bachelors degree as a generic qualification that enables students to apply for graduate level jobs. It is quite feasible for Geography graduates to work in areas such as business management and technology as well as many others (see FAQ 1 if you are struggling to come up with career ideas).

### **4) Where can I find information on getting work experience / volunteering?**

In today’s competitive job market, gaining relevant work experience is more of a necessity than a luxury, because without it you are likely to find getting a job a more difficult and lengthy process. You may even have to get that relevant experience after you graduate before you can find a job.

The *Learning from Experience* module offered within Geography is worth considering as a means of undertaking a period of work experience and associated academic work alongside this to draw out what you have gained from the placement and how this links back to Geography. Contact Ian Cook [i.j.cook@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:i.j.cook@exeter.ac.uk) (Learning from Experience Module Convenor) for more specific information about the requirements for this module.

Geography also has a part-time Work Placement Co-ordinator, Ian Osborne, who may also be able to offer advice on obtaining work placements during your time here at Exeter email: [I.D.Osborne@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:I.D.Osborne@exeter.ac.uk)

Information on work experience and internships can be found on the following link

[www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/jobhunting/workexperience/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/jobhunting/workexperience/) including the University of Exeter

*Jobsurfing* internship database.

The *Prospects* website has some useful information on work experience -

[www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Work\\_experience/pl1e1qalLid](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Work_experience/pl1e1qalLid)

*Prospects* occupational profiles also contain useful ideas for work experience / typical employers and contact addresses e.g professional bodies

[www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Explore\\_types\\_of\\_jobs/pl1elmjX](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Explore_types_of_jobs/pl1elmjX)

'I want to work in...' pages of our website (all occupational sectors are covered)

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/careerplanning/sector/>

## 5) Where can I find job vacancy information?

There are basically three methods of finding jobs – look at advertised vacancies (e.g websites, specialist journals, newspapers etc), speculative applications (CV and covering letter to access the 'hidden' job market) and through the use of recruitment agencies. Here are some ideas of how to get started with finding job vacancies:

### ***Employability and Graduate Development:***

EGD publishes vacancies for finalists and graduates on our 'Jobsurfing' database:

[www.ext.prospects.ac.uk/casa/servlet/casa.jobseeker.JSVacServlet?mode=menu](http://www.ext.prospects.ac.uk/casa/servlet/casa.jobseeker.JSVacServlet?mode=menu)

EGD receives copies of various publications with student and graduate vacancies throughout the year. Visit EGD to pick up your copy whilst stocks last.

A number of graduate recruiters visit the University of Exeter, especially in the autumn term, to give presentations about their organisation and their recruitment processes. Go to our events pages to see what's on offer:

[www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/)

### ***Careers / Recruitment Fairs:***

Employers with both current and future vacancies to fill often visit recruitment fairs held at various sites across the country. Visit the events pages on our website for details of Careers Fairs at the University of Exeter and in other places.

### ***Websites with online vacancies:***

There are many websites containing graduate vacancies. Click here for a list of general job sources: <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/resources/>

If you would like to search for job vacancies in a particular sector, you may wish to look at the following section of our website for links to specific job vacancy sites:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/careerplanning/sector/> (click on the occupational sector you are interested in e.g. 'environmental/animal care' for environment related vacancy/careers information etc)

### ***Newspapers / Journals:***

National and local newspapers hold job vacancies in many occupational sectors, some of which are aimed at graduates.

Specialist journals are also a source of vacancies, sometimes at graduate level.

### ***Recruitment Agencies:***

Recruitment Agencies are commercial organisations who act on behalf of employers with vacancies to fill. Some deal with a whole range of types of work, although many specialise in particular occupational sectors.

## 6) How can I find a part-time job whilst studying?

*The Works* (based in Devonshire House) is an excellent source of advice and part-time/temporary job vacancies in and around the Exeter area -

[www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/theworks](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/theworks)

Part-time work can be great for your CV as well as earning money.

## 7) I need advice on how to write application forms / CVs / covering letters? What help is available to me?

CVs and covering letters are often required in the job hunting process, whether you are responding to a job advert which asks you to 'apply in writing' or if you are applying to an organisation speculatively to enquire whether they have any vacancies (or for work experience). It is vital that your CV and covering letter is produced to a high standard as this is your marketing document to a potential employer. Various CV workshops are available for you to participate in to ensure that your CV is as effective as it can be. Book your place here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/)

Check out the resources on <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/jobhunting/skills/>  
The *Prospects* website also has a great section on applications / CVs - [www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Applications\\_\\_CVs\\_and\\_interviews/p!eefmd](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Applications__CVs_and_interviews/p!eefmd)

**We're here to help** - Get your draft applications / CVs / covering letters checked by a Careers Consultant to ensure you are promoting yourself effectively, before submitting them. See FAQ 1 for more details about how to book an appointment with a Careers Consultant.

## 8) Do you have any resources that will help me practice psychometric tests and interview skills?

Why not book a place on our Introduction to Psychometric Testing Course to find out more? Click here to book your place: [www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/)

If you would like to take a **free online practice psychometric test**, please contact the Employability and Graduate Development in person or by phone on 01392 724493 to register for the test; the test is also open to graduates. It's a verbal reasoning and numeracy test similar to those used by graduate recruiters. Your results will be emailed to you as soon as you have completed the test and you are welcome to book an appointment to discuss the results with a Careers Consultant.

SHL Practice online tests are also useful, although these may not fully replicate those used by employers.

The *Prospects* website also has some useful tips on how to prepare for psychometric tests: [www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Applications\\_\\_CVs\\_and\\_interviews/p!eefmd](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Applications__CVs_and_interviews/p!eefmd)

## 9) Do you have any resources that will help me prepare for an Assessment Centre?

The following guide to assessment centres has been produced which outlines the basics you need to know if you are invited to attend an assessment centre:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/events/skills/assessmentcentres/>

The *Prospects* website contains useful tips on preparing for Assessment Centres:  
[www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Applications\\_\\_CVs\\_and\\_interviews/p!eefmd](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Applications__CVs_and_interviews/p!eefmd)

You are also more than welcome to discuss this further at an appointment with a Careers Consultant.

### **10) I'm considering postgraduate study – what help and advice is available to me?**

Postgraduate study, both research and taught, is a popular choice for Exeter students and graduates. Whether you are considering studying in the UK or abroad you will need to choose your route with care and make sure that the course both fits with your interests and also your future career plans.

The following link provides a useful starting point for those considering postgraduate study -  
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/students/postgraduatestudy/>

The Prospects website also contains a really useful section and course search function -  
[www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Postgrad\\_study\\_main\\_menu/p!eFpclp](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Postgrad_study_main_menu/p!eFpclp)  
Book an appointment with a Careers Consultant to discuss your ideas for postgraduate study further. Academic staff within the School are also a valuable source of advice if you are considering postgraduate study, so it may also be helpful to discuss this with relevant staff too.

### **11) What is The Exeter Award?**

The **Exeter Award** is an achievement award for undergraduate and taught postgraduate students at the University of Exeter. The Award is designed to enhance the employability of University of Exeter graduates by providing official recognition and evidence of extracurricular activities and achievements. These include: attendance at skills sessions and training courses, active participation in sporting and musical activities, engagement in work experience and voluntary work.

Click here to get started with The Exeter Award -  
[www.exeter.ac.uk/exeteraward/gettingstarted/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exeteraward/gettingstarted/)

### **12) What is the Exeter Leaders Award?**

The **Exeter Leaders Award** focuses on leadership and achievement and participants must demonstrate their leadership skills for a prolonged period of time, or an outstanding achievement and complete six additional elements. You need to have completed The Exeter Award *before* you can register for the Exeter Leaders Award.

For more information about the criteria for the Exeter Leaders Award click here -  
[www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterleadersaward/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterleadersaward/)

### **13) How do I keep up to date with the latest career and employer events happening on campus and elsewhere?**

For the latest information check out our website [www.exeter.ac.uk/employability](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability) for both campus events and also for a range of UK wide careers related events / fairs.

### **14) Can I get help from Employability and Graduate Development at Exeter after I have graduated?**

Yes, you most certainly can and for as long as you need our help – check out our graduate pages for more details of the support on offer: [www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/graduates/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/employability/graduates/)  
Ideally, we'd like to see you well before you graduate though! Make the most of the resources available to you during your studies here at Exeter if at all possible i.e. workshops, training events, 1:1 careers appointments, careers fairs, alumni events etc.

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