Healthcare
Career and Industry Guide

EMPLOYABILITY TEAM

Advancing Careers

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Introduction

"What can I do with a Health and Social Care degree?"
"What can I do with a Business and Healthcare degree?"
"Which companies offer careers with my degree?"

If you're asking yourself these questions then we would advise you to research your career choices as thoroughly and as early as possible, particularly in relation to experience required, different career routes you can explore or where postgraduate study choices can develop future opportunities.

Three ways you will succeed in finding a graduate job:

1. Undertaking paid work whilst at university or in the six months immediately after
2. Focusing your job search exclusively on graduate level jobs and making your applications whilst still studying
3. Having a career plan upon leaving university

I have a degree, now what?

If you don't know what career you want when you graduate, you may have more options than you think. Having a degree opens you up to many graduate level jobs and postgraduate study, which doesn't specifically have to be in healthcare, as many industries are open to graduates from any degree background. So, explore your options!

The below link has some useful guidance for graduates who are still deciding on their career ideas and options; key skills that are gained in each degree and what you can do with them.
https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/career-ideas/i-have-degree-now-what

Career Decision Making

Your first step should be to bridge the gap between where you are and where you want to be. Exploring your values, interests, and skills will help you find educational and career options that match up with your goals and plan for the future.

As well as being familiar with opportunities you can secure with the degree you are studying or have studied, it may be useful to take a careers assessment or quiz, to get a deep understanding of industries or alternative roles you may be suited to. Examples of these are below:

- **Buzz Quiz** – A short, fun quiz which uses the Myer-Briggs personality factors to determine what careers may suit you (as well as other things).
  https://icould.com/buzz-quiz/

- **National Careers Service Skills Assessment** – An assessment that supports you in identifying your transferable skills as well as finding out what interests and motivates you.
  https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-assessment

- **Prospects –** Offers a 'Career Planner' which is a detailed career quiz as well as the 'Job Match Beta' which asks questions on interests, as well as what you find purposeful and rewarding, matching your answers with job roles.
  https://www.prospects.ac.uk/planner

Types of Healthcare roles

A health and social care degree covers a range of areas, with many possible routes to explore. In general, your degree can fall into two areas:

- specialist roles
- clerical/administrative/operational roles

Specialist roles, including nursing, social work, midwifery and occupational therapy, require you to be a registered healthcare professional. You'll need a relevant approved postgraduate degree and to register with a professional body to work in these roles.

What career routes can I consider?

The sector is wide, so there are lots of opportunities you can explore after you graduate:

- ambulance services
- care management
- clergy
- charity
- children and early years
- community development
- counselling
- dentistry
- health informatics
- health promotion
- healthcare administration and management
- health visitor
- housing
- medical sales
- medicine
- medical research
- mental health
- midwifery
- nursing
- nutrition and diet
- optometry and opticians
- pathology
- pharmacy
- physiotherapy
- police force
- probation
- psychological therapies
- public health
- occupational therapy
- radiography
- rehabilitation roles; speech, language and physical therapists
- social work
- special educational needs
- teaching
- well-being
- youth work

You could work in the National Health Service (NHS), private healthcare or private/non-profit organisations in a range of settings including:

- care homes or hospices
- community healthcare (e.g. doctors' surgeries, dental surgeries, health clinics)
- hospitals
- medical laboratories
- people's homes

In large organisations such as the NHS and private healthcare providers such as Bupa, there are also jobs for graduates in:

- customer care
- finance
- hospitality
- human resources
- IT
- legal services
- marketing
- procurement
- sales

Understanding the industry and your career path

This a wide-ranging sector; not only do you need to think about the industry and type of role but also the specific groups of people you would like to work with. Do you want your client base to be the elderly, young people and children, families, people with mental or physical disabilities or others.

Typical employers

Many health and social care graduates work in roles across education, health, public services, and the charity sector. Typical employers include:

- the NHS
- local authorities including social services
- charities, not-for-profits, and community organisations
- schools, colleges, early years organisations, or adult education settings
- independent healthcare organisations including, Bupa, BMI Healthcare, Care UK, Ramsay Health Care UK, Spire Healthcare, The Nuffield Trust
- ambulance services, police force and probation

There are also a variety of opportunities available across the private sector, for example, within care companies and private healthcare organisations. Graduates can also work within social prescribing, employed by either the NHS or a private healthcare company and working in partnership with community groups.

Where and how can I do my research?

General Research

NHS Careers
Prospects – Healthcare Industry
What jobs can you get with a healthcare degree?
Healthcare operations and management jobs

Targeted Research

How to become a Nurse
How to become a Social Worker
How to become an Occupational Therapist
How to become a Midwife
How to become a Physiotherapist
How to become a Counsellor/Psychotherapist
How to become a Radiographer
How to become a Healthcare Manager

Transferable skills

A degree in Health and Social Care provides students with knowledge of complex issues across the health and care sectors and prepares students for relevant careers within the industry. It provides students with an understanding of health and social care from practical and academic perspectives, as you'll learn to:

- recognise and understand management practices in health and social care
- research and analyse complex topics related to health and social care using inter-disciplinary approaches
- formulate and present arguments through a range of assignment methods, including reports, essays, presentations, and group projects
- produce an independent dissertation on a topic of your choice, applying research methods and analysing relevant data effectively

You'll also develop a range of skills and competencies, including:

- written communication skills - to present your knowledge and argument effectively through reports and essays
- verbal communication and presentation skills - to effectively engage in lectures, tutorials, presentations, and supervision meetings with academics
- the ability to work independently and as part of a team - to engage in independent research and contribute to group projects
- research skills and data analysis - to critically analyse information and data and apply it to a specific assignment
- time management and project management skills - managing multiple deadlines and planning assignments from start to finish
- multi-tasking and problem-solving skills - managing competing priorities while studying

How to gain experience

Whatever career area you're interested in, finding some short-term paid or voluntary work will improve your prospects of getting a graduate job and can give you a valuable insight into how a company or organisation operates. Students who gain relevant work experience while studying secure graduate level employment quicker after graduating.

Please see our ***'Ways to gain experience and skills throughout your degree'*** resource under 'Employability Resources' on the Employability VLE tile for more ideas and information on gaining experience. Here are some ideas that you may want to consider:

- Volunteering – this can be a great way to gain industry specific skills and knowledge and will give you some great experience to add to your graduate CV.

  Volunteering demonstrates commitment and is an excellent way to gain experience in dealing with individuals, children, families and caring for vulnerable groups. You can seek opportunities to get healthcare experience in your local hospital, doctor's surgery, day centres or schools and nursing homes. If you like to work with children, you could volunteer in schools, summer camps, youth clubs and local sports teams. Experience of mentoring, counselling, or befriending may also be useful for social work and related careers.

  Victim support organisations, homeless shelters and mental health charities such as Mind provides valuable experience for those hoping to work with vulnerable groups as well as phone line counsellor roles for charities such as ChildLine, Nightline or the Samaritans.

  If you're interested in alternative approaches to health and healing, you could explore work experience within a holistic health practice. Volunteering on a health project in a developing country is also valuable career preparation.

  Other relevant experience includes working in a community setting or at fitness centres in health promotion or getting involved in more wide-ranging community projects at advice centres, community centres, churches and other faith communities.

    - NHS Volunteering
    - Do.it
    - CharityJob
    - Team London Volunteering
    - Volunteer Match
    - Reach volunteering
    - Volunteering Matters
    - Voluntary Worker
    - Idealist
    - Just Serve
    - NCVO

- Internships – these are work experience opportunities offered by an organisation for a fixed period of time. They are typically undertaken by students and graduates looking to gain relevant skills.
    - Placements & Internships for Students | RateMyPlacement
    - Internships | Bright Network
    - Virtual Internships | The Forage

- Relevant work experience – work shadowing or paid work experience. Can you find any administrative or office-based experience within the healthcare industry? Can you find a role supporting individuals in a care capacity? Can you take on any responsibilities in your current role that include management functions?

- Networking - this is important and helps you develop contacts in the industry. Many organisations and professional bodies host student events and can provide you with networking opportunities that may support you in finding relevant experience. Explore student membership of other supporting organisations!

Further Healthcare courses and qualifications

Postgraduate/Masters qualifications

Master's degrees are available in a very wide range of healthcare and public health-related subjects. Some are specifically aimed at people who are already qualified in a certain field, but others are more general and open to those with other qualifications and backgrounds. For many health-related careers, such as Nursing, Social Worker and Occupational Therapy you will need to take a Master's degree in order to qualify in your profession.

Think about your next steps and whether you will need to pursue a postgraduate qualification in order to get there.

Anglia Ruskin University main campus have a number of specialist postgraduate courses in Social Work, Nursing, Mental Health and Occupational Therapy etc, so you can explore the range of courses directly through their website and admissions team.
ARU Postgraduate Degrees

You can also search for courses you're interested in at other universities:

- Find A Masters
- UCAS Postgraduate

Please also find listed below some direct links to masters courses at other London universities - this is a preliminary list and we would encourage you to complete your own research to find the course that's most suitable for you.

Nursing

University of Greenwich – Adult Nursing
Kingston University London – Adult Nursing
University of West London – Adult Nursing
London South Bank University – Adult Nursing
University of West London – Adult and Mental Health Nursing
Middlesex University London – Mental Health Nursing
University of West London – Mental Health Nursing
University of Greenwich – Mental Health Nursing
University of Kingston – Mental Health Nursing
London South Bank University – Mental Health Nursing
University of Greenwich – Children's Nursing

Social Work
University of Greenwich
Brunel University London
University of East London
London Metropolitan University
Middlesex University London
London South Bank University

Occupational Therapy
Brunel University London
London South Bank University

Midwifery
Kingston University
Middlesex University London

Physiotherapy
University of Roehampton
London South Bank University
Brunel University London

Speech and Language Therapy
City University of London

Public Health
London Metropolitan University
University of Greenwich
Middlesex University London
University of Westminster
University of East London

What are Pre-Registration courses

Many postgraduate courses are listed as pre-registered courses and that means that the courses are validated by the governing accreditation organisation. This means that if you study a postgraduate course that is advertised as a pre-registration course, you will receive a registered status at the end, which is what you need to be able to practice in your area of specialism.

The common organisations accrediting registration status are as follows:
Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
Social Work England
Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT)
Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

How do PGDips and PGCerts differ from Masters degrees?

Postgraduate diplomas (PGDip) and certificates (PGCert) are perfect for those who don't have the time or the funds for a full Masters. Ideal if you'd like to increase your knowledge, without having to write another dissertation.

There is lots of further information available about what these involve and the benefits and drawbacks.
Postgraduate diplomas and certificates

What Healthcare graduate schemes are available?

NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme

A fast-track programme to prepare you to work as a senior manager in healthcare; during the scheme you are employed on a fixed-term contract and receive a salary.

You can specialise in one of six areas:

- general management
- finance
- human resources
- health informatics
- policy and strategy
- health analysis

NHS Graduate Training Accelerated Programmes

Accelerated or shortened courses available in certain clinical professions such as nursing and the allied health professions; undertake training in 2 years instead of 3 or 4.

These courses are available in:

- nursing – adult, children's, learning disabilities, and mental health fields
- diagnostic and therapeutic radiography
- dietetics
- occupational therapy
- orthoptics
- paramedicine
- physiotherapy
- podiatry
- speech and language therapy

Frontline Graduate Scheme

Children and Families Social Work - 2-year, salaried social work training programme.

Step Up to Social Work

An intensive full-time, fully funded, Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work training programme, that allows you to become a qualified social worker in just 14 months.

Think Ahead Graduate Scheme
Fast-track mental health social work scheme; a busaried and salaried 2 year scheme

National Graduate Development Programme
Fast-track national graduate programme specifically for mangerial roles working in local government

Police Now Graduate Scheme
Competitively salaried, 2-year graduate training programme; at the end of the 2 years, you have a number of options inside policing.

Unlocked Graduate Scheme
A leadership development programme that recruits graduates and career changers to become prison officers.

Please note that these are just a few examples of graduate schemes. These organisations often attend graduate recruitment open day events and host videos on their websites to give students an insight into what a career there might be like.

You'll also find them active on social media, where you'll be able to ask questions to those who've already completed the graduate training programme.
Websites that you can search for graduate schemes are:

- Bright Network
- Prospects
- Give a Grad a Go
- Milkround
- Target Jobs

Where to look for other graduate jobs and part-time opportunities?

If you are looking for part time or flexible opportunities, please see our ***'Finding part-time graduate work'*** resource on the 'Employability Resources' tile of the VLE.

Generic job searching websites

Generic job search websites are widely used by organisations to post jobs in any industry or level. Although these websites can be useful to find a range of opportunities, you may find that the same jobs are advertised across many platforms, and because they aren't focused on the graduate market, they can be highly competitive with lots of widely advertised and often duplicated roles.

- Reed
- Indeed
- Total Jobs
- CV Library

Using industry specific job searching websites may save you time and allow you to find opportunities that best fit your interests, because they specialise in roles that suit your career direction and bespoke for the industry.

Healthcare specific job searching websites

NHS Band 5 roles are the professional entry level jobs, and they include a diverse range of of clinical, management and administrative roles.

- NHS Jobs
- Individual NHS Trust websites
- NHS England
- BMJ Careers
- Healthjobs.co.uk
- Social Care and Education Jobs
- Health Jobs UK
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
- HCA Healthcare

Recruitment Agencies

Another way of searching for roles is by using recruitment agencies as they work directly with organisations that are looking to hire. Recruiters are consultants that match candidates to job roles using interviews and application support. Contacting recruitment agencies is another way of maximising your chances of finding roles, as they contact you if a role that suits your interests, skills, knowledge, and experience becomes available.

General recruitment agencies that support graduates:

- Hays
- Adecco
- Morgan Hunt
- Tiger Recruitment
- Huntress

Healthcare recruitment agencies in London include:

- Pulse Jobs
- Sky Care Recruitment
- TFS Healthcare
- Howard Finley
- Star Nursing and Care Ltd
- Medacs
- PSL Recruitment
- Vertex Healthcare
- Medicco Healthcare
- Carehome.co.uk
- MSI Recruitment
- Zentar
- Exceed Healthcare
- HCP Staffing

Changing Careers

It's never too late to re-train in another field - in fact, having life experience behind you when heading back to university can work to your advantage.

Make a career change | Prospects.ac.uk
Career Change Advice | At 30, 40, 50 | Career Consultants
How to Change Your Career | Guardian Jobs (theguardian.com)
How To Change Careers, According To 50 People Who Made A Pivot (forbes.com)

Whilst you are completing your degree, or once you have graduated, you may be looking to make a career change into a different industry or a different role. Consider these points when looking to progress into something new.

1. Stepping Up
   a. Can you progress from your current role into a new role within the company or industry?
   b. Have you spoken to your manager or HR department about the opportunity for progression or taking on further responsibilities?
   c. Can you accept management or supervisory responsibilities?
   d. Can you apply for a role similar to your current role where there is scope for development?

2. Stepping Out
   a. Move into a different sector - have you researched what sectors you are interested in? Can you network with individuals in this sector? Can you gain any relevant work experience?
   b. Look into your transferrable skills and how these can be used in another role or industry
   c. Demonstrate how you can be a great fit and asset to another company

Do you already have considerable Healthcare experience?

You may already have considerable relatable experience that you have gained prior to studying for a degree. An undergraduate or postgraduate degree in Health and Social Care can be a great way to secure your career acceleration and rise into managerial and leadership positions. Having extensive industry experience, alongside a degree, may open the door to career progression opportunities and senior positions.

When searching for senior leadership or managerial positions, you may need to use specialist job searching websites which cater for applicants with extensive industry knowledge and experience. Some of these websites may only list jobs that have a salary of £50,000 or above, and are specifically designed to support professionals with extensive experience, so you find these more helpful than the graduate schemes aimed for entry level skills in the sector.

- Aruba Exec
- Exec Appointments
- Executives on The Web
- Experteer
- Senior Executive jobs | Guardian Jobs (theguardian.com)
- Executive Opportunities - Search Executive Jobs Online (stoneexecutive.co.uk)

Psychometric Testing

Many employers use psychometric tests as part of the recruitment process. They're common in graduate jobs, work placements and internships. Psychometric tests are used to:

- Identify the people best suited to a particular job
- See if you are a good fit for their company culture
- Screen a lot of applicants without having to interview everyone

You'll see tests of things like:

- Verbal reasoning – your ability to understand written information
- Numerical reasoning – how you think using numbers
- Abstract or spatial reasoning – your ability to understand patterns, logical rules or work with shapes
- Personality - questions about how you behave, to predict how you might act in a work situation (there are no right or wrong answers)
- Situational judgement tests - set a scene and ask what you would do in that situation

Psychometric Testing can be quite difficult if you have not had any experience of them in the past. You can practice these tests on Career Zone by going to the 'Aptitude Test' section. You can also find free practice tests on sites like:

- The Psychometric Test Project
- The British Psychological Society
- SHL practice tests

Speculative Applications

A speculative application is when the job seeker conducts research and directly contacts a company they wish to work for to see if there are any employment opportunities. Statistically, almost 60% of jobs are not actively advertised on the open market (UK Careers Fair).

Targeting and reaching out to companies to enquire about opportunities may increase your chances of success in the competitive job market. Being proactive in this way can give you access to a much wider variety of roles and increase your chances of success in the competitive job market.

Speculative applications provide a direct route into the company and contacting recruiters can lead to:

- Temporary or permanent work
- Internships or work shadowing opportunities
- Increased business connections

Even if it turns out there isn't a job available, your positive approach may impress the employer sufficiently that they'll bear you in mind for future vacancies that arise.

To find out more about speculative applications, please see page 5 of our ***'Cover Letter writing guide and examples'*** under the 'Employability Resources' tile for more information and an example.

Professional Bodies

Professional bodies are organisations who maintain inspection over the conduct, knowledge and key skillset and practices of that profession. These professional bodies offer membership to those working in the sector or profession, so they can have access to labour market information, trends, conferences, workshops, seminars, and exclusive job opportunities. Becoming a member of a professional body gives you full access to these events and vacancies and allows you opportunities to continue your professional development within the industry.

Below are some of the professional bodies for the Healthcare industry.

- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- Social Work England
- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT)
- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)

CareerZone

Career Zone is a digital platform which provides careers and employability online resources for all our students. CareerZone has great resources to help you explore, understand and decide your career path, and the below sections provide you up to date information on various industries and job roles.

- **'Industry Reports'** – bespoke sections on Healthcare with further links to useful websites for further exploration
- **'Labour Market Information'** - explore different roles, with facts about each role, including employment growth, average working hours and salaries, as well as common tasks and required qualifications
- **'Career Pathways'** - videos directly from people who perform various roles, allowing you to get a real sense of what the role is about.

To access Career Zone, log into your VLE platform. On the right side of the screen, you will see 'Services' where you can click on the Career Zone button, which takes you directly into the platform.

Enterprise

You might also want to explore the world of enterprise. If you've got a great idea and you spot a gap in the market and want to earn a living from doing something you're passionate about, if you start your own business, you won't be unemployed.

You might want to help others or make the world a better place, so if you have a product or service that can save people time, or money, or stress, and generally make life better, then this is always a great reason for starting a business.

The Enterprise Hub is an entrepreneurial support service provided to current students and alumni who wish to establish their own businesses. The Enterprise Team is comprised of experts who possess a wide range of

specialist business skills and experience. This includes a group of students and alumni entrepreneurs who offer not only their insights to running a successful business but also provide additional guidance as peer mentors. The Hub offers bespoke workshops to those already running businesses as well as those seeking to establish new start-ups. To register your interest or for more information please contact our Enterprise Team via email - Enterprise@london.aru.ac.uk

LinkedIn

It can be hard to stand out in the job market when there are so many other graduates trying to do the same thing. One quick win is to have a LinkedIn account to raise your profile and build up professional contacts while still at university.

Benefits of using LinkedIn:

- Build your personal brand - people will remember you and your brand when they look for someone with your particular skills and expertise. A strong personal brand can lead to new opportunities
- To build a strong network of professional contacts - you never know when a connection will come in handy and the bigger your network, the more chance you have of being referred to a job role
- To prove your dedication - having a LinkedIn account as a student proves that you are dedicated to pursuing a career
- To get job alerts - you can program LinkedIn to send you job alerts for certain companies, industries or specific job titles, so that you'll never miss out on a great opportunity again

Employability Support

If you need any employability support or want to discuss your future career options, you can book a one-to-one appointment with one of our Careers Consultants. So, whether you're looking to prepare for your first graduate role and need advice on your CV or application form, or you're looking for a part-time job to fit around your studies or want to apply for a postgraduate course, then please drop us an email at employability@london.aru.ac.uk or call us 0207 400 6789 and we'll get you booked in as soon as possible.