



# Project Management Career and Industry Guide



EMPLOYABILITY  
TEAM

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Advancing Careers

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## Introduction

“What can I do with a Project Management 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 Finance and Accounting, 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>

## What are Project Managers?

The project manager is responsible for day-to-day management of the project and must be competent in managing the six aspects of a project, i.e. **scope**, **schedule**, **finance**, risk, **quality** and **resources**. Project managers work on specific projects that have definite outcomes, have time limits and have to stay within a budget. They are vital to the businesses they work for.

Jobs are available across all sectors, from business, IT and engineering to healthcare, marketing and retail.  
[5 Industries That Are Hiring Project Managers | ARU Distance Learning \(anglia.ac.uk\)](#)

## What do roles in Project Management involve?

- Planning what work needs to be done, when and who's going to do it
- Looking at the risks involved in a particular project and managing these risks
- Making sure the work is done to the right standard
- Motivating the team of people involved in the project
- Co-ordinating work done by different people
- Making sure the project is running on time and to budget
- Dealing with changes to the project as and when necessary
- Making sure the project delivers the expected outcomes and benefits

## Roles related to Project Management

- [Project Manager](#)
- [Project Officer](#)
- [Assistant Project Manager](#)
- [Project Coordinator](#)
- [Project Administrator](#)
- [Project Analyst](#)
- [Change Control Manager](#)

## What qualifications do I need?

You can get into general project management with any degree, although courses in business or project management are particularly useful. However, for more specific project management roles, such as those in engineering or IT, subject knowledge is more important, so an undergraduate degree in a related subject will prove useful.

You don't need a postgraduate qualification but if your first degree is unrelated, a Masters could increase your chances of success.

## What skills are linked to Project Management?

- **Time management** - you'll spend time figuring out how other people spend their time, but it's equally important to be skilled in managing your own workload. It's your job to prioritise and delegate tasks successfully. You need to be skilled at identifying the most important tasks, and saying no to requests that will get in the way of completing priority tasks.
- **Organisation** - how can a project manager organise the work of others if they're unorganised themselves? The job demands a high level of responsibility from setting goals, managing meetings and creating estimates and timelines to scheduling and tracking the progress of a project.
- **Communication** - the majority of your time will be spent liaising with others. You need to be able to clearly articulate visions, ideas, goals and project issues to a variety of people, from team members to stakeholders. Your written communications skills need to be honed for report writing, while your verbal skills need to be up to scratch for meetings and presentations. Good listening ability is also essential.
- **Negotiation** - project managers need to be excellent negotiators in order to find common ground to accomplish project goals. You'll need to work with teams, often with competing interests to negotiate resources, budgets and schedules. Knowing how to negotiate a win-win outcome for all parties is the sign of a good project manager.
- **Risk management** - identifying and managing risk shows that you're in control of your project. You need to stay ahead of the game and predict and create solutions to problems before they arise in order to deliver projects successfully.
- **Leadership** - being able to lead your team, as well as manage their activities is vital. You need to be able to inspire team members, set the project vision and motivate your colleagues.

## Where and how can I do my research?

[How to become a project manager | Prospects.ac.uk](https://prospects.ac.uk)

[How to become a Project Manager | reed.co.uk](https://reed.co.uk)

[How To Become a Project Manager | Indeed.com UK](https://indeed.com)

[Project Management in 2023 - A Complete Guide \(monday.com\)](https://monday.com)

[Project Manager interview questions and answers - Workable](#)

## How to gain relevant experience

Project management skills and experience can be gained in a variety of ways!

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

1. Gain experience in a role that supports a Project Manager. Some of these roles may be entry level roles whereas others may require some project experience:

- [Junior Project Manager](#)
  - [Project Assistant](#)
  - [Product Assistant](#)
  - [Project Coordinator](#)
  - [Project Scheduler](#)
  - [Assistant Project Manager](#)
2. Gain experience in a role which will allow you to build upon your skills to progress into a PM role:
    - [Office Manager](#)
    - [Business Analyst](#)
    - [Operations Specialist](#)
    - [Event Planner](#)
    - [Researcher](#)
    - [Finance Assistant](#)
  3. Gain work Project Management skills in your current role: can you take on management or leadership responsibilities within existing employment? Can you volunteer to support with staff training, development or rotas?
  4. Work experience: arrange a period of work shadowing with an experienced professional. Start by networking with professionals on LinkedIn or by sending speculative applications.
  5. Volunteering: work with a local charity and take part in organising and arranging events. APM and PMI offer opportunities for volunteering!
    - [Volunteering with APM – opportunities for everyone webinar](#)
    - [PMIwhy Project Management Volunteering | PMI](#)
    - [Reach volunteering](#)
    - [Charity Jobs near London | CharityJob.co.uk](#)
    - <https://www.volunteermatch.org/>
  6. At university: get involved with schemes and societies connected with the university eg work with the student union and help to organise and manage an event. Join a society and take on a responsibility! Have you considered running a project at the university that you can apply for funding for?
    - [Run a Project \(angliastudent.com\)](#)
  7. Find a mentor – mentors can support you throughout your professional journey and provide you industry relevant knowledge and expertise!
    - [Mentoring | APM](#)
    - [The Mentoring Club - The non-profit mentoring platform created for your Growth & Development Journey. \(mentoring-club.com\)](#)
  8. Virtual work experience – Bite-sized 5-6-hour virtual work experience programs that give students a genuine career advantage with the world's top companies.

- [Free Virtual Work Experience Programs from Top Companies - Forage \(theforage.com\)](#)
- [Free Virtual Work Experience | Springpod](#)
- [Internship Experience UK | Virtual Internships | Bright Network](#)

9. Internships – these are a period of work experience, offered by an organisation, lasting 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](#)

## Further events qualifications and courses

### MSc International Project Management

Anglia Ruskin University, London offers a Masters in International Project Management. The course enables you to explore project management in a wide range of contexts, including long-run public sector infrastructure projects and short-to-medium term projects in private sector businesses, public sector organisations and not-for-profit organisations.

As an ARU London Alumni, you will receive a £2,000 scholarship to study a postgraduate degree with us!

Remember – if you are looking to complete a masters then you will also need some industry relevant experience to help you stand out in the graduate job market! Please come and speak to a member of the employability team and we will be happy to discuss these options with you!

- [MSc International Project Management \(aru.ac.uk\)](#)

### Project Management qualifications

While a degree in project management will qualify you for the job, it's the additional knowledge gained through professional qualifications and short courses that will help you to progress. Completing these qualifications before finding employment isn't necessary, as the majority of employers provide new recruits with on-the-job training. However, having a accredited course will help you stand out in the graduate job market.

Courses are available in the various project management methodologies, such as:

- **PRINCE2** - a structured methodology, commonly used for end-to-end project management. Courses are available at foundation, practitioner and agile level. Foundation courses are suitable for new recruits with a basic knowledge of project management processes. You'll then progress to practitioner level, which is aimed at working professionals.  
[Information & Courses & Project Management Certification PRINCE2 | UK](#)
- **Agile** - is suited to fast-moving environments such as IT. Agile methodology uses short development cycles called sprints to focus on continuous improvement in the development of a product. Training is available at foundation and practitioner level. For more information on Agile courses, see IT training.  
[Agile Project Management \(AgilePM®\) | APMG International \(apmg-international.com\)](#)

Industry certification can also be gained through the [Association of Project Managers \(APM\)](#) and the [Project Management Institute \(PMI\)](#).

The APM offers the following certifications:

- **APM Project Fundamentals Qualification (PFQ)** - an introductory course in project management terminology. No prior project management knowledge or experience is required.  
[Project Fundamentals Qualification PFQ. | The APM PFQ Course](#)
- **APM Project Management Qualification (PMQ)** - a knowledge-based qualification that allows candidates to demonstrate an understanding of all elements of project management. You'll need some previous experience and will ideally have completed the PFQ.  
[Project Management Qualification PMQ. | The APM PMQ Course](#)
- **APM Project Professional Qualification (PPQ)** - covers the core and specific competences project professionals require. It's aimed at those working in all types of project management and looking to become a member of the APM.  
[Project Professional Qualification \(PPQ\) | APM PPQ](#)

### Free Project Management qualifications and training

- Level 3 Project Management - Introduction to Project Management Skills Bootcamp (London) - gain the basic skills required to start out their career in project management.  
[Introduction to Project Management | Babington](#)
- Level 3 Data Skills Programme - understand the basic principles of data analysis, data processing, and how to turn data into actionable business insight.  
[Analysing Data - DfE Skills Bootcamp | Babington](#)
- KICKOFF – free, interactive 45- minute project management course and digital toolkit from PMI (Project Management Institute)  
[Free Project Management Course | PMI KICKOFF™](#)
- Diploma in Project Management - guides you through every aspect of project management in a clear and simple manner.  
[Earn a Diploma in Project Management in this free online course \(alison.com\)](#)

## Professional Bodies

Professional bodies are organisations run by individuals that are experts in a particular sector e.g., accountancy, project management, banking, marketing etc. They can be extremely useful to join as they often provide opportunities for career development and further training, as well as industry specific events or networking opportunities. Whilst you are still a student, they may offer you free student membership.



- [The Association of Project Management \(APM\)](#)
- [Project Management Institute](#)



## Where to look for Project Management Opportunities

### Generic job searching websites

Generic 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. Using industry specific job searching websites may save you time and allow you to find opportunities that best fit your interest

- [Reed](#)
- [Indeed](#)
- [Total Jobs](#)
- [CV Library](#)
- [GAAP Web](#)
- [City Jobs](#)
- [Top Financial Jobs](#)

### Project Management job searching websites

- [APM Careers Hub](#)
- [Project Management Institute Job Board](#)
- [Project Manager Jobs](#)

### 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](#)

Project Management Recruitment Agencies

- [Morgan MCKinley](#)
- [London Project Management recruitment agencies \(agencycentral.co.uk\)](#)
- [Totum Partners | London UK](#)

## Project Management Graduate Schemes

Lots of companies recruit for Project Managers through graduate schemes. This will give you the opportunity. To receive expert training and personal development you need to build a secure and successful career.

- [Network Rail](#)
- [Computacenter](#)
- [Babcock](#)
- [BT](#)
- [DHL](#)
- [Fujitsu](#)
- [Artelia](#)
- [Atos](#)
- [Reinshaw](#)
- [Mace](#)
- [BAE Systems](#)
- [Mott Macdonald](#)

## Other companies hiring Project Managers

- [NHS](#)
- [IBM](#)
- [Jaguar Land Rover](#)
- [Capita](#)
- [Barclays](#)
- [Amazon](#)
- [Deloitte](#)
- [Verizon](#)
- [Accenture](#)
- [Bank of America](#)

## 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 events experience?

You may already have considerable relatable experience that you have gained prior to studying for a degree. An undergraduate or postgraduate degree in Business and Events Management 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.

## 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 industry sections 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](mailto: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](mailto:employability@london.aru.ac.uk) or call us 0207 400 6789 and we'll get you booked in as soon as possible.