



# Routes into Practice

Accounting and Finance Degree Guide



EMPLOYABILITY  
TEAM

Advancing Careers

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## Introduction

Dear Student,

This resource pack has been created for the purpose of supporting you whilst you are studying your Accounting and Finance degree to secure graduate employment. There is little doubt that you will have accumulated a wealth of skills and experience that will be desirable, but how do you transition from a student to an employee?

This interactive document has various hyperlinks that can guide you in understanding what doors your degree can open for you in terms of job roles, as well as how to make those crucial first steps to planning your career. This guide will also support you in job searching, as well as outlining the useful tools that the university has to offer such as Career Zone and the Enterprise Hub. Our employability and careers services are available to you not only as a student, but also after you graduate or become alumni (a former student that has completed a qualification at a university) - remember it is not a one-off provision, we are here to support you all the way!

## What Can I Do with My Degree?

Most of us pursue a degree because we like the subject, or we know someone who has studied the same course, but have you given any thought to what happens after university? Are you aware of what roles you can go into with the degree you gain, as well as what these roles entail?

Below you will find a list of careers you can pursue once you have graduated. Each role is hyperlinked to take you to a website that has the job profile for the role, including information on the job description and requirements, as well as career progression and key skills. Each role is accompanied by a brief description. Click the link for more information

Not sure what the entry level role will be? Remember that entry level positions are roles that require little or no experience in the role, so it's a great place to start if you want to get into a new role. Most entry level roles require a few key words before the job title (e.g., Entry Level Finance Executive) or the title of the entry level position (e.g., an entry level position for a Finance Executive will be a Finance Assistant or Finance Trainee). If you require further support with this, please contact the Employability Team.



### Industries you can go into with your degree

[ALL INDUSTRIES](#)

### Roles directly related to degree

- [CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT](#) - As a chartered accountant you'll give advice, audit accounts and provide trustworthy information about financial records.
- [CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANT](#) - As a chartered certified accountant, you'll undertake a variety of accountancy services.
- [CHARTERED MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT](#) - As a chartered management accountant, you'll prepare, develop and analyse financial information for an organisation's management .
- [CHARTERED PUBLIC FINANCE ACCOUNTANT](#) - A key part of the role as a chartered public finance accountant is to make sure that public money is being spent properly.
- [COMPANY SECRETARY](#) - As a company secretary, you'll need to ensure a company complies with financial and legal requirements, as well as maintaining its high standards of corporate governance.
- [EXTERNAL AUDITOR](#) - As an external auditor, you'll examine financial records and other data to provide businesses, their investors and market regulators with a clear picture of how they're performing.
- [FORENSIC ACCOUNTANT](#) - A forensic accountant uses accountancy skills to investigate financial discrepancies and inaccuracies such as fraudulent activity.
- [STOCKBROKER](#) - A stockbroker manages and look after client investments, acting as an intermediary between them and the stock exchange.



### Roles where your degree will be useful

- [Actuary](#)
- [Arbitrator](#)
- [Business development manager](#)
- [Data analyst](#)
- [Economist](#)
- [Licensed conveyancer](#)
- [Management consultant](#)
- [Mortgage adviser](#)
- [Procurement manager](#)
- [Retail banker](#)
- [Tax adviser](#)

## Graduate Destination Outcomes

Research conducted by the Higher Education Statistics Agency and AGCAS via Prospects has shown the graduate destinations from 2021/2022 in terms of where graduates have gone on to do in terms of further study and employment. With a response from 4880 Accounting and Finance graduates, 57% are in full-time employment 15 months after graduation whilst 30% had continued onto further study.

Many transferable skills are developed throughout Accounting and Finance degrees. This skillset includes:

- knowledge and awareness of business organisations
- numerical and quantitative skills
- problem-solving and analytical ability
- oral and written communication skills
- ability to argue your case and negotiate
- knowledge of global business issues and language skills, particularly if you study European or international finance
- entrepreneurship.

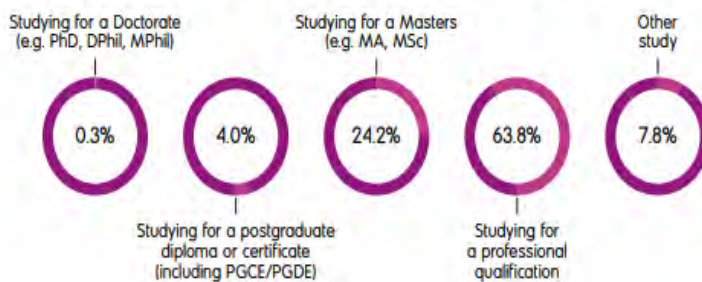


The below table shows most graduates that complete an Accounting and Finance degree move into careers within Business, HR and Finance professions with 51.7% of graduates working full time and 28% working as Clerical, Secretarial and Numerical clerks Professionals.

### Type of work for those in employment



### Type of course for those in further study



The above diagram above shows that 63.8% of graduates go on to study a professional qualification, with 24.2% studying a Masters

The diagram to the right lists the top jobs that Accounting and Finance graduates go into.

### Top 10 professional jobs

- 1 Chartered and certified accountants
- 2 Finance and investment analysts and advisers
- 3 Taxation experts
- 4 Management consultants and business analysts
- 5 Financial managers and directors
- 6 Actuaries, economists and statisticians
- 7 Financial accounts managers
- 8 Data analysts
- 9 Brokers
- 10 Business associate professionals n.e.c.



Below is a case study from one of our very own graduates who achieved an Accounting and Finance degree.

It's March 2022, and Raluca receives a phone-call from a member of the Employability Team to see how she is getting on with her career after graduating in 2021. She explains that she has had difficulty accessing suitable employment, due to her lack of work experience in the UK. Trudi and Raluca work together and Raluca is offered a suitable role at the head office of a large organisation in their Accounts department.



#### **Raluca's story**

Raluca had made many job applications throughout the autumn, but her CV was not working for her. The response she was getting from recruitment agencies was that she should apply for entry level roles, even though she had 10 years' experience of working at a senior level in her home country of Romania.

In January, she decided that she needed some UK experience, so she undertook some practical training and work experience.

At the beginning of March, Trudi from the Employability Team called to ask if she needed any help with her career development. Raluca explained her struggles and frustrations since graduation. Trudi asked to see Raluca's CV and it was immediately obvious that Raluca was positioning herself as a recent graduate and underselling her skills and experience. Trudi explained that the first part of her CV, often referred to as the profile, should be tailored to her chosen role and champion her 10 years' work experience, her language skills and give rationale as to why she decided to undertake a degree as a mature student in the UK.

Raluca revised her CV. The profile now highlighted the responsibilities and achievements from her work experience. She had also changed her LinkedIn profile, so the headlines were more reflective of her skills and experience, and she was ready to go.

Within a week of using the updated CV, Raluca had one phone interview, 2 physical interviews, one video interview and 2 job offers. She contacted Trudi as she found it stressful making a decision. They talked through the pros and cons and also profiled each organisation to see if they aligned with Raluca's personality and ambitions. In the end, Raluca was able to come to a positive decision and she started in the Accounts Department at the HQ of a national retailer on Monday 28 March 2022.

Raluca is happy that she engaged with the Employability service as she now has a rewarding job offer. She would encourage any students or alumni struggling with their career progression to take advantage of these services. She is very appreciative of the University and all its support and would encourage you to engage with the employability team for support to empower you on your career journey.



## Career Planning

A career plan is a step-by-step guide using long-term, mid-term and short-term goals to identify strengths and barriers to achieve a career goal. It can be used not only to secure a first-time role, but also to secure a promotion if you are already in employment, or it can be used to plan a career change. Career plans involve looking at your current qualifications, skillset, interests, and experience so you can make an informed decision as to what career you would like to pursue. As well as this, it involves analysing what you currently have in order to create realistic goals leading up to securing your career aspirations.

As well as being familiar with the roles 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).
- [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.
- [National Careers Services Skills Health Check](#) – An in-depth assessment identifying your work-based and personal skillset.
- [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.

### Career Planning – Stage One, Reflection

When creating a career plan, as well as completing career assessments, it’s important to identify your experience, qualifications, and skills – but what’s as important is identifying your values in terms of what you like in a job and what’s important to you. Self-awareness is also key as you will need to include your interests and preferences within your career plan. This can be done by completing preference-based tests such as personality questionnaires.

### Career Planning – Stage Two, Exploration

Once you have identified the above, you can begin your research by reading job profiles as well as job advertisements on websites such as [Prospects](#), [National Careers Service](#) and [Target Jobs](#) for the roles you are interested in as well as watching videos on platforms such as Career Zone and [YouTube](#) to find out what it’s like to work in that role. Additionally, networking online with professionals who are currently in the roles of interest using social media platforms such as [LinkedIn](#) can also give you an incentive as to whether you would like to pursue a career in that particular role. The next step is





to gain exposure to that role through volunteering, work shadowing, finding a work experience placement or securing an internship.

### Career Planning – Stage Three, Decisions

This stage will help you to decide on what role or roles you would like to pursue a career in. It's important to use all of your research you have gathered and consider your voluntary experience to see what you can do to reach your career goal. Examples of these could be any skills you would like to gain that is needed in the career you want to pursue or any additional qualifications you wish to complete that will get you ahead of the crowd. Additionally, you can look at the pros and cons of each role. When you have identified the tools needed to support you in securing your career goal, you can put short-term, mid-term and long-term SMART goals in place.

### SMART Goals

**S**pecific – The narrower your goal, the more you'll understand the steps necessary to achieve it. Be as clear and specific as possible with what you want to achieve.

**M**easurable - What evidence will prove you're making progress toward your goal? Setting milestones along the way will give you the opportunity to re-evaluate and correct as needed. When you achieve your milestones, remember to reward yourself in small but meaningful ways.

**A**chievable - Have you set an achievable goal? Setting goals you can reasonably accomplish within a certain timeframe will help keep you motivated and focused. Before you begin working toward a goal, decide whether it's something you can achieve now or whether there are additional preliminary steps you should take to become better prepared.

**R**elevant/Realistic - When setting goals for yourself, consider whether they are relevant. Each of your goals should align with your values and larger, long-term goals. If a goal doesn't contribute toward your broader objectives, you might want to rethink it. Ask yourself why the goal is important to you, how achieving it will help you and how it will contribute towards your long-term goals.

**T**ime Based - What is your goal timeframe? An end-date can help provide motivation and help you prioritize.

## How To Build Up Your Skills and Experience

Whilst you are studying your degree, it's always a good idea to acquire some relevant work experience to develop your skills and gain exposure to roles that will help you in securing your graduate position after university. A few ways to do this are through volunteering or applying for an internship. Whilst volunteering is gaining unpaid work experience and is very flexible, an internship is a short-term contract (usually less than a year) with set hours and most likely is paid although unpaid internships do exist. Regardless of what you are trying to find to gain work experience the



methods below will inform you of the different ways you can find these opportunities. These methods will work for finding both volunteering and internship opportunities as well as graduate employment. Remember that the more methods you use, the quicker and easier it will be to secure that role!

## How To Find Graduate Employment

### Graduate Schemes

Graduate schemes are training programmes at an entry level for those who have obtained an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. These schemes are used by organisations to bring new employees into their departments and support them professionally. These schemes usually give the successful candidates hands-on experience in different departments allowing them to gain exposure to different roles and tasks. Some graduate schemes are accelerated courses with the new employees studying towards a master's degree at the end of the programme. You can find accounting and finance related graduate programmes advertised on specialist websites for undergraduates and postgraduates such as [Prospects](#) as well as researching specific organisations that offer them. Below is a list of some of the largest dedicated accounting and finance organisations operating in London:

- [PWC careers page](#)
- [Deloitte careers page](#)
- [Ernst & Young](#)
- [KPMG](#)
- [Binder Dijker Otte \(BDO Global\)](#)

### Networking & Events

Networking is a process by which information is shared by professionals and can take many forms such as informal or formal conversations, exchanging business cards or contact details and striking up a conversation with someone who is already discussing a professional topic you may be interested in. It is an extremely important part of modern day business. However, networking is not a 'one-off' task, but something that should be exercised where possible online or in person. In order to seek the benefits of networking, we need to be constantly building and keeping a good rapport with our network. This is something that will take time and the benefits themselves may take months or even years. An example of this is if a contact needs someone for a certain job role and they remember that you wanted to pursue a role in that field, they could reach out to you but only if you have developed a good professional relationship with that person.

Attending events such as fairs, conferences, seminars, or workshops is an excellent way to network with hosts, organisers and other guests. Look at the list of attendees or speakers beforehand and



identify key speakers or employers that you would like to meet. You can find events via [LinkedIn](#) as well as on the well-known website [Eventbrite](#) in which you can create and attend all kinds of events. Being proactive and attending events such as careers fairs and those hosted by sector specific organisations, can help you in meeting professionals that work in the industry and in the job roles you are interested in. Building effective networks can ensure that you are on an employer's radar when looking for work experience or finding internships or employment. You never know when you will be recommended for a job by one of your contacts! In addition to this, you can also network online via social media platforms such as LinkedIn by connecting with other people in groups or as part of your network.

### Generic Job Websites & industry-specific Job Websites

Using websites that advertise roles such as [Indeed](#), [Reed](#) and [Total Jobs](#), is an excellent way of finding any role within any industry at any level. These jobsites are generic and are used by many organisations to promote their opportunities. Alternatively, there are industry specific job websites that help candidates that want to work in a particular sector rather than using many generic jobsites. There are many recruitment agencies and recruitment jobsites that target many sectors:

- [Business](#)
- [Banking](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [Accountancy](#)
- [Insurance](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [Administration](#)
- [Economics](#)
- [Graduates/Postgraduates - Prospects](#)
- [Graduate/Postgraduate – Target Jobs](#)

### Speculative Applications

Not all jobs are advertised - to find these hidden roles you'll need to write a speculative application to a company you're interested in working for. 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.

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, such as a full-time job, an internship or work experience, despite the fact that these roles are not advertised. This involves sending a speculative application cover letter and a CV. Although jobs are advertised in many ways, this is just one of the job-hunting strategies used to find employment, especially in certain fields such as the creative sector and charities.



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.

### Recruitment Agencies

Another way of searching for roles is by using recruitment agencies. Recruitment agencies work with organisations directly to help fill their vacancies. They are consultants that match candidates to job roles through interviews and application support. There are a large number of agencies that work within the UK, and some are sector specific, meaning they recruit for certain industries. 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. A few recruitment agencies that work well with graduates are listed below:

- [Hays](#)
- [Adecco](#)
- [Morgan Hunt](#)
- [Tiger Recruitment](#)
- [Huntress Group](#)

### Professional Bodies

Professional bodies are organisations run by individuals that are experts in a particular sector e.g., accountancy, project management, banking, marketing etc. These organisations 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 which is another way you can find roles via networking or direct applications. As well as this, it is another way of showing seriousness and continuous professional development of the career you want to pursue or are currently pursuing. Here are some examples of professional bodies:

- [Association of Chartered Certified Accountants \(ACCA\)](#)
- [Association of Corporate Treasurers \(ACT\)](#)
- [Association of Taxation Technicians \(ATT\)](#)
- [Chartered Institute of Management Accountants \(CIMA\)](#)



- [Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy \(CIPFA\)](#)
- [The Chartered Institute of Taxation \(CIOT\)](#)
- [Institute of Chartered Accountants In England and Wales \(ICAEW\)](#)

### LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social media platform made for professionals to connect with one another. As well as the tools it has such as the ability for users to post material, comments, media and much more, LinkedIn has a jobs board and is used by various recruiters. In addition to this, recruiters use a slightly different version of LinkedIn in which they can find talent through using key words to find profiles that match be they skills, experience, or knowledge. Therefore, it is extremely important to showcase yourself effectively on LinkedIn and be very clear as to what careers or roles you are looking for. LinkedIn also has a feature for users to change their pictures to include a banner saying ‘#Lookingforwork’ or ‘#Hiring’. It is encouraged for job seekers to include this banner as it is easier for recruiters to see who is available from the glimpse of an eye. As opposed to this, job seekers are encouraged to connect with those that have the ‘#Hiring’ banner as they too are using LinkedIn to fill positions within their organisation.

LinkedIn also has the hashtag (#) function as well as groups. Regarding hashtags, this is a fantastic way to spread your post or even your CV all over LinkedIn. Any LinkedIn user that includes a hashtag in their post means that any user that follows that hashtag will have that post appear in their newsfeed. You can use as many hashtags as you see fit and this is a great way to connect with people all over the world. Some hashtag suggestions are: #Jobseeker, #GraduateCareers, #Graduate (subject of study) etc.

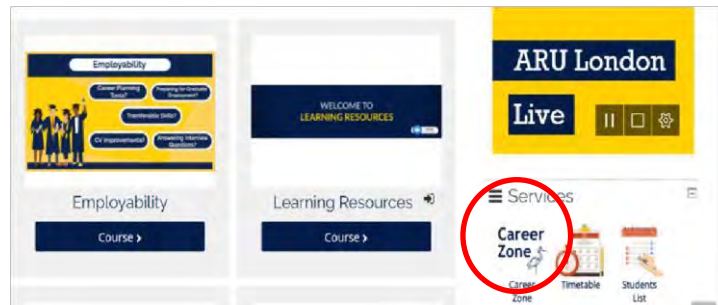
With regards to the groups, you can be part of as many groups as you want but will need to receive confirmation you have been accepted into the group. Here you will be able to post material, be part of conversations and even post your CV. This is an excellent chance to engage with people who work in the field you want to work in or have just graduated as they may have other connections who they may want to introduce you – you never know who will get you that graduate role!

### Career Zone

Career Zone is an exceptional employability platform maintained by the Employability Team to help you secure your dream job. It is available to you 24/7 and provides up to date information on industries as well as exclusive job roles, employer advice videos and an interview simulator along with many other features.

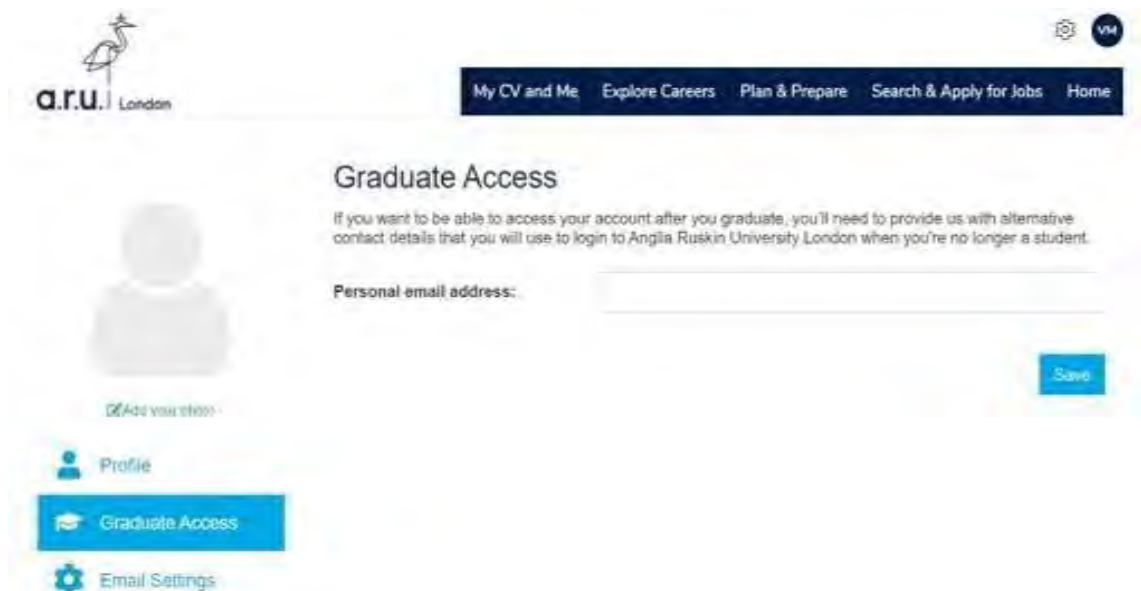


### Accessing Career Zone



To access Career Zone, log into the VLE platform. On the right side of the screen, you will see 'Services' where you can click on the Career Zone button. As logging onto the platform is a single sign-on process, you will not be required to provide your login details again. If you have any issues logging in, please contact the Employability team.

### Career Zone – Graduate Access



Once you have reached your final trimester, be sure to change your account to 'graduate access.' This means you will be able to access the platform outside of the VLE as this will be closed once you become an alumnus. To access Careers Zone away from the VLE, log in to your VLE portal and look under the 'services' section where you can access the platform. Click on the small circle with your initials that lead to your profile and go to 'graduate access'. Type in your personal email and register.



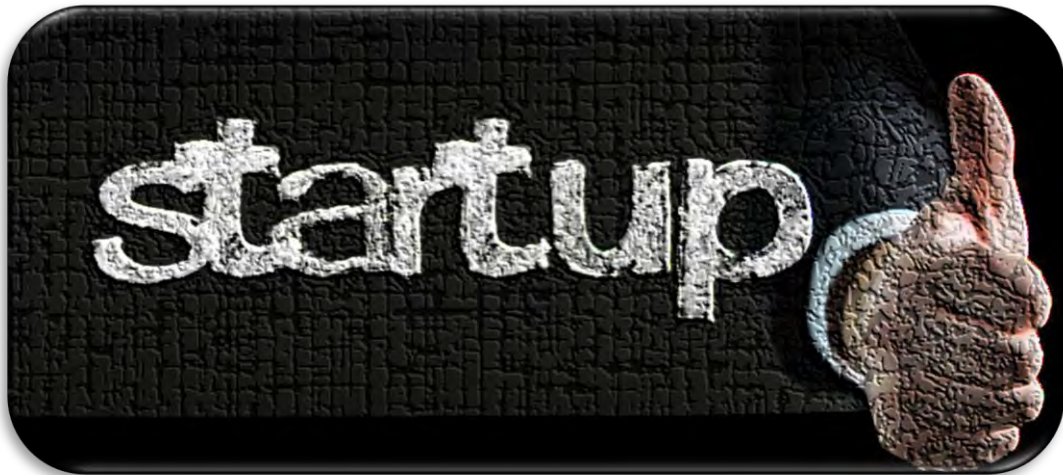
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You should receive an email from Abintegro (the organisation who runs the site) with an external link, username, and password to access Career Zone externally.

## Enterprise Hub

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 provides 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 for the Enterprise Hub or for more information please contact our Enterprise team via email - [enterprise@london.aru.ac.uk](mailto:enterprise@london.aru.ac.uk).





## Get In Touch

If you want to discuss any employability or careers topic with one of our Careers Consultants, you can book a one-to-one appointment for 30 minutes. These topics can range from tailoring your CV to a role you want to apply for to preparing for an assessment centre.

If this is of interest, please drop us an email at [Employability@london.aru.ac.uk](mailto:Employability@london.aru.ac.uk) or call us 0207 400 6789 on. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) as well!



## Additional Websites – Graduate Schemes/Programmes

GRADUATE SCHEMES/PROGRAMMES	SECTOR
<a href="#">BDO</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">Deloitte</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">EY</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">Mazars</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">KPMG</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">National Audit Office</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">PwC</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">RSM</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">Smith and Williamson</a>	Accounting and finance
<a href="#">Willis Towers Watson</a>	Accounting and finance





<b>GRADUATE SCHEMES/PROGRAMMES</b>	<b>SECTOR</b>
<a href="#">Barking &amp; Dagenham Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Barnet Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Brent Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Camden Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Enfield Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Greenwich Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Haringey Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Harrow Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Islington Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Newham Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Redbridge Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Southwark Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Sutton Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Waltham Forest</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Richmond &amp; Wandsworth Council</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">Civil Service</a>	Local Government/Public Sector
<a href="#">NHS</a>	Healthcare/Finance
<a href="#">Lloyds</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Barclays</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Bank of England</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">HSBC</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">JP Morgan</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Goldman Sachs</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Morgan Stanley</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Blackrock</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Citi</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Credit Suisse</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">EY</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">PWC</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance
<a href="#">Deloitte</a>	Investment Banking/Business & Finance



<a href="#">Morrisons</a>	Retail
<a href="#">Lidl</a>	Retail
<a href="#">Asda</a>	Retail
<a href="#">Aldi</a>	Retail
<a href="#">Ocado</a>	Retail
<a href="#">Tesco</a>	Retail
<a href="#">M&amp;S</a>	Retail
<a href="#">Fujitsu</a>	Technology
<a href="#">Capita</a>	Professional Services
<a href="#">PA Consulting</a>	Technology/Consultancy
<a href="#">Pegasus Group</a>	Residential/Consultancy
<a href="#">Vodafone</a>	Telecommunications
<a href="#">Siemens</a>	Telecommunications
<a href="#">HM Treasure</a>	Local Government
<a href="#">Southwest College</a>	Education
<a href="#">Newton</a>	Private Sector
<a href="#">Enterprise Rent-A-Car</a>	Private Sector
<a href="#">Nestle</a>	Food & Drink
<a href="#">National Audit Office</a>	Finance
<a href="#">Capgemini</a>	Technology/Consultancy
<a href="#">Aston Carter</a>	Accounting & Finance
<a href="#">Grayce</a>	Finance
<a href="#">Airbus</a>	Aviation
<a href="#">Jaguar Land Rover</a>	Automotive
<a href="#">NFU</a>	Agriculture
<a href="#">MI5</a>	Security
<a href="#">TTI</a>	Private Sector
<a href="#">CGI</a>	Technology/Consultancy