



Finding the right career for you

Plan your future with the careers service.

Some people have always known what they want to do with their life. Others have absolutely no idea what's going to happen after university. Most of us fall somewhere in the middle.

Finding a career that suits you is a process that involves thinking about your abilities and interests, and taking the time to research your career ideas.

Many people worry that they'll make the wrong career decision and that one false start will doom them forever. If this sounds familiar, bear in mind that no decision is final. It's rare for people to be in their first graduate job for more than a couple of years (without leaving or changing their role) and it's possible to change careers once you have some proven skills and experience.

What else can I do?

Formal training programmes aren't the only way to get on the career ladder: in fact, they account for less than 15 per cent of graduate jobs. Here are some alternative options to kick-start your career.

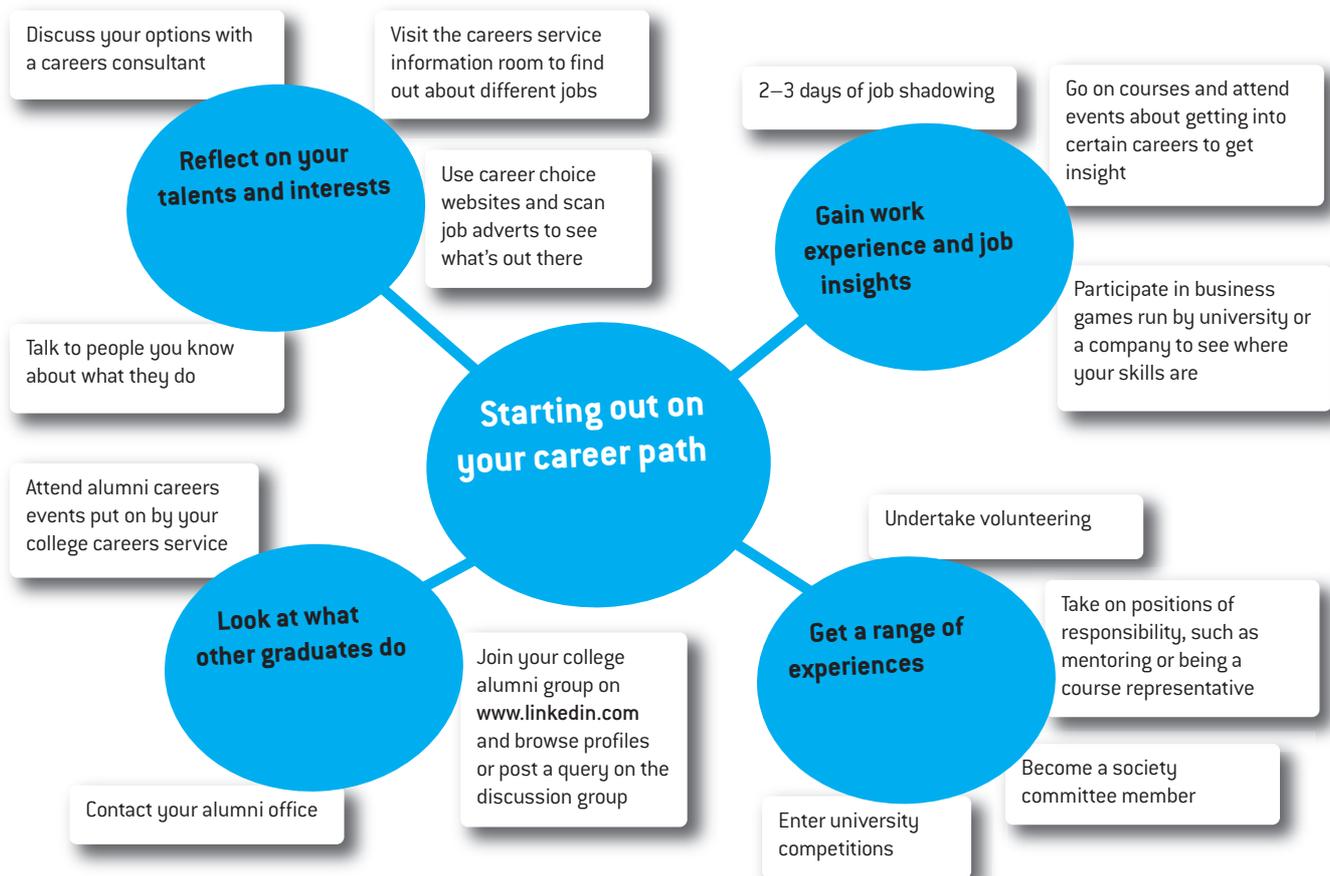
Temping can be a good stop-gap, allowing you to pay off some debts, try out some different industries and build up your CV. If you do the job well, something more permanent and more senior may be up for grabs.

Entry-level positions may not be billed as 'graduate jobs' but they usually need graduates to do them. You can often move up very quickly through the ranks if you demonstrate your potential early on.

Other ways to earn a living – particularly if the nine-to-five isn't really your style – include setting up

“ City Course, run by The Careers Group, provided a grand perspective into financial and legal careers through presentations, networking sessions and insightful group activities hosted by recent graduates, recruitment teams and senior staff. This fantastic opportunity influenced and broadened my industry awareness in just five days by exposing me to many finance sectors. What I valued most was the first-hand experience gained in the workshops, where I formulated my own opinion of finance careers instead of solely relying on magazines and company brochures. The most poignant aspect of the course was witnessing the calibre of my peers, which drove me to step up my game in my ultimate year. ”

Punit Ghumra, Queen Mary alumnus



Some people begin the career-decision process during university, others concentrate on getting a good degree and then focus on career choice after graduation. Both approaches are fine!

your own business, freelancing, joining a franchise or a co-operative, contract working, juggling simultaneous assignments or taking a well-paid 'day' job to fund an entirely different career goal. (Some careers, such as acting and TV production, require this kind of flexibility during 'rest periods' to keep the bills paid.)

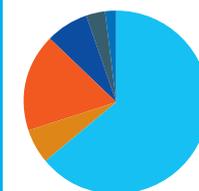
Breaking the jobless cycle

You need experience to get a job, but you can't get a job without experience. Sound familiar? If you're caught in this

vicious (un)employment cycle, consider boosting your skills through a paid vacation placement or relevant volunteering work. You could also opt for a working holiday, combining work experience with broadening your horizons. Your careers service will have details about these schemes.

In short, there's no such thing as a 'typical' graduate career. Working life is what you choose to make it, so if conventional methods aren't getting you anywhere, take a different route – or choose another direction entirely.

What University of London 2011 graduates did next



- Work 64.05%
- Work & study 5.95%
- Study 17.47%
- Unemployed 7.26%
- Unavailable 3.35%
- Other 1.92%

Do anything, be anyone

There is no such thing as a typical University of London student so it follows that there is no such thing as a typical University of London graduate career. However, looking at what previous students have gone on to do can be a good way of starting to think about what type of job or study might suit you. Find out more about working in the City, not-for-profit, science, technology and creative industries on page 43.

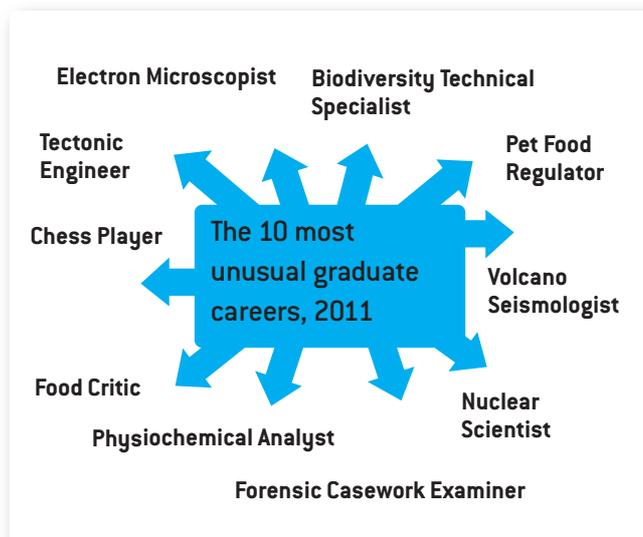
Find the right career for you

Resources to help you

Work out what might suit you: www.careers.lon.ac.uk/sortit.

Find out about different types of jobs:

- targetjobs.co.uk
- www.prospects.ac.uk
- www.careerplayer.com
- www.icould.com
- <http://wlgd.thecareersgroup.co.uk>
- Careers Group courses
- College careers events
- a step-by-step guide to career choice and job-hunting: *Dude, where's my career? The guide for baffled graduates*, by Tanya de Grunwald.



Sarah Webster, Employment and Progression Worker



David Wood, Deputy Director, Regeneration and Economic Analysis Unit



Naresh Bhojwani, Graduate Trainee, Investment Banking Technology



Ramla Awaais, Scientist