Careers Statement of Services available - for current students, recent graduates and research staff (2016-17) Oxford Brookes University Careers

This statement outlines the service that current students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, as well as recent graduates (alumni) of Brookes, or current members of research staff can expect from Oxford Brookes University Careers.

1. Our Mission

To enhance students’ and graduates’ employment prospects

In support of the University’s vision and Strategy for Enhancing the Student Experience we work collaboratively, energetically and creatively to make a positive difference to the progress of students and graduates of Oxford Brookes University. Careers helps clients (current students, recent alumni and current research staff on fixed term contracts) to understand and undertake the process of career management; including developing their employability; clarifying their own values, interests, attributes and abilities; identifying appropriate opportunities; making informed career choices and achieving their personal objectives.

2. Who can use Careers – eligibility

The following groups are eligible to use Careers:

- Currently enrolled full-time and part-time students of Oxford Brookes University on first degree and postgraduate courses.
- Currently enrolled students on the above courses which are jointly awarded by Oxford Brookes and a partner institution, in cases where Oxford Brookes is the “administering institution”. Associate College Partnership1 (ACP) students have full access to the online careers resources accessible from our website. Further support for graduate level career decision making is also offered, on a case by case basis, on contact with Careers. See further clarification at 9 iii below.
- Any intercalating students (i.e. those students taking agreed time out from their studies at Oxford Brookes, see also 9 ix below).
- Students who discontinue from the above courses in the period immediately after leaving their studies, for a period of six months.
- Graduates of Oxford Brookes University for up to three years following graduation
- Research staff currently employed on fixed term contracts by Oxford Brookes university.

Unfortunately we are not resourced to offer services to students or graduates from other universities. For further clarification see also Boundaries of careers support, at 9 below.

3. Careers - Services Provided www.brookes.ac.uk/careers

The Careers team provides a welcoming and flexible careers education, information, advice and guidance service (CEIAG), which is impartial, confidential and centred on individual needs. It offers individuals encouragement to identify and achieve their career and personal goals. When an individual engages with us we will help establish their needs and suggest the most appropriate ways of meeting them. We offer information, advice and guidance both in person (normally at Careers) and on-line.

Careers - In person:

- Advice if individuals do not know where to start, or feel confused. Likewise, advice if they know clearly what they want to do but just need some tips on the practical next steps to take;

1 Associate Partner Colleges of Oxford Brookes University are: Activate Learning, Abingdon & Witney College, Bridgewater College Brooklands College, Ruskin College, Solihull College, and Swindon College.
• An initial assessment of individual needs and response to quick queries, with signposting to appropriate career resources to help individuals move forwards;

• Help with locating relevant and up-to-date information on occupations, further study opportunities, vacation work, part-time or voluntary work, employers and graduate vacancies;

• Assistance with CVs and applications, interviews and assessments, and with the development of transferable skills, often through workshops;

• Take away career resources – ‘Hot Tips’ advisory sheets (quick guides), covering a range of relevant career and employability matters, job directories;

Confidential and impartial, one-to-one (normally, same day) advisory discussions with a Career Consultant, with additional coaching support available on a referral basis;

• A range of careers education and employability workshops which may be delivered directly by Careers staff or via the Academic Faculties.

Careers - On-line:

• Job search and high quality web based careers and employability resources, with access to thousands of global job and work experience vacancies. To have full access to job vacancies and our comprehensive on-line career resources, individuals need to activate their careers accounts at http://www.brookes.ac.uk/careers/students-and-graduates/getting-started--careers-activate/ by clicking on both 1. Job Vacancies, then 2. Resources and then inputting their normal student (or staff log-in) and password. Graduates who have left Brookes should request on-line access by e-mailing careers@brookes.ac.uk.

• Where eligible individuals are unable to visit us in person because they are located away from the main Headington campus, or on placement, e-guidance support and telephone appointments are available. Queries will normally be responded to within three working days. Skype, or longer telephone interviews are also available, by referral, following initial contact with Careers.

4. The Careers Team – our approach and Quality Assurance matters

Our approach draws on effective models of careers guidance and coaching. It encourages individuals to take responsibility for their own career development learning and decision making. The process aims to help and support individuals take control of managing their own learning and development, enabling them to unlock their potential and maximise their performance. All Careers team members engage with appropriate professional development opportunities to help them stay up to date with graduate career and labour market issues and to be competent in their roles.

In terms of quality assurance, the University currently holds the Investors in People award (Gold) for staff and systems development; and Careers adheres to the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) Code of Practice. We are also mindful of guidance on good practice from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), including the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the national quality standard for information, advice and guidance providers, the matrix Standard.

5. Outcomes - individuals can achieve from actively engaging with Careers

In the context of future employability and the University’s ‘Brookes Attributes’, which individuals develop throughout their courses, the initial outcomes individuals can achieve from using our service include an enhanced awareness and understanding of their:

✓ Career and personal goals
✓ future career, work/placement or further study options
✓ skills and strengths
✓ areas for personal development
✓ what needs to be done next to progress

Individuals will also gain more confidence in taking appropriate action to move forward with their career and personal goals.

Longer term outcomes individuals may achieve include:

✓ Progression into full or part-time employment
✓ Progression into further full or part-time study/learning

6. Signposting on to other resources and assistance

Where Careers is not best placed to meet an individual’s needs we may signpost them on to other sources of information, or appropriate agencies (examples include other departments of the University, such as Student Central, Wellbeing or Oxford Brookes Union (the Students Union), external organisations and agencies.

7. Where Careers is located

Careers
John Henry Brookes Building
Oxford Brookes University
Main Headington Campus
Oxford
OX3 0BP  Note: main entrances via London Road or Gipsy Lane
tel:00 44 (0) 1865 484670  fax:0044(0)1865484677
e-mail: careers@brookes.ac.uk  www.brookes.ac.uk/careers

While Careers is centrally located on the Headington Campus, we do, from time-to-time, provide services elsewhere on other University sites and these are publicised on our website and by e-mail, etc.

8. When Careers is open

Normally, from Monday to Friday. For the most up-to-date opening times and availability of appointments with career consultants, both in semester and vacation times, please check our website: www.brookes.ac.uk/careers

9. Boundaries of Careers support to clients

i. We always attempt to meet the needs of eligible users. However, at particularly busy times and for certain programmes, including some workshops, we may need to prioritise support for current students and adapt service delivery methods to ensure appropriate levels of access. Where this is the case we will publicise any priority access, restrictions, or revised booking arrangements.

ii. We offer information, advice and guidance, as well as access to a wide range of career resources but individuals also need to proactively engage in researching options, tailoring
applications, etc. While we cannot make career decisions for individuals we do act as constructively critical and supportive 'sounding boards'.

iii. In terms of support for students at Associate Partner (ACP) Colleges; Careers at Oxford Brookes is resourced to offer graduate level advice & guidance. The expertise of Careers staff and the career resources available therefore support the transition of students who are already undertaking BA/BSc honours, or Masters level degrees. Consequently, students at ACP colleges who are considering options around whether to undertake a foundation, first degree or an apprenticeship, or seeking advice on the making of initial applications via UCAS (including personal statement advice), or advice on non-graduate level employment, or other non-graduate level courses, are advised to contact tutors or support staff at their current college whose expertise will be more suited to their needs. In the case of making an initial choice of degree subject, university admissions departments will be able to provide a course prospectus and information on university open days, and entry requirements, etc.

iv. Support in constructing CVs, cover letters and tailoring applications entails advice on the principles and practicalities of making effective applications. We are unable to provide a dedicated proof reading/grammar checking service as this might lead to misrepresentation of individuals' capabilities to potential employers, or other opportunity providers. We always ask for hard copy print outs of documents to be presented for review as these are easier to read and comment on. Due to the risk of computer viruses we cannot download information, such as CVs or applications, from personal data sticks.

v. The vast majority of our services are free, however, sometimes charges or cancellation fees may apply for certain programmes and materials (such as the use of specialist psychometric assessments). Where this applies we will notify individuals in advance of the costs and acceptable arrangements for payment.

vi. If an individual has engaged with Careers, either as a current student, a researcher, or as a graduate/alumnus, and does not appear to be making progress towards their stated career objectives, our staff will review options with the individual so that the most effective use is made of their time and our resources. An individual may be allocated a particular Careers Consultant to work with, to an agreed action plan/programme, for a defined period of time.

vii. Clients referred to Careers by other services/departments of the University may be asked to first meet with a representative from that service and from Careers to establish what level of support might be appropriate and this will be agreed in writing.

viii. If, in the view of the Head of Careers (or his or her nominee), the services and experience available from Careers are not appropriate for an individual’s particular needs, then the level of access that can be offered to services may be reviewed, adjusted and, on occasion, withdrawn. Any such decisions would be made, after consultation, and with an individual’s best interests in mind, in the light of relevant University policies. This might include, where an individual is a current student, the University ‘Fitness to Study’ policy, and/or ‘Policy on responding to complex student situations’, for example. In such circumstances attempts would be made to signpost on, or refer, an individual to other appropriate University support services, or to external sources of information and support more suited to that individual’s particular needs and circumstances.

ix. If an individual student is suspended or is dis-continuing their course at the University, further access to Careers will depend on the particular reasons for such suspension, or dis-continuation, and any limitations imposed by Oxford Brookes University.

10. We ask all clients:

i. To provide us, upon request, with relevant details of their course, qualifications, skills, experience, career aspirations and any challenges they are facing, so as to assist us in
offering the most appropriate information, advice and guidance to them. To have full access to our powerful job search tools and career resources individuals need to first log in via the Careers website at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/careers/students-and-graduates/getting-started--careers-activate They should activate both: 1. Job Vacancies and then 2. Resources.

Prior to one-to-one appointments, to have first looked at our relevant on-line or paper based resources, such as Hot Tips sheets, or our CV Guide, to help them make the most of their time with our Career Consultants; to complete any forms, sign ups, or preparatory work that has been requested before any interview or group work activity and to let us know as soon as is practicable if they are unable to keep any appointment or attend any event (please remember that failure to do so is likely to prevent someone else from benefiting from the service);

ii. to always treat our team and other users with respect, and use our feedback mechanisms if they wish to make a suggestion, to compliment us, or raise a concern, or complaint, about our service;

iii. to respond whenever possible to requests for feedback, and to direct their comments via our established channels. All students will be asked by the University to complete a Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey some months after they have graduated. The confidential responses provide valuable information about what Brookes graduates do, and helps the University to tailor and improve its services to students.

11. How we communicate with clients

We put an emphasis on providing face-to-face support where possible, as this is most effective. Beyond this our primary methods of communication are email and via the internet. Details of how to submit an enquiry to Careers are on our website and we aim to respond to all enquiries within three working days.

12. Careers information resources and accessing other websites

Careers has developed a range of hard copy and on-line careers resources. Our website also enables on-line access, to several third party providers of careers information, work experience and job vacancies (including Abintegro, Adult Directions and Targetconnect). It also contains links to other websites, services and/or content. As Careers has no control over external sites we cannot accept any responsibility in relation to their operation, services or content. In all cases individual users are solely responsible for evaluating the suitability, accuracy and completeness of such websites, services or content and for complying with any user terms and conditions.

13. Job vacancies, work experience, volunteering

We make every effort to ensure organisations listed in our information, websites, emails, noticeboards and publications are bona fide. However, we are unable to verify details in their entries and cannot guarantee their accuracy. We strongly recommend that individuals research organisations carefully before applying as we are unable to individually verify the details of vacancies posted to our website and related sites. However, we will remove any vacancies where it can be demonstrated that the organisation involved is in contravention of UK law. People applying to vacancies advertised through our systems do so at their own risk and Careers is not liable for any costs or damages incurred by applicants who have applied for vacancies posted on our site(s).
14. Confidentiality & privacy - how we ensure client information remains confidential and arrangements for private meetings

We comply with the Confidentiality and Data Protection policies of Oxford Brookes University. We will at all times respect the privacy of our clients/users. Initial conversations are often held in public areas of Careers but, on request, private meeting rooms are available and booked one-to-one appointments with Career Consultants will normally be held in private. To support the provision of an effective client centred service our staff may record brief notes of interactions with clients, which other team members can access. In accordance with the University’s policies we will disclose confidential information, to third parties, only with an individual’s informed consent, except where there is clear evidence of serious risk to a client or to the welfare of others. Any personal data that individuals provide is held securely on protected University data systems and not on personal data sticks. We do not make public data or feedback which could identify individuals (except with their permission). Individuals can access information we hold about them in accordance with the University’s policies.

15. How Careers promotes diversity and accessibility

Careers embraces Oxford Brookes University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy statement and is committed to equality of access and treatment regardless of race, religion, sex, disability, marital status, social class, age or sexual preference. Forms of unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, unequal treatment or unethical behaviour will be challenged.

We aim to be accessible to all clients, and encourage you to ask us for any special help you require to make best use of our services. Our team will be pleased to provide details of access support equipment, or discuss how we can provide information in different formats. Careers is accessible to wheelchair and pushchair users.

16. How to provide the Careers Service with feedback, give a suggestion, a compliment or raise a concern or complaint

Feedback, both positive and negative, drives the continuous quality improvement of our service and is vital to us. We usually gather feedback through online or paper questionnaires. We also actively seek informal feedback and suggestions. While individual comments will be confidential, unless an individual decides otherwise, we do share anonymised feedback and our responses publicly.

Should an individual be unhappy with any aspect of our service and wish to raise a concern they should speak, in the first instance, to a member of staff, or telephone us on 01865-484670, or e-mail us at careers@brookes.ac.uk. Concerns about a member of staff may alternatively be directed to the Head of Careers (or, if a concern relates to the Head, the Academic Registrar). Concerns will normally be acknowledged within three working days.

We always try to resolve concerns quickly and informally. However, if a current student wishes to make a formal complaint they will need to use the Student Complaint Procedure (University Regulations: C2), which includes submitting a formal ‘Student Complaint and Appeal Form’. Formal complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Student Complaint Procedure (available on request). If an individual is not a current student, and they have tried to resolve their concern informally without success, a formal complaint may be made to the Head of Careers (or, if a complaint relates to the Head, the Academic Registrar), who will ensure that the complaint is considered in accordance with the University’s procedures.

This Statement of Service is reviewed regularly in the light of developments to the Service and changes in university policy, or legislation.

V5 updated: 14 September 2016
Next planned review: Prior to Semester 1 2017

Regulations: E12 Statement of Policy on Confidentiality and the use of Students’ Information; E13 Data Protection Policy; E14 Data Protection Guidelines for Academic Staff.