

Careers Statement of Services - for current students, recent graduates and research staff (2020-21)

Oxford Brookes University Careers

Please note that during the Coronavirus Pandemic, Careers is providing its services remotely. To contact us: e-mail: careers@brookes.ac.uk

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 (SESE 2 2015-20) 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:

- i. Currently enrolled full-time and part-time students of Oxford Brookes University on first degree and postgraduate courses.
- ii. 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”. Such students, studying for Foundation Degrees or above, at one of the designated Associate College Partnership¹ (ACP) colleges have full access to the online careers information accessible from our website. For their own convenience, when located at a distance from Oxford Brookes, students at partner organisations are encouraged to access the professional careers service support offered at the institution where they are based.
- iii. Any intercalating students (i.e. those students taking agreed time out from their studies at Oxford Brookes, see also 9 ix below).
- iv. Students who discontinue from the above courses in the period immediately after leaving their studies, for a period of six months.
- v. Graduates of Oxford Brookes University for up to three years following the completion date registered on the student records system.
- vi. 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.

¹ The 7 Associate Partner Colleges of Oxford Brookes University are currently: Abingdon and Witney College, Activate Learning: includes City of Oxford College and Reading College), University Centre Somerset, Brooklands College, Solihull College, Swindon College, Wiltshire College and University Centre

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 graduate career and related 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;
- 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. Practice interviews may be provided, subject to resources available at the time (see 9.iv below);
- Digital career resources – including ‘Hot Tips’ advisory sheets (quick guides), covering a range of relevant career and employability matters, as well as some paper based resources including job directories. On request consideration will be given to providing information in different formats;
- Confidential and impartial, one-to-one (normally, same day and of 20 minutes duration) guidance discussions with a Career Consultant, with additional support available for students identifying a disability or other support requirements on a self-referral or 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 information 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 log in, via the Careers home page. <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/careers/>
- Graduate access (alumni): graduates who have left Brookes should request on-line access to all resources by e-mailing careers@brookes.ac.uk
- E-mail guidance and telephone/video call support when away from Oxford.
Where eligible individuals are unable to visit us in person because they are living or working outside the Oxford city area (e.g. on a placement year, or year/semester abroad, or have special circumstances, such as a disability, which makes visiting Careers on the Headington campus difficult) e-mail guidance support and video/ telephone appointments are available. To access the e-mail guidance service, e-mail your query to eguidance@brookes.ac.uk, along with any supporting documents such as your CV/application and job criteria. Following initial contact with Careers, video/ telephone discussions may be offered as an alternative to e-mail guidance, as these are often the most effective way of resolving queries. E-mail guidance queries will normally be responded to within three working days and closed 10 working days after the last communication from Careers staff.

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, Careers is subject to the University's internal review processes and, as a member service, it adheres to the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) quality assurance processes and Code of Ethics. It is also mindful of guidance on good practice from the Office for Students (OFS), the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), including the Revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2018) 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, while on their course, 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, having successfully completed their course, include:

- ✓ Progression into "Graduate Jobs" i.e. Professional, Managerial & Associate Professional roles (SOC 2010: Codes 1-3)
- ✓ 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 – John Brookes Building, Headington Campus

Please note that during the Coronavirus pandemic we are providing all our services on-line. Contact with us is via e-mail, in the first instance, to: careers@brookes.ac.uk

Careers
John Henry Brookes Building (JHB G10)
Oxford Brookes University
Headington Campus
Oxford
OX3 0BP

Note: main entrances via London Road or Gipsy Lane

While Careers is centrally located on the Headington Campus, room JHBG10, 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 available

- i. **Meeting needs:** our resources are principally designed to support transition and development into graduate level occupations and/or postgraduate study. 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. **Engagement:** 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, impartial, 'sounding boards'.
- iii. **CV & application support:** 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.
- iv. **Interview practice** - practice job/placement interviews may be available subject to need and our available resources. At particularly busy times we may not be able meet every request but will highlight other useful resources. All interviews are different and whilst it is impossible to replicate exactly the interview scenario, we will ask questions which are typical of those that are normally asked at interviews. A Careers Consultant will then give feedback and advice on how to improve performance (if necessary) before an individual has their real interview. Interview practice is normally videoed to aid the feedback discussion. Where an individual has previously attended a practice interview, a request for another will be subject to a needs assessment by one of our Careers Consultants.
- v. **Service costs:** 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. **Review of individual needs & further guidance:** 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, or concerns arise, 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, instead of accessing same day/short guidance appointments with Careers Consultants.

- vii. **Referral and pre-meetings:** users who are 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 most appropriate and this will usually be agreed and confirmed in writing.

- viii **Suitability of services:** if, in the view of the Head of Careers/Head of Student Development (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 or procedures. 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, or the arrangements for referring students for support, agreed between departments. 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. **Suspended or dis-continuing students:** if a 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 wider limitations imposed by Oxford Brookes University.

10. We ask all users:

- 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/>

- ii. Prior to one-to-one appointments, to have first looked at our relevant digital or paper based resources, such as Hot Tips sheets, or our CV Guide, to help them make the most of their time with our Careers 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);

- iii. 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;

- iv. 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 the Graduate Outcomes Survey of leavers from Higher Education, some months after they have graduated. The confidential responses provided by this survey give valuable information about what Brookes graduates do, and helps the University to tailor and improve its services to students.

11. How we communicate with users

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 video/telephone calls, email and via the internet. Details of how to submit an enquiry to Careers are on our website and we aim to normally respond to all enquiries within three working days.

12. Careers information resources and accessing other websites

Careers has developed a range of digital (and to a reducing extent paper based) careers resources. Our website also enables on-line access to several third party providers of careers information, work experience and job vacancies/volunteering opportunities (including Jobteaser, Abintegro, Kudos AD and GoinGlobal). 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/opportunities where it can be demonstrated that the organisation involved is in contravention of UK law. People applying to vacancies/opportunities 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/opportunities posted on our site(s).

14. Confidentiality & privacy - how we ensure user information remains confidential and arrangements for private meetings

We comply with the Confidentiality and Data Protection policies of Oxford Brookes University², including the University's Information Security/GDPR protocols (e.g. Privacy Notices covering students, staff and alumni): <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/it/information-security/data-protection---gdpr/> We will at all times respect the privacy of our 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 Careers Consultants will normally be held in private. To support the provision of an effective user centred service our staff may record brief notes of interactions with them, 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 user 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 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.

² Regulations: E12 Statement of Policy on Confidentiality and the use of Students' Information; E13 Data Protection Policy; E14 Data Protection Guidelines for Academic Staff.

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 e-mail us at careers@brookes.ac.uk. Concerns about a member of staff may alternatively be directed to the Head of Student Development (or, if a concern relates to the Head, the Academic Registrar, or his or her nominee). 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 Student Development (or, if a complaint relates to the Head, the Academic Registrar, or his or her nominee), 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.

Last update: 2 November 2020 v8.2
Next planned review: Prior to Semester 1 2021