

Getting your first job in post-school education



Finding the right job for you

JOB ADVERTS

Looking at job adverts is a quick and easy way to find out what jobs are available. Full-time and part-time college and university teaching posts are advertised in the Education Guardian (on Tuesdays), the Times Educational Supplement further education pages, and the Times Higher Education Supplement (both on Fridays). Other broadsheet newspapers including The Times, The Independent, and The Daily Telegraph publish job vacancies in further and higher education institutions. It is also worth checking local and regional press and the following specialist jobs websites for further and higher education posts:

<http://www.jobs.ac.uk> and <http://www.fejobs.com>

Remember, adverts are not designed to help you understand what different kinds of jobs involve – they are generally for people who know the type of job they are after. College and university careers services have a wealth of resources to support career research and planning, and you may also find it helpful to talk to a careers adviser before applying for particular jobs.

WEBSITES AND JOB BOARDS

Most employers now advertise vacancies on their websites or through online job boards. You can also find further education (FE) and higher education (HE) job vacancies online on specific education sector job boards, general job boards that cover all employment sectors, or local job boards that advertise jobs available in a particular geographical area. For example the Times Higher Education website has a job board for positions in universities where you can browse by role, location etc:

http://jobs.timeshighereducation.co.uk/jobs_home.asp?navcode=200

DIRECT APPROACH

You could also try approaching local colleges, or adult education institutions that offer courses in your subject area/s – although you could be offered casual or temporary teaching hours rather than a permanent position.

AGENCIES

A number of FE colleges in England also employ hourly-paid teaching staff through employment agencies so you could try registering with employment agencies that specialise in the tertiary education sector.

How to apply

THE APPLICATION FORM

If you are applying for an advertised post you will be asked to complete an application form giving full details of your education and any employment experience.

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REFEREES

Most colleges and universities will ask you to give the names of referees (usually two) who can vouch for your experience and abilities – remember to ask potential referees for their permission before supplying their details on an application form.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING

Most institutions will require you to complete an equal opportunities form as part of their equal opportunities policy. This enables them to monitor their records to ensure fairness in the treatment of applicants, whatever their sex, ethnicity or physical ability.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

In many cases an application form will come with a job description, outlining the components of the job on offer, and a person specification, detailing the skills and experience being sought in the applicant. It is important to show in your application how you match these requirements. Making the most of what you can bring to the job will increase your likelihood of being shortlisted.

Check if the application form is available online. This can often be quicker and you will find it easier to make changes and correct any mistakes. If you do complete a paper form don't forget to keep copies of any applications that you send off.

YOUR CV

You might also want to draw up your own CV (curriculum vitae) if you are applying for jobs on spec. This should outline your education and any work experience, and name people who can be approached for references. Don't forget to cover any voluntary, community or other experience that could show you have the qualities and maturity to teach in a post-school setting. You should tailor any covering letter to show why you are applying to the particular institution and/or course. If you are applying for an advertised post you should complete any application form specified rather than just send in your CV. See the Recourse website www.recourse.org.uk for more advice on CVs. There is also a useful example of an academic CV template at: <http://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/cv-templates/1309/academic-cv-template>

Preparing for interviews, receiving feedback**INTERVIEW PANELS**

Interviews can be nerve-racking at any stage in your career. Interview panels will be seeking out the most suitable candidates for the vacancy – rather than trying to trip you up – so you just need to be clear and honest in outlining your background, any work experience you have, and the qualities you can offer.

PREPARATION

You should go over what you wrote in your application form and be prepared to answer further questions on your education, employment and/or voluntary experience that show you can do the job as outlined in the job description and person specification. Don't forget any transferable skills – experience you may have gained outside of an educational setting but which is relevant to the post you are applying for. You should also check out any information the institution may have sent you about the post so that you arrive at the interview well-informed. Look at the institution's website to find out more about your potential workplace.

If you know who is going to be on your interview panel it is often worth finding out a bit about them and perhaps reading any academic papers they may have written prior to the interview.



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Tips on making the most of body language and non-verbal communication in interviews can be found at:
<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewsnetworking/a/nonverbalcomm.htm>



FEEDBACK

If you are not offered the post, and don't know why, you can usually approach the institution's human resources or personnel department for feedback about your performance at the interview. This may be helpful for future applications and interviews.

Checks and references

THE JOB OFFER

If you are successful at interview you will usually be given a provisional job offer subject to references being received and other checks carried out by the employer prior to you starting in post.

REFERENCES

A previous employer is not legally obliged to provide a reference but, if they do, they have a duty to make sure it's accurate and not misleading. If you receive an offer of a job 'subject to a satisfactory reference' any contract will not take effect until this is received.

DOCUMENTATION

Employers are also now legally obliged to check that you are entitled to work in the UK and will ask you for documentation to prove this before issuing a contract. This can include passport, birth certificate or certificate of registration.

CRB CHECKS

In some cases an employer may need to carry out a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check, particularly if you are applying to work in education for the 14–19-year-old age group or in prison education – 'offender learning'. For more details visit the CRB website at: www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk

CERTIFICATES

You may be asked to provide proof of your qualifications so make sure you keep all your certificates.

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