

Employability Cyflogadwyedd

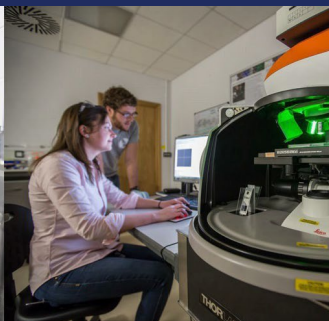
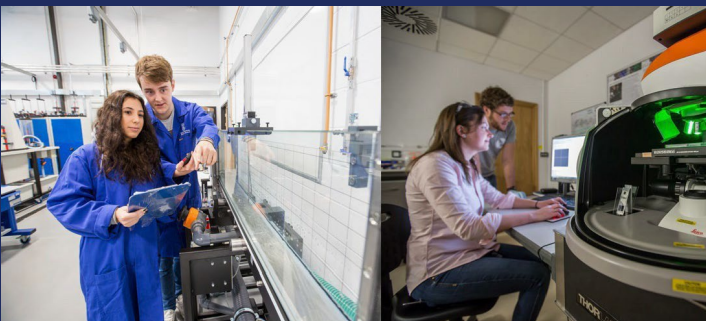
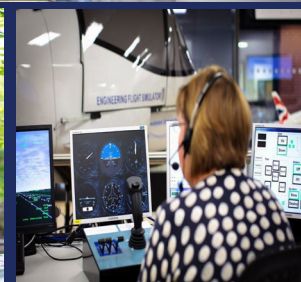
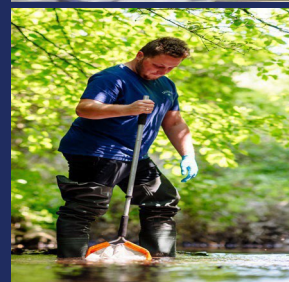


Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Faculty of Science and Engineering
Y Gyfadran Gwyddoniaeth a Pheirianeg

Your Employability Handbook

An invaluable resource to take control of your employability!



Science and Engineering Employability Handbook

Getting Started

What can you expect?

Applying for jobs is difficult. Many students face rejection, or possibly even being ignored. Each job application should be high quality and match the requirements of the job being applied for; this takes time. It is important to remember that university work should come first!

Key Skills and Attributes:



To discover which skills are key in the sector where you want to work, take look at the job profiles on prospects.ac.uk:

www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles.

How can I receive support?

Making use of the resources the Faculty of Science and Engineering offers students at Swansea will help you to succeed. These resources have been designed and created with a strong focus on our students.

Through proven techniques and valued experience from our past and present students, these resources are constantly being developed and improved.

Companies are looking for you to demonstrate that you possess all of these skills and attributes. You should always try to model your applications to show that you have these. You can develop these both professionally and personally (working or socially).

Getting Ahead Cont.

Boost your employability! There are many valuable and transferable skills that you can obtain by volunteering and being part of a society during your time at university.

Discovery

DiscoverySVS is a Swansea University student led charity that manages a wide range of volunteering projects. Our volunteering projects aim to enrich the lives of disadvantaged people across Swansea and work with different community members, whether it's children and young people, individuals with additional needs, refugee and asylum seeker families and older people. You can find a list of current projects here, this includes virtual volunteering: discoverysvs.org/our-projects

Volunteering is a hugely rewarding experience which benefits both the volunteer and the community. However, volunteering can be so much more than a fun and fulfilling way to spend your time. Volunteering can also help advance your career, develop skills and really increase your employability no matter what career you want. It can also help you to determine your career goals, and add value to your CV if you're lacking in work experience.

Societies

The College of Engineering has a society to represent each discipline. These are run by students and provide a great opportunity to build a network amongst your peers and make friends throughout your studies.

Each society offers a multitude of extra-curricular activities from socials, visits to conferences, fundraisers and talks from professionals. This is a brilliant way of boosting your employability whilst also socialising with your peers and

having some fun along the way. Students in their final years can offer you invaluable support throughout your degree, being able to offer guidance on your course and even industry insights.

Swansea University Science and Engineering Societies include: Aerospace Society, Chemical and Environmental Society, Civil Society, Electronic and Electrical Society, Materials Science and Engineering Society, Mechanical Society, Medical Engineering Society, Women in Engineering, Race Engineering, Physics Society, Chemistry Society, Conservation Ecology Society, Geography Society.

All of the society information can be found here, including links to each of the societies listed above: https://www.swansea-union.co.uk/get_involved/societies/

GO Wales

The Achieve Through Work Experience Programme is a European Social Fund initiative to create work experience opportunities for students on higher education courses in Wales who:

Are under 25 year old, in full time education, may face barriers to gaining work experience and can say yes to at least one of the following:

- I have a disability or work limiting health condition
- I'm from Black and Minority Ethnic background
- I have caring or child-care responsibilities
- I am in care or a care leaver
- I'm from a low higher education participation neighbourhood.

To find out more about the Programme and eligibility criteria please visit gowales.co.uk or email gowales@swansea.ac.uk.

Your Ideal Job

It is important for you to consider what industry you would like to work in when you graduate. When you are working it is vital that you are happy with your job. Not every job is the same and not every job will be perfect for you. This is why work experience is so important in helping you to make informed decisions about your future.

Think about the following:

- Do you have an idea of your ideal job?
- Would you like to work for a larger “corporate” company, or a small-medium enterprise (SME)?
- Would you like to do more practical or theoretical work?

Year in Industry

- Much of the information we provide has come directly from our students. We keep track of our student successes and use this information to improve the service for you!
- We have a large database of live placements, companies that you can speculatively apply to and insights into their recruitment processes. This can give you an advantage when applying: <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/job-adverts>
- To continue the high standard of support that we provide you with, we need you to keep us up to date with your application progress and feedback your insights from experience: <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills>

Graduate Employment

- When you find a graduate job, please take the time to let us know, as it is vital we keep a track of where our students go. This allows us to:
- Invite you and your company back to the university
- Get advice for a student applying to your company
- Grow our industrial network.

Year in Applied Research

- This scheme provides students with exposure and appreciation of research topics within a particular research area.
- Grow Field/laboratory skills specific to discipline
- Year in applied research vacancies will be updated regularly and can be found here: <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/job-adverts>

Are you proud of your university? Please keep your contact details up to date on the Alumni portal here: <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/alumni/stay-connected/update-your-contact-details/#d.en.34568>

- COMPLETED THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT COURSE
- SECURED EMPLOYMENT
- UPDATED LINKEDIN PROFILE

To find out more about your strengths and job suitability, complete the SEA Career Development Course. It will give you a good idea of what roles you are best suited for and also what you need to work on to be the perfect candidate for your dream job.

Find out more here: <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/job-adverts>

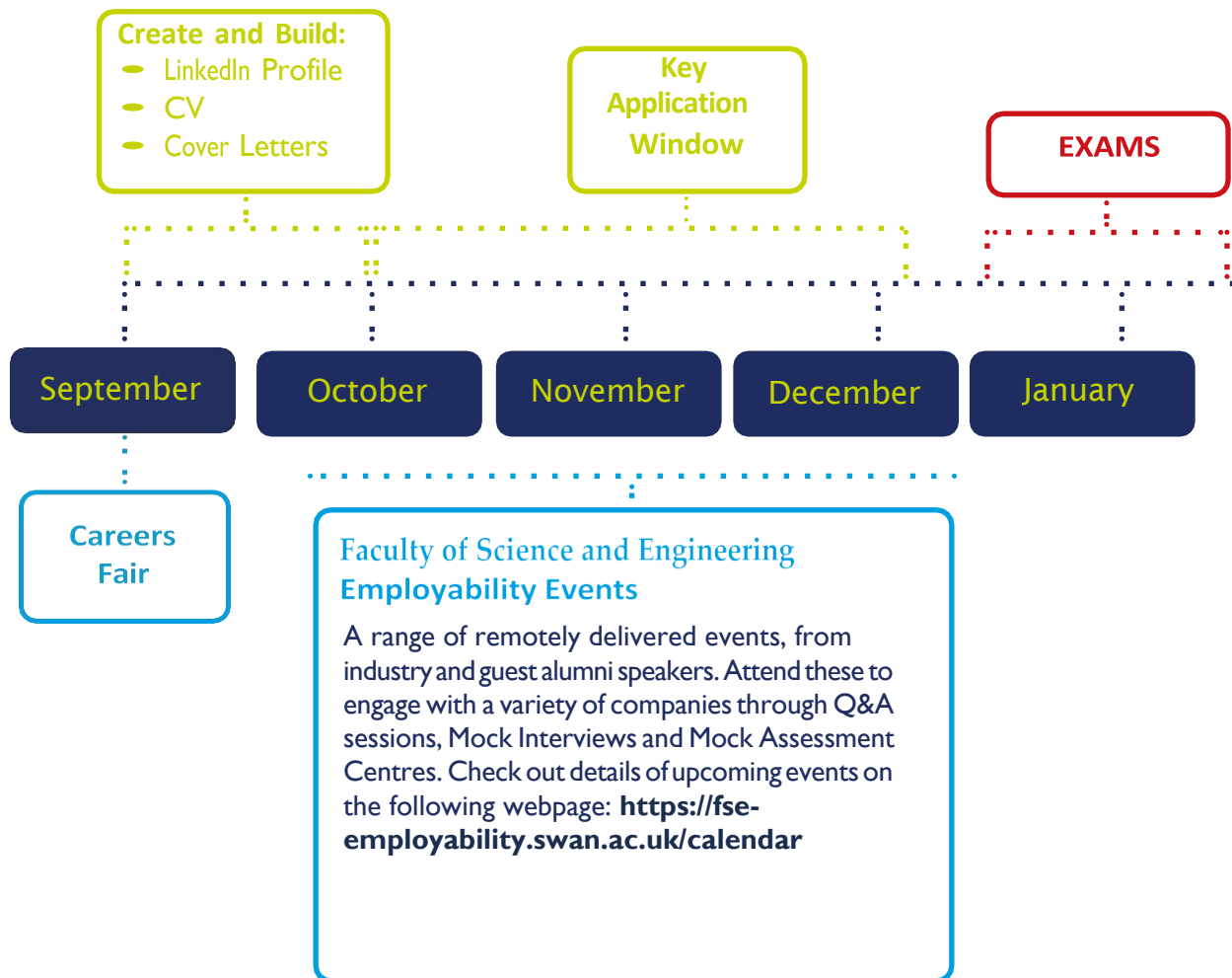
The Recruitment Timeline

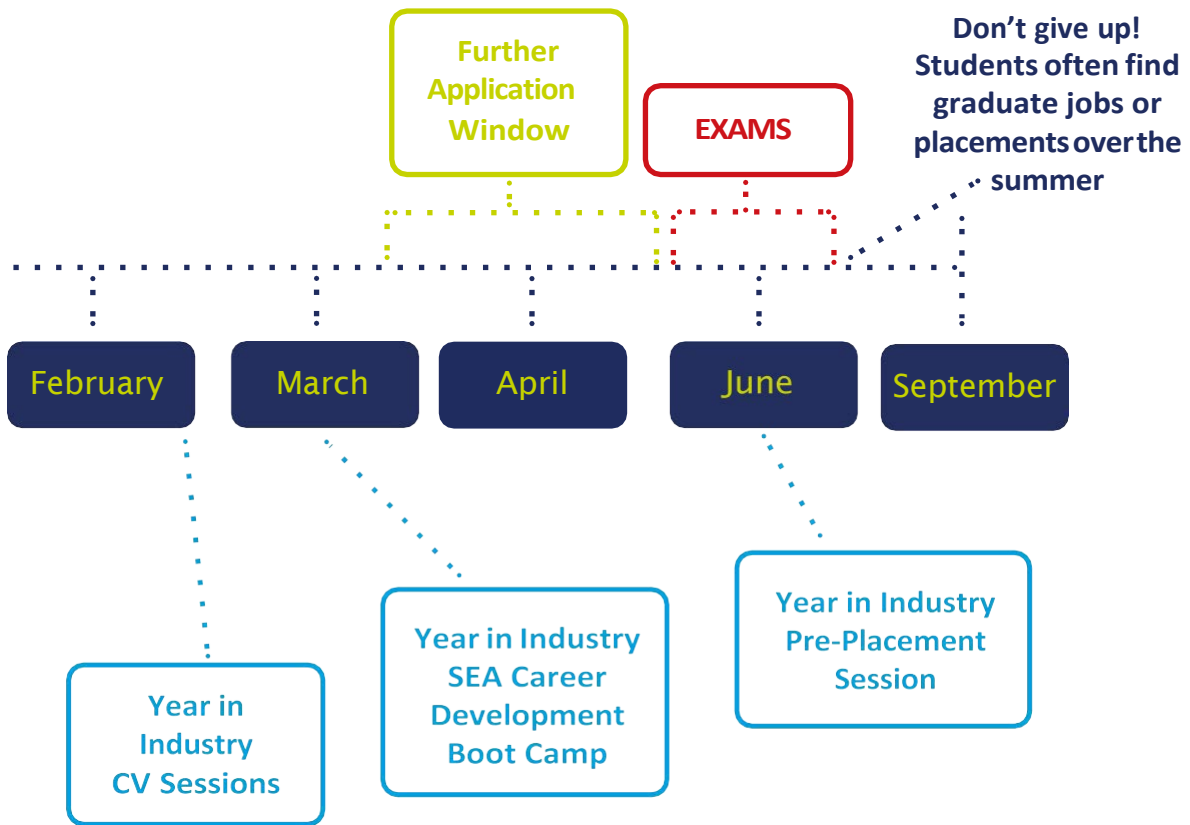
A typical recruitment year:

What you can be developing (Green)

What support the College provides you (Blue)

Exams window (Red)





Networking

You have the opportunity to network at a number of events organised by the College of Engineering Employability Team. Take a look at some of our networking tips below:

BE YOURSELF

Networking should be viewed as laying the foundation stone for a (hopefully) fruitful relationship. Recruiters and company representatives attend careers events to meet students, so don't be shy about approaching them. Don't try to be the person you think others want to meet. A clean, straight forward introduction followed by several questions is the best approach.

ASK QUESTIONS

The best way to impress a potential employer is to seem enthusiastic and genuinely interested in their product or service. This will require you asking them plenty of carefully crafted questions and listening to their response. With this in mind, Forbes Magazine believes that it is always best to walk away from a conversation having allowed the other person to speak more than you did. In their experience, this would allow you to better plan and execute your follow-up (whether through an email or other form of communication). Showing genuine interest in another person can say more about you than talking about yourself could. However, it is important to avoid questions that are overly political or confrontational, or that the person you're asking is unlikely to be able to answer, e.g. questions on very technical or specialist matters. You may want to be perceived as clever or clued-up but could easily come across as showing off or trying to catch out an employer.

RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH

This is the cardinal rule for all employability-based events. If it is a careers fair, the university will publish the attendees in advance. Take some time to research the companies that are attending in advance and prepare questions to ask. It's better to try and ask more in-depth questions about the company than those you could answer yourself from a simple search or a quick scour of their website.

TIPS FOR INTROVERTS

If you're nervous, TargetJobs suggests pairing up with a fellow student and approaching employers together. You could even ask one of the organisers if they could introduce you. If you find the experience too alarming or draining, remember to grab yourself five minutes' quiet time. These experiences, if genuine, should feel enjoyable rather than a chore.

KEEP THE PHONE OUT OF SIGHT

Using your technology when you're supposed to be engaging with employers risks looking rude. If you want to take notes on your device, ask if that's okay first so the employer knows that that's what you're doing. Otherwise, they may assume that you're bored and disinterested.

Find more tips on the following page:

myuni.swansea.ac.uk/sea/recruitment/networking

NETWORKING QUESTIONS: EXAMPLES

- What do you do?
- How long have you worked for 'company x'?
- How did you secure your role in 'companyx'?
- Does your organisation participate in many events like this?
- What advice would give someone who is looking for a placement/graduate role?
- As an employer what are your top three things you look for in someone on an internship/graduate role?
- What do you expect from a colleague in the first three months of work?
- If you had to start your career again, what would you do differently?
- What is a typical day in your role and organisation?

CVs

For more in depth information and guidance to make the most of your CV, visit our Employability Site's CV Section here:

engemployability.swansea.ac.uk/employability-skills/cv-writing

Why do you need a CV?

Your CV is the most important document you will create. Your CV should be tailored to each job you apply for. Employers use it to see if you are suited to them. You can also use it to approach a company. Any type of employment will usually require a CV.

How do you improve your CV?

Showcase your strengths, skills & how you fit the job you are applying for:

Make it easy for the employer to read and compare to the specifications they are looking for in a perfect candidate

Target it to the employer, but also to the role you are applying for

What should your CV look like?

The structure of a CV can vary, for example, as a student you are not expected to have a great deal of experience and education can come first. When you gain some experience it is usually wise to put that section before the education section; for a graduate role every candidate will have a degree. Employers can spend as little as 10 seconds scanning your CV, so clarity is vital.

Top Tips

- Write about what an employer wishes to read
- Make your layout clear and consistent
- Keep your CV concise
- 2 pages maximum (A4)
- Bullet points make scanning easy
- Tailor your CV to each company that you apply to
- Always update, review and change your CV
- Always get somebody to check your grammar

KEEP ON TOP OF YOUR CV, UPDATE IT EVERY QUARTER!

Year in Industry students:

Submit your CVs to the team; they will review it and send it back. Make some changes & re-submit it for a final review.

Style

- Use professional language and do not use vague abbreviations
- Make sure to use the same tense throughout
- Sell yourself with positivity and action words relating to key skills
- Highlight key achievements / successes

Design

- A creative CV should be kept for a creative job
- Abstract fonts are difficult to read and look messy
- Do not use too many colours as it can appear unprofessional

Length

- A standard length CV is 2 pages (A4)
- 1 page CVs can be requested
- Some countries require different styles

Layout

- Employers look at the top section and tend to skim down the left side of the page

Headings

- Clear and bold headings should be used
- Don't use a heading for the sake of it
- If you want to add interests, make them interesting and not generic

Content

- Your CV should show what you have completed each year
- Make sure that contact details are correct and a professional email address is used

Fonts

- Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman are preferred as they are easy to read; Comic Sans should be avoided

Checklist:

- Have you amended and updated your CV?
- Have you had someone review your CV?
- Have you filled out relevant work experience?

Example CV

Contact details: DOB, nationality, relationship status and gender are **not** required

2 full pages

Roger Davidson

123620@swansea.ac.uk
01299 67890

21ThameAve
Leigh-on-Sea
Essex, SS9 2XQ

Keep it brief!

Outline your key skills

A logical, hardworking and self-motivated person seeking an industrial placement during the university degree programme to add work experience to academic knowledge. Works well as part of a team or individually always keeping to deadlines and helping others, as required, along the way.

Reverse chronological order

List core/important modules. Module codes are not required here

No need to list every GCSE

Highlight your responsibilities

Demonstrate key skills and initiative

Demonstrate CAR (page 25)

Education

September 2016 - Present Product Design Engineering Student (BEng), Swansea University
Year 1 average: 70%. Year 2 average so far: 75%.
Core course material include Product Design, Thermodynamics, Mechanics, Fluid Mechanics, Manufacturing Technology, Environmental Awareness, and Experimental Studies.

September 2014 - July 2016 A-levels, Southcold High School for Boys Grammar School
Maths (A), Product Design (A), General Studies (A), Physics (B), Chemistry (B),
French (B – AS-level only)

September 2009 - July 2014 GCSEs, Southcold High School for Boys Grammar School
5A*s (Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Geography, Resistant Materials)
5A's (English Literature, Statistics, Biology, French, Religious Education)
2B's (Latin, English Language)

Experience

July 2015 - September 2017 Halfords Group Plc, Part-time Bicycle Mechanic and Sales Assistant
Performed technical and administrative duties. I developed skills in customer relations, contributed to a successful business and independently completed bicycle assemblies to high standards. I contributed to staff and stock management by organising rosters and raising orders of workshop consumables.

July 2016 - August 2016 Benson Lund (A division of Ipeco Holdings Ltd)
Shadowed and contributed in the Design Office of Benson Lund for three weeks, and for one week on the Production Line. I designed components with 2D and 3D CAD modelling systems (CoCreate OneSpace Design), updated design documentation and printed and issued technical drawings. I gained knowledge of Fire Test Plans and Air Worthiness Standards. On the shop floor, I shadowed parts manufacturing operation to understand how drawings I produced were used.

Positions of Responsibilities

September 2016 - Present Treasurer of Swansea University Mountaineering Club
Managing club funds and being part of club committee. I became better at working as part of a team towards set targets. I schedule my time to balance committee duties and university work. As a committee member, I am responsible for the safety of club members that we take mountaineering and for teaching new members skills necessary to participate. I demonstrate willingness to help others and work in a team.

Use action words

October 2012 - Present
Cub Scout Leader
Volunteering as a Cub Scout leader, I plan and run meetings once a week. Not only rewarding by seeing young people develop their potential under my guidance but improved my organisational skills too.

Show transferrable skills

September 2015 - July 2016
School Captain
Supervised a team of 39 prefects. I represented the School on formal occasions such as Remembrance Day parades, led readings in assembly as well as being a positive role model. This gave skills and knowledge in effective organisation of a team, communication, diplomacy and public speaking. I am now a more confident and approachable person from my experiences in this role.

September 2014 - July 2016
Chairman of School Council
Ran real-world problem-solving tasks with the team while listening to the views of others.

Clear headers and titles

Personal Interests

Mountain biking. Mountain biking has been one of my main interests for over 10 years. I enjoy building my own bikes using knowledge I acquired when working at Halfords. Riding also keeps fit and healthy.

Rock climbing. As part of Swansea University Mountaineering Club, I am responsible for my safety and that of others. Climbing requires physical and mental strength as well as attention to detail.

Photography. My interest in photography started with photographing live gigs and wildlife. I now extend it to my design work, displaying influential ideas and products.

Music. I have been playing bass guitar in a band for 3 years. We recorded an EP (2017) and played numerous gigs. This demands an ability to work with and listen to other people to achieve an objective. I also enjoy playing guitar and ukulele.

Show extra curricular activity

Use bullet points where possible

Awards

- Achieved the **Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award**. Currently working towards the Gold Award. During this award I learnt a huge amount about teaming, individual skills and the interaction with other team members.
- Awarded a Trophy for the '**Most Outstanding All-Round Sportsman**' at school, based on my achievements and attitude.
- Full clean UK driving licence. Qualified First Aider. Student member of the IMechE.

Demonstrate commitment

Do not say "Available on request"

References

Dr J D Johnson (Level 1/2 Tutor)
College of Engineering
Swansea University
Swansea
SA1 8PP
01792 29557
j.d.johnson@swansea.ac.uk

Mr Mark Smith
General Manager
Halfords
High Street
Swansea
0844 4717 1752
mksmith@demon.co.uk

Ask before putting any names down



What is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is the social network for professionals. It is used by employers to screen candidates for job roles and is also a great marketing tool for a large business with a big network.

Why do I need an account?

It is increasingly popular year on year and there are approximately 400 million users. It will allow you to interact with potential employers and embed yourself within the industries you are interested in. Your profile is your online professional footprint, available for all users to view.

Student LinkedIn

LinkedIn has a range of tutorials for you to create your profile. It provides you with a checklist of what you should include and ranks your profile based on how complete it is.

Networking

You must be active and take the time to update your profile and build your network. Look for: companies, colleagues, classmates and people who have jobs that you want, or work in industries that you are targeting.

Targets

Think about what you want to put on your LinkedIn profile in the future. What types of things have others written that you would like to write yourself...

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Top Tips

- Use a professional photo ideally, head and shoulders on a clear background
- Clearly describe experience (job roles & achievements)
- Include education history
- Include volunteering work
- List key skills
- Ask for endorsements and recommendations
- Assign an easy to remember profile URL

Remember to join the Science and Engineering LinkedIn page to keep up to date with the latest news, events and vacancies. You can also join exclusive groups for year in industry, year in applied research or if you are in your final year.

www.linkedin.com/in/sufseemployability

Checklist:

- Do you have a professional profile photo?
- Have you included details about your degree course on your page?
- Have you filled out relevant work experience?
- Have you added any additional training, awards, languages or qualifications?
- Are you a member of your industrial governing body?
- Have you put a link in your CV to your LinkedIn profile?
- Is your profile "All-Star"?
- Do you update your LinkedIn profile regularly?
- Have you joined your subjects LinkedIn group?

Cover Letters

Why do you need a covering letter?

A covering letter is a way of drawing an employer's eye to your application and encouraging them to interview you. The two main points to address are:

- a) Why you are interested in the job
- b) Why you are suitable

How can you prepare a cover letter?

As with your CV, research is important and your covering letter should be tailored to every application. You shouldn't use a template as employers can spot them. Read the company's website, find articles and build your knowledge (this can also help for interviews). Re-read the job advert as it may give clues about what you should mention in your application.

How can you structure your cover letter?

It can be split into 4 key sections

- Introduction: Who you are and what you want, mention what you study and that your CV is attached.
- About you: Why you are perfect for the role. Compare yourself to the job description, how you tick the boxes, why you fit with the company.
- About the role/company: Why you want the role, explain that it's the only company you want to work for, what attracted you, demonstrate that you have researched.
- Closing statement: Sign off, end with a courteous remark such as "I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my application with you further".

What should it look like?

- It should be one side of A4
- Set out in proper letter format
- Try to address the recipient by name (looks better than Sir/Madam)

For more in depth information and guidance to make the most of your cover letter visit our Employability Site <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills/cover-letters>

Checklist:

- Have you written a cover letter?
- Have you had someone review your cover letter?
- Have you had any initial feedback?
- Have you made any changes?

Year in Industry students:

Submit your cover letter to the team, they will review it and send it back. Make some changes and re-submit it for a final review!

Includetheperson'sname, position and full address

WhenusingMr/Mrsend with Yours Sincerely

When using Sir/Madam endwith Yours Faithfully

Show good knowledge of the company

Highlight the key skills and experiences you have to offerandhow you meetthe criteria in the Job Description

If you would like something taken into account express it here

Mrs L. Howard
TalentRecruitmentManager
Mott MacDonald
FitzalanHouse
Cardiff
CF245CC

JeanDavies
CliveRoad
Canton
Cardiff
CF24 0EL

27 October 2019

Dear Mrs Howard,

Please find my attached CV in response to the Year in Industry placement advertised on the Mott MacDonald website (Ref. 21315). I learned about the Sandwich Placement program from the Mott MacDonald presentation on 4th of October which I attended at Swansea University.

I am a second year undergraduate at Swansea University studying for a MEng in Civil Engineering. The course has stimulated my interest in helping to make the global community a brighter, better and more sustainable place for the future. I am keen on taking part in work experience and eager to gain knowledge and experience while working hard on the tasks I am given. My course has reinforced my conviction that water is a resource that should be carefully managed, and I aspire to contribute to solving this global challenge.

I am aware of the work undertaken by Mott McDonald in water management under the MMB joint venture, which I perceive as a great opportunity to work with you along shared values. The global presence of Mott McDonald and its contribution, such as the Indonesian water sanitation project meet my career aspiration in its values and impact.

You will see from my enclosed CV that I have charity work experience. My voluntary work taught me that no matter whom you are, everyone can play their own part in making this world a better place and civil engineers can play a key role in this effort. This taught me to be flexible and adaptable regarding the environment I live and work in to maximise the team's output. I have excelled in fluid mechanics, soil mechanics and project work as evidenced by the grades on my CV. I trust my computer literacy meets the requirement for the post as I have learnt to use BIMs, scientific programming and office packages for reports and communication.

I would be very pleased to attend an interview for this application and can be contacted by email or telephone. Please note that I have examinations in the first three weeks of January, and would prefer to avoid an interview at this time, but I would make every effort to attend if unavoidable.

Yours Sincerely,
Jean Davies

Statewherelyousawthe job advertised

Introduce yourself

Outline what attracts you to the role, showing that you have done your research

Discuss relevant work experience

Add when you are available for interview and to work

Top Tips

- Try to phone the company for more information
- Keep a copy in this Handbook to take to your interviews
- Employers will be evaluating your professionalism and attention to detail
- A formal approach is better than an informal one
- Usefull sentences, correct spelling and grammar
- Quote statistics to back up your results

Application Forms

How do you prepare?

Application forms are becoming a more popular component of recruitment processes and 85% of employers will use this method. They are designed to filter out irrelevant information. It also makes it easier for employers to compare applications. It is an alternative to a CV and may ask for additional information to your CV.

- Ensure you read the instructions and documents attached before starting.
- Check whether the form requires you to fill out in one go, or if it allows you to return later. Some will not allow you to edit a previously submitted answer, so it may be worth drafting it in Microsoft Word beforehand.
- You must collect information about the company you are applying for.
- Ask yourself what skills, experience, knowledge and attributes the employer is looking for. Clearly demonstrate how you meet these requirements within your answers.
- Keep a copy of your application form to refer to ahead of the interview.
- Make sure you clearly show how you meet the criteria in the Job Description.

How are they structured?

Online: most common for student recruitment. Some online applications have built in tests (page 26).

Electronic: can be downloaded from the employer’s website or email link, you can complete it and attach it in an email.

Printed: these are rare; employers may post you an application to fill out by hand and return by post, do not fill it out before drafting responses. Make a photocopy before you start.

What can you expect?

- Competency based questions
- Short and to the point questions
- A case study question
- A role related question
- Multiple choice questions

Can you think of examples?

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Managing Applications

Overview

- There are some important things to consider across this process. At times, learning how to become more employable comes from experience.
- It is important to apply for as many jobs that are suited to you as possible; this is because more often than not, employers will be swamped with applications and may not reply to all of them.
- Apply to all positions where you feel that you will thrive, without waiting for responses, however be mindful of individual companies’ policies where the number of positions for which you may apply is sometimes limited.
- Coping with rejection is vital to succeeding; it is important to maintain confidence and use it as a chance to gather feedback to improve yourself.
- Finally take note of your experiences, both good and bad, for your own reference in the future. Your experience is your most valuable asset.

Supporting Statements

1. Capture the reader's attention with a positive and enthusiastic introduction.
2. Make sure your application is honest and accurate; you never know when an employer will check up on statements you have made.
3. Make each paragraph flow nicely and make each word count.
4. Don't waffle, be clear and concise.
5. Provide strong reasons as to why you want this role.
6. Highlight your strengths and experience.
7. Show you are up to date on industrial topics and current affairs.
8. Provide evidence for essential criteria.

CAR Writing Technique

The CAR writing applies to your supporting statement in a job application, you should also use it to structure the text about each experience reported on your CV, and your answers during an interview.

Be concise.

You may research and use the more detailed writing scheme STAR(R) but be careful to keep text short and to the point.

Context:

What was the situation (e.g. dates, company, job title etc.)?

Action:

What task were you assigned? How did you complete it?

Result:

On a CV, document the performance aspects (exceeded targets?), the skills you developed and the feedback you may have received. In an interview, make sure that this answers the question.

The Swansea Employability Academy also have advice on the application process:

<https://myuni.swansea.ac.uk/sea/recruitment/application-forms/>

Top Tips

- Save your applications regularly
- Make it as easy to read as possible
- Bullet point answers if necessary
- Get as close to the word limit as possible
- Check spelling hasn't been Americanised
- Get it proof read
- Don't undersell yourself
- Keep copies of applications and dates they were submitted
- Use action words

Online Tests

For more guidance on online tests, visit our Employability site here:

<https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills/aptitude-tests>

How do you prepare?

These are sometimes referred to as psychometric tests and come in many forms. The two main types of tests are personality and aptitude. These tests are usually the final screening before an interview. They test character, skills and cognitive ability. These show more about a candidate than just their grades.

The best way to prepare is through practice and applying the right techniques. Try to get in touch with someone who has done the tests before. **Practice using the SEA Career Development Course Psychometric Tests.** Remember, you can always ask the team for guidance!

Abstract Reasoning?

The abstract, verbal and numerical reasoning tests check your skills and abilities against the role that you are applying for. The employer will judge you on areas like critical thinking and logical reasoning. For each of these tests, you will be timed and in exam conditions.

Abstract often gives you two sets of shapes and asks you which set the shape in question fits into. Often patterns can be anything to do with the shapes, colour, shade, angles, edges, lines, direction. It is important to spend time understanding the pattern and not to guess or rush your answers.

Verbal Reasoning?

This test often gives a passage of text followed by 4 questions about the passage. Often the technique here would be to read through the passage and then attempt the questions. It is important to remember that these tests are not always designed for you to be able to finish them in the allotted time, but instead to see how you behave under pressure. Do not guess questions to finish.

Numerical Reasoning?

This test is usually multiple choice; you will be given a set of data either in a passage, table or graph and asked to make calculations or analysis of the data to get the answer. It is often, again, a good idea to practice several times and ensure you have a calculator to hand. Taking notes and applying basic mathematical principles to each question will benefit you. You will likely come across ratios, percentages, decimals and fractions, so brush up!

Taking notes throughout will be of great benefit. You should remember that the test will likely not be designed so that you can comfortably complete it in the allotted time, so don't worry if you do not get to the end – just stick to the technique and you will be fine.

Situational Judgement Test?

They usually ask you to choose a statement that will best describe you. There is no right or wrong answer here; they are looking to understand how you will react in different situations and how you can potentially fit into the company and that specific job role. It would not be wise to try to guess what the employer is looking for, as this will confuse the results of the test and they will not provide an accurate reflection of you.

Resources

- Look for online practice opportunities on websites such as TargetJobs
- Profiling for Success (Career Development Course)
- Graduates First: www.graduatesfirst.com
- <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills>

Interviews

For more in depth information and guidance on interviews, visit our Employability site here: <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills/interviews>

Telephone Interviews

Select a quiet room with no distractions (there are specialist rooms for this purpose in the Bay Campus Library)

- Ensure good quality phone signal or use a landline
- Have your CV in front of you for ease of access to refer to
- Have details of the company you are applying to in front of you; select key points from their website or job advert and when asked sell that information back to them, thus proving you know about the company and what they do and any plans they have going forward
- Listen to the questions carefully and then answer within any time scales that may be given
Have the 20 practice interview questions in front of you with your answers and where possible use these example answers

Video Interviews

You may have to answer a pre-recorded question. The more you practice, the more relaxed you will be. They may also involve a face to face interview over Skype, or you may just have to answer a pre-recorded question with a limited time to answer.

You may be given many chances to re-record your answer or you may only be given one chance.

- Make sure you dress smartly, this will be an assessing point
- Take the interview in a quiet room with no distractions
- Tidy the space behind you so the employer will not see clutter/mess/posters
- Is the lighting correct? Do you have a strong internet connection? Is the environment quiet?
Does your microphone or webcam work? Use your webcam to practice with mock interview

Face to Face Interviews

This has been a vanishing form of interview recently, often held at the company's office. You could be interviewed by one, two, three people, maybe even more. It is likely that there will be a hiring manager and an HR representative present.

- Look at the interviewers when answering the questions. As everyone will be monitoring your performance, it is important to engage with everyone
- Use your hands to express your answers
- Accept the offer of a glass of water as you will be talking a lot, this will allow a pause and give you a chance to think about how you are answering questions
- Don't be afraid to ask the interviewer to repeat the question if you need clarity or to buy yourself some more thinking time
- Shake the interviewers' hands at the start and the end of the interview and be sure to thank them for their time when you leave

- Research company
- Prepare answers to typical questions overleaf
- Use Glassdoor, RateMyPlacement and the College
Employability page: employability.swansea.ac.uk/insights
- Structure answers for interviews using 'CAR' or 'STAR'

Further interview advice can be found on:
<https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills>

Interviews (cont.)

Take control, be prepared! Here are some typical competency questions.

Competency Questions:

You will find that some questions come back frequently in most interviews. The 20 questions below should help prepare you for all types of questions. Make sure you can answer them and you will have material ready for the day.

You and Your CV

1. Why did you choose Swansea University and what factors influenced your choice?
2. Why did you choose your degree subject?
3. What has been your greatest achievement?
4. What are your hobbies/sporting interests and tell me about them?
5. What computing skills do you have?
6. What has been your greatest achievement?

The Company and the Job Description

1. Tell me about (the company and what we do)?
2. What can you offer us?
3. From the job spec, how can you add value to what we do?
4. Why do you want this job?

Twenty typical competency interview questions:

1. Describe a situation in which you have led a team.
2. What is the most important goal you have set yourself in the past? What made you successful in reaching it?
3. Tell us how you might approach communicating with another person who may dislike you personally?
4. How have you approached your studies to be effective with your personal organisation and planning?
5. How might you react if some arrangements you had planned carefully suddenly had to be changed?
6. Have you been in a work situation where you felt unable to cope with the volume of work you had been given? How did you overcome this?
7. Give an example of a time when you felt you could motivate colleagues or peers to achieve a goal?
8. What would you do if someone you were relying on to help you achieve a goal let you down?
9. Have you ever had to tackle a task or piece of research work that you did not like? If so, what was it and how did you deal with it?
10. Describe a situation in which you were initiative.
11. What has been your biggest setback?
12. Describe a time where you had a difficult decision to make.
13. Describe a situation in which you solved a problem.
14. Describe a situation in which you took responsibility.
15. What do you expect to be doing in 5 years' time?
16. What are your weaknesses?
17. What are your strengths?
18. Who else have you applied to/got interviews with?
19. Give an example of a time when you have used fact-finding skills to solve a problem – then tell us how you analysed the information to reach your decision?
20. Do you have any questions for us?

After the interview

As soon as possible after the interview make a note of the questions you were asked and how you felt you answered them. You may need to go for a number of interviews before you get offered a job, so use each interview as an opportunity for development. If you are unsuccessful, see if you can get some feedback.

Assessment Centres

For more in depth information and guidance on assessment centres, visit our Employability site here: <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills/assessment-centres>

Overview

Assessment centres tend to be one or two day events where candidates are observed and assessed against a set criteria, rather than being compared to other candidates. You will be required to take part in a number of different exercises and you will be continuously assessed throughout the day. Make a good first impression to everyone that you meet (even non assessing staff). Be sure to maintain professionalism during meals or drinks.

Example Agenda

You may get some social events where you meet other candidates, recruiters, graduates and senior management.

This is an excellent opportunity for you to find out more about the organisation and to ask questions in an informal setting (asking questions shows interest).

- Information sessions which give more detail about the company; if anything is unclear then ask!
- Tests and exercises designed to reveal your potential.

You may undertake: group work, aptitude tests, presentations, problem solving tasks.

What can you be asked?

Competency questions: use your past experience to predict what you might be like in the role that you are applying for. They will expect real life examples and they will need to be convinced that you are able to transfer skills (use CAR page 25).

Strength based questions: the best ways of extracting information from candidates without any rehearsed answers. They use these questions to get an insight into your life and personality. These answers flow better as candidates often get engrossed in their responses. See examples on next page.

Unexpected questions: sometimes thrown in to make you think, as they test your ability to think on your feet and react under pressure. "What colour and type of sock would you be if you could?" or; "How many bricks can you stack to the moon?"

Preparing

- Participate in a college run mock assessment centre!
- Read through the details or agenda sent through about your interview or assessment centre (have they asked you to prepare slides?).
- Read through your application, CV and cover letter to familiarise yourself with it (you will be asked about what you have written).
- Research the company and the role and make notes to the right.
- Create a list of your skills and the experience/examples to back this up for you to discuss in the interview.
- Practice your answers with friends, family or mentors.
- Plan to get there ahead of time (do you need to book public transport?)
- Dress appropriately—always your smartest!

Top Tips

- Be friendly and make a positive contribution
- Make the most of conversing with recent graduates
- Join in, even at meal times, converse with candidates
- Be yourself and focus on what you are there to do

Checklist:

- Have you planned for a good night's sleep?
- Have you got a map or a route of where you are going?
- Have you got your clothes ready and ironed?
- Are you leaving plenty of time for traffic/delays?
- Have you read all the details thoroughly?
- Have you included this booklet, your CV, cover letter and any other relevant documentation in a folder?
- Have you prepared questions to ask the company?

Want to find out more? Take a look at the following: <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skill>

Company Notes:

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Strength-based interviews stem from a very positive view on recruitment. It aims to put the right person in the right job and focuses on personal attributes rather than competencies. Rapid-fire questions are typically used in such interviews to probe whether the candidate is a good match for the vacancy.

For more information, take a look at <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/strength-based-interviews> Below are typical questions you may be asked in strength-based interviews.

Don't over think your answers, these interviews usually have overlapping questions and are typically analysed for genuineness. Preparing for this type of interview is not something you can leave until the last minute with sample questions. The best way to prepare is to acquire a good level of self-awareness regarding your qualities, values and motivations. This will help you to target your applications where you are a good match so you need to research the company.

Some questions below illustrate the questions that may arise, but it is not an exhaustive list by far, you would not be expected to read through them in preparation.



International Student Support

- Living and studying overseas demonstrates “global mobility” and an ability to adapt to new cultures and challenges, make sure you highlight this global awareness throughout the application process
- Mention all the languages you speak including English and your native tongue
- Express and highlight knowledge of cultures and a global awareness
- Have you got a network in other countries or other international students in different countries?
- Do use your network in your home country to source your placement, we are open to international placement opportunities

Do you need anything extra?

If you have a “legal right to work in the United Kingdom”, highlight this on your application and provide supporting documentation. It would also be useful to add this to your CV and covering letter.

When adding your educational qualifications, employers may not be familiar with international standards and may require you to translate your qualifications to the UK equivalent. Visit UK NARIC for more information: naric.org.uk/naric

International@CampusLife help students, and their families, with all sorts of non-academic problems. They are fully trained immigration specialists and will try and assist with any queries you may have. Take a look at their web page for more details <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/international-campuslife/>

Disabilities Support

What support do you have?

Deciding whether or not to disclose your disability is your own personal choice. You are under no legal obligation to do so and can decide if and when you wish to disclose it.

If you have a disability, medical condition or specific learning difficulty, contact the Disability Office to find out more about the support that is available to ensure you have the same opportunities as everyone else. The Disability Office is part of Inclusive Student Support Services.

Please visit their webpage for information on support and funding available www.swansea.ac.uk/disability

For more support and advice you can also arrange a meeting with SEA and their Careers Consultant myuni.swansea.ac.uk/sea/about-us/speak-to-an-adviser

Mature Student Support

You can bring life and work experiences with you. Demonstrate your skills and qualities to employers and use your experiences to your advantage.

CV/Applications:

- You do not have to put your date of birth or age on your CV. Regard your age positively and emphasise your strengths and qualities.
- Employers may not be familiar with certain qualifications (such as O’levels, Access Courses) so summarise what they equate to.
- You do not have to put every job you’ve ever done on your CV. They can be summarised and grouped.
- Make a connection with past experiences, what you are studying now and what you want to do in the future. This applies if you have come to university to make a career change.
- You may want to write a skills based CV if you cannot put yourself across in a traditional CV.
- Include information such as voluntary work, interests and commitments.

Postgraduate Support

The main rules still apply to you, however, you will also have the opportunity to prove that you are an excellent researcher who will bring value and expertise to the department. Your knowledge and achievements to date will be of interest to the recruiting department or institution, as well as your ability to demonstrate that you can manage projects. The skills you gain as a postgraduate will be valuable indications of your ability to succeed in a new role.

CV/Applications:

An academic CV is typically longer than undergraduate CV as the candidate is usually required to include any publications or conferences attended, as well as:

1. Research experience
 2. Teaching experience
 3. Administrative experience
 4. Technical skills
 5. Ability to attract funding
- Read through any research papers developed by the department you are applying to; good preparation is key.
 - You may be asked to present on topics similar to previous research you have done.
 - Do you know who currently funds the research and are there any requirements for the funding?
 - Do you know where you would fit within the department if you were successful?

SPINterns

Have you been unsuccessful with your placement finding?

Will you be staying in Swansea this summer?

You can always apply to become a SPIN Intern (SPINtern) and work for the College of Engineering on a short placement. There are many different opportunities for you to gain all those transferable skills and experiences that you can take with you to industry.

Keep an eye on your emails for when the application process begins!

Useful Resources

Employability Skills

Open to all students, with employability advice and guidance, vacancies, blogs, podcasts, insights and more! <https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/employability-skills>

Employability Newsletter

A weekly collation of Employability news, placements and events via email.

Employability Drop-In

Come and speak to one of the team about anything Employability related, for example: CVs, Applications & Interviews, Year in Industry, Summer Placement & Graduate Job Search and Employability Events. Drop-ins are open to all students of any year group.

Find out more about how you can attend a drop-in here:

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/FSEEmployabilityI@SwanseaUniversity.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>

Employability Champions

Each Engineering discipline has a dedicated champion to provide support & guidance; details of each are included in this handbook and their weekly office hours included in the newsletters. [Employability Champions - Swansea University](#)

Swansea Employability Academy

Find useful information via the following pages: <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/sea/>



<https://www.instagram.com/fseemployability/>



www.linkedin.com/in/sufseemployability



<https://fse-employability.swan.ac.uk/>
[FSE Employability \(office365.com\)](http://FSE Employability (office365.com))