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SYDNEY

Australia's  
Global  
University

# Careers and Employment International Student Employability Guide



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As an international student, you have invested heavily in your future. Your education and career are a significant life investment, so planning your career is vital for you to reach your potential.

Welcome to Careers and Employment, UNSW's hub for student employability. Our mission is to help you enhance your global employability and empower you to succeed beyond the classroom and be career ready! We understand that starting a successful career is not easy and we're here to help.

Our team of professional careers consultants are on campus year round to help you through:

- Career development seminars
- Individual career advice appointments
- Employability programs and courses
- Career development resources
- Employer connections

With local and international experience in career development our team are registered Career Development Practitioners with the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA).

The information in this guide should be used in combination with career development seminars, career advice appointments, and all the other UNSW Careers and Employment resources for international students which are outlined at [student.unsw.edu.au/international-student-careers](http://student.unsw.edu.au/international-student-careers). This guide was originally published by the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) and written by Jo Doyle. It was sponsored by ETS TOEFL and the Victorian Government Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, and supported by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. It has been edited to provide information on specific resources for UNSW International Students.

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## Starting out

The world of work is dynamic and ever-evolving in nature, the only certainty is that most people will have a range of different jobs throughout their lifetime. Careers are not linear and many of the jobs of the future do not exist today. It is important to keep updating your skills in order to adapt to the changing global job market.

Research shows the earlier you begin to plan and build upon your skills towards your career goals, the more employable you become. By making a plan in your first year you can make the most of your time at UNSW and take full advantage of the services and opportunities available to you.

### Get to know yourself and set goals

Career development is an ongoing and cyclical process. The first and most important step is to understand yourself: what are you good at? What do you dislike doing? What interests you? What are you passionate about? Where would you like to work and why? What is your dream job? With this knowledge, you can then research and explore options and identify possible careers to pursue. Ideally, you then gain experience in the chosen industry and then again reflect on your understanding of yourself.



Get help to work out what you want and how you can achieve your career goals. A good place to start is to make an appointment with a UNSW

careers consultant and start researching industries and jobs and careers that may be of interest to you. To make the most of your appointment, you may want to look at the following websites to help identify your interests and associated career options:

[graduatecareers.com.au](http://graduatecareers.com.au)  
[joboutlook.gov.au](http://joboutlook.gov.au)  
[gooduniversitiesguide.com.au](http://gooduniversitiesguide.com.au)  
[graduateopportunities.com](http://graduateopportunities.com)

### What are employers looking for?

There are two distinct types of skills that all employers are looking for when recruiting staff: hard skills and soft skills.

Hard skills refer to the technical knowledge and abilities that you need to perform a particular job or role. These skills are usually learnt in your classes, can be easy to measure, observe and quantify and are often used to single candidates out for an interview. Examples of hard skills include subject matter knowledge acquired through a particular degree or certificate, reading, mathematics, proficiency in a language, knowledge of specific laws or policies, typing, and the ability to use technology.

Soft skills, on the other hand, are less tangible. These skills are made up of personal qualities or attributes that make a candidate a suitable team member to work within an organisation. Examples of soft skills include good communication, active listening, teamwork, problem-solving, initiative, emotional intelligence, time management and organisational skills.

Hard skills are most often used in the recruitment process to identify potential employees but it is the soft skills that determine (usually during the interview process) which person is the right 'fit' for the company, team and role.

### Top skills employers look for

According to the Australian Association of Graduate Employers 2018<sup>1</sup>, Australian employers surveyed rated the top ten soft skills as follows:

1. Teamwork
2. Cultural Fit
3. Interpersonal Skills
4. Oral Communication Skills
5. Motivational Fit
6. Problem Solving Skills
7. Analytical Skills
8. Achieves Results
9. Integrity and Trust
10. Accountability

### Communication is key

Communication is an all-encompassing skill set and can vary between countries. It includes:

#### Written communication

The ability to correspond in emails, letters and reports in a concise and clear manner. It is more than the ability to write in English. It is about producing written material that is appropriate for the task and easy to read (grammar, tone and context are important).

#### Oral and verbal communication

The ability to actively listen and confidentially contribute to conversations in the workplace both socially and work-related.

#### Nonverbal communication or body language

This relates to how you hold your body when engaging in face to face communication. Examples of positive and professional body language include: maintaining eye contact, having a good posture that demonstrates confidence, maintaining personal space for yourself and the person you are speaking to, and offering a firm and confident handshake upon introduction.

It is important to keep developing your English communication while in Australia because your

proficiency is going to impact your success when applying for work. The whole application process will assess your ability to communicate effectively. Your written communication will be assessed through your application, tailored resume and cover letter. Your ability to listen and confidently speak in English will be assessed in interviews, analysing case studies, psychometric testing and assessment centre group tasks. Your body language will be assessed in every face to face interaction.

Research has shown that international students who engage in a broad range of activities outside their language group have a greater understanding of Australian culture and are more able to communicate effectively thus making them more employable.

International students who are confident English speakers perform better in the interview process and make a smoother transition to the workplace.

### Six great ways to improve your communication skills

- Take short courses to improve your pronunciation or writing skills
- Join and participate in clubs/societies. This expands your network and helps you build knowledge and vocabulary about your area of study or interest
- Get to know some local slang and familiarise yourself with cultural norms. Watch the way other students communicate with their lecturers/teachers, friends and in public. Watching TV or listening to the radio can be a great way to build up intercultural knowledge. Fun activities could include: watching Australian soap operas, cooking shows, listening to podcasts, going to see live music or watching comedy
- Be proactive and try working with a diverse range of people when producing a group project. You will meet new friends and gain a different insight into people's views and experiences. Australia has a rich multicultural heritage and this is a fantastic way to improve your understanding of 'how things work' in various

<sup>1</sup>The Australian Association of Graduate Employers Survey 2018

social and work situations. Remember team work is a highly desirable skill and UNSW uses group assignments as a form of assessment because they mirror workplace tasks and help students get work ready

- Keep building on your English language skills: read widely, listen to the radio, watch films and TV and try using English daily – at home and with your friends. UNSW records lectures and this is a great way to review things you might have missed while improving your listening and comprehension skills
- If you are struggling with your studies or don't understand something be proactive and get help. Ask questions, speak to your lecturers and tutors or friends about your problems. Visit the academic support services team for advice on essay writing and look for a tutor or mentor to help you with problem areas.

## Understanding Australian cultural differences

Despite Australia being multi-cultural and diverse, overall the culture is more individualistic (less collectivist), which translates to people feeling they have an independent identity and are more self-governing. In contrast, within collectivist cultures peoples' identities are more merged with their group (e.g. families) who have more influence on their decision making. Australia is also less hierarchical than some cultures and see others as more equal.

In many Australian work cultures this high-individualism and low-hierarchy translates to actively contributing and openly communicating, in a less formal manner, while maintaining politeness and respect. For example, at work senior colleagues

are usually spoken to using their first name rather than by their title. Similarly, in the class-room it is common to call professors by their first name rather than the title 'Professor.' In meetings, it is often valued to contribute ideas, ask questions and involve everyone.

When employers interview you they are often assessing how well you will fit into the working culture at that organization and if you will be able to work well and get along with everyone else. This is often why employers want to know if you have any "Australian Experience."

Familiarising yourself with the cultural differences, and especially the cultural norms of the Australian workplace will help make you more employable in Australia and globally. Keep in mind there are many experiences outside of a workplace that can help you acquire this knowledge.

Tips to enhance your understanding of the Australian workplace culture include:

- Engage in social groups outside of your own language group (there are over 137 nationalities at UNSW)
- Complete the UNSW Professional Development Program for International Students
- Join UNSW societies or sport groups
- Engage in other extracurricular activities and/or programs such as the ones listed on the UNSW Advantage website
- Speak-up in class, speak with your professors
- Build a network of friends from other cultures

# First Year

The first year of your studies is all about building knowledge. Focus on your course-work while also becoming familiar with Australian culture, the employment market and potential career pathways.

Attend careers events and make an appointment with a careers consultant to discuss your career goals and questions. Talk to people. Talk to recruiters, recent graduates, interns, careers consultants and your friends and begin building an understanding of what skills and attributes you will need for the career you want. You can then start developing these skills.

## Prepare a resume and cover letter

Developing an Australian resume early is a smart idea. You will need a resume before you apply for any work-related or volunteer position, and the resume structure is different in Australia than in many other countries. Therefore, while you may have a great resume from your home country, it may not be as effective in a global context.

## Create a LinkedIn profile

LinkedIn is commonly used in Australia to search for jobs, research career pathways, connect with alumni, find employers and build your network and online brand. It is an excellent professional networking platform with many benefits for students in all disciplines.

## Consider DIPPIII2: Creating Your Career

If you're an undergraduate student and your program allows you to take an elective, this 6 unit of credit course is taught by Careers and Employment via online modules supported by interactive face-to-face seminars. It covers:

- Understanding yourself and developing your employability

- Researching career opportunities and organisations now and into the future
- Using career development competencies to create your career
- Communicating your professional point of difference to employers

[student.unsw.edu.au/employability](http://student.unsw.edu.au/employability)

## Gain experience

### Part-time / casual work or volunteering

In Australia, many students either work part-time or volunteer while studying and this is often expected by employers. According to the Australian Association of Graduate Employers, 81% of successful graduates worked part-time or on a casual basis, and 56% volunteered while at university.<sup>2</sup>

Whether you volunteer or work, these experiences do not necessarily need to be related to your degree. They can be a good starting point to develop cultural competencies and networks, enhance your soft skills and show future employers that you are motivated. Volunteering can often be the first step to work opportunities and any of these experiences can provide you with local Australian experience to put on your resume. Volunteering can also provide you with local referees for future applications. Remember that employers look for students who have local experience and can demonstrate skills such as, teamwork, cultural fit and communication skills.

For volunteer and extra-curricular opportunities, check out:

[student.unsw.edu.au/advantage](http://student.unsw.edu.au/advantage)

[arc.unsw.edu.au/clubs](http://arc.unsw.edu.au/clubs)

[volunteer.com.au](http://volunteer.com.au)

[volunteeringaustralia.org](http://volunteeringaustralia.org)

[govolunteer.com.au](http://govolunteer.com.au)

<sup>2</sup>AAGE and High Fliers Research 2016

## Middle Years

There are many co-curricular programs at UNSW to help you with your career development, leadership and entrepreneurship. The middle years of your degree are an ideal time to participate in some of these and add to your personal and professional development outside of the classroom. The following are some examples:

### Professional Development Program for International Students

Starting a career as an international student in a new country can be challenging, which is why Careers created this Program! The program is explicitly designed for international students and includes:

- A three-day seminar on business communication, customer service skills, employer expectations and the recruitment process
- A 50 hour on-campus office Workplace Experience Program organised by Careers and Employment and hosted by various departments at UNSW

The program provides an opportunity for international students to gain essential workplace skills including; business communication and customer service skills, as well as undertake a 50-hour workplace experience on the UNSW campus.

[unsw.to/pdp](http://unsw.to/pdp)

### Career Leaders

In the Careers and Employment Career Leaders Program, you can assist with the marketing and promotion of our programs and events, including our biggest event of the year - the Careers Expo. Through this experience, you can build your network and develop valuable soft skills, such as communication, to add to your CV.

[unsw.to/careerleaders](http://unsw.to/careerleaders)

### Mentoring programs

Mentoring programs at UNSW can enable you to connect with alumni and industry professionals to learn from them and receive valuable career development support. This is a great way to build networks, gain insight into an industry, and inform your career goals. Speak to your Faculty Student Service Center or a careers consultant to learn more about career mentoring programs at UNSW.

[student.unsw.edu.au/mentor](http://student.unsw.edu.au/mentor)

### Interchange

Interchange is an active learning journey designed to help you find your inner entrepreneur and develop your professional skills, including communication, innovation and leadership. It is a 4-day TED-style conference program involving 200 International Students from multiple Australian universities, studying all subject areas - allowing you to connect with new people to gain insight into innovation and entrepreneurship.

[student.unsw.edu.au/interchange](http://student.unsw.edu.au/interchange)

### The Founders Program

The Founders Program is UNSW's platform to embed entrepreneurial confidence and skills in students and recent alumni. Whether you have the next big idea, or your startup's already gone global, this Program equips you with the skills and networks to accelerate your success.

[founders.unsw.edu.au](http://founders.unsw.edu.au)

### UNSW Heroes

UNSW Heroes is a program designed to foster professionalism and entrepreneurship consisting of industry workshops, an innovative project and volunteering experience.

[student.unsw.edu.au/hero-program](http://student.unsw.edu.au/hero-program)

### Internships

Internships are highly sought after and highly competitive in Australia. They can also be called vocational placements and often take place during the Australian winter (June-July) and summer (December-February).

Many large companies use internships to hire talented and motivated students into graduate or entry level roles once their degree is finished. These internships are therefore targeted at students in their penultimate year and are usually for fixed time frames. For example: three months over summer, or part-time over a semester.

Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) also have internships and these organisations are the largest employers of international students in Australia. It is common for many international students to obtain internship experience with SMEs before working with some of the larger organisations that you may already be familiar with.

Benefits of undertaking an internship:

- Expand your network and open doors to possible employment
- Build confidence and technical knowledge
- Acquire skills and experience in your chosen field
- It is a great way to 'try before you buy' - road test a role or a career
- Gain local or international work experience to put on your resume.

At UNSW, internships can often be part of an academic course and provide students with discipline specific work experience. These internships are commonly referred to as work integrated learning (WIL) experiences. By participating in a WIL course at UNSW, you can gain quality work experience and course credit at the same time. Research has shown that international students who undertake embedded work experience in their studies are more likely to be employed after graduation as they gain valuable insights into workplace culture and build a range of skills.

WIL experiences are typically managed through your Faculty and are credited towards your degree. You will often need to apply to the course first, and then then apply to internships that are approved and listed as part of that course.

In some cases, you may be able to use an internship that you have found yourself. However, it is important to first check with your Faculty or course convener to ensure it is an appropriate internship that provides a genuine learning opportunity that is aligned with your course and complies with the Fair Work Act.

Under the Fair Work Act, work experience generally needs to be paid, except where it is voluntary work with a not-for-profit organisation or part of your course (a 'vocational placement', as defined in the Fair Work Act) - that is, a work placement embedded into your course. To learn more visit FairWork Australia.

[fairwork.gov.au](http://fairwork.gov.au)

### When to apply for internships?

It is important to research and become familiar with when the major companies in your sector are recruiting and what particular skills they are looking for. Most large organisations with internship and graduate programs recruit well in advance.

#### In Australia

Many major companies open applications in late February and close towards the end of April/early May for graduate roles starting in January next year, and for internships starting in winter and summer of that year. For this reason, UNSW usually host career fairs and employer sessions on campus during March and April.

#### Globally

Many organisations in Asia and the Northern Hemisphere recruit in August-October for internships in the Australian Summer (November-March), or for graduate positions that will start the following June. UNSW International Students

Careers Week takes place in T3 and is a great opportunity to learn about and apply for global opportunities. As a UNSW student, you can also gain exclusive free access to sites such as [goinglobal.com](http://goinglobal.com) and [unsw.higheredtalent.org](http://unsw.higheredtalent.org). Speak to a careers consultant about accessing these and other resources available to you for overseas opportunities.

## Research and develop commercial awareness

Just having a diploma or a degree is no guarantee that you will get the job of your dreams. This means you need to differentiate yourself from your competition in a very competitive job market. To do this you will need to research. Profile companies you want to work for and get proactive about the role you want.

Recruiters expect you to know about their organisation. During the application process, you are often asked about what you know about the company and how your skills will fit into the role and the company culture. Be strategic and only target companies that suit you and your skill set. Do not apply for hundreds of jobs online. Always tailor your resume and cover letter to suit each job you apply for. Take your time and do your research.

Remember that SMEs are the largest employer of international students in Australia. Unlike some of the large organisations, many SMEs will not have structured internship programs but instead hire students through referrals, word of mouth, or by students approaching them directly. To learn more about how to find work with SMEs make an appointment with a careers consultant and attend the career development seminar "Job Search Strategies."

## Network and access the hidden job market

Did you know that many jobs in Australia are not advertised? This is known as the hidden job market.

Moving to a new country and studying abroad means you are far away from your network of family and friends. International students often struggle to tap into the hidden job market in Australia because they have a very small network.

Therefore, one of the key tips for enhancing your employability is to increase your personal and professional network.

To build strong personal relationships you need to have excellent communication skills and make authentic, meaningful connections with people you interact with in your daily life. Many international students end up acquiring work through networking, so it is important that you learn how and where to network effectively. We recommend attending our "Network for Success" seminar.

## Join an industry professional association

Industry professional associations can provide students with a helpful link to professionals and career insights within a certain industry. Many associations hold networking events for students and some may even have their own exclusive job board. For a list of industry professional associations related to your area of study, check out:

[student.unsw.edu.au/useful-links](http://student.unsw.edu.au/useful-links)

## Information Interview

Information interviews are common in the Australian job market, and they can be one of the most effective job search strategies for students.

An information interview is a conversation with someone who has work experience in a job, field, or industry that you are considering. It is a rich source of information used to help inform career choices, meet people in an industry, and learn about opportunities that may not even be advertised. An information interview is not a job interview and it is up to you to research and approach people who you think will be willing to provide you with valuable insight. A great place to start is by approaching UNSW alumni who can be found on LinkedIn. To learn more about how to conduct an information interview, look in the "resources" section of [careers.unsw.edu.au](http://careers.unsw.edu.au) or book an appointment with a careers consultant for help.



## Alumni Profiles



### Mina Tang

**From**  
China

**Degree**  
Master of Professional Accounting

**Current Role**  
Analyst, Management Reporting & Analysis, UNSW

**Completed**  
Professional Development Program  
Cultural Mentorship

**Advice for students**  
"Expand your network and stay ready for any opportunities"



### Nawab Taimur Ahmed

**From**  
Pakistan

**Degree**  
Master of Engineering Science

**Current Role**  
Network Development Engineer, Amazon

**Completed**  
Professional Development Program  
Yellow Shirts

**Advice for students**  
"Good communication skills are key to a successful and bright career"



### Clive Sam

**From**  
India

**Degree**  
Master of Telecommunications

**Current Role**  
Wholesale Support Engineer, Symbio Networks

**Completed**  
Professional Development Program  
Cultural Mentorship  
Leadership Program

**Advice for students**  
"Join the Professional Development Program!"



### Karla Mortel

**From**  
Philippines

**Degree**  
Master of International Business

**Current Role**  
Recruitment Specialist, Dynatrace

**Completed**  
Professional Development Program  
Career Ready Mentoring Program

**Advice for students**  
"Find time, book it in, take action and reap the benefits!"



### Edward Gauw

**From**  
Indonesia

**Degree**  
Bachelor of International Studies/Media (PR and Advertising)

**Current Role**  
Digital Operations Executive, Domain Group

**Completed**  
Professional Development Program  
Peer Mentoring

**Advice for students**  
"Utilise PD Program and keep in touch with friends you meet along the way!"



### Bea Phan

**From**  
Vietnam

**Degree**  
Bachelor of Commerce

**Current Role**  
Business Analyst, UNSW

**Completed**  
Professional Development Program  
Career Leaders  
NSW Global Scope

**Advice for students**  
"Make sure you participate and make new connections at PD Program!"



## Where to network

Join a professional association connected to your field of study and participate in networking events, conferences and information sessions. Many professional associations have discounted fees for students and provide online resources, job opportunities and career advice for members. For example, CPA Australia, Engineers Australia or the Australian Computer Society

Join and participate in clubs and societies during your studies. This allows you to share ideas and information with like-minded local students. It will give you an insight into the social world of young people in Australia and may give you access to a diverse network of contacts

Join a volunteer program. You can gain meaningful work experience and refine your interpersonal skills while giving something back to the local community. Many corporations look for candidates who have some sort of volunteering or community engagement on their resume

Use social media to maintain and build these connections (e.g. Facebook, Instagram and WeChat)

Create a LinkedIn profile. LinkedIn is very popular in Australia and is a valuable Professional Networking website. Learn more by attending the "Navigating LinkedIn for Career Success" seminar

Keep connected with family and friends back home and update them on what you are doing in Australia. Maintain your global network and tell them if you're interested in gaining work experience back home during the holidays via job-shadowing, informational interviewing, internships or part-time jobs



## Final Year

In your final year, it is time to start using all your research and planning and apply for work globally and/or in Australia. Be sure to use a variety of job search methods to increase your chances of success. It is also important to realise that as a new graduate you may work in a variety of fields before finding the right fit for you. The nature of work is rapidly changing, and the average Australian worker will have 10 or more jobs throughout their lifetime.

When job seeking, keep these top tips in mind:

- Research the company's vision or mission statement, core business and strategic direction and competitors so you can talk about why you want to apply to that particular employer
- What are their fundamental values and do these 'fit' with your own beliefs and values?
- Does the company have a history of hiring international students? Look on LinkedIn to get an idea if they value diversity and require bilingual, globally minded staff?
- Be open to opportunities. Be flexible as many jobs start as short term contracts or casual positions
- Manage your expectations. Be willing to start in a junior, casual or contract position and work your way to a more senior or permanent, this will allow you to expand your network, prove yourself and potentially learn about unadvertised internal opportunities
- What is the application process and do they recruit international students? If so, what types of pre-requisites are there? Know your post-study work rights and what kind of visa you might need
- Will you have to complete a new language test (ETS TOEFL, IELTS, Pearson) or achieve a certain grade average to qualify for the role you want? Some corporates set IELTS as high as 8 in speaking, reading and writing

### Graduate programs

Graduate roles are structured professional development programs designed specifically for university graduates. These programs are tradi-

tionally offered in the corporate and government sectors in Australia to top tier students.

These full-time positions provide rotations in key areas of the business over a set period (usually two years). Graduate programs offer structured training and support, feedback and ongoing employment opportunities.

Most graduate programs in Australia recruit students a year in advance. This recruitment generally takes place in February, March and April, which means you need to plan and apply at the beginning of your final year for positions that will start the following year. For example, if you graduate in November, you will need to apply for graduate programs in T1. However, students are often still eligible for graduate programs up to two years after they graduate.

Entry requirements into graduate programs vary and are highly competitive. It is essential to research your eligibility when thinking of applying for a graduate role in Australia.

According to the Australian Financial Review, some of the large graduate programs in Australia receive over 10,000 applications for just 300 graduate positions, which means only three per cent of graduates who applied were successful.

Competition is fierce, and large companies can afford to pick and choose the best graduates from the pool of applicants. Remember that large graduate programs are just one of many options when looking for work.

### Start your career in a small-to-medium sized business

There are many opportunities for students wishing to launch their careers within small-to-medium sized businesses. Entry-level positions are less competitive than graduate programs and have fewer restrictions in terms of visa requirements and language proficiency.

Benefits of working in a small-to-medium sized business:

- Skills and experience are often very 'hands on' and you get a broader understanding of the way businesses work
- You are usually given early responsibilities, which increases your confidence and gives you a higher profile within the company that you might not have in a larger organisation
- Insight into Australian business culture
- Large corporates are interested in generalist skills developed in small business, and you can use this role to make the step to a larger organisation after a few years

### Use your networks and talk to people

Make a list of everyone that you know. You'll be surprised at how many contacts you know and who may know about a potential position. Ask these people if they know anyone in the industry who you could talk with to learn more about that industry. This is called an information interview (See Middle Years section). A great way to make contacts, and to find out what a job is really like is to talk to people who are doing it!

A great place to start is by researching UNSW alumni on the UNSW Sydney LinkedIn page to find alumni who are working in an area of interest to you. Be sure to update your own LinkedIn profile first.

### Returning home

There are many opportunities open to you as an overseas-educated graduate. If you are keen to go back home after you graduate it is essential that you stay in touch with what is happening in your local job (labour) market while undertaking your studies.

Many multinational companies have branches all over the world and are looking for candidates with a broad range of skills including English. These corporations have a global mindset and

value locally born, overseas-educated students.

Investigate the entry requirements and recruitment cycle in your region and don't forget to start planning early.

- Follow what is going on in your sector - read local websites, join local professional associations and keep informed about the economic and political activities in your region
- Research potential employers and the local recruitment cycle and application process
- Target multinational or Australian companies in your area who are looking for bilingual staff with a global perspective and apply for graduate programs or vocation or internship opportunities, consider joining local professional associations and chambers of commerce
- Find out what skills and attributes recruiters in your region value, and work towards building these into your resume
- Create a region-specific resume in your language and in English for multinationals (get it checked by someone back home)
- Research UNSW alumni on the UNSW Australia LinkedIn page. Once you graduate, be sure to connect with the UNSW Alumni LinkedIn group
- Use LinkedIn and social media and promote your unique personal brand - remember to promote your bilingual /bicultural advantage

UNSW Careers works with online recruitment platforms that help students apply to organisations that specifically want to hire returnee students. Speak to a careers consultant to learn more. Examples include:

[gradconnection.com.au](http://gradconnection.com.au)  
[unsw.higheredtalent.org](http://unsw.higheredtalent.org)  
[chinaportal.guccu.org/unsw](http://chinaportal.guccu.org/unsw)

### Working in another country

Are you keen to work abroad at the end of your studies? If so, it is essential that during your studies you start doing your research and preparing your skills for the region you are targeting.

You may want to visit the region first to see if you enjoy the lifestyle and culture. This is a great excuse to go on holiday, or you may wish to undertake an exchange semester or study tour in this country as part of your studies. The options are endless, but you need to do your homework first.

Questions to consider:

- What opportunities are open to a citizen from your country? Will you require sponsorship or a special visa to live and work in this country?
- Will you require additional language skills? If so, what will you need to do to qualify to work in this country? Do you need to study the language and to what level?
- What are the living conditions and salaries like? Do you need health insurance?
- What will be the long-term career benefits?
- Will your qualifications and experience be recognised?
- Do you have any family or family connections in this country that could help?

## Goinglobal

This website provides country-specific careers and employment information such as resume templates, wages, jobs, internships and recruitment cycle information. As a UNSW student, you can access Goinglobal for free by first logging in at:

[careersonline.unsw.edu.au](http://careersonline.unsw.edu.au)

## Online Application Tips

When applying online, you will need to write concise answers within a set word limit. It is vital that you address the question and demonstrate your soft and hard skills with examples from your work or study history.

To demonstrate skills you can give examples of projects you've undertaken within your studies, volunteering, work experience or extra-curricular activities.

Employers want to know what your overall goal or drive is so don't forget to include your motivation or overall suitability for the role.

A helpful tip is to cut and paste the questions into a word document and work on the questions offline. Get someone to check over your answers and ensure you have answered the questions appropriately.

## Interview tips

To increase your confidence in interviews, it is essential to be well prepared. Find out what type of interview it will be and who will be conducting it. There is a range of interview types including panel, assessment centre, one-on-one, telephone or via Skype.

Be prepared to talk about the company and explain why you want to work for it. Review its key clients, projects and core business.

Know your strengths and be ready to explain why you think you are the right fit for the position and organisation. Have examples prepared to demonstrate where you have developed the skills they are looking for and ensure you use the STAR method to answer most questions. Also be able to explain your visa status and bring along any relevant paperwork: resume, responses to key selection criteria, referees details, passport/visa and your portfolio if needed.

Video interviews are an increasingly common stage of the application process when you apply for large organisations, especially when you apply for positions overseas. When conducting a video interview: ensure you are in quiet space with a neutral background, test the microphone for good sound quality, angle the camera so it is at eye level, dress professionally, have good lighting, make eye contact with the camera, not the screen.

## Getting a Tax File Number

A tax file number (TFN) is a unique nine-digit number issued to you by the Australian Government so that you can work legally and pay tax.

A TFN must be supplied to an employer so that they can pay tax on your behalf. If you are working for 'cash in hand' you are not protected by the law and may not be receiving the correct award wages.

[ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au)

## Know how much you're worth

When applying for and accepting a position, it is essential to do your research and know how much you are entitled to be paid. Use the Fairwork Pay Calculator to work out your pay rates, penalties and allowances.

[fairwork.gov.au/pay](http://fairwork.gov.au/pay)

## Know your rights

Australia has laws protecting workers. These govern and guide what employers should pay, and the type of working conditions employees should be given (hours, break times, Occupational Health and Safety requirements, and leave entitlements).

In Australia, employers are not allowed by law to discriminate or harass staff concerning; race, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender, carer or parental status and physical features.

If you face any form of discrimination or harassment in the workplace, please contact Fair Work Australia. For help and support call the Fair Work Infoline **13 13 94**.

If you would prefer to speak in your language, call **13 14 50**.

[fairwork.gov.au](http://fairwork.gov.au)

## What can you do to ensure you are protected at work?

When you accept a job offer there are some things you and your employer should be clear on, including:

- Your agreed pay rate
- Your job duties
- Your employment status (e.g. full-time, part-time or casual work)
- What time you'll be starting and finishing work
- How many hours you'll be working per week
- Whether there's an award or registered agreement covering your job.

## After You Graduate

The world of work is constantly changing, and the transition from full-time student into permanent full-time employment is increasingly rare. More and more graduates are starting their careers in short-term contracts or temporary positions.

Be open to opportunities and don't wait for that perfect job to appear. Use short-term opportunities as stepping-stones towards your ultimate goal.

Keep building on your skills and experience while staying motivated to get your dream job.

### Managing expectations

- The current job market is very competitive, and it is important to note that it takes on average nine months to find employment after your studies
- Remember you can't become a CEO straight away after your studies, so it is important that you manage your expectations and apply for entry-level positions. Narrow your job search to roles you can meet the key criteria for
- Take your time and tailor your resume and cover letter to each job. Don't waste your time applying for hundreds of jobs
- Building a career takes time. If you can't land that dream job keep positive, get proactive and start filling the gaps in your skill set

You can access UNSW Careers and Employment services up to 18 months after you graduate.

Remember to keep your information up to date in our online system. Be sure to also connect with the UNSW Alumni LinkedIn group and look to connect with alumni from your country.

- Target companies that embrace and promote diversity. Global companies are more likely to need bilingual, multicultural savvy staff. It is ok to return home to start your career; you may find that this will lead to global opportunities
- Be flexible and take opportunities if they arise. Grow your expertise and learn how to upsell the skills you have to gain the position you want in the future. Be a global worker
- Finally, managing family pressure is vital when starting your career. Often there is an expectation that you must perform a specific job to satisfy family plans and this can often clash with your dreams or interests. If you are struggling with these expectations, make an appointment and see a careers consultant or an academic adviser and find helpful strategies to manage this pressure

### Lifelong learning

Most people will have more than ten different jobs over their lifetime, and no career is linear. So it is essential to keep developing your skills and expanding your knowledge so you can take on the next opportunity or challenge in your working life.





### First year checklist

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| Register and familiarise yourself with the resources and job board at <a href="https://careers.unsw.edu.au">careers.unsw.edu.au</a>   | Learn about employability for international students at <a href="https://student.unsw.edu.au/international-student-careers">student.unsw.edu.au/international-student-careers</a> |
| Make a careers appointment to have your resume reviewed/discuss career planning   | Expand your network by joining a student society or volunteering <a href="https://arc.unsw.edu.au/clubs">arc.unsw.edu.au/clubs</a>  |
| Research industries and career profiles. Start with <a href="https://student.unsw.edu.au/useful-links">student.unsw.edu.au/useful-links</a>   | Practice your English: Consider UNSW Personalised English Language Enhancement (PELE)   |
| Develop/update your LinkedIn profile  | Check out <a href="https://student.unsw.edu.au/advantage">student.unsw.edu.au/advantage</a> to gain experience and build "soft skills"  |
| Attend recommended career development seminars; <b>Writing a Successful Resume and Cover Letter, Ace the Interview, Network for Success</b> and <b>Navigating LinkedIn for Career Success</b> |   |

### Middle years checklist

|   |  |
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| Gain experience through a WIL course/internship/part time work/extra-curricular experience/volunteering   | Attend faculty specific employer events, alumni panels   |
| Apply for the Professional Development Program for International Students <a href="https://unsw.to/pdp">unsw.to/pdp</a>   | Consider a mentoring program <a href="https://student.unsw.edu.au/mentor">student.unsw.edu.au/mentor</a>   |
| Join an Industry Professional Association <a href="https://student.unsw.edu.au/useful-links">student.unsw.edu.au/useful-links</a>   | Conduct information interviews and research opportunities, become familiar with recruitment cycles in Australia and/or other countries <a href="https://goinglobal.com">goinglobal.com</a> |
| Consider the undergraduate course; DIPP1112: Creating your Career <a href="https://unsw.to/employability">unsw.to/employability</a>   | Volunteer with Career Leaders <a href="https://unsw.to/careerleaders">unsw.to/careerleaders</a>  |
| Attend recommended career development seminars; <b>Get that Job: Strategies for Successful Job Searching, Assessment Centres</b> and <b>Applying for Graduate Programs Online</b> |  |

### Final year checklist

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|--|---|
| Begin applying for jobs using multiple strategies  | Continue to grow your network in Australia and abroad   |
| Take time to focus on quality versus quantity with job applications  | Monitor the job board at <a href="https://careers.unsw.edu.au">careers.unsw.edu.au</a>        |
| Attend UNSW Career Expos/International Student Careers Week  | Research visas and home country opportunities and connect with the UNSW Alumni LinkedIn group |
| Explore <a href="https://goinglobal.com">goinglobal.com</a> and other global employability job boards  | Partake in interview preparation/practice and application reviews with a careers consultant   |
| Attend recommended career development seminars; <b>Get that Job: Strategies for Successful Job Searching, Addressing Selection Criteria</b> and <b>Ace the Interview</b> |   |

