

# Careers support for MSc MCF students



October 2023

[www.careers.ox.ac.uk](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk)

# Oxford University Careers Service



A wealth of tailored support to help you to achieve your career goals.

**TRUSTED | IMPARTIAL | ACCESSIBLE**



individual, impartial careers advice



information on sectors and occupations



opportunities to meet with employers



internships and learning development programmes



application and interview skills development, support and feedback



job and internship vacancies





# What we'll cover today



- Further study
- Industry
  - Pathways and Timelines
  - Application Prep
  - CV and Cover letters
  - How to learn more about employers/roles
- Making the most of careers events
- Q&A






# Further study




← → ↻ 🔒 https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/academia#collapse1484001 🔊 🔍 ⭐ 📱 ⚙️ ⌵ 👤 ⋮




## Oxford University Careers Service

EXPLORE CAREERS JOB SEARCH AND APPLICATION BUILD SKILLS INTERNSHIPS **FURTHER STUDY** HOW WE HELP WHO WE HELP



[Home](#) > [Explore Careers](#) > [Sectors and Occupations](#) > **Academia and Higher Education**

Sectors and Occupations 

# Academia and Higher

[Why Study Further](#)[Personal Statements for Further Study](#)[Types of Postgraduate Course](#)[Postgraduate Study in the UK](#)[Postgraduate Study in the USA](#)[Postgraduate Study in Other Countries](#)

<https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/>



# Further study



## Insight into Academia

Seminar series exploring topics relevant to those considering higher education roles in research, teaching and related areas.

We offer a varied programme of seminars – typically offering two or three sessions each term. Topics vary, but have previously included:

- Being an early career researcher – exploring realities and exploding myths
- To PhD or not to PhD
- Positioning for Academic Progression
- Should I do a Postdoc?
- Coping with academic setbacks
- Academic futures – more than research
- Advancing an academic (research) career outside the UK
- Academic CVs and applications

<https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/insight-into-academia>

<https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/term-planner>

# Industry



## Banking and Investment

Opportunities in this sector are many and varied, so if you want a career in banking and investment, you should be able to find the role and firm that's right for you.

## Technology, Data, Machine Learning and AI

The technology sector is probably evolving more quickly than any other industry sector.

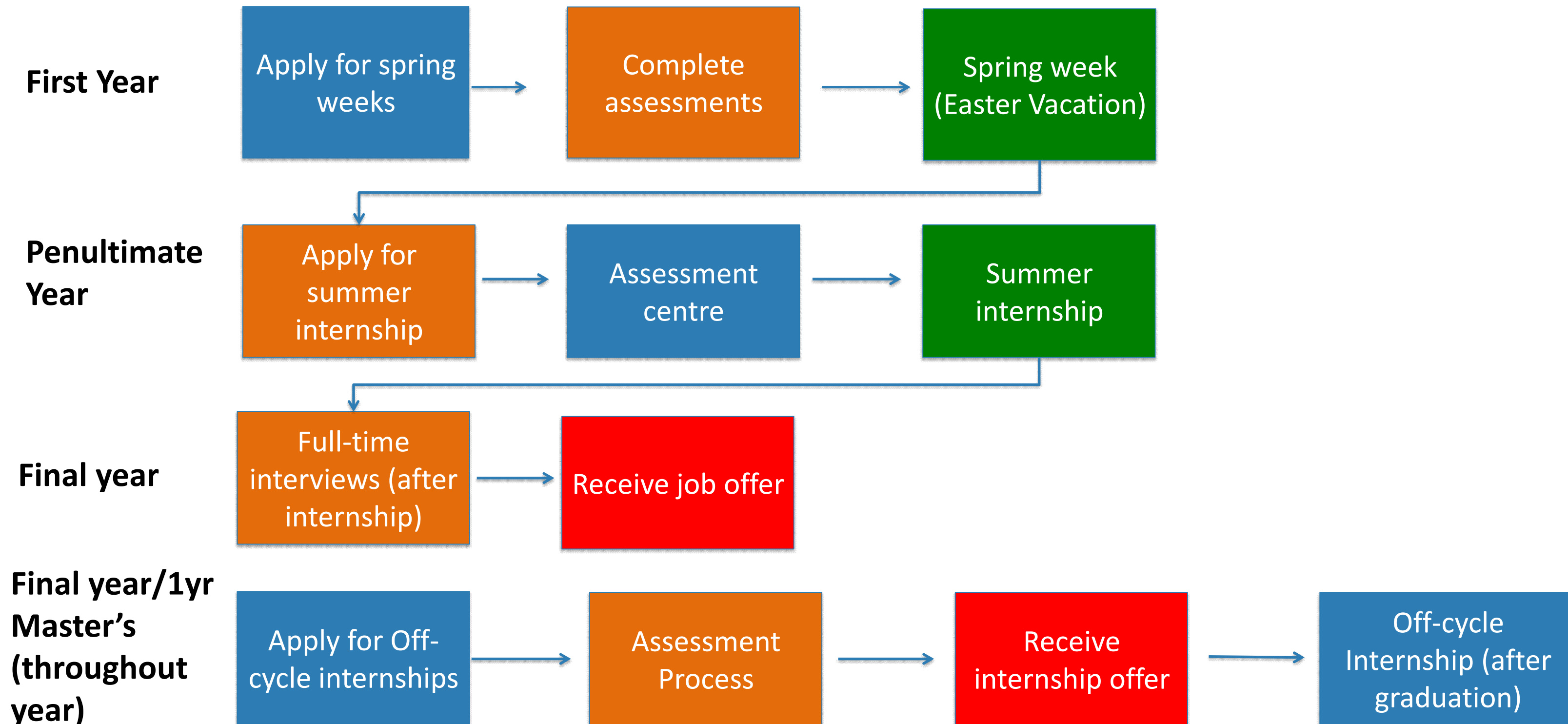
## Sectors and Occupations

Explore over 40 sectors and occupations in briefings written by our expert Careers Advisers.

<https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/sectors-and-occupations>



# Banking - Standard Entry Routes

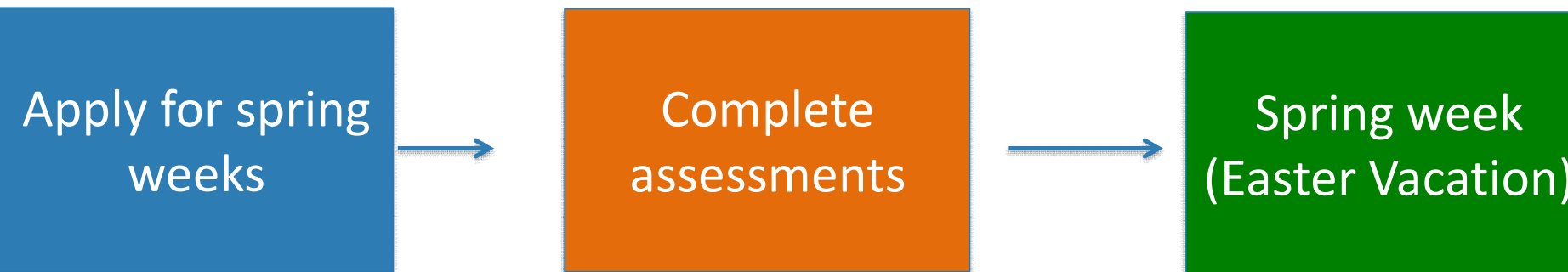


\* Each firm's process may be different and some don't offer off-cycle internships so make sure to check their websites or ask recruiters

# Banking - Standard Entry Routes



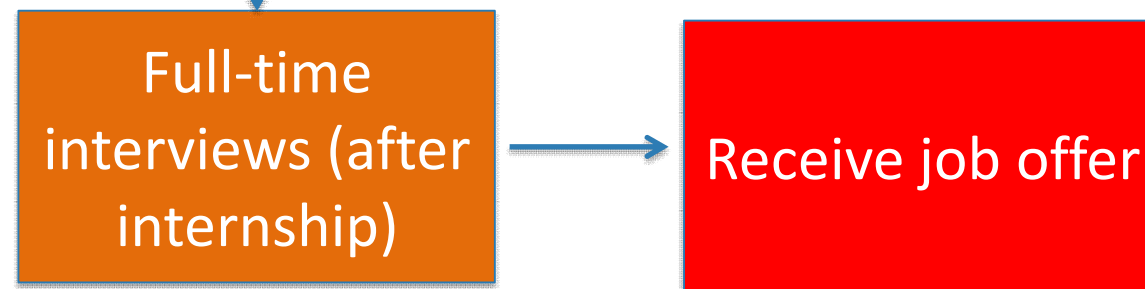
**First Year**



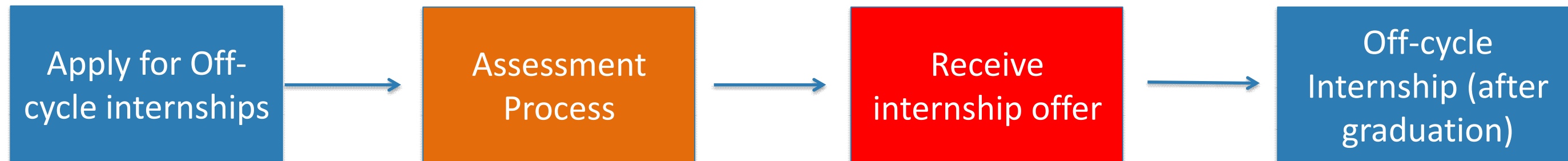
**Penultimate Year**



**Final year**



**Final year/1yr Master's (throughout year)**



\* Each firm's process may be different and some don't offer off-cycle internships so make sure to check their websites or ask recruiters



# Banking - Application Timelines



- The vast majority of banking and investment application periods close in mid to late October, if not earlier
- Many recruit on a rolling basis, interviewing candidates as and when applications are submitted

**N.B.** So, apply as early as possible, ensuring your preparation is completed well in advance. DON'T wait for the deadline!

# Application Prep – Top Tips



1. Know the recruitment timelines
2. Research, Research, Research! - Learn all you can about the firms
3. Understand the assessment process
4. Save copies of your applications – if an online form, save your answers in a Word document
5. Give yourself time to complete them – if done well, they will take time and effort



# CV

Sets out the evidence that you have what they are looking for

# Cover letter

Explains why you are applying and why they should hire you

## ZAYNAB BATHIA

+44 (0) 7685 000 0000 [zaynab.bathia@worc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:zaynab.bathia@worc.ox.ac.uk)

### EDUCATION & AWARDS

<b>MSc in Mathematical and Computational Finance, University of Oxford</b>	2022 – 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Relevant modules: Financial Derivatives, Financial Computing with C++, Stochastic Calculus</li></ul>	
<b>BA Hons Mathematics and Statistics, University of Oxford</b>	2019 – 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>First-Class Honours (72%); Gibbs Award for Excellence in Mathematics</li><li>Relevant modules: Applied &amp; Computational Statistics, Machine Learning, Lifetime Models</li></ul>	
<b>St John's School, Milton Keynes</b>	2012 – 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A-levels: Maths A*, Physics A*, Chemistry A* &amp; GCSEs: 8A*, 2A</li><li>Awarded School Prize for A-level results and Smith Prize for 'Contribution to School Life'</li></ul>	

### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

<b>IPSOS, France, Data Analyst (8 weeks internship)</b>	2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developed predictive tools in R to forecast study completion reducing average error rates from 8 to 3%</li><li>Implemented a Markov chain model to determine added value of Facebook advertising</li><li>Produced interactive graphs to illustrate complex datasets and visualise emerging trends</li></ul>	
<b>Oxford Finance Society, Marketing Officer (6 months)</b>	2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student society that brings together students interested in pursuing a career in finance</li><li>Responsible for promoting society events using social media and printed material</li><li>Managed event bookings, successfully increasing audience numbers by 30% in the first term</li></ul>	
<b>EGM Analysis, Market Research Assistant (1-month internship)</b>	2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Responsible for producing eight data tables summarising previous field activities using Python</li><li>Presented daily key data summary to four senior managers, with a colleague</li><li>Developed knowledge and interest in marketing and consumer goods</li></ul>	
<b>Student Consultancy, Team Leader, Oxford University (8 weeks)</b>	2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Led a team of five students to develop marketing strategy for a local start-up</li><li>Designed and executed paper and phone surveys, engaging 250 participants</li><li>Presented recommendations to client; all implemented within 3 months and delivering 20% increase in sales within 6 months</li></ul>	
<b>Red Lion Hotel, Newport Pagnell, Waitress (part-time summer work)</b>	2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provided professional, courteous dinner service in busy gastropub with 80 covers</li><li>Maintained positivity and good working relationships in high-pressure service environment</li></ul>	

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS & INTERESTS

**Languages:** Bilingual Punjabi and English; French – near-fluent; German – conversational  
**IT:** Python (advanced), R (advanced), C++ (intermediate)  
**Music:** Lead clarinettist in Milton Keynes Youth Band; member of National Youth Orchestra  
**Sport:** College football team, training twice a week  
**Travel:** Extensive travel throughout Europe, including organising work placement in France





# CVs display evidence



A CV is a process of displaying the **evidence** of your suitability for a job or other opportunity:

Their list of criteria:

- ----- ✓
- ----- ✓
- ----- ✓
- ----- ✓

Your CV

Subheading  
Information  
• Detail

Information  
• Detail

Subheading  
• Evidence  
• Extra skills



# CVs – top tips



- Make sure you know the job requirements in detail (attend events, read firms' websites, recruitment pages)
- Each CV should be tailored to each role
- It's important to highlight relevant financial/quantitative knowledge
- Ask yourself "Am I clearly demonstrating that I meet the job criteria?"
- **CHECK IT** – ask someone else to review eg: careers adviser

[www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cvs#/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cvs#/)

## CV

Sets out the evidence that you have what they are looking for

## Cover letter

Explains why you are applying and why they should hire you

Your address  
Your email address

Their address

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction

Why this role/organisation/sector?

Why you?

Conclusion

Yours faithfully (if you started Dear Sir or Madam)

Yours sincerely (if you addressed the letter to a specific person)

*Signature*





# Content



## Why you

- Explain why you're well suited to the role. Make direct reference to **your strongest relevant** skills, experience and knowledge against the JD
- Include essential transferable skills reflected in JD
- Don't expect the recruiter to infer skills or experiences for themselves....show them!

## Conclusion

Reiterate your desire to join the organisation and that “you look forward to hearing from them”.

- Sign off correctly

Ms Williams (named individual).....Yours sincerely

Dear Sir/Madam.....Yours faithfully



# Cover letter – Top Tips



- Keep it short – a concise letter demonstrates focus and strong communication skills
- Tailor it to each individual organisation – give specific examples i.e. what made you choose them/what is unique about the work they do, their clients etc?
  - **NOT** generic reasons eg: international firm, market leader etc.
- Don't repeat your whole CV
- Check your spelling/grammar and get someone else to read it

# Essential Check: CVs and Letters



- **TAILOR APPLICATIONS** to the Company AND Job Description (JD)
  - What does the score sheet look like? (hint: analyse the JD)
  - Match the culture and style of organisation
- **PROOFREAD**: Use a spell checker **AND** read to doublecheck spelling/grammar - **AND** ask someone else to read it if you can
- Check that it says clearly what you want it to say. Are there any sections that are hard to read or follow? If yes, try to simplify the language, avoid jargon, use shorter sentences
- Write to a named person if you possibly can Don't repeat your whole CV.

It's normal to find cover letters tricky to write. Give yourself plenty of time before the application deadline to re-draft.

Put it down for 2 or 3 hours/overnight - then PROOFREAD again!

[www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cvs](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cvs)

[www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cover-letters](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/cover-letters)





# Application Forms - Top Tips



- Read the questions carefully – what are they really asking you?
- Give examples/evidence when you make any statements
  - eg: I have a passion for investing – what have you actively done to demonstrate this?
- Edit vigorously to reduce framing and context, focus exclusively on demonstrating WHAT (Skill) and RESULTS (Evidence of impact)
- Make sure you stay within the word limit (if there is one)

# Example Questions



1. Why do you want to work for the firm?
  - This is where your prior research is very helpful
2. Why are interested in X division/team?
  - Give specific examples - i.e. what made you choose to apply to them/what is unique about the work they do, their clients etc?
3. What skills do you have that make you suitable for the role?
  - Choose a few of the key job criteria that you meet and explain how and why your experience is relevant



# Example



## Investment Analyst

### Applicants should have:

- Very strong **interpersonal** and **analytical skills**
- A genuine **interest in financial markets**, investing and macro-level economics
- The **ability to take initiative**
- **Integrity**

### Key Skills

- Excellent **communication skills** (written and oral)
- **Strong quantitative skills**
- **Passion for investing**
- Very **strong organisational skills**

## Questions to identify examples from your CV

- Where have I demonstrated these skills on my CV?
- What type/level of quantitative and analytical skills are they looking for?
- Is this a transferable skill? Have I learned how to do this as part of my degree, work experience, extra-curricular activities etc?
- What other examples of verbal and written communication do I have outside of academics?
- What active examples do I have on my CV that demonstrate a genuine interest in financial markets/investing/banking etc?



# Preparing for Interviews



## Research the Company

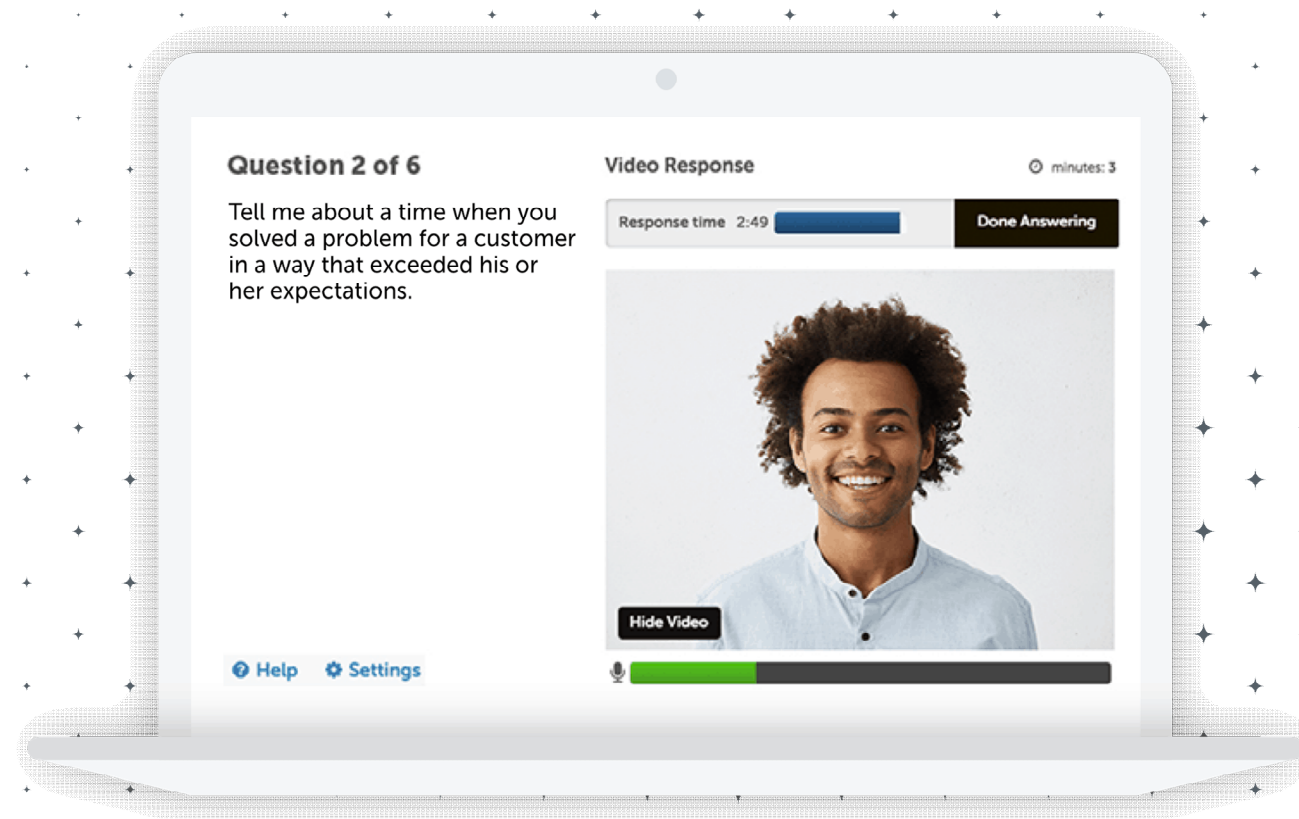
- Sector/Role Online – 100%
- Company recruitment pages
  - the recruitment process
  - profiles of graduates
  - tips and insights
- Talk to their people
  - What they do and why they value this
  - Experience of work, management, training

## Additional Work to get an Edge

- **Commercial awareness** – read FT/Economist and other sources
- Follow one or two BIG trends – go more in-depth
- **Application smarts.**
- Anticipate questions, prepare and practise answers
- Know what you have already shared
- Prepare your own questions

## Find Hooks to Hang your Application on

# Interview Questions



- 1.Can you tell us about your understanding of J.P. Morgan's global presence and its role in the financial services industry?
- 2.Can you describe your experience or interest in finance and economics, and how it relates to this role?
- 3.How do you handle situations where you need to solve problems quickly, both independently and as part of a team?
- 4.Share an example of a project or initiative where you demonstrated exceptional analytical and project management skills
- 5.What is the difference between debt and equity?
- 6.How do high interest rates impact our clients?



# Useful Resources



## General vacancies and occupation information

- [The Economist](#)
- [The Job Crowd](#)
- [The Unofficial Guide to Banking](#)
- [BankersByDay](#)
- [CFI Careers Map](#) – for details on different roles

**Online test and technical preparation resources** - As well as the resources listed in the [Psychometric Tests](#) and JobTestPrep briefing, the following websites are good for practice tests:

- [SHL Direct: Practice Tests](#)
- [Practice Aptitude Tests](#)
- [Brainstellar](#)

**Sector vacancies** - N.B. Most graduate jobs are advertised on firms' own websites

- [City Jobs](#) – Accounting, Banking and Finance Jobs
- [E-financial Careers](#) – International finance jobs

## News

- [Financial Times](#) (current students can access a free subscription via [SOLO](#))
- [Bloomberg](#)– Up-to-date financial news
- [Reuters](#)– City-related news and information
- [The Economist](#)



# How to connect with employers



## Careers Fairs - Registrations Now Open for Oxford's Michaelmas Careers Fairs | Oxford University Careers Service



Employers attending include: Jane Street, G Research, Optiver, Susquehanna (SIG), Five Rings, Da Vinci Trading, Eclipse Trading, Flow Traders & more....

**Events** – Check CareerConnect [www.careers.ox.ac.uk/using-careerconnect](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/using-careerconnect) and firms' websites

**LinkedIn** – contact alumni/current employees of firms you're interested in

# Careers Fairs – what to expect?



Who will be there?

- Recruiters who can tell you more about the firm, roles & process
- Oxford alumni working in areas you might be interested in, people who were in your shoes.
- Oxford careers advisers are on hand to support you throughout the events, as well as to provide careers advice and guidance.

# Preparing for fairs



- Check who is attending
- Do your research!
- Plan the questions you want to ask – i.e. organisation's culture, application process, projects they are working on
- If there is a recent graduate at the stand – ask what their first year was like, what sort of projects, responsibilities etc.

# During the fair



## Do:

- Introduce yourself – tell them your name, course, and year of study.
- Demonstrate that you have done some research on the organisation.
- Ask pertinent questions, and try to establish a dialogue (next slide)
- Collect names and contact details and follow-up after the event.
- Thank them for their time!

## Don't:

- Ask questions which are answered in the fair booklet!
- Ask questions that can come across as arrogant: 'Why should I join your company? What have you got to offer me?'

<https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/making-the-most-of-careers-fairs>



# What you could ask for



- More insight into the company culture
- What do they feel makes a good applicant stand out
- What are the characteristics of their most successful employees
- What they enjoy most or dislike about their particular industry
- .... questions that help you to decide whether they are an organisation or sector you would like to be part of.



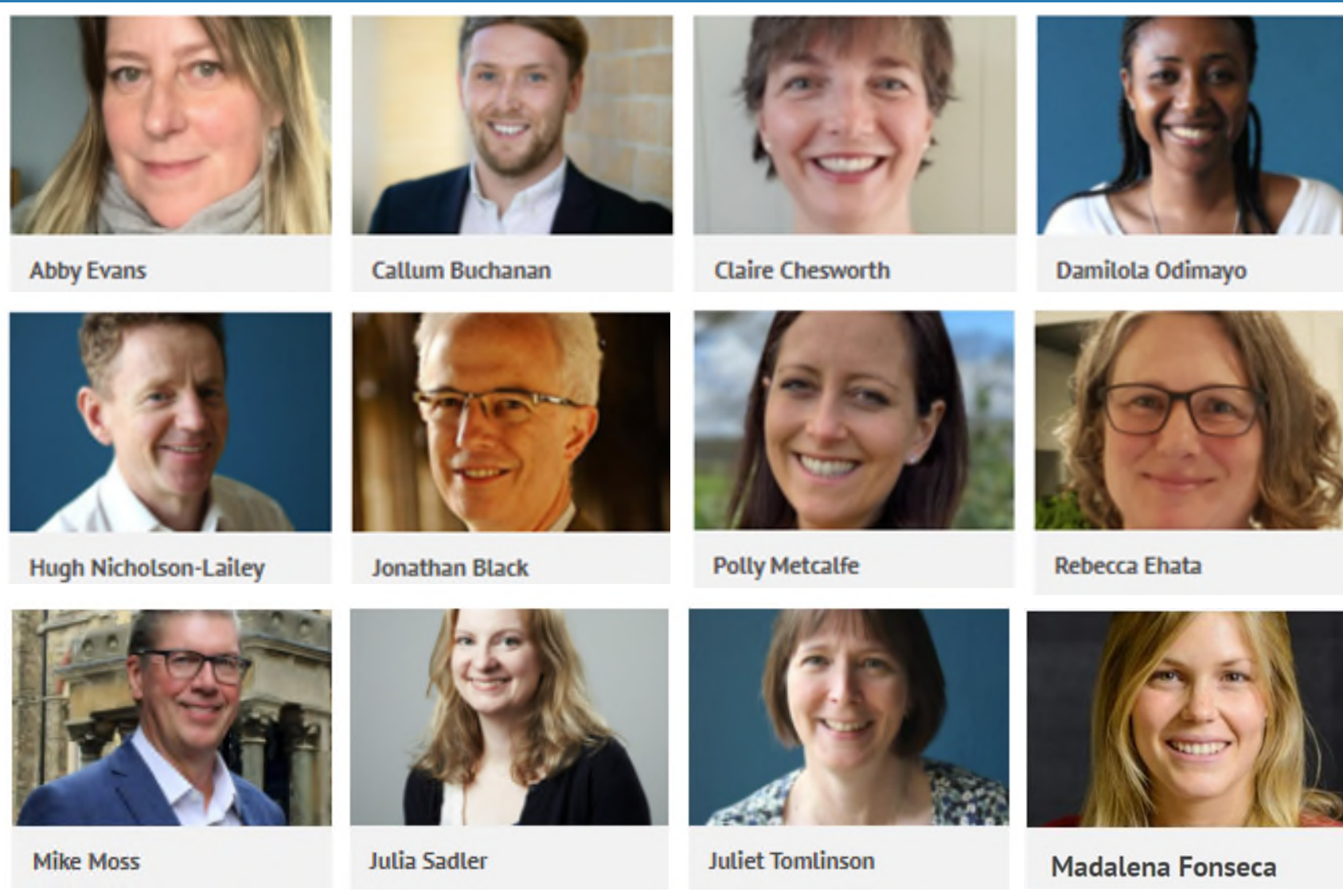
# Make notes



- Try to make notes when you move away from a stand
- You can add value to applications by explaining that your interest in their organisation stems from “the careers fair, where XYX told me YXY”
- In smaller organisations, the person who attends the fair may be the person who reviews and shortlists candidates. Referencing their name in an application may help them remember you.



# One-to-one support



- Book 20 minute appointments when you need them
- Confidential and impartial
- Health- and disability-related careers support
- See our specialisms and how to book at [www.careers.ox.ac.uk/see-careers-adviser](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/see-careers-adviser)


getting started | sector strategies | interview prep | internships | further study advice |  
identifying resources | clarifying interests, motivations, values | CV/letter feedback | & more








# More to explore online






ADMISSIONS   RESEARCH   NEWS & EVENTS   ABOUT

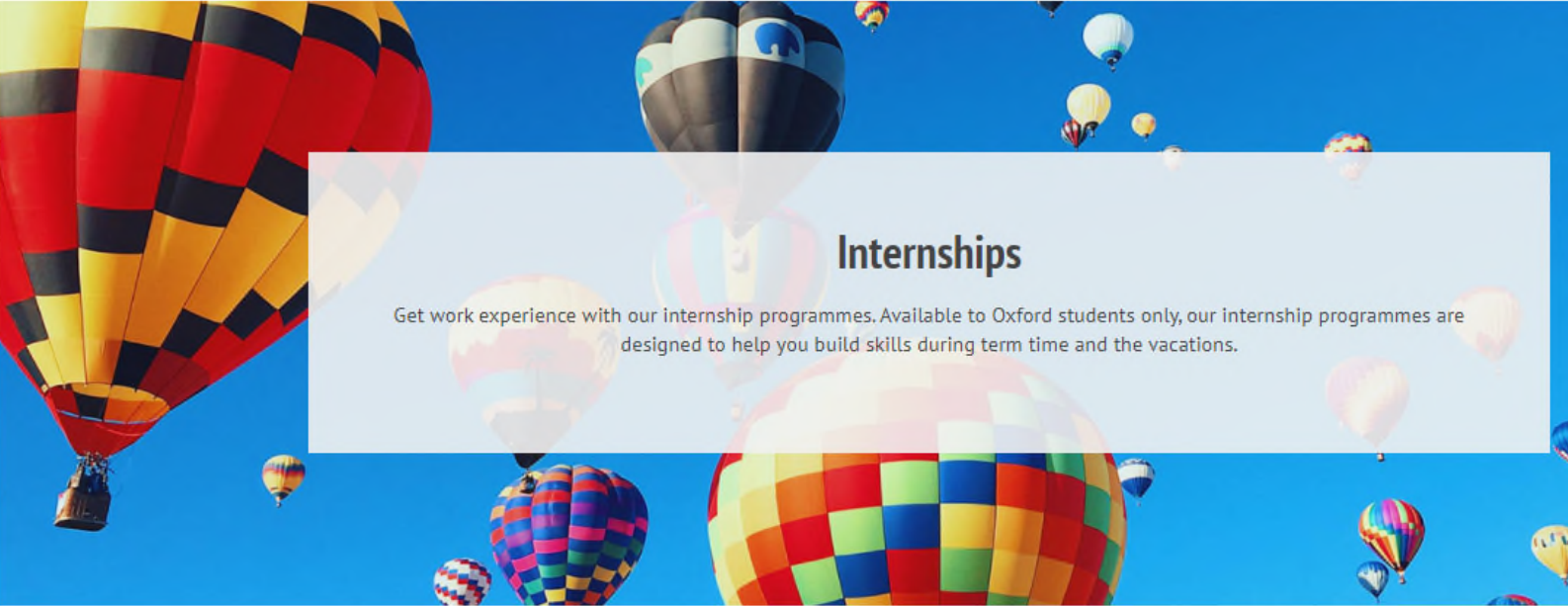
 Oxford Students website    CareerConnect login



Oxford University Careers Service


EXPLORE CAREERS   JOB SEARCH AND APPLICATION   BUILD SKILLS   **INTERNSHIPS**   FURTHER STUDY   HOW WE HELP   WHO WE HELP

 > Internships

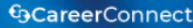




### Internships

Get work experience with our internship programmes. Available to Oxford students only, our internship programmes are designed to help you build skills during term time and the vacations.



www.careers.ox.ac.uk



### Welcome to CareerConnect

Please select one of the following options to continue and sign in to the system.

Student sign in

Alumni sign in

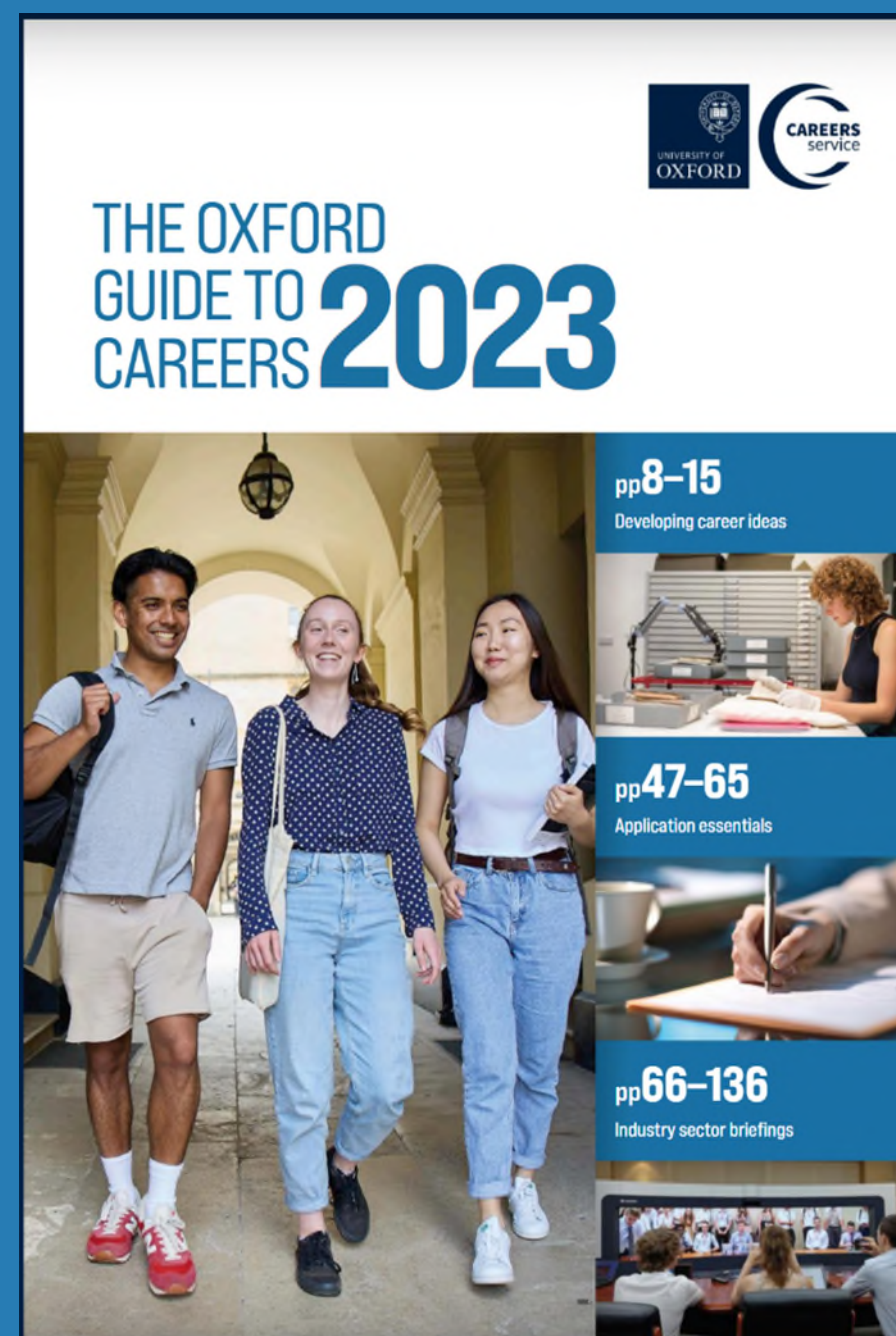
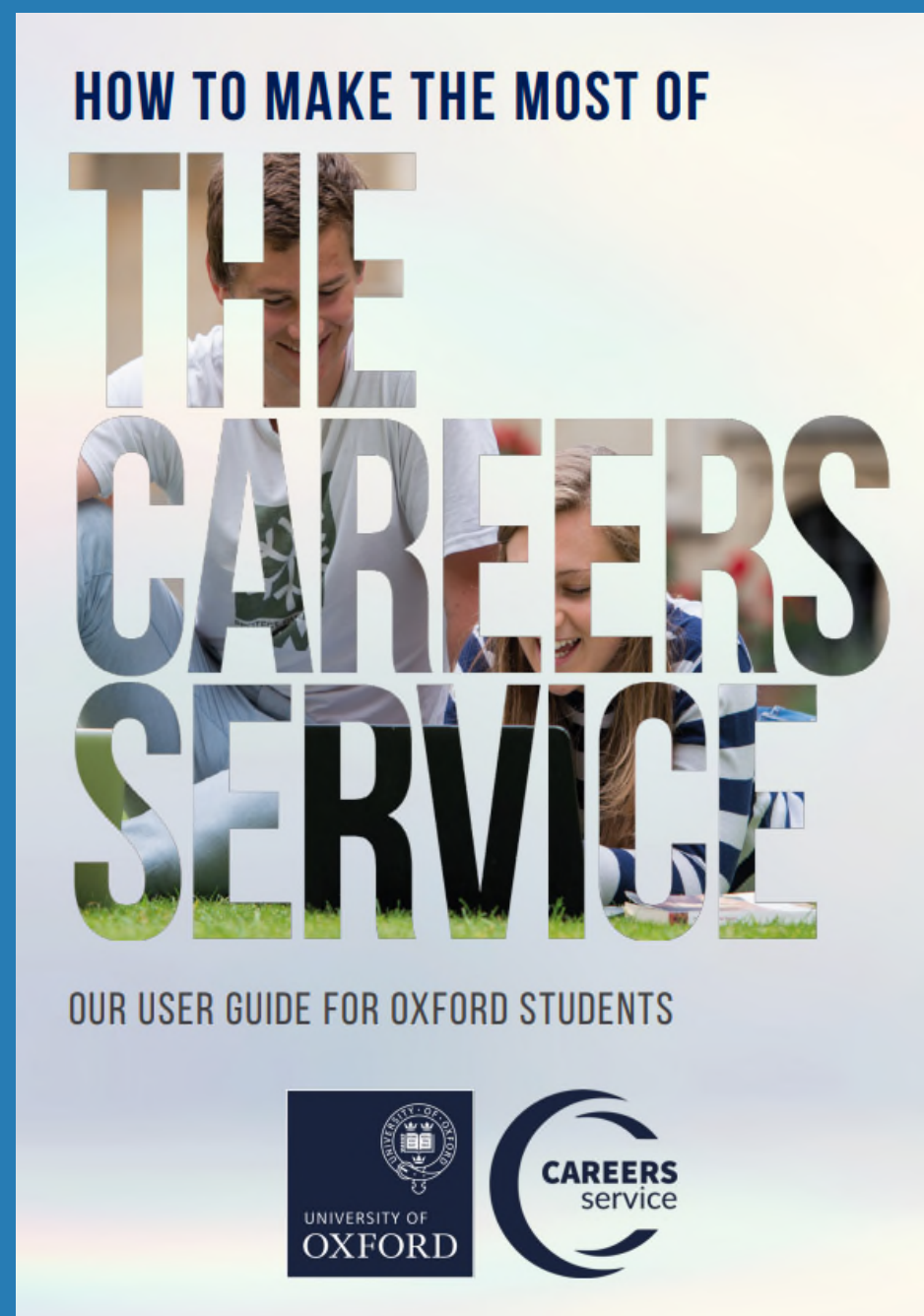
Departmental/College Staff

Research Staff





# Start here...



[www.careers.ox.ac.uk/how-we-help#/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/how-we-help#/)

&

[www.careers.ox.ac.uk/guide](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/guide)



- The lowdown on sectors as diverse as advertising and AI
- Information from recruiters
- Profiles from alumni in sectors from academia to tech
- CV and cover letter templates and tips
- Advice on cringe-free networking
- Interview strategies
- How to plan your job hunt if you're feeling career clueless



**Questions?**