

DU Cares Careers Support

As a care experienced student, we understand that you may not have used a careers service before. If so, please don't worry; we are here to help and support you. We understand that you may have a range of additional barriers that may have prevented you from accessing work experience or careers support and we are really keen for you to reach out and engage with us! Careers & Enterprise is here to help you achieve your aspirations and potential.

We're here for you throughout your career journey, during and beyond your time at Durham, and our support includes, but is not limited to:

Expert careers advice

Our careers advisers can help you with your individual needs. From career planning, through to applying for internships, placements, and graduate jobs, we'll support you from day one. Wherever you've come from and wherever you want to go, we'll help you develop the skills and experience you need to succeed. You don't need a career plan or even a career idea to make an appointment with a Careers Adviser – we can help you to explore, plan and progress. Our Careers Advisers also run a range of career workshops and talks each year, on practical topics such as writing a CV or job application and preparing for interviews, to career insight panels focusing on different career sectors.

Career information resources

There are countless careers, roles, and employers out there, which can sometimes feel a little bit daunting, but we are here to help. We have a wide range of online resources available to support you with your careers research, including detailed career sector guides, help sheets on everything from preparing your CV, making job applications, and what to expect at assessment centres and interviews, as well as a comprehensive set of e-learning resources. We also have interactive tools available to help you practise your interview and assessment skills, and a CV review tool, which will give you instant feedback on your CV. All these resources are available to you wherever and whenever you need them.

Building your network

We've got links with many leading graduate recruiters, and you'll have access to thousands of work experience and graduate opportunities. Why not attend one of the hundreds of employer events we offer each year? They are a great way to meet graduate recruiters to find out about their internships, placements and graduate roles. So, make the most of our connections to build knowledge, gain insights and explore opportunities.

Developing work experience

The graduate job market is competitive. Whereas once a good degree from a world-class university would be enough to secure you a job, it is now essential that you can demonstrate meaningful work experience to ensure that your CV stands out. For all career paths, from graduate programmes and beyond, being able to demonstrate employability and personal skills gained in the workplace is key. The Careers & Enterprise Centre will help you secure work experience; whether it's a summer internship, a placement year, or part-time work experience during term time. As well as internship schemes for large graduate recruiters, we also create **bespoke work experience internship and development programmes** that meet the specific needs of individual students. Programmes change on an annual basis, to ensure we best meet the needs of our current student cohort. Recent programmes have enabled students to gain experience working with small and medium-sized businesses, social enterprises, charities, scientific organisations and more.

- **Enabling Opportunities** – a bespoke programme of tailored workshops and one to one advice and guidance, aimed at supporting students to apply for work experience. Students from areas of lower higher education participation (LPN), lower household income and/lower socioeconomic status groups, as well as students from the North-East, are amongst the eligible participants. Applications from care experienced students are particularly welcomed.
- **Infinity: internship programme for autistic students** - a collaboration between Careers & Enterprise and Disability Support, this support programme aims to provide careers focused support, including workshops and one to ones, to autistic students with the ultimate goal being a funded internship, with one of a number of carefully sourced and supported organisations.

Global Opportunities

The Careers & Enterprise Centre works in partnership with the International Office to offer a programme of short summer global internships and international volunteering opportunities. Financial support is available for travel and cost-of-living expenses, and most of our programmes carry no fees. Funding is available only to students who come from lower household income backgrounds, with applications from students who are care experienced looked upon favourably. Funding is provided in part by the Turing scheme, so the destinations of our programmes do vary each year. In the summer of 2023, for example, we supported students to undertake internships in New York, Seoul (South Korea), Vietnam and Lisbon (Portugal). Our volunteering projects took place in Fiji, Brazil, Uganda and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia).

Student Employment Service

Lots of our students work during their time at university. If you're seeking a part-time job alongside your studies, our Student Employment Service helps you to find and apply for paid part time, voluntary and work experience opportunities both at the university and in the local area.

Student Employability Fund

The [Student Employability Fund](#), created in 2018, financially supports students from households with an income of below £42,875 per annum (as assessed by Student Finance England or equivalent) to develop skills, attributes and experiences that will help them to progress into their chosen destination.

Turn a bright idea into a great new business

More of our students and graduates are starting their own businesses than ever before. Whether you have dreams of starting a freelance career, or a great idea for a new product or service, Careers & Enterprise provides the support you need to achieve your goals. Delivered from the Hazan Venture Lab, our new co-working space for aspiring entrepreneurs, we provide a comprehensive offer of start-up support. This includes one-to-one start-up advice, grant funding, and workshops, as well as access to our network of established entrepreneurs and business support professionals. The University's annual Blueprint Start-up Challenge provides the opportunity to win up to £10,000 to take your new venture to the next level!

Find out more about Careers & Enterprise support, resources and activities on our [Supporting Students intranet](#). Our [Quick Start Guide](#) is a great starting point to get to know our service and our '[Equality, Diversity and Your Career](#)' page provides information on enhanced support and opportunities available to students from diverse backgrounds.

If you would like to learn more about how Careers & Enterprise can support you as a care experienced student, contact our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead, Adelle Fairclough (E-mail: adelle.fairclough@durham.ac.uk) in the first instance for further information.

*'Everyone had low expectations of me because of my care background, even my beloved foster family. It took me a very long time to figure out how those expectations were downgrading my own dreams and aspirations. I started dreaming big and being determined to prove that they were so wrong. Getting into university was my *'I've done the work therefore I made it'* moment, but removing all the barriers to my aspirations without accepting any limit to my dream took a lot of hard work and intentionality – but I did it. It was the most powerful thing I have ever done; it generated an amazing flow of opportunities through which I started flourishing and doing things I have never thought to even be on my radar! So, I just want to beg anyone who will be reading this, to dream big with their career aspirations. To dream big and break those big dreams down into smaller and actionable actions they can start working on TODAY. If you're willing to work on each of those smaller actions hard enough, and long enough, then there is nothing that you cannot achieve'. – Giammarco Di Gregorio, a recent Durham graduate.*