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Making Career Choices and Gaining Work Experience

2nd Year Cellular and Molecular Medicine

Careers Talk Jan 2010



Making Career Choices

The image features a wide, calm ocean with gentle waves in shades of blue and teal. The horizon line is straight and divides the image roughly in half. Above the horizon, the sky is filled with soft, white and light blue clouds, suggesting a bright but slightly overcast day. The overall mood is serene and open.

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HAVEN'T A CLUE



**What's
important
to you?**

**Experience
and
Review**

**Explore
your
options**

Apply

**Make
Choices**



What's Important to You?

- Your motivation to work
- What you are good at and enjoy doing
 - Must this be a part of your job?
- Location, salary, hours, employer, ethos, people

Think about **criteria**
in terms of their relative importance



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Your Options

- 1. A job whereby you use your degree on a day-to-day basis**
- 2. A job where you wouldn't use the specifics of your degree but is still science-related**
- 3. A job unrelated to science.**

Option 1: A Job Related to CMM

- **Industrial Scientist** Research / Manufacture / Analysis
- **Biomedical Scientist / Clinical Scientist** sample testing
- **Forensic Scientist** application of science to answer questions of interest to the legal system
- **Environmental Scientist** study of interactions among physical, chemical, biological components of the environment
- **Information Scientist** collection, classification, manipulation, storage, retrieval and dissemination of info
- **Patent Officer, Examiner** applying/awarding scientific patents

www.bris.ac.uk/careers/dept/cellular.asp

CMM Related Employers

- NHS Labs
- Government Labs e.g. DSTL
- Forensic Science Labs Forensic Science Service, private
- Blood Transfusion Service
- Medical Research Council Labs www.mrc.ac.uk
- University Labs
- Charity Research Labs e.g. Cancer Research
- Private Sector – e.g. patent firms, pharmaceuticals, biotechs

Option 2: A Science Related Job

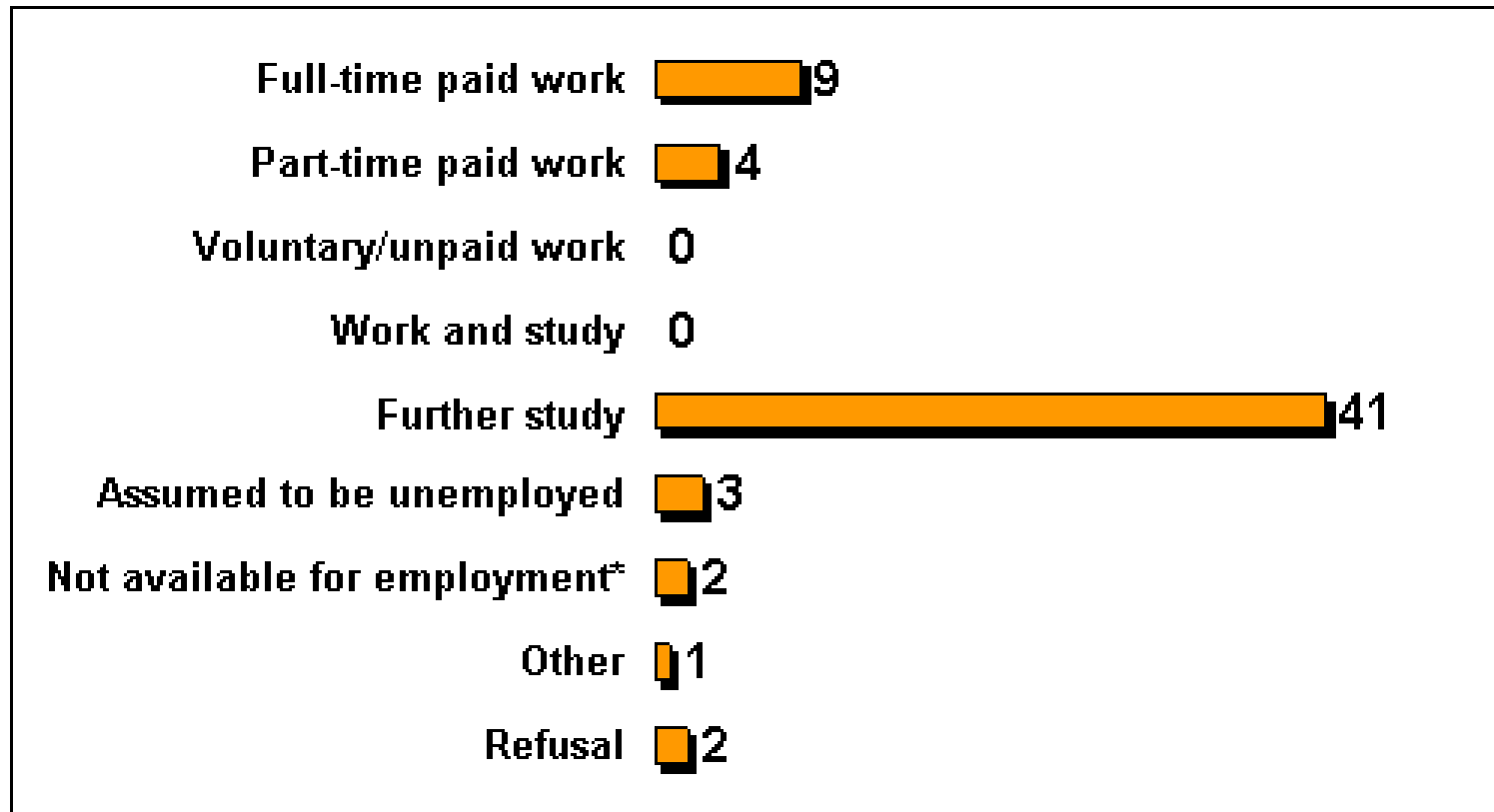
Such As

- **Scientific Sales/Marketing**
- **Trading Standards Officer**
- **Food Technologist**
- **Medicine / Health Care**
- **Science Media**
- **Management (e.g. NHS, private firms)**
- **Teaching**

Option 3: An Unrelated Job

- **Approx 60% graduate jobs are not degree specific**
- **A science degree from UoB is highly regarded by employers**
- **Think about transferable skills and promote them!**
 - **Data Analysis**
 - **Problem Solving**
 - **Communication**
 - **Attention to Detail**
 - **Team-work**
 - **Time Management**
 - **IT**

Cellular and Molecular Medicine Graduate Destinations 2008



figures include those who intercalated Medicine (32 graduates) or Veterinary Science (4 graduates).

Cellular and Molecular Medicine Graduate Destinations 2008

12

Examples of occupations: Clinic Coordinator, Genetics Technologist, Learning Support Assistant, Senior Associate Scientist, Nursing Care Assistant, Assistant Technical Editor, Research Technician, Administrative Assistant, Clinic Coordinator, Genetics Technologist, Senior Associate Scientist, Assistant Technical Editor, Research Technician.

Examples of employers: Morrisons, NHS, Our Lady Rosary Primary School, Pfizer, SSP International, St. Monica Trust, Tocris Cookson Ltd, University of Liverpool, University of Oxford.

Your Options: Further Study

? **Think**

Why do it?



Research

What? Where? When?



Research

Funding

Sources of Information

- www.bris.ac.uk/careers/postgrad/index.asp
- **Your department**
- www.prospects.ac.uk

2008 Graduates: Further Study

- **Demography & Health**
- **Forensic Science**
- **Medicine**
- **Veterinary Science**
- **Veterinary Parasitology**

- **Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)**

Can I take a Year Out?

Yes! But Plan....

- **See Careers Service advice pages**
- **See Case Studies for ideas**
- **Gap Year event in March 11th**
- **Talk through your ideas**



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Making Decisions

- Start **Researching**
- Use **Careers Guidance** Software
- Do some **Work Experience** – formal/informal
- Talk it through



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Experience and Review



Explore your options

Apply

Make Choices

How to apply....

- **Advertised Positions: Online Applications**
- **Advertised Positions: CV & Cover Letter**
- **The Speculative Approach**

Application Forms

- **Can take time!**
- **Watch typos/grammar**
- **Research firm**
- **Research skills needed**
- **Make it easy to read – concise**
- **Be specific**
- **Structure your answers**
- **Display what YOU have done**
- **Word Limits**

Types of Application Questions

- **Please describe a time when you learnt new skills by overcoming a challenging situation.**
- **What challenges do you think the industry faces in the next five years?**
- **Please explain the key skills you have developed that make you potentially suited to a work experience with**

CVs

- **Check the information applies to each application**
- **Presentation is critical – no errors or bad phraseology**
- **1 or 2 pages**
- **Prioritise and highlight key points**
- **Bullets – avoid long description**
- **Draw out relevant skills**
- **Highlight relevant previous work experience**
- **Highlight skills from degree**

9 key steps to Speculative Applications

- 1. Research organisations and employers – through websites, yellow pages, news pages, library**
- 2. Do you know anyone who works for these organisations?**
- 3. Make contact with organisations, initially to find out how realistic work experience is with them. Phone is best.**
- 4. Get a name of who to send CV & cover letter to**
- 5. Send tailored CV/cover letter**

9 key steps to Speculative Applications

6. Follow up 2 weeks later with phone call. If 2 weeks not available, ask for a quick chat.
 7. If they have absolutely nothing for you, ask for their advice on who else to approach.
 8. Some sectors – you will need to be persistent. Stay positive.
- Set yourself a goal on how many companies you will try and target each week!

Why Applications Fail

- **Spelling / Grammar**
- **Poor Presentation**
- **Information given is not relevant to the job**
- **Info is not specific enough**
- **Lack of motivation**
- **Too humble**
- **No examples of skills given**
- **Wrong employer name!**



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Gaining Work Experience

“graduates need to demonstrate to employers that they can 'hit the ground running'. In addition to working hard to gain a good degree, students should engage in extra curricular activities and obtain work experience in order to develop skills that will make them better prepared for the world of work.”

Benefits of Work Experience

- Greater understanding about world of work e.g.
 - Commercial awareness
 - Lab etiquette
- See what a particular job or company is like
- Development of key work skills
- Putting degree work into practice?
- Money!
- Make contacts
- Demonstrate motivation/focus to an employer
- Maybe sort out a graduate job

Types of Work Experience

- **Structured placement – (internship, vacation placement, summer placement)**
- **Project Placements e.g. STEP www.step.org.uk
IAESTE www.iaeste.org.uk**
- **Standard Experience - paid or unpaid – structured or unstructured**
- **Work Shadowing – half a day or longer**
- **Voluntary work / Part-time term-time / vacation work**

Tracking down the right opportunity

Obvious

- Dept for CMM related
- Careers Service website:
www.bris.ac.uk/careers
- www.work-experience.org
- www.gradsouthwest.com
- www.do-it.org
- Graduate directories
- Company websites
- Company Events

Not so Obvious

- Magazines/articles
- Own contacts
- Institutes/Associations
- Lists of businesses
- 'Careers Network'
- Conferences, Events, etc

How the Careers Service Can Help

Workshops

practice interviews, CVs, application forms, work experience, making decisions, hidden job market, working abroad, etc

Spring Term Events

- Careers in Health Care 11 Feb
- Careers in Social Care 16 Feb
- Applying for Medicine 23 Feb
- Careers in Development 4 Mar
- Careers in Sport and Fitness 9 Mar
- Taking a Year Out After Graduation 11 Mar

Employer Presentations

work experience schemes, public sector organisations, teaching, finance, law.....

Many more events in Autumn Term

Friendly Careers Centre : 11 Priory Rd

- Drop-in Careers Advice Mon-Fri 10-3.45 (ex. Wed am)
- **Bookable JobShop and Work Experience Advice (via website)**
- Free Employer Directories and Sector Specific Booklets
- **Books on Making Careers Decisions**
- Books on Working Abroad, Applications, etc.
- **IT suite with careers software**
- Newspapers and Journals

www.bristol.ac.uk/careers

- **Events Section**
- Events Downloads
- **Work Experience Vacancies and application advice**
- Working and Studying Abroad section
- **My Department section – useful website links**
- 'I want to work in...' section (job sectors)
- **International Students section**
- Careers Network
- **PDP (recording everything!)**