

# Finalists' Countdown

May 2009

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*Help, advice and information for students about to graduate from the University of Kent*

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## Inside This Issue

- 1 **Time to take action!**  
How we can help
- 2 **Where are the Jobs?**
- 3 **Graduands' FAQs**
- 4 **Back-up Plans**

## The end is in sight!

The countdown is almost over! You will be graduating in just a couple of months time – into one of the most difficult job markets for many years.

But don't despair – there are still many jobs available for new graduates and we can help you to maximize your chances of getting one of them.

Once your exams are over, take some time to put your career plans into action by:

1. Coming to one of our talks or workshops
2. Attending a summer recruitment fair
3. Updating and perfecting your CV
4. Applying for jobs or courses

## The Careers Advisory Service can still help you

The Careers Advisory Service is **open as usual throughout the summer vacation** - 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday, except on August Bank Holiday. The Careers Information Room will be open all day, but will be unstaffed between 12.30 - 1.30 pm.

**You are still welcome to use our facilities after you have graduated:** call in to talk to a careers adviser or to use our information resources or networked PCs.

**JOBHUNTING TIP**

*Employers look for graduates who can demonstrate "soft skills" such as team-working, cultural awareness, leadership and communication skills, as well as academic achievement – make sure that your application demonstrates these.*

See [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/skillsintro.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/skillsintro.htm)

**HELP AVAILABLE**

*You are welcome to keep on using the CAS at Kent after your graduate: but if you live closer to another university, they may allow you to use their careers service during the summer vacation.*

*You can find a list of all university careers services in the UK and Ireland at: [www.prospects.ac.uk/links/careersservices](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/careersservices)*

**Where are the Jobs?****University of Kent vacancy database**

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

**Other graduate vacancy sites**

These include:

**Graduate Prospects** [www.prospects.ac.uk/](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/);

**Target Jobs**  
<http://targetjobs.co.uk/graduate-jobs/>;

**Milkround** [www.milkround.com/](http://www.milkround.com/);

Links to **other useful sites** can be found at [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/graddirectories.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/graddirectories.htm)

**Summer Recruitment Fairs**

These are events where a large number of employers gather at a university or convention centre to publicise their vacancies and complete their recruitment of graduates. They take place all over the country, the largest being in London on 16 and 17 June ([www.londongradfair.co.uk/summer](http://www.londongradfair.co.uk/summer)). You can find a comprehensive listing of these fairs at [www.prospects.ac.uk/links/CareerFairs](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/CareerFairs). The following sites may also help you to prepare for the Fairs

- [www.get.hobsons.co.uk/advice/get-a-job-careers-fairs](http://www.get.hobsons.co.uk/advice/get-a-job-careers-fairs)
- [www.grb.uk.com/careers\\_fairs.0.html](http://www.grb.uk.com/careers_fairs.0.html)

**Recruitment Agencies and Jobs Boards**

These are well worth using - many graduates find their first job through an agency – but the sheer number of them can be confusing. Our web pages at [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/recruit.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/recruit.htm) give advice on choosing and using agencies, with many links.

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Now that you have completed your studies you are a "graduand" – you become a graduate when your degree is awarded

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### **JOBHUNTING TIP**

*Don't use the same CV and covering letter for every job application. The best applications are closely tailored to that specific job. See our Applications pages for advice:*  
[www.kent.ac.uk/careers/applcn.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/applcn.htm)

### **HELP AVAILABLE**

*Graduates on our contact database receive regular email updates of graduate vacancies, careers events and useful information.*

*Don't miss out: sign up now at*  
[www.kent.ac.uk/careers/contact.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/contact.html)

## **Graduands' FAQs**

### **1) I have no idea what I want to do!**

The following may help you:

- **"PROSPECTS PLANNER"**, an online guidance system available at [www.prospects.ac.uk/links/Pplanner](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/Pplanner)
- Our **"What Can I Do With My Degree In ...?"** pages [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/degreein.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/degreein.htm) or the **"Options with .... "** sheet for your degree subject.
- Our booklet and web pages on **"Choosing a Career"** [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/Choosing/ChoosingCareer.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/Choosing/ChoosingCareer.htm)

### **2) I know what I want to do, but how can I find out more about getting into that area?**

The following may help you:

- **Occupational Profiles** at [www.prospects.ac.uk/links/Occupations](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/Occupations)
- **"I Want to Work In ..."** - brief introductions to almost 90 popular career areas, with useful links [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/workin.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/workin.htm)

### **3) Where can I find out about postgraduate study?**

- The **AGCAS booklet** "Postgraduate Study and Research" and the Postgraduate Study section of [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)
- The **Postgraduate Study pages** of our website [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/postgradmenu.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/postgradmenu.htm)

### **4) How can I make applications for jobs or courses that will help me to stand out from the crowd?**

The following may help you:

- The **DVD, "Your Job's On-Line"** (available via our website from the campus network) and **video "Looking Good on Paper"** (available in the CAS)
- Our **web pages** and **booklets** on applications and interviews [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/applcn.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/applcn.htm)

If you would like any further help or advice, come into the CAS and talk to a careers adviser

**JOBHUNTING TIP**

*Remember that your Kent email address will expire during the summer, so make sure that you have a permanent address to use in job applications.*

*Make sure that this address is appropriate for job applications – one such as [sexmad@hotmail.com](mailto:sexmad@hotmail.com) may not make the best impression!*

**HELP AVAILABLE**

*Most employers will ask you for an academic reference, so make sure you get permission from your referee to give their name before you leave Kent. It helps referees to write you a good reference if they have a copy of your CV too. For more advice on references, see [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/referees.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/referees.htm)*

**Back-up plans**

The job market for graduates will be tough this year, so if you don't find your perfect job right away, don't give up hope. The following tips may be helpful:

- **Be flexible:** all kinds of jobs may give valuable experience. Don't restrict yourself to "graduate training schemes" or jobs with "graduate" in the title;
- **Improve your skills,** particularly IT and language skills. See [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/skillsmenu.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/skillsmenu.htm)
- **Consider voluntary work:** you may even get paid pocket money and/or expenses for this! It can also help build up useful skills and experience for a whole range of careers. [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/workin/voluntaryWork.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/workin/voluntaryWork.htm) has more advice on this option;
- **Take time out to travel** – but use that time usefully! Working on conservation or social projects, learning another language or teaching English abroad will all look better than touring exotic beaches. Our pages at [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sitesint.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sitesint.htm) (Working Abroad ) and [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/tefl.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/tefl.htm) (TEFL) give lots more information;
- **Learn to network.** This can be used to find out more about career areas of interest to you and may help you to gain work experience – or even a job! For help with this, see [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/CJ.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/CJ.htm)
- **Don't give up!** There are still jobs out there for graduates and the economy will recover at some time in the future so stay focused and positive.

**GOOD LUCK**