

Options with English

Your skills

Over the course of your degree you develop a good mix of subject specific and technical skills as well as transferable core skills. Consider these alongside your other activities, such as paid work, volunteering, family responsibilities, sport, membership of societies, leadership roles, etc. Think about how these can be used as evidence of your skills and personal attributes. Then you can start to market and sell who you *really* are, identify what you may be lacking and consider how to improve your profile.

The skills you gain through studying English are marketable in most career areas. Perhaps the major strength of all English graduates is communication skills, both in speech and in writing. However, you also learn to: organise your workload; work to tight deadlines; convey meaning precisely; pick out the essential points from texts; interpret, assess and evaluate sources; lead and participate in discussions; work independently; think critically and develop opinions, propose ideas and theories; persuade others of your point of view; think and act creatively; have confidence in your own opinions; work with others presenting ideas and information; have tolerance of ambiguity and of others' opinions; and develop IT skills.

Many English students write for student newspapers and magazines, get involved with student radio or film societies or volunteer in the community or local schools. For you as an English student doing a non-vocational course, the skills you develop outside your study are critical in developing a rounded CV. The combination of evidence of skills gained from work experience and extracurricular activities, as well as through your study, can help you in CV writing and job applications - and boost your employability.

Job options

Bear in mind that it's not just your degree discipline that determines your options. Look at [your degree... what next?](#) for informed advice on career planning and graduate employment, or take a look at [what jobs would suit me?](#) a helpful starting point for self-analysis.

You can choose between jobs that are degree-related or those that appeal because they use other interests or elements of your degree.

Jobs directly related to your degree

- [English as a foreign language teacher/English as a second language teacher](#) - teaching English to international students either in the UK or overseas.
- [Primary school teacher](#) and [Secondary school teacher](#) - teaching in state and independent schools, sixth form and FE colleges.

Jobs where your degree would be useful

- [Advertising account executive](#) - acts as a link between three to four client accounts and the agency; has overall responsibility for the smooth running of a campaign; coordinates the activities of the advertising and administrative teams.
- [Arts administrator](#) - provides administrative support for a wide range of arts and cultural organisations.
- [Academic librarian](#), [Information officer/manager](#), [Records manager](#) - responsible for the acquisition, organisation and dissemination of information and materials within the library system or information unit.
- [Charity officer](#) - responsibilities include aspects of marketing, public relations, organising events, finance,

fund-raising and managing volunteers.

- [Editorial assistant](#) - assists senior editorial staff in the administration of the commissioning, planning and production of books, journals and magazines. The recognised starting point for editorial and publishing careers.
- [Marketing executive](#) - involved in business development, market research, planning, product development, pricing, packaging, advertising, PR and sales.
- [Newspaper journalist](#) - researches and writes stories for publication in local, regional and national press.
- [Programme researcher, broadcasting/film/video](#) - supports the production team, collects, verifies and prepares information for film, television and radio productions. This can be seen as apprenticeship for a production role.
- [Public relations officer](#) - uses all forms of media and communication to build, maintain and manage the reputation of companies and organisations.
- [Runner, broadcasting/film/video](#) - fetches, carries and does any small jobs needed for the production department of a film, video or television company. An entry level job into media production.

Other options

If your first job is not one related to your chosen career, you can still use your time effectively in order to gain experience for your longer-term career aims. Consider college evening classes, IT courses, learning languages, arranging work shadowing or work experience and volunteering - employers will really value the commitment and initiative you have shown to move your career forward.

Although some of the jobs listed here might not be first jobs for many graduates, they are among the many realistic possibilities with your degree, provided you can demonstrate you have the attributes employers are looking for. It's also worth noting that many graduate vacancies don't specify particular degree disciplines, so don't restrict your thinking to the jobs listed here.

[Explore types of jobs](#) to find out more about the above options and related jobs.

Career areas

Every year statistics are collected to show what HE students do immediately after graduation. These can be a useful guide but, in reality, with the data being collected within just six months of graduation, many graduates are travelling, waiting to start a course, paying off debts, getting work experience or still deciding what they want to do. For further information about some of the areas of employment commonly entered by graduates of any degree discipline, check out [what do graduates do?](#) and [your degree... what next?](#)

In 2007, six months after graduation, 55% of graduates in English had entered paid employment. Many were in temporary jobs, mostly in clerical or catering jobs, to be used as a 'stepping stone' to gain experience for their longer-term aims. These figures are typical of non-vocational subjects, in contrast to vocational subjects where more graduates go straight into employment.

Of the graduates going into employment around 50% went into professional or associate professional jobs. This included 8% entering marketing, sales and advertising, 8% entering managerial roles and 11% teaching and related roles.

The report *The English Degree and Graduate Careers*

<http://www.english.heacademy.ac.uk/explore/publications/reports.php>)

notes that longer term prospects for English graduates are good, even though English graduates may tend to spend time in lower level employment immediately after graduation. The report also indicates that a high number of English graduates tend to be drawn to working in the public and non-profit sectors rather than the private sector.

Where are the jobs?

Typical employers include: banks; publishers; advertising agencies; PR companies; accountants; local government; UK Home Civil Service; the National Health Service (NHS); retailers; finance; educational institutions; voluntary and charitable organisations; the media; libraries; leisure industries; the tourist trade; social services; as well as a wide range of local, small to medium-sized enterprises.

You can find more information in the following sectors:

- [Advertising and PR](#);
- [Education](#);
- [Local, regional and national government](#).

Career management is an ongoing process; one that you'll no doubt develop throughout your working life. [Explore job sectors](#) for further information on all the above employment areas.

Further study

A large proportion of English graduates, nearly 30%, go on to further study (this includes work and study).

You may choose to continue your academic studies in English by doing an MA, with the potential to move on to a PhD. If you want to teach English, you will need to take the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), or Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) in Scotland, or a qualification in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL or CELTA).

However, you could opt for postgraduate study that does not relate to English or takes you down another specific career path. Many courses will take graduates from any subject, so you can choose courses in subjects such as marketing, finance, business, law, librarianship, information work and journalism.

These trends show only what previous graduates in your subject did immediately upon graduating. Over the course of their career - the first few years in particular - many others will opt for some form of further study, either part time or full time. If further study interests you, start by thinking [about postgrad study](#). [Search courses and research](#) to identify your options; you can also [apply for courses online](#).

Look at [funding my further study](#) for more details relating to finance and the application process.

What next?

Don't forget there are alternatives to entering employment or postgraduate study, such as taking time out, volunteering or travelling. Longer term, you may want to consider starting your own business. For something different, check out [self-employment](#) and [flexible working](#) or explore [working and studying abroad](#).

This should have started you thinking about your future. Whether you are in the early stages of career planning, or you have definite ideas about what you want to do, you will find further information to help you in the following sections:

- Analyse your skills, interests and motivations to find out [what jobs would suit me?](#)
- [Explore types of jobs](#) to find out about entry requirements, salaries and working conditions.
- [Explore job sectors](#) for hints on breaking into various industries.
- [Find graduate employers](#) and see what they have to offer.
- Look at the advice on [applications, CVs and interviews](#).
- Get [work experience](#) through vacation work or a work placement.

- [Find courses and research](#) and investigate postgraduate study opportunities.
- If you have already graduated, get online [interactive advice](#).
- Visit [your university careers service](#) for a wealth of advice and resources to help with your career planning.

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Written by Fiona Christie, University of Manchester, October 2006.

Edited by Carol Bebawi, AGCAS, October 2006.

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