



SEE *career* NEWS



SCHOOL OF EARTH AND ENVIRONMENT'S **EMPLOYABILITY NEWSLETTER**

Issue 8 March 2016

Welcome

It is a pleasure to be back for second semester in the School of Earth and Environment.

This is the 8th edition of SEE Career NEWS, where we aim to offer you practical advice on how to improve your employability prospects. We do this by providing real life case studies from our former students, but also by highlighting the many events and activities you can engage with, to make you compete in a competitive job market.

In this edition, we look back on the many different initiatives that took place during the last semester, reflect on the current job market for both Geologists and Environment students, and celebrate some of our alumni success stories.

As last semester, Michael Billam and Zoe Cumberpatch continue their roles as Student Employability Ambassadors, providing an abundance of placement opportunities and support. Remember, it is not too late to secure a placement if you are a second year student.

Finally the employability team would like to say a big thank you to Anjee Gupta who will sadly be leaving us at the end of March. All the School wish her continued success in her future career and her contribution will be sorely missed.

Wishing you a successful semester!

LINDA HARTLAND
Student Employability Officer
L.Hartland@leeds.ac.uk



Leeds ranks third best in UK for student employability

The University has been ranked third in the UK for the employability of its graduates.

In the new QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2016, Leeds was behind only Oxford and Cambridge in the UK, and also placed in the world's top 20. Among the highlights, Leeds was ranked in the top 30 in the world for the quality of its partnerships with employers.

Greg Miller, head of student placement at the University, said: "We encourage students to prepare for their careers as soon as they arrive; that's one of the reasons our graduates are highly sought after by employers.

"Our courses, combined with the wealth of experience available outside academic teaching, help them broaden their experience and develop the skills employers want – skills that will benefit their organisation."

Robert Partridge, Director of Student Opportunity, added: "Leeds has a deep commitment to the professional futures of its students, with more than 650 graduate recruiters visiting campus each year.

"We also have long-standing partnerships with firms, including Marks and Spencer, Procter & Gamble and Rolls-Royce. But more fundamentally, we have developed our distinctive Leeds Curriculum, with its focus on employability, and our programme of co-curricular opportunities, Leeds for Life, which helps students prepare for a career from their first day on campus.

"It is fitting, then, that these efforts should be recognised in the first ever QS Employability Rankings. We will continue to make employment of our graduates a top priority in an increasingly competitive job market."

Leeds is in the top 10 nationally for graduate recruitment, according to High Fliers Research published this year.

The University also won the National Business Awards this year for its enterprise initiatives, which recognised the university's efforts in delivering support for entrepreneurial students across all subject areas, as well as the significant impact of support and advice for student start-ups and alumni entrepreneurs.

Based on five criteria – employer reputation, partnerships with employers, alumni outcomes, employers' presence on campus and graduate employment rate - the QS Graduate Employability Rankings is a pilot initiative to evaluate employability.

For this first edition, over 47,000 employer survey responses were analysed, 1,239 universities considered and 723 evaluated. Future rankings aim to increase the number of universities analysed and the categories.



Employability update in Earth & Environment

The graduate market of 2015 showed the highest increase in recruitment for a decade.

The Faculty of Environment now ranks at a fantastic 82% in the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey and in 5th place in the University of Leeds ranking. This is testament to the delivery of key events and activities on offer each year including this year's 7th annual Faculty of Environment Careers Fair which was a huge success. The fair was the largest to date, attracting just shy of 400 students with 27 exhibitors representing on the day.

A wide spread of organisations took part including Arcadis, Arup, Atkins, Aecom, BP, CGG, Getech, Golder Associates, Groundwork, Lithos Consulting, Mott Macdonald, PwC, PepsiCo, WSP and many others, highlighting a range of opportunities suited to all year groups in Geosciences and Environment.

Paul Collins from Informed Solutions commented:

"We found the event very enjoyable and productive, and it was lovely to see so many interested students! We have already heard from some of the students that we spoke to at the fair."

"Supporting Employability this year, our two new student ambassadors, Zoe Cumberpatch and Michael Billam have been extremely busy."

The Year in Industry continues to thrive, with 36 students opting for a placement in 2014/15 and 31 students in 2015/16. The Student Placement Awards organised by the Careers Centre saw local employer VHE Construction nominate 2014/15 placement student Steven Ashton with a special mention on the day.

VHE commented:

"Steven commenced at VHE Construction with no experience of the remediation industry and he has grown into the position to the extent that the managers request his presence on projects. He has become a valued member of the team and will be greatly missed."

This highlights the significance of the Year in Industry as the number of employers targeting SEE students continue to grow.

"Supporting Employability this year, our two new student ambassadors, Zoe Cumberpatch and Michael Billam have been extremely busy. They have set up the SEE Careers Clinic which runs every two weeks aiming to help students with practical job hunting skills including CV writing and interview skills. They also have contributed to the Careers Skills modules and have talked about their placement year at Open Days."

Planning for the next annual careers day is already taking place with a number of employers already keen to attend. The 2016 fair will take place on Wednesday 19th October 2016.

Thought Geoscience was an easy path to a career in Mining or Hydrocarbons? Think again.

Be proactive and survive the mining drag.

The mining industry is one of those cycles. Similar to what we are currently seeing in the oil and gas industry, economic booms and economic drags come and go. The mining sector is unfortunately going through one of those drags- but this isn't necessarily bad news for students!

Sources in the industry predict that the upturn of the sector will begin in 2-4 years – estimates granted, but it will bounce back eventually. It's a necessity for the globe. The higher cities grow, the more technology the human population demand, the deeper the mines have to dig. As the saying goes: if it can't be grown or harvested, it has to be mined. Even more good news is the fact that the mineral sector is going to see a shortage of geologists in the next decade, a result of the low interest in the area during the 1960's.

These aren't guarantees of a job, but they do put you in good stead. So what should you do in the meantime? Well if you're just starting out you can take the relevant degree pathways that give you those unique skills required for this career. If you're already on that trail, now is the time to gain those extra skills! They may be in the form of a job or further study. PhD's are a great option for placing yourself above the rest – but just as valuable is core work experience that can't be gained in a school or academic institution. But don't forget to diversify! People with a suite of skills will ride the storm better when the next inevitable downturn arrives. Having skills in the social and environmental aspects of the industry will pay you well when you may be required to adapt in the work space. Hard work, proactivity and a basic enjoyment for what you are doing is what is needed for success in all of the earth and environment industries.

You should look for ways to gain those extra experiences and skills to make you a cut above the crowd. Societies are invaluable for this – Leeds has a particularly good Society of Economic Geologists student chapter which is a definite stepping stone to a future career.

Get out there. Work hard. Reap the rewards.

OWEN LOKUCIEJEWSKI-TAYLOR

SEG President. 4th Year MGeol Student (Year abroad in Canada).
2016-2017: Potentially a PhD.



How to keep your career dreams alive in a \$30 a barrel world?



You'd have to have been living under a rock to be unaware that the oil price is in one of its lows and thus exploration has been greatly reduced, and with it lots and lots of job losses for Geoscientists. I'm not going to go into detail of the current situation but US Shale gas, Saudi Arabia not wanting to lose their market share and supply being much much greater than demand are some of the basic factors.

I've always been set on the petroleum industry: taking the petroleum pathway of modules, tailoring my dissertation towards hydrocarbons and even being lucky enough to secure an industrial year in a hydrocarbon facing company.

After a gruelling panel interview at Imperial College London, I was lucky enough to be offered a full sponsorship to study the Petroleum Geoscience MSc by Statoil starting in October (1 of around 10

sponsorships available for Petroleum Geoscience in the UK this year). The most important question I was asked was 'as student employability ambassador, what would you recommend to students wanting to go into the petroleum industry?'

My response (minus the nerves, slight stuttering and incredibly smart clothing was as follows)...

'I tell them that if they are 100% passionate about a career in the industry and prepared to do whatever it takes to get there then go for it, but be prepared to be flexible, think about getting a job out of the industry to gain key transferable skills or maybe consider further education in the form of an PhD which has a hydrocarbon focus. If you aren't sure whether you want to work in oil and gas or if the state of the industry is making you consider an alternative career path, then I think it's probably wise to look into alternative options.'

Remember that no matter what, you will be coming out of a great university with a (hopefully) great degree in a great subject and that in itself opens a lot of doors for you. Don't be fooled into thinking your only options are oil and gas or mining. Have you considered Engineering geology? Marketing? Management? Teaching? Researching? Climate modelling? Risk analysis?

If, like me, you can't imagine yourself doing anything else then your task is to make sure you are well-rounded and 'tick all the boxes'. Make sure you have work experience be that industrial or through a research based internship, work hard to ensure your grades leave you in the best possible position and constantly develop your employability and transferable skills through extracurricular activities, sports and part time work.

Two of the best pieces of advice I've been given by people in the industry are 'determination, passion and curiosity to learn are vital above all else' and 'write your career goals on some paper and stick it in your wardrobe, every morning you will see this and you will be motivated to chase your goals'.

If you need any help at all visit Linda or Anjee or the Careers Centre Team.

ZOE CUMBERPATCH

Student Employability Ambassador.
4th year Geological Sciences (Ind)
[Placement at Getech Group Plc].
2016-2017: MSc Petroleum Geoscience at Imperial College London (Statoil Sponsored).

Successful Alumni making a mark!

In this next section, we meet two former Earth and Environment students who are embarking on their dream jobs!



JAMIE MITCHELL
Met Office

What programme did you study?

BSc Earth System Science (with Industrial Placement)

Where are working now and what does it involve?

I currently work for the Met Office down in Exeter, Devon. I work in the Hadley Centre which is the department that carries out world-leading research in climate change. My role is to communicate the policy relevance of the climate research to the UK Government in a clear and easy to understand way. This then helps people in government to make decisions around matters that concern climate change.

How did you find out about the role?

I heard about the job whilst I was doing my follow-on Masters degree in climate change at Exeter University. One of my course mates worked at the Met Office at the time and recommended that I apply – which I did straight away!

How did you find the application process?

The application process was a standard CV and application form. Throughout the process emphasis was placed on how your skills matched up with Met Office essential and desirable criteria. Following my successful application I was invited along for an interview and a group exercise and thankfully after that I was offered the job!

“Experience, Experience, Experience!
The amount of relevant experience you have on your CV will determine whether you get through the initial screening phase and invited to interview.”

Did you go anywhere for support when completing the application?

Throughout my application I used the references and tools that were available on the Careers Centre website. For example I used the material that helped with writing CV's as well as the tips for interviews and assessment centres.

Did you take part in a Year in Industry?

Yes I did and I can't recommend it enough! My year out was at a company called VHE who specialise in regenerating contaminated land sites. Looking back, this couldn't be further away from the sort of work I am doing now. However on reflection it didn't matter because any form of full-time working experience before you graduate is priceless and looks brilliant on your CV.

So if you are thinking twice about applying for a year in industry role because it is not in the area that you want to work in when you graduate, apply anyway and you won't regret it!

Do you think that applying for a placement in your second year helped you when applying for graduate jobs? If so, how?

Yes absolutely because you learn from the mistakes that you made when applying for placements. Also already having gone through the process gives you a more complete understanding of what employers are looking for and you can use this information to shape your graduate applications.

I was also lucky enough to be on the other side of the interview table during my year out, where I worked with my boss to find my replacement! This was invaluable experience as it gave me the opportunity to see exactly what employers were looking for.

What advice would you give a final year student looking for a job upon graduation?

Experience, Experience, Experience! The amount of relevant experience you have on your CV will determine whether you get through the initial screening phase and invited to interview. To get relevant experience it is crucial to network, go to careers fairs and just to be proactive!

Once you get to interview then it's all down to your personality and I think whether you can provide enough real-life examples of how you fit the essential criteria of the role you're applying for. If your smiling, friendly, enthusiastic about the role and have prepared examples ready for competency based questions then you are halfway there I think!

What key skills have you developed during your degree that you feel are the most important to your career to date?

Specifically for me, the ability to read complex information and draw out the key points and communicate those effectively – much like what is required when using journal paper references effectively when writing essays or reports.

More generally, my degree developed my written and oral communication skills which I think are important in most if not all graduate jobs.



ASHLEY O'NEILL

Hilton Worldwide

What programme did you study?

BSc Meteorology and Climate Science (Industrial)

What is your current job?

Energy Data Analyst in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA)
Engineering Operations Team at Hilton Worldwide, Watford

How did you find out about the role?

I found the vacancy on the stars at Leeds careers website and applied via the Hilton Worldwide website.

How was the application process?

About a fortnight after applying I found out I had been successful for the next stage. This included an automated online video interview, an excel test, numerical, verbal and logical reasoning tests and a personality questionnaire, which I had about a week to complete.

Following completion, I found out less than a week later that I had passed through to the next stage – a face-to-face interview at the Hilton Worldwide Head Office the following week. The interview was with 3 members of the Energy and Environment Team and lasted approximated 40mins-1hour covering some competency questions but mainly tested my technical knowledge of the energy industry.

The following day I was invited for a final interview with the Vice President and Senior Energy Manager (my future line manager) of Engineering Operations scheduled a week later at the same offices. I felt that I was more prepared for the technical questions in this final interview.

Two days later I was delighted to be offered the position and was excited to start my new role at Hilton Worldwide. Overall the recruitment process was quite short and intense, but allowed me to remain focused.

Where did you go for to support?

I used a lot of the support and tips I had been given from the SOEE Employability team during my time at Leeds as preparation. This included various interview techniques such as the STAR competency response, methods for researching the company, and how to prepare a question to ask the interviewers. My role as a Student Employability Ambassador definitely helped me to feel adequately prepared and confident throughout the whole recruitment process.

Did you take part in a Year in Industry?

I completed a Year in Industry at The Department of Energy and Climate Change within the Energy Price Statistics team.

Do you think that applying for a placement in your second year helped you when applying for graduate jobs? If so, how?

Having a Year in Industry massively helped me when applying for and securing a graduate job. Most employers do require relevant experience when recruiting for a role, and if it is not an outlined requirement the work experience definitely helps you to differentiate from the crowd.

I had also undertaken a summer internship upon finishing University at Mott Macdonald Consultancy as a carbon intern. This experience also helped to further my application for my current role.

Both of these internships allowed me to perfect my application and interview technique so that when it came to applying for my dream job I was confident throughout the whole process. Finally, like any work experience I developed the essential transferable skills and competencies that employers look for in a candidate.

What advice would you give a final year student looking for a job upon graduation?

My main piece of advice would be to get involved in every opportunity you can and really make the most of your time at Leeds University. When it came to applying for my current role, my CV boasted 2 great examples of relevant work experience as mentioned as well as involvement in my department community through roles as employability ambassador, open day ambassador and course rep. I had also participated in societies such as Leeds Student Radio and had a strong academic background with a passion for my degree and the career path that I wanted to follow. All of these things are extremely important and help to set you aside from the rest when applying for a graduate role.

When it comes to applying for roles, always tailor your CV and cover letter to suit the job description, allow sufficient times to prepare for interviews and ensure you research the company and have prepared a question to ask them that cannot be found anywhere on their website!

What key skills have you developed during your degree that you feel are the most important to your career to date?

The top 3 skills I've developed during my degree and work experience are communication, team work and time management helping to create a healthy work life balance.

"I developed the essential transferable skills and competencies that employers look for in a candidate."

Current environmental job market



The environmental jobs market has been growing since 2011 and has maintained a steady rate of about 5% growth per year since, as well as there being an increasing revenue from the sector since 2010 (Fig 1). As a result, for those of us doing environmental degree programs we have a range of options in terms of jobs when moving beyond university into the world of work.

Jobs in consultancy and ecology are the most readily available with many companies large and small looking to consultancy firms for guidance on how to make their business greener and more environmentally friendly. Many consultancy firms, like Arup for example, also offer graduate opportunities with training programmes and many incentives.

Despite all this though, looking for a more focused position in an environmental sector can be trickier as the demand is not so high. As a 4th year meteorology student myself, it has been hard to come across jobs in the weather industry as many are reserved for more experienced professionals. This has forced me to look beyond meteorology as I did when securing my year in industry in second year to roles offering a wide range of transferable skills. I believe the

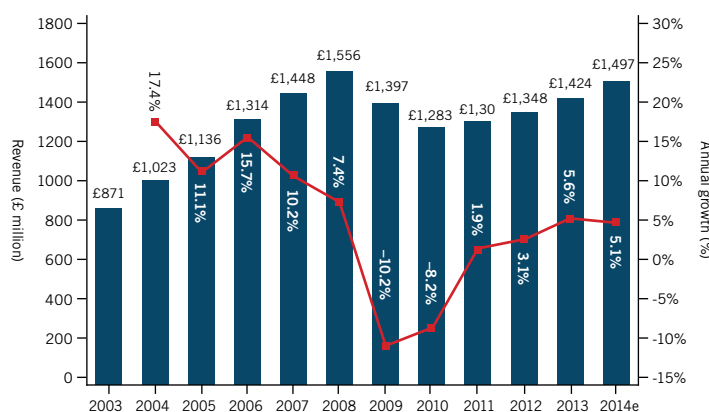
experience obtained by doing an industrial year makes you far more desirable and employable when applying for any job, as you obtain the often essential experience of working full time. However, if you haven't done a year in industry or don't desire to, all is not lost! There are many ways to obtain the key skills certain industries look for all around you at university, from the societies within the school (EnviroSoc, RocSoc, SAG and others!), to volunteering opportunities and sports clubs. Just by showing you are an enthusiastic individual can do you many favours in a sector such as ours.

There are many alumni from Earth & Environment that can be contacted through the Leeds Network who are happy to talk to you about the paths they took to get to their current position. There is also a group on LinkedIn where you can view the profiles of Leeds graduates (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4515663/profile>) to get an idea of the steps they took.

Overall my advice for graduating environmental students would be not to panic if you don't get the position of your dreams straight out of uni, just remember that the sector is a growing one, especially with the implication of the Paris Agreement at the end of 2015. Any job can offer transferrable skills and work experience which could help you reach your goal one day in the future, your degree is just the foundation to build on.

Michael Billam
BSc Meteorology and Climate Science (Industrial)
Student Employability Ambassador

Fig 1: UK environmental market revenues and annual growth 2003-2014e



Events and assistance from the Careers Centre

As well as the School providing support with your employability, the Careers Centre (located at 5-7 Cromer Terrace) offers one-to-one support, together with general courses and events on completing applications, CV and interview skills.

Dedicated Careers Advisors are on hand to help with your career planning from 9-5 Monday to Friday. You don't need an appointment, just call in. The Careers Centre has a large information room which is well stocked with books, journals and DVDs. You can also use a cluster of networked computers to research your career options or to work on your CV or on-line applications.

For more information on events that may be of interest visit careerweb.leeds.ac.uk and please see page 7 for essential dates for your diary!

Geological Society Careers Day

The Geological Society Careers Day, an essential meeting place for geoscience students and the geoscience industry took place on Wednesday 20th November at the British Geological Survey in Keyworth, Nottingham. Free transportation was arranged for interested students.

The day consisted of a variety of talks by industry professionals along with a Careers Fair where students could meet with University Course Leaders and Industry leaders about how they can gain entry into the sector. One School of Earth & Environment student commented:

"The careers day at the BGS was extremely useful to me; the multitude of attending companies gave a clear insight into the industries that desperately require geoscientists and the qualities and skills they're looking for in applicants. The day helped me figure out a plan of action for life after uni; after years of being unsure and undecided, I now know what I want to do. A brilliant experience which I would definitely recommend to others."

Events/Dates for your diary

This is just a selection of workshops and events happening at the Careers Centre in Semester One. For more details on these and other events, check out the Careers Centre website at: careerweb.leeds.ac.uk

EVENTS FROM THE CAREERS CENTRE		
Date	Title	Venue
19/02/2016 13:00	CV, Cover Letter and Interview tips and hints	Careers Centre – Teaching Room LG03 / LG04
22/02/2016 13:00	Market Yourself to your perfect career	Careers Centre – Teaching Room LG03 / LG04
23/02/2016 11:00	The University of Leeds Routes into Teaching Expo 2016	Parkinson Court, University of Leeds
24/02/2016 13:00	Application and Assessment Centre Workshop delivered by Teach First	Careers Centre – Teaching Room LG03 / LG04
24/02/2016 12:30	Website Design and Optimisation	Careers Centre – Teaching Room LG02
29/02/2016 13:00	Mountbatten New York Programme – Graduate Opportunities in New York City	Careers Centre - Wharfedale Room
01/03/2016 12:00	PACE: Public Affairs and Community Engagement Panels	Careers Centre – Teaching Room LG02
02/03/2016 12:30	Marketing	Careers Centre – Teaching Room LG02
08/03/2016 17:15	TEFL Panda - Work in China! The ultimate English teaching experience	Careers Centre – Teaching Room LG03 / LG04
09/03/2016 14:00	US-UK Fulbright Commission - Postgraduate study in the USA	Careers Centre - Wharfedale Room
11/03/2016 13:00	Mandarin Consulting Talk - UK employment options for Chinese students	Careers Centre - Wharfedale Room
27/04/2016 11:00	Yorkshire Graduate and Internship Recruitment Fair	Sports & Exhibition Centre

EVENTS DELIVERED IN THE SCHOOL OF EARTH AND ENVIRONMENT		
Date	Title	More information
22 February SOEE Computer Lab A 16:00 – 17:00	Careers Clinic: Graduate Jobs	For final year students. Advice and support for your next steps after University.
27 February	Careers in Engineering Geology, Mining, and Mineral Exploration: A One-Day Event for Current Students and Alumni	Careers Event for all Earth Scientists. Learn more about the varied career paths with a Geological Science degree. Organised by SEG (Society of Economic Geologists) this is an event not to be missed.
7 March SOEE Computer Lab A 16:00 – 17:00	Clinic Clinic: Year in Industry	Not got a placement yet? Come along to get hints and tips from our Student Employability Ambassadors
21 April 17:00 – 18:00 Main seminar rooms, SEE	Year in Industry: Pre-placement briefing	Compulsory pre-placement briefing for all students undertaking a Year in Industry
15 June	Eco Fair	The largest Environment event in the North of England at Elland Road football ground www.eco-fair.co.uk

Don't miss the range of events happening at the Careers Centre and within your School.

CURRENT NEWS AND UPDATES

For the latest information on careers, events and placement opportunities refer to the VLE, School Facebook and Twitter sites.



Careers Centre



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FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of SEE Career News, please email Linda Hartland at L.Hartland@leeds.ac.uk

Equally, your feedback is important. If you have any comments about this edition or suggestions on what to include in future publications, please contact Linda at the above email address.

Don't forget to follow the School Employability Twitter accounts [@SEEEmployability](https://twitter.com/SEEEmployability) and [@SEEPlacements](https://twitter.com/SEEPlacements) for the latest employability updates.

For the latest information on careers, events and placement opportunities refer to the dedicated Employability section on VLE, School Facebook and Twitter sites.

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