Welcome

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

Employability was at the forefront of activity during semester one. The School welcomed back many of its past students to contribute to teaching and the fifth annual Environment Careers Fair was a resounding success, with over two thirds of employers stating they will return in 2014.

In this edition we look back at the range of activities that took place late last year, and preview some of the career events yet to come. Student success also features significantly and includes news of a finalist who has secured a graduate role at BP, and a current third year student on placement at DECC (Department of Energy and Climate Change) in the heart of Whitehall.

As last semester, Jonathan King and Michael Cook 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. Wishing you a successful semester!

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

University of Leeds in the top ten for graduate employment

The latest High Fliers report has revealed that graduate recruitment is set to rise in 2014, with the University of Leeds among the top ten UK universities most targeted by Britain’s top employers.

Conducted by High Fliers Research in December 2013, the report shows that employers in eleven out of thirteen major employment areas are preparing to take on more new graduates in 2014.

Bob Gilworth, Director of the Careers Service at the University of Leeds said: “This is fantastic news for our students, who now have more opportunities than ever to gain valuable, paid work experience with Britain’s leading employers. And we are well placed to help our students shine – we are a Russell Group leader for year-in industry placements and excel at shorter internships, working with blue chip organisations, SMEs, charities and the university to ensure our students make the most of their time here at Leeds.”
FORMER SEE STUDENTS RETURN TO LEEDS

The School of Earth & Environment welcomed several of its past students to contribute to the Year 2 careers skills module last year. A total of 25 former students contributed to all 3 modules in the School; delivering presentations on their careers to date as well as interviewing students for their mock application assessment.

On the 8th October, the School welcomed Ruth Fain from Golder Associates, Brad Johnson of Rotherham Council, Daniel Turner of the Canal & River Trust and George Davies, Head of Environmental Management at Heathrow Airport. Highlighting their personal successes and difficulties along the way, all four graduates provided an informative insight into their area of employment. Daniel is the most recent graduate and is a Senior Project Officer at the Canal & River Trust, Brad works for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council as a Carbon Reduction Officer and Ruth is a Senior Environmental Scientist at Golder Associates.

Daniel is responsible for managing the volunteer network for the Canal & River Trust in the Yorkshire Dales. His main tip for the students was to:

‘think about module selection in order to get the appropriate skills for the job, get relevant work experience and do a placement! ’

Brad discussed the challenges of working for local government with a limited budget, not only is he responsible for a Carbon Reduction Plan for the Rotherham district but also manages the Low Carbon Schools Programme for the borough. A graduate of 2009, Brad stated:

‘Today’s environmental graduates are coming into an increasing competitive workplace. The careers module helps to prepare them for what comes next. When offered the opportunity to speak to the students I was keen to pass on my experience and knowledge about getting on the career ladder and making them aware of the excellent environmental career opportunities that exist across the public sector. Hopefully we’ve helped make the process a little less daunting!’

George has had the longest career to date; graduating in 2003 he has worked in both the public and private sector. Upon graduation, George worked for the Environment Agency for three years, before taking a role at a privately owned Environmental Consultancy. In the last three years, he has been employed as Head of Environmental Management at Heathrow airport. George completed his presentation by offering some great advice:

‘Take opportunities, work hard, be positive and think business’.

On the 9th October, former students Luke Verrall and Kirsty Budge were joined by Paul Taylor of Camira Fabrics to present to the BA Environment & Business and BSc Sustainability & Environmental Management students. Luke graduated in 2012, securing a role as Graduate Ecologist at AECOM immediately upon graduation.

Pictured from left to right, Brad Johnson, Ruth Fain, George Davies and Daniel Turner

Pictured from left to right Kirsty Budge, Luke Verrall and Paul Taylor

Professor Viv Jones, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Student Education, said: “It’s really great to see that the quality of University of Leeds students is recognised by top employers and that we have not only maintained our position in the UK top ten, but improved it. “This is a great endorsement of all the work we are doing, through partnership between faculties and our fantastic Careers Service, to prepare students for life after Leeds.”

Bob added: “Leeds is particularly good at recognising and reacting to changes between sectors and different types of opportunities. Five years ago, few would have predicted that Teach First would be the largest graduate scheme in the country, but we are delighted to be one of Teach First’s most important target universities and to be hosting their Summer Institute here. “We have an award-winning Careers Centre, one of the most comprehensive business start-up programmes in the UK higher education sector, and through our groundbreaking Leeds for Life programme, we help students develop the right skills through co-curricular activities and in their programmes to impress potential employers.”
Luke made the most of work experience opportunities whilst studying, securing a 12 month placement at the RSPB in Minsmere. This role provided him with a wealth of experience in practical conservation, learning from experts in the field, working to protect and preserve nationally important species and locally significant areas of biodiversity. This role helped him secure his position at AECOM at a Graduate Ecologist.

Kirsty, who graduated in 2010 as a PPC Officer (Pollution Prevention and Control) regulate sites that fall under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. The main aim is to work with industries to ensure compliance with their environmental permits and associated legislation. This includes reviewing submissions from operators and carrying out site inspections. Kirsty’s advice for current students is to:

Think big, act early. I think it is important for the next generation to aim high and seek a career in their chosen field and identify the experience needed for that career early, so that they are prepared when they graduate. Speaking to the next generation of graduates at an early stage hopefully breeds this mind set.

Paul Taylor has had a varied career in both the public and private sector. His current role as Sustainability Manager of Camira Fabrics, places sustainable business practices at the centre of the organisation through their supply chain, customer base and wider community.

Paul is extremely supportive of the career related activity within the School said:

As a growing business in West Yorkshire, founded on sustainability principles, having opportunities to engage with the next generation of skilled graduates is extremely valuable; for the graduate, companies like ourselves have a social responsibility to guide and support on the skills needed in industry, while for us it as an opportunity reach out to new audiences and sectors.

The module reflects the significant emphasis that the School of Earth and Environment places on employability. The School continues to see an increase in the numbers of sector specific employers who want to work with us, either by contributing to teaching, providing placements or offering graduate posts.

**PLACEMENT YEAR CELEBRATION EVENT**

The second Placement Year Celebration Event took place on Tuesday 8th October in the University’s Great Hall. The event organised by the Careers Centre and hosted by Professor Viv Jones, (ProVice Chancellor – Student Education) celebrates the achievements of the University’s placement students and welcomes them back to the University.

The School of Earth & Environment had 13 students on placement during the academic year of 2012/13, undertaking a vast range of jobs from mining in Ireland, monitoring energy usage in hotels to working in environmental safety at a Nuclear Power Plant.

During the event, the winners of the inaugural University of Leeds Placement Year Image Competition were announced. Placement students were invited to submit a photograph, graphic or piece of artwork which they believe captures the essence of ‘My Placement Year’.

Entries were judged by Bob Gilworth (Director of the Careers Centre), Greg Sturge (LUU Activities Officer) and Lesley Patrick (DARE Collaboration Manager).

Michael Lawson, studying Geological Sciences who worked at GETECH (a Leeds based employer which conducts research for oil companies across the globe) won 3rd prize. Michael worked as part of the Palaeogeography team, creating maps and reports that reconstruct the Earth during the Jurassic period; 200-145 million years ago.

These reconstructions are compiled into reports which are sold to oil companies for large amounts of money to assist them in locating hydrocarbons. His image of the Jurassic period impressed the judges, stating ‘Both image and caption demonstrate the scale of the experience. Whilst clearly enjoying his time, it is empowering to know that students can make such a difference in a single year’s work.’

Fancy seeing more of the competition entries? Check out the careers centre website at http://careerweb.leeds.ac.uk/info/6/work_experience
Environment Careers Fair

The fifth annual Environment Careers Fair took place on Wednesday 23rd October 2013. This is the School’s premier Careers Event attracting just under 300 students.

A wide range of employers and conservation groups attended including BP, Camira Fabrics, Canal and River Trust, Centrica, CGG, Change Agents, Contact Singapore, Deloitte Petroleum Services, Frontier, GETEC, Golder Associates, Groundwork, Lithos Consulting, Mott Macdonald, PWC, Unilever, URS and WSP Environmental.

Employers and students were very impressed with the organisation and opportunities on offer, Victoria Taylor, Senior Hydrographic Surveyor of the Canal and River Trust commented:-

‘I found the experience very valuable and I am sure I will recommend to our department that we should attend next year, if invited.’

Paul Taylor (pictured on the right), Sustainability Manager of Camira Fabrics was equally as impressed stating that it was

‘An absolutely superb event, really well organised, great range of exhibitors and the students were really engaging. Such great numbers too!! ’

Freya Howden - MSc Engineering Geology said

‘It was a great opportunity to meet employers from the Earth and Environment industry who seemed to have a genuine interest in the School and its students’

Michael Cook, (final year BSc Environmental Sciences) commented

‘The fair was very well organised, having similar employers next to each other really helped to streamline the event. It was great to see so many students across a variety of years in attendance’.

The next Environment Careers Fair will take place on Wednesday 22nd October 2014 and will be held in the School. For more information, email L.Hartland@leeds.ac.uk

Geological Society Careers Day

The Geological Society Careers Day, an essential meeting place for geoscience students and the geoscience industry took place on the 20th November. The annual event held at the British Geological Survey in Keyworth, Nottingham offered a variety of talks by industry professionals along with a Careers Fair where students could engage with University Course Leaders and Industry leaders.

Free transportation was arranged for interested students from the School of Earth & Environment.

Robert Dawson, (1st year Geological Science) who took advantage of the opportunity, commented

‘It definitely gave me plenty of ideas for summer placements and careers in the future. Many thanks to the School for organising!’
Life after University, what next?

Matt Le Good, final year student of Mgeophys, BSc Geophysical Sciences (Industrial) is one of the School’s first students to secure a graduate role for 2014. SEE Career News congratulates him on this fantastic achievement and asked Matt to provide an insight into how he secured his role and what hints and tips he has for other students.

CONGRATULATIONS ON ACHIEVING A PLACE ON THE BP GRADUATE TRAINING SCHEME. HOW COMPETITIVE WAS IT?
The application was quite long and involved several stages including an application form, online tests, competency interview, technical interview and an assessment day at the end. I applied for a technical role as a graduate geophysicist and was competing against a variety of people from different backgrounds studying Earth Sciences, Physics and Maths from Masters to PHD level for the graduate scheme and BSc. level for the internship. They had a large number of applicants for the internship and graduate scheme combined.

WHAT WILL THE ROLE INVOLVE?
I will either be based in exploration, field development or in a producing asset, interacting with drilling, petroleum and reservoir engineers as well as commercial and other disciplines. I will be part of the Challenge programme, which typically lasts three years and includes working on real jobs working on real problems, influencing business results immediately.

HOW MANY GRADUATE ROLES DID YOU APPLY FOR?
I applied for as many graduate roles as I could! It is a difficult year in terms of decisions to make in the future and so I wanted to keep my options open as much as possible.

HAD YOU DONE ANY RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE BEFORE APPLYING FOR GRADUATE ROLES? IF YOU DID, HOW DO YOU THINK THIS HELPED IN TERMS OF YOUR APPLICATION?
I took part in an internship at Shell during summer 2013. This was a great experience as it gave me some exposure to the Oil and Gas industry and was a great talking point at an interview. I also had some work experience on my year abroad in New Zealand looking at earthquake data. This was useful as it allowed me to compare between industry and academic research and form decisions on what roles to apply for.

DO YOU THINK THAT UNDERTAKING A STUDY YEAR ABROAD HELPED YOUR APPLICATION? IF SO, HOW?
It was great to meet different people studying the same subject and gain an insight into some of the different aspects of geophysics, which were relevant in New Zealand. I also think the opportunity to live abroad helped me to confirm that I wanted a job involving traveling. It is a great example to use in interviews, as you demonstrate a lot of skills that interviewers are looking for.

HAVE YOU ANY ADVICE FOR STUDENTS APPLYING FOR GRADUATE ROLES?
Take as many opportunities as you can along the way throughout your time at Leeds. Even if you are certain you know what you want to do it’s important to try and experience as many different jobs as you can to gain experience. It is well worth applying for internships over the summer as you gain vital experience, which looks good on a job application. It is also a way of earning a bit of extra cash. It’s also important to focus on extracurricular activities which show you can work in a team. I also recommend attending the School’s Careers Fair to meet with representatives from the organisations that interest you. This provides a useful named contact when applying for graduate jobs and you get a good indication of the company by speaking to current employees.

Finally I would say it’s good to get your application in as soon as possible as a lot of companies keep recruiting until they have filled all of their spaces. It seems to become more competitive later on.

Matt pictured at a SEE Behind the Scenes event during his role as a Student Experience Ambassador.

Matt undertaking a magnetic survey in the Wairarapa region New Zealand.
A Day in the Life of Ashley O’Neill at the Department of Energy and Climate Change

In July 2013 I began my 12 month placement at the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and embarked on an amazing journey moving to London and working in the heart of central governmental decisions at Whitehall.

I am part of the Energy Price Statistics team at DECC and my main body of work involves monitoring domestic energy markets and investigating how energy bills differ for various consumers. We run a quarterly survey called the Domestic Fuels Inquiry (DFI) to receive energy tariff and pricing data from energy companies. I am required to maintain relationships with contacts within the Big 6 energy suppliers and use the data provided to calculate customer numbers and annual energy bills on a regional and national level for DECC’s publication ‘Quarterly Energy Prices’ (QEP).

I also deal with requests from policy and economics for domestic energy price statistics, including providing responses to various Parliamentary Questions to feed into ministerial briefing, as well as various external queries.

My typical day at DECC involves:

7.15 am – I aim to get up around this time each day; however, I never have been a morning person so sometimes struggle! I jump in the shower to wake me up and get myself ready.

8.00 am – I leave my house in Chiswick with my housemates Harriet and Sam who are also on placement at DECC. We head to Chiswick Park tube station and get the District line Eastbound. I usually read or play ‘Candy Crush’ to pass time on the tube.

8.40 am – We get off the tube at Embankment station and walk along Whitehall Place to DECC.

8.45 am – We are arrive at DECC and use our security pass to pass through the ‘time machine like’ pods. We head up to the Statistics team area on the 6th floor and hope we’ve been assigned a desk for the day – if not it’s hot-desking time and a treasure hunt begins to find a spare desk.

8.50 am – I set up my computer and make a cup of tea.

9.00 am – I log into my phone and read through my emails whilst eating breakfast at my desk – usually a banana and yoghurt.

9.30 am – I find that I’ve received 3 DFI data returns from energy companies. I tick the returns off on my checklist and save them in the necessary folders. I briefly reply to thank the returns off on my checklist and save them in the necessary folders. I briefly reply to thank the suppliers and file the email away. The next step is to check the data.

10.00 am – Each Monday morning I check for any news in the Domestic Energy Market. I launch the Internet and head straight to BBC news. I see that 2 of the Big 6 energy suppliers have announced price decreases following price rises at the end of 2013. The price changes come after recent policy announcements to reduce energy bills for consumers. I record the information in the relevant files and circulate an email to alert my team. It’s a great opportunity working in the topical area of energy prices.

10.30 am – I check my emails again and see that my manager has asked me to draft a response to a parliamentary question relating to the recent announcement. I spend the rest of the morning drafting the response basing the structure on similar past questions and drawing statistics from DECC’s publications.

12.30 pm – I head downstairs to the canteen for lunch with the other placement students. I usually bring my own salad or soup but occasionally we pop to Tesco for a £3 meal deal since we’re still students at heart! If the weather’s nice we sometimes head to the park or sit on Trafalgar Square steps.

1.30 pm – I arrive back to my desk and check for approval of my parliamentary question response. I make a few small changes and send the answer off.

2.00 pm – I complete my daily task of recording petrol prices in an excel file. This data is automatically sent to me each day and it is my responsibility to update the long-term time series. The data feeds into DECC’s online publications and is important for many businesses.

2.15 pm – Each quarter, after publishing QEP, we circulate a Domestic Market Brief which highlights the key points of QEP and summarises information on current energy bills. I spend the rest of the afternoon researching the current bills using an energy switching site. I print off all available energy tariffs for each payment type and highlight the cheapest and standard tariffs for each energy company. I record this information in an excel file and compare to DECC’s annual bill estimates.

5.30 pm – I pack up and finish for the day. Occasionally, nearing publication deadlines I’ll work until 7 or 8 pm but this is rewarded with flexi working and days off. When I finish early I’ll often go down to the DECC gym in the basement before heading home and having my tea.

8.00 pm – I make my lunch for the next day and relax for the evening, chatting to my housemates and watching TV before going to bed around midnight.

Whilst I have been working at DECC I have developed some valuable skills for any future career. My communication skills have increased massively and I am now a lot more confident in dealing with people via email, telephone and face to face. My skills and knowledge of analysis software, in particular excel, have also developed dramatically in my time at DECC. I have learnt how to be more thorough with my work by performing important checks on large excel data files. I also feel that I am now a lot more concentrated and work driven and have adapted well to the structure of a working life. I have developed a good routine and have a great work-life balance. This is something I am keen to continue when I return to Leeds for my final year.

I’ve had the opportunity to attend various trips and talks whilst at DECC including visits to a low carbon community in Norfolk and to the Centre for Carbon Measurement at the National Physical Laboratory. I’ve attended various ‘DECC School’ talks which provide information on the various teams and projects within DECC and an external Met Office talk titled: ‘Weather matters for Energy.’ These experiences have allowed me to develop different areas of expertise whilst remaining linked to my studies at Leeds.

The School provides guidance in setting up your work placement and will support you during the year. For more details, email L.Hartland@leeds.ac.uk or contact Dr Colin Pitts, Placement Tutor on C.S.Pitts@leeds.ac.uk

Follow @SEEplacements and check out the VLE’s ‘Year in Industry’ section for more information.
Events/Dates for your diary

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

This is just a selection of workshops and events happening at the Careers Centre in Semester Two. For more details on these and other events, check out the Careers Centre website at: careerweb.leeds.ac.uk Most events will need to be booked in advance.

**EVENTS FROM THE CAREERS CENTRE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 February</td>
<td>Leeds Internship Programme – Winter Internships for current finalists</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 February</td>
<td>Get Hired Pop-Up! Confident Assessment Centre Presentations</td>
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<td>13 February</td>
<td>Interview and Assessment Skills Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 February</td>
<td>Preparing for Success: What to Do Before and During Your Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 February</td>
<td>Effective CV’s and Applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 February</td>
<td>Get Hired Pop-Up! Networking to Get That Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 February</td>
<td>How to Make Your CV Stand Out: Individual Drop-in Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 March</td>
<td>Get Hired Pop-Up! Great Answers to Application Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 March</td>
<td>Commercial Awareness – What does it Mean and Why Do Need it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 March</td>
<td>How to Secure an Internship or Placement… It’s Not too late!</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 March</td>
<td>Impress in Your Pyjamas: Remote Interviewing</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 March</td>
<td>Leeds Internship Programme – Summer Internships for 1st and 2nd Years</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>3 Ways Social Media Can Help Your Career</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 March</td>
<td>Get Hired Pop-Up! Create a Striking CV</td>
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**EVENTS DELIVERED IN THE SCHOOL OF EARTH & ENVIRONMENT**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>More information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 13th Feb</td>
<td>Careers one to one appointments</td>
<td>2-4 pm Book appointments on the VLE under 'Employability'/Careers Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00 – 16:00</td>
<td>Network Rail Graduate Programme presentation</td>
<td>A presentation on Network Rail’s graduate scheme. Aimed at Environment and Sustainability students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 24th Feb</td>
<td>What can I do with an Earth Sciences degree?</td>
<td>Aimed at all Geophysics and Geology students but particularly Year One undergraduates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:00 – 16:00 Main</td>
<td>Careers one to one appointments</td>
<td>2-4 pm Book appointments on the VLE under 'Employability'/Careers Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 25th Feb</td>
<td>North West Regional Geology Careers Event</td>
<td>Careers Event for Earth Science students at the University of Manchester. Registration essential at <a href="mailto:Careersfair.2014.gsol.mcr@gmail.com">Careersfair.2014.gsol.mcr@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 27th Feb</td>
<td>Want to be a Student Ambassador?</td>
<td>Interested in being a Student Experience, Employability or Open Day Ambassador? Find out more from our current Student Ambassadors who will provide an insight into their roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 5th March</td>
<td>MSc Sustainability Careers Event</td>
<td>Targeted for MSc students with Alumni guest speakers and information on how to use social media to obtain employment in Environment Development or Sustainability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 14th May</td>
<td>Eco Fair</td>
<td>The largest Environment event in the North of England at Eland Road football ground <a href="http://www.eco-fair.co.uk">www.eco-fair.co.uk</a></td>
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**CURRENT NEWS AND UPDATES**

For the latest information on careers, events and placement opportunities refer to the VLE, School Facebook and Twitter sites.
The School of Earth and Environment (SEE) event will run from 1-3pm in the Level 8 Seminar Rooms – speak with programme leaders, current Masters students and admissions staff to find out more about our Masters programmes in Earth Sciences (Exploration Geophysics, Structural Geology, and Engineering Geology) or Climate and Atmospheric Science.

**SEE Scholarships and industry funding available**

Book your place online today [www.leeds.ac.uk/jointheleaders](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/jointheleaders) and don’t forget that there is now an alumni discount of 10% for Leeds University Graduates.

**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](http://careerweb.leeds.ac.uk) and please see page 7 for essential dates for your diary!

**FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK**

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

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

Don’t forget to follow the School’s Employability Twitter Accounts @SEEmployability and @seeplacements for the latest employability information. The VLE also has a dedicated Employability section along with an Alumni LinkedIn Group with the latest graduate opportunities. [LH1]