

SED Careers Workshop

Presenting yourself

Careers

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Objectives for today

- A reminder of the **transferable skills** you are building through your studies and why they matter
- Exploring how to **express your skills**:
 - on your **CV**
 - in **cover letters**
 - in **interview**
- Looking at **networking** and how to present yourself
- Highlighting **ongoing support** available from **Careers & Enterprise**

Skills developed studying English

- Communication
- Influencing and persuasion
- Critical thinking
- Analytical skills
- Attention to detail
- Remote working
- Self-motivation
- Time management
- Independent working
- Reasoning and judgement
- Research skills
- Theoretical understanding
- Resilience
- Organisation

Skills can be the building blocks of job descriptions

Pan Macmillan - Communications Assistant, Picador, Bluebird and Brand

Do you have a passion for communication? We have an exciting opportunity to work in publishing as a Communications Assistant who will be responsible for supporting the PR, Marketing and Brand teams.

This is an exciting opportunity to join an award-winning publisher and the teams of two of its fastest-growing imprints.

The Communications Assistant will be responsible for supporting PR and Marketing campaigns and the development of our ever-expanding brands.

This is an entry-level role so you may not have worked in book publishing previously but we would love it if you can demonstrate strong organisational and communication skills from a previous role.

Key tasks include:

- Being the first point of contact for queries from journalists, the public and suppliers
- Maintaining a schedule of book titles and digital book proofs and approving access to journalists and bloggers when required
- Coordinating sending review copies of books to journalists, influencers and bloggers
- Assisting freelancers with campaign administration
- Creating meeting agendas, running dashboards in meetings, taking and sharing minutes
- Coordinating presentations

Your CV is...



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Your CV is...

- A **marketing document** that demonstrates you are the ideal candidate
 - Tailor your CV to each application
 - Maximum two sides of A4
- Focus needs to be:
 - **What does the employer want?**
 - **How can I show them what they want?**
- **Not** – *how can I fit everything I have ever done on to two pages!*

There is no such thing as the perfect CV!

What you include on your CV, its length, and what it looks like, will depend on:

- The job and sector you are applying to;
- What the employer most wants to see.

Some **areas to cover** include:

- Contact details
- Education
- Work experience
- Other experience (e.g. volunteering, societies)
- Interests

An example CV

Henrietta Rozani

Flat 5b, 155 Sterling Place, London E1 2PQ
hsrozani@googlemail.com
07891 234 567

PROFILE

English Literature graduate from Queen Mary University of London, passionate about literature and its place in society, regularly submitting own work to university publications. Interest in Marketing began as a teenager, leading the marketing campaign for the School Leavers' ball and subsequently in leading on creation and delivery of Marketing & Events for the QM English Society.

EDUCATION

BA English Literature, Queen Mary University of London

2018 – 2021

- Strong interest in modern fiction; achieved grade of 75% in *British Fictions of the 1960s* module.
- Analytical & critical thinking developed through submission of 20 essays per year and regular tutorial debates.
- Disciplined time management and self-motivation essential to success, as limited lecture time and substantial independent working, including remotely during Coronavirus pandemic, required to complete assignments.

Some top CV tips

When including your work/other experience, make sure that you:

- Give a short line of context.
- Use positive, active language:
 - "**Created** a website for the Society, writing all copy & content."
- Use punchy **bullet points**, not long sentences.

Some top CV tips

- Quantify contribution
 - ***“Collaborated with six others on the ball committee, communicating via fortnightly meetings and email”***
- Reflect the employer’s language:
 - Highlight the skills **they** say are required

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Cover letters are...



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Cover letters are...

- An **opportunity** to show an employer why you are a great candidate for their role.
- A chance to **expand** on CV bullet points with more detail.
- A means to communicate three **whys**:
 - Why you want to work in their **organisation**
 - Why you would like that particular **role**
 - Why **your** skills and experience make you the right candidate.
- Not longer than one side of A4.

A cover letter example

“I have excellent **communication skills**, which have been developed through both my work in customer service, working with a large range of clients, and my English degree at Queen Mary, University of London. Through my studies I am highly skilled in analysing and communicating my thoughts and opinions on literature and its wider context both in discussion and in writing.”

Interviews are...



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Interviews are...

- An **achievement** to be celebrated!
- A **confidence boost** – the employer wants to hear more about you
- Another opportunity to show you're a great candidate
- A chance to get to know more about the organisation – and whether you want to work for them!

Video interviews

- Approach preparation in the same way as an in-person interview
- Make sure you keep your energy focused towards the screen:
 - **Looking in the camera** will feel like eye contact to the interviewers
 - Looking away from the screen may look like you are reading notes
- Make sure you have good lighting, and that your background is professional.

Types of interview question

Motivation questions

These are focused on your interest:

- Why would you like this role?
- What interests you about this company?

Strengths

The interviewer wants your honest reaction to better understand you as a person:

- What do you consider a weakness?
- What energises you?

Competency

Questions focused on skills or competencies:

- Tell me about a time when you...

An example of answering competency questions

Video example of a competency question being answered:



eCareersGrad is a great resource available on the Careers website.

Showing your skills in interview

- The **STAR technique** is a great tool for answering competency questions
- **S = Situation**
 - Give a brief overview of the context
- **T = Task**
 - What you needed to do
- **A = Action**
 - What **you** did
 - Spend most of the answer talking about this
- **R = Result**
 - The outcome of your actions

An example of answering competency questions with STAR

The same time management competency question being answered using the STAR technique:

Action

- "..get up early before school..."
- "..break-up my revision.."
- "..something I enjoyed.."

01:43

Give an example of when you've had to manage multiple tasks at the same time?

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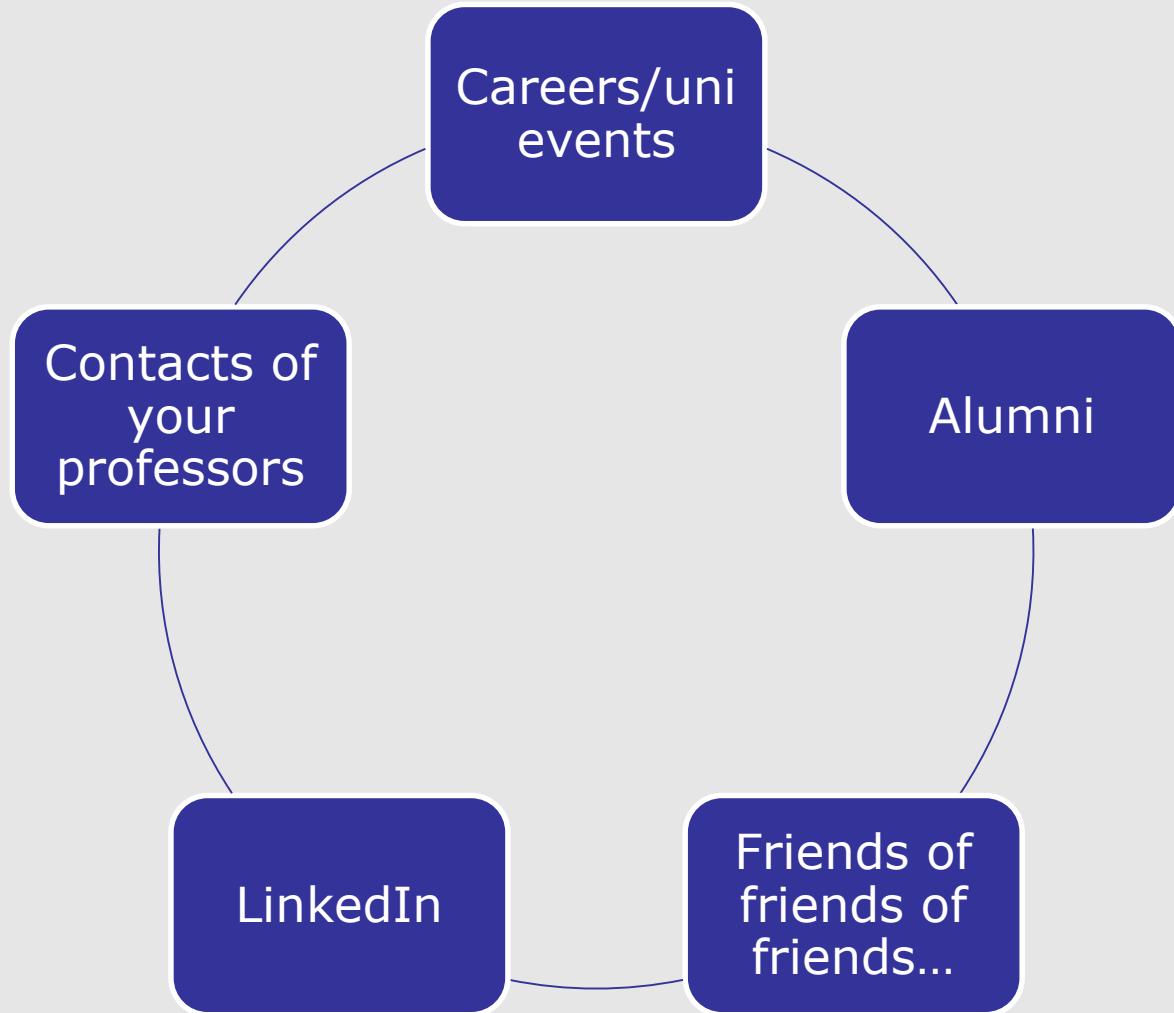
Networking



Networking

- **Networking is...**
 - A conversation with a purpose.
 - A means of learning more about a role, sector, or organisation from someone with experience.
 - An opportunity to be curious.
 - A way to make connections.
 - Easier with practice.
- **Networking isn't...**
 - A competition you can win or lose.
 - About taking advantage of people!
 - One-directional.

Your network sources



Networking and presenting yourself

When you have the opportunity to network:

- Be aware of what you'd like them to know about you, and how you can get it across.
- BUT the aim is to **listen more than talk!**
 - What would you like to know? E.g.
 - How did they get started in their career?
 - What kind of skills are needed in their profession?
- LinkedIn
 - Make sure it is up to date and matches your CV.
 - Follow companies that interest you.
 - Personalise your connection request invites.

Upcoming networking opportunities

Exploring creativity, freelancing & the arts

Tuesday 23rd February 5.30-7pm

Humanities alumni speed networking session

Tuesday 2nd March 5-6.30pm

Amazing alumni working in publishing, journalism, marketing, government and more.

English at work: English alumni panel

Wednesday 3rd March 5.30-7pm

Practice in a pandemic: Drama alumni panel

Wednesday 17th March 5.30-7pm

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WHAT'S
NEXT?

What next?

- After today:
 - Think about your skills, and the evidence you have for them
 - Ensure they are included in your CV!
 - Consider how you might include them in a cover letter
 - Consider making some notes about your experiences for use in future interviews
 - **Don't make a script to memorise!**
 - Think about your network
 - Attend Humanities and SED alumni events
 - Check out the resources on qmul.ac.uk/careers
 - Book a Careers appointment!

What do we *offer*?

- Individual career planning and guidance
- CVs, cover letter and application feedback
- Practice interviews
- Psychometric test support
- Work experience and internships
- Careers resources
- Group workshops
- Enterprise support
- QTaster, QMentoring, The Student Consultancy Project
- Careers fairs
- Employer events and visits
- Alumni panels

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Any *questions?*



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qmul.ac.uk/careers

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