



Advice for Sports Students – Years 1 & 2

1. Start planning your career early!

Career planning should start in your first and second year because....

- It **takes time** to work out what you want to do – especially with so many options open to you! In addition to sports-related careers, you could opt to go into a completely unrelated career – anything from The City to social work or advertising! (40-60% of graduate jobs don't specify a degree). So you need to start thinking about yourself (e.g. what do you enjoy, what matters in a job, where do you want to be etc) and researching the many opportunities out there. There is a section on career planning on the Careers Service website, as well as information to help you explore and learn about different occupations. *Speak to your careers adviser if you need help!*
- You may **need to develop particular skills, or gain specific work experience** to go into your chosen career area before you can begin applying. (e.g. *PE Teacher* – need experience of working with children; *Sports Marketing* – will look for organisational skills and experience of planning and running events).
- You **don't have as long as you think** – some graduate schemes and postgraduate courses will have closing dates as early as September of your final year! In effect you'll be applying at the very end of third year (unless you plan on taking time out after uni) so don't have the four years you imagined...

2. Make the most of your time at university!

A degree alone is not enough to impress an employer, in the field of sport or outwith. Think about it: every graduate will have a degree, so how do employers choose? What makes you different?

- Some employers look at degree results and may specify a minimum (e.g. 2.1 for banking or 2.2 for the Civil Service) so it's important to **study hard** to achieve the best grade you can. If you want to continue on to postgraduate study, a 2.1 may also be required.
- But it isn't just about academics, so don't spend all your free time in the library! Employers look at other attributes which can make you more employable: work experience and skills/qualities. Employers expect (and look for evidence) new graduates can **develop key skills and qualities**, including *communication skills, problem solving, interpersonal skills, leadership and organisational skills, motivation and commitment, and self-management*.
- The onus is on you to develop these skills and demonstrate these qualities, not only through your studies and course placements, but also through **vacation, voluntary and part-time work** and membership of **clubs and societies**.

So, make the most of your time at Edinburgh, do something substantial with your time outside your studies and develop the skills to give you the edge in the graduate market place.

Ask yourself: what can I do in my first two years at uni that would look good on my CV, or that might be useful to talk about during a job interview?

3. Use the Careers Service!

The Careers Service can help you from day one in the following ways:

- **Jobs** – we advertise part-time, vacation work via **SAGE@ the Careers Service** – our online jobs database updated daily. www.careers.ed.ac.uk/SAGE
“Throughout my student career I have secured varied part-time work through SAGE. This work and character-building experience was essential in developing my personal profile”.
– Final year student.
- **Volunteering** – is a useful way of gaining skills, meeting people and making a difference. We hold information about volunteering opportunities both locally and further afield on our website (www.careers.ed.ac.uk/STUDENTS/Something_different/voluntarywork.htm), in the Careers Service information rooms and on the SAGE database.
“Group/team work, problem solving, influencing people, assertiveness, presentation, foreign language, organising time: [developed through] acting, society work with HELP and Scottish Romanian Language Link (SCROLL); voluntary work at a convent.”
– Graduate (Now a Barrister)
- **Vacation work** – consult the Vacation Work section of our website (www.careers.ed.ac.uk/STUDENTS/Job-hunting/Vacation_Work/Index.htm) for information, advice and links to relevant vacancy sites. We hold a range of reference books and information folders on vacation opportunities available locally, nationally and internationally. We also advertise vacation work on the SAGE database.
- **Finding out about different occupations** – is easy via our *Information Centre* at 33 Buccleuch Place which has folders and books full of explanations, facts and case studies about different jobs and careers, from Archaeologist to Zoologist. You can come in and browse whenever we are open – check out our website for times. The Information Centre operates on a self-help basis with a member of the Information Team on hand to help you find what you’re looking for. In addition you can research careers on our website 24/7 at: www.careers.ed.ac.uk/STUDENTS/Careers/index.html and we run a programme of *“Insight into...”* talks each semester with careers advisers and guest speakers giving the low-down on different occupations – times and dates are on our website.

To find out more about the ways in which we help students, use the links provided on the careers website dedicated to sports students:
www.education.ed.ac.uk/careers/sports.html.

4. A bit more help...



To help you make the most of your time at university, pop along to the Careers Service to **pick up these two short leaflets** full of useful tips and advice... and they're *free!*

If it all seems too much, call in or telephone us to **book an appointment with a Careers Adviser** (45 mins). We're happy to help, whether supporting you to plan your future or offering feedback on a CV or a practice interview. (Tel. 0131 650 4670)

We look forward to working with you.

