

# Careers Central's Guide to the 2019 GRADUATE CAREERS EXPO

The UOW Graduate Careers Expo is a FREE annual event bringing together university students and employers from the region, within Australia and overseas. Employers will be on campus to tell you all about their recruitment programs.

Employers are set up in stalls with one purpose for the day – to interact with students who are potential employees. This is your chance to build a networking relationship with important career contacts.

## WHY ATTEND?

A careers expo is the perfect opportunity to network with prospective employers and gain some great networking and self-marketing skills.

The Expo also gives you the opportunity to:

- Gain first-hand information about an employer, the structure and operation of the organisation and recruitment processes.
- Collect application information and learn how to improve your chances of gaining employment.
- Explore career opportunities and work out what you are looking for from an employer.
- Make a good first impression before applying for a position.

## ELIGIBILITY TO ATTEND

The Graduate Careers Expo is FREE and open to all students. However it is most relevant to final year students seeking graduate jobs.

Penultimate year students are also encouraged to attend and can learn valuable information on how to prepare for grad programs and vacation programs.

Employers may also provide information on vacation programs, work experience/internships and scholarships. Employer representatives can provide you with useful suggestions on improving your employability skills and tips on enhancing your chances of getting a job.

## PREPARING FOR THE CAREERS EXPO

It's important to remember that some employers receive thousands of applications for graduate program positions. Making a great impression at the Careers Expo can give you an edge over other students.

Here are some helpful tips on how to make a lasting impression.

### BEFORE THE EXPO:

- Check the list of exhibitors and note the disciplines they're targeting.
- Make a top 10 list of employers you would like to see at the expo. Research these organisations and their graduate programs.
- Prepare a list of questions to ask. Show that you are genuinely interested and serious about obtaining employment and ensure that your questions show you have done your research on the organisation. They'll be looking out for students who are well prepared and familiar with their organisation and graduate programs.
- Plan how you will introduce yourself to employers to make a positive impression. Prepare a short 30 second introduction; include your major, expected graduation date, what you're interested in and why you want to talk to them.

### ON THE DAY:

- Bring your student ID for entry.
- Take a notepad and pen to write notes. After you visit their stall write down important information you learned that may be helpful in your application.
- Dress up a little; remember you need to make a positive first impression in a short amount of time. The first thing the employer sees is what you're wearing. No need for a suit – business casual is the way to go.
- Make the most of the expo by talking to as many exhibitors as possible. Collect relevant brochures and printed information.
- Keep your visit short and be respectful of their time, thank them for their time and be mindful of other students wanting to talk to them.



- Listen to what the employer says, especially for information which could be of assistance when writing your application.
- Meet with the employer representatives and introduce yourself confidently. Approach the stalls, shake hands, smile, have a positive attitude, give your 30 second introduction and ask your prepared questions.
- Make sure you're polite and friendly. You may be interviewed by these representatives in the future.

#### **DON'T:**

- Assume they won't consider you because your discipline is not in line with their industry. Employers are often open to various disciplines despite the industry they're in.
- Simply collect freebies, showing no interest in the exhibitors.
- Hang out with your friends the entire time.
- Arrive 10 minutes before the Expo closes and expect employers to be able to spend a lot of time with you.

#### **AFTER THE EXPO:**

- Read the information you have collected.
- Make a decision on the programs you will apply for.
- Make a note of closing dates.
- Initiate any further communication requested from an employer.
- Record your conversations and contacts you have made. This is a great start in building your networks.
- Utilise Careers Central services if you have not already done so – we can help with your job application, interview techniques and preparing you for assessment centres and psychometric testing.

#### **QUESTIONS FOR EXHIBITORS**

1. What does their recruitment process involve (Closing dates, online applications, assessment centres, commencement date, etc.)?
2. What is the best way to get more detailed information regarding their organisation?
3. What are the key things you look for in employees (academic results, personal

attributes, extra-curricular activities and work experience etc.)?

4. I know XYZ about your organisation but can you provide me with more information?
5. Do you mind telling me what it is you like about working for this organisation?
6. How is the program structured? (duration, rotations, locations, etc.)
7. What sort of professional development does your organisation offer (mentoring, shadowing, short courses etc.)?
8. How would you describe the culture of the organisation?
9. What differentiates your organisation from others?
10. What do you view as the benefits and challenges of working for this organisation?
11. In terms of career advancement, what are some of the typical career paths?
12. What are the growth prospects for this industry in the future?
13. How often do previous graduate program recruits move into permanent roles with your organisation at the completion of the program?
14. What roles might people move in to?

This is not an interview, but these people may interview you in a month or so, so be polite and professional!

#### **TIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

- Check which organisations are hiring international students prior to attending the expo.
- If you are unsure, ask about the company's policy on hiring international students and VISA restrictions.
- Questions regarding sponsorship and obtaining Permanent Residency are best discussed at another time not at the Careers Expo.
- Be confident in your communication and be sure to prepare a 30 second introduction.
- Ask about recruitment processes, as these can be different to those practiced in your home country.
- Careers expos are a great opportunity to network with Australian employers; keep records of discussions and representative contact details, and be ready to make the most of the experience.

