

Career ideas for History Students

This handout introduces some career ideas for History students together with sources of further information to help you research more about these careers. It also describes the help available from the Careers Service and general advice on finding jobs, work experience and postgraduate study.

Getting started

A degree in History can lead to many different career areas, and whilst this is positive it can be a bit overwhelming. A good place to start is the 'Careers with my Degree' section on the Careers Service website <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/students/degree/hst>. The section includes:-

- 1. What graduates do?** - Here you will find information about what graduates from History at Sheffield go on to do after their degree along with in-depth Graduate Case Studies. These can provide ideas and inspiration.
- 2. Understanding Yourself** - If you are not sure what you want to do, this section will help by providing a range of on-line self- assessment tools. The 'What jobs would suit me' (Prospects) link will generate career ideas personally suited to you. The 'Profiling for Success' activities will help you think about your motivations, interests, personality, and career ideas. For more help on getting started you can download the 'See the Bigger Picture' workbook or pick up a copy at the Careers Service.
- 3. Your options** – This provides a broad picture of options open to History students.

What do History Graduates do?

Below are some of the careers that History graduates typically enter. The ones most directly linked to History have an asterisk.

However please bear in mind that these are only some of the options. The skills that History graduates have can lead in many different directions and also lots of jobs do not require a particular degree subject because the organisation offers full training programmes.

Administration - (including Civil Service, Local Government, Education, NHS) this is a large area of work, broadly involving the development, management and implementation of procedures to ensure the smooth running of an organisation and its work. Opportunities exist in the private and public sectors, as well as the 'third sector' (charities, NGOs and other not-for-profit organisations). Organisations in the public sector include the Civil Service, Local Government, Universities, NHS etc. Jobs for graduates include management and trainee management positions, as well as junior administration roles. Similar roles also exist in the institutions of the European Union and international organisations such as the United Nations, although entry-level opportunities with the latter are relatively rare.

Archivist* - Archivists acquire, manage and maintain documents and other materials that have historical importance, and make the information contained in them available to a range of users. They are employed by National/Local Government organisations, Universities, Libraries, Museums and other public and private sector bodies. Entry is usually via a postgraduate qualification after a period of related work experience.

Charity Officer - There are various roles which fall under the heading of charity administration. Activities undertaken by staff include marketing, volunteer co-ordination, fundraising and budgeting. Securing a paid position with a charity often requires previous voluntary work experience with such organisations.

Financial Services – Jobs within this sector include Accountancy, Banking, Tax Adviser, Insurance Broker, Pensions Consultant and many more. Entry is usually via internships, graduate programmes or direct entry jobs. Having previous paid or voluntary experience in a finance-related area is useful when applying for these opportunities.



Heritage Manager and Museum /Gallery Officer/Conservator* - Heritage Manager posts involve conserving, developing, and promoting an historic building or site. Museum /Gallery Officer /Conservator posts involve acquiring, caring for, developing, displaying, and interpreting a collection of historical artefacts or works of art with the aim of informing, educating and inspiring the public. Entry is usually via a mixture of voluntary work, work experience, temporary positions and increasingly a postgraduate qualification (many of which include work placements) in a related subject is very useful.

Human Resource Management - Human Resources (HR) Officers develop, advise on and implement policies relating to the effective use of people within an organisation. They are involved in activities such as workforce planning, recruitment, selection, training, pay negotiations, development of terms and conditions, review of working practices etc. Entry is usually through a graduate scheme, or direct entry post at a junior/administrative level. Study for Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) qualifications is necessary to then progress onto more senior posts

Law - The two main options in Law are Solicitor and Barrister. Solicitors provide expert legal support and advice to clients and Barristers represent individuals or organisations in court. History graduates would need to do a 1 year Law Conversion course – the Graduate Diploma in Law, followed by a Legal Practice Course plus Training Contract (Solicitor) or Bar Professional Training Course plus Pupillage (Barrister). (Please note some law firms actively seek non-law graduates such as those with a History degree.)

Librarian/ Information Officer* - They procure, manage, organise, evaluate and disseminate information, and provide support regarding information retrieval to the organisations' users. Librarians/ Information Officers can work in Universities, Public libraries, Schools, Commercial Companies, Professional Practices and a range of other organisations. Entry is usually via a postgraduate qualification after a period of related work experience. Some opportunities to gain a year's work experience are offered under the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) graduate training programme.

Marketing - Marketing executives are involved in developing marketing campaigns to promote a product or service. The role includes research, liaising with clients, planning, advertising, public relations, event organisation, and product development. Entry is usually through internships, a graduate scheme, or direct entry post at a junior/administrative level. A postgraduate qualification from the Chartered Institute Marketing (CIM) can be useful prior to entry, but many graduates obtain a junior position first and then study for these qualifications part-time whilst in work.

Media/Journalism/ Publishing - Journalists research, write and present stories for national, regional and local news media. Traditionally using print, TV and radio formats, journalism now exists across a variety of multi-media formats. As part of the publishing, media and broadcast industries, there are other roles for graduates including programme researcher, production assistant, publishing copy-writer, editorial assistant, and web author. It's essential to get relevant experience, through involvement in student media etc., to gain trainee posts in these sectors, and some may require postgraduate training

Public Relations and Communications - involves the communication of key messages about organisations, companies and individuals to the public and media. PR and Communications staff work to maintain a positive image of their client, providing them with advice, and using a range of media e.g. press releases, statements, newsletters, the internet, and other corporate communications

Recruitment Consultant - Recruitment consultants are responsible for attracting candidates and matching them to permanent or temporary jobs with client companies. Previous work experience in customer service roles, sales, or marketing is useful for starting a career in the recruitment industry.

Teacher/Lecturer* - Teachers can work in Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Sixth Form Colleges, Further Education Colleges, Adult and Community Centres, and in Higher Education (Universities). Teaching in Schools usually requires postgraduate study, which can be done a variety of routes (PGCE, School Direct, Teach First). Lecturing in H.E. normally requires postgraduate study (e.g. a Master's degree) and research for a PhD plus postdoctoral research experience.

Postgraduate Study

While most graduates go into employment after their degree, for a career in lecturing and academic research, a postgraduate degree is the first step. Also for some vocational careers a postgraduate professional qualification prior to entry is usually or often expected, for example Journalism, Law, Teaching, Librarianship etc. Of course there are other reasons for going on to postgraduate study besides career motives. For example you may wish to obtain a higher degree purely out of interest. Whatever your reasons you need to consider the options available to you and the costs involved as well as the career prospects. Seek advice from tutors and the Careers Service and information is available at www.prospects.ac.uk and www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/worktypes/study

Looking for Jobs or Work Experience

The graduate labour market can be divided into two main sections:-

-**Graduate programmes** offered by large organisations, some in the public sector but most in the private sector.

-**Direct entry posts** where an organisation simply has a job and advertises it. These can be with major organisations but are often with small to medium-sized enterprises.

Graduate programmes start to be advertised from the autumn of your final year and continue throughout the year. Many large organisations' closing dates for applications fall in October/November onwards, so you will need to look into these well in advance. This is the case for example with 'Fast Stream' opportunities with the UK Civil Service, although other entry-level posts in Government departments may be advertised throughout the year.

Direct entry jobs become available at any time so you will need to look for these closer to the end of your final year. You need to check vacancies regularly, or better still register on relevant sites for email alerts.

The best thing to do is to use careers information to check the recruitment patterns for the types of work and employers that interest you. The Careers Service website has advice on finding and applying for jobs on www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/jobs and www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/gettingajob In addition we run talks by employers during each semester and 'Recruitment Fairs' in both autumn and spring, attended by many major organisations.

The key to getting a graduate job can often be relevant **work experience**, so making the most of work experience and part-time jobs is vitally important. Internships or placements with a large employer are available in some types of career. Often aimed at penultimate year students, these begin to be advertised early in the academic year through to spring /early summer. Use the **vacancy sources below** to help you find out about these and other work experience. Many students arrange their own work experience or work shadowing directly with an employer, by contacting them and asking about opportunities. Doing this often requires an organised and persistent approach, so to help, use the Careers Service's guides to '**Finding a Part-time Job**' and '**Finding a Work Placement**' and our suggestions at www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/jobs/creative .

Finding Vacancies

Career Connect lists graduate jobs and work experience opportunities, including summer internships and year-long placements. Access **Career Connect** via MUSE or www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/jobs along with links to other vacancy websites. IMPORTANT: general graduate careers websites do cover a range of careers but tend to be dominated by large commercial organisations or those with major graduate schemes. For certain careers, including many of those listed earlier, you will also need to use specialist professional sites. Some of these appear below while others are listed in the 'Occupations/types of jobs' section of the Careers Service's '**Information resources**' www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/infotree .

The Careers Service

If you need help with any aspect of your career planning then book an appointment with a Careers Adviser via **Career Connect**. The Careers Service is based at Level 1, 388 Glossop Road, Sheffield. Tel: 0114 2220910.

Useful Websites

www.shef.ac.uk/careers

www.prospects.ac.uk Graduate careers website with careers advice, vacancies, work experience, postgraduate study information, etc.

www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/infotree University of Sheffield Careers Service's web links to further information on a wide range of occupations, further study, taking a gap year, job hunting and more.

Archivist - Archives and Records Association (ARA) www.archives.org.uk

Charities - Charity Job www.charityjob.co.uk - includes careers advice and jobs

Financial Services – see www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm for further information on the range of jobs related to financial services

Heritage/ Museums /Galleries – Museums Association- www.museumsassociation.org

Higher Education -www.jobs.ac.uk – jobs and careers advice for working in the H.E. sector

Human Resource Management - Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) www.cipd.co.uk

Librarianship/ Information Management - Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/starting-library-and-information-career

Journalism, Media, and Publishing - The National Council for the Training of Journalists www.nctj.com/want-to-be-a-journalist

Publishers Association www.publishers.org.uk see the 'Careers in Publishing' pages

Law - The Law Society - www.lawsociety.org.uk The Bar Council - www.barcouncil.org.uk

Marketing – Chartered Institute of Marketing - www.cim.co.uk and www.getin2marketing.com

PR and Communications - Chartered Institute of Public Relations www.cipr.co.uk/content/careers-advice

Public sector careers (general)

UK Civil Service

- General recruitment information www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-service/about/recruitment

- Job vacancies <https://www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/index.cgi>

- Fast Stream recruitment www.gov.uk/faststream

Local government

- Vacancy sites www.lgjobs.com and www.jobsgopublic.com

- National Graduate Development Programme www.ngdp.org.uk Graduate programme for local government

European Union

- **European Civil Service** http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/job/index_en.htm

- **European Personnel Selection Office** http://europa.eu/epso/discover/index_en.htm

Recruitment Consultant – Institute of Recruitment Professionals - <https://www.rec-irp.uk.com/>

Teaching – Department for Teaching – Get into Education- <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/>

FE Advice - Becoming a Further Education Teacher -www.feadvice.org.uk