

MSc in Advanced Computing
MSc in Computing for Financial Markets
MSc in Information Technology

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Aim of Today's Session

- To encourage you to develop your career **plans**
- To introduce you to key topics such as **preparing** applications
- To make you **aware** of the support available at the Career Development Centre



IT Industry

- Information technology (IT) is at the centre of everyday life and can be found in almost all other industries.
- IT underpins many organisations and pastimes, from shopping to watching the television, and it is at the core of every business.
- The UK economy will require an average of 110,500 new IT professionals every year for the next four years (Technology Counts UK, 2010).



Career Planning

- **Self Awareness:** Know yourself
- **Opportunity Awareness:** Understand what's out there
- **Decision-making**
- **Taking action**



Self Awareness

- **Personality** What suits you?
 - **Skills** What you do well?
 - **Values** What is important to you?
 - **Interests** What you like to do?
-
- Tools to help you are available in the CDC and on the website

What can you offer?

Specific subject knowledge and technical skills

Transferable skills:

- - project management
- - critical thinking
- - research skills
- - time management
- - presentation skills
- - teamwork

Top Technical Skills

Computing Weekly Magazine (2011):

1. SQL
2. C
3. MS Office
4. Java
5. SQL Server
6. C#
7. .net
8. Oracle
9. C++
10. Unix
11. ASP
12. Visual Basic
13. XML
14. SAP
15. HTML
16. TCP/IP
17. Linux
18. J2EE
19. Exchange
20. JavaScript
21. Cisco
22. Windows XP
23. Access
24. Focus
25. OOP

What employers say about Post Graduates

"They settle into our work environment quicker and know what is expected of them."

"They have good learning skills, a commitment to the task and need only minimum supervision."

"They are able to work on their own and have the benefit of logical thinking. Also their research field might be relevant."

Opportunity Awareness

- What opportunities are available?
- What do they require?
- What do they offer?



Types of IT positions

Positions include:

- **highly technical roles**, including programming and systems analysis;
- **business-related roles**, including project and relationship management;
- **creative roles**, involving digital technologies used in web design and development.

Types of employers

- Accenture, IBM, Logica and Microsoft are amongst the biggest names in the IT industry providing expert **support** and **services** to other organisations.
- Over half of IT professionals find IT roles outside of the IT industry with companies providing services via hardware and software, web development and **specialist consultancies services** for niche markets for example. Examples of these are Ernst and Young, Deloitte, KPMG and BDO Stoy Hayward.



Types of employers

- **Financial services firms** such as JP Morgan, Bloomberg and Morgan Stanley require highly secure, high quality IT systems for all their global daily banking transactions. There is also some outsourcing of their functions via **software development companies** such as Scott Logic Ltd.
- The **retail industry** has business-focused IT jobs available; indeed most of the major retailers such as Sainsbury's and Tesco will use a variety of IT systems to support a whole range of functions. Look out for opportunities via their graduate training schemes.

Types of employers

- The **telecommunications industry** is one which is fast paced and rapidly expanding providing mobile services, broadband, land telephony, IPTV and Video on Demand services. Key players are BT, Vodaphone, Orange and T-Mobile.
- The **public sector**, which includes local authorities, central government and the NHS, offers a variety of IT roles.



Types of employers

- The **manufacturing industry** is a key user of all aspects of IT and opportunities exist in multinational engineering companies in the oil, pharmaceutical, automotive parts and energy industries. Examples of key players are GlaxoSmithkline, npower and Amec.
- The **games development industry** has a good UK presence. Many of the larger companies have studios in the UK and include companies such as MGS, Sony, Rockstar and Disney. Many smaller companies offer opportunities in all aspects of games development.

What employers are looking for

Degree / Post Graduate

+

work experience

+

outside interests

=

Transferable Skills

What counts as work experience

- Paid vacation internship
- Part-time or summer job
- Industry related placement
- Volunteering

Work Experience

- Develop personal qualities and skills
- Gain insight and relevant, practical experience
- **Resources available in the CDC – drop in!**

Find out about the work

- Your studies
- Work Experience
- Sector briefings – CDC Events
- Occupational profiles
- Prospects (www.prospects.ac.uk)
- Hobsons casebooks
- Professional bodies



Decision Making

- **The self-audit:**
- Where am I now?
- Where do I want to be?
- How do I get there?
- What support do I need?
- How can I keep improving?



Taking Action

- Job Search Strategies
- Producing successful applications
- Understanding the recruitment process



Vacancy Information

Advertised Vacancies:

- Graduate Vacancy Directories / Bulletins
- Agencies
- Internet Sites
- International/National/Regional Press
- Specialist Journals

Unadvertised Vacancies:

- Speculative applications
- Networking

Global Opportunities

These are ten of the most popular graduate recruiters in the IT and communications sector, all of which have a global presence:

- Microsoft; Apple; IBM; Intel; Dell; BT; Cisco;
- Accenture; O2/Telefonica; Hewlett Packard.

The Microsoft logo, featuring the word "Microsoft" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.The IBM logo, consisting of the letters "IBM" in a blue, striped, sans-serif font.

80% of jobs are not advertised – networking is crucial!

- Aim is to meet influential people - not to ask for a job.
- Make an appointment with someone influential to find out more about their field of work.
- Make friends! You will usually be employed by someone who likes you.
- Ask for work experience/shadowing or a mentor

Successful Applications – The Rules!

- Identify & address employer's needs – produce a **tailored** application
- Give evidence of relevant skills and qualities
- Present a professional, cohesive image
- Don't undersell yourself
- Convey enthusiasm & commitment

STEP 1: Assess what you have done

Record:

- Your **education** – including course dissertations/ projects / prizes won
- Your **work experience** – duties/ responsibilities
- Your **achievements**
- **Voluntary** work
- Your **activities** and **interests**



STEP 2: Assess what this means

- Activities
- Tasks
- Skills gained
- Qualities developed
- What you were involved with
- What was your contribution

STEP 3: Research the Company

Research the firm

- Areas of practice
- Values, Ethos of the company
- Growth/development as a company
- Challenges and competitors

Research the job

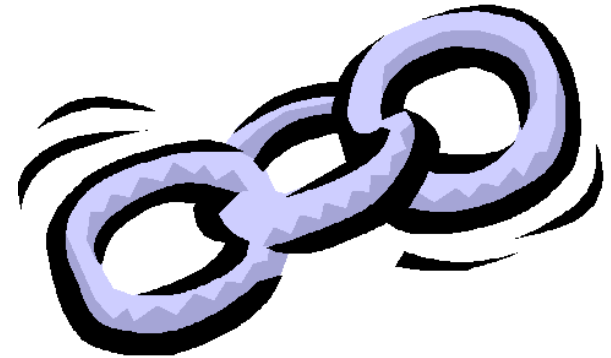
- What do they look for?
- What does the position involve?



STEP 4: Make the link

MATCH what you have to offer with what the employer is looking for, e.g.

- Teamwork/interpersonal skills
- Judgment and lateral thinking
- Analytical ability
- Commercial acumen
- Handling responsibility
- Determination/drive



Provide **evidence** to back this up!

What to do if you don't match?!

- **Often you're hired as much for your problem solving skills as for your knowledge of a particular language. Emphasise your ability to learn - e.g.**
- *"I have a limited knowledge of C++ but have a thorough knowledge of Java. There are few new concepts and I'm confident I can learn to write well-structured and efficient C++ in a short time."*
- *"It's true I haven't learned PL/1, but I've learned two other procedural languages - PASCAL and Java - which share the same data types and control structures. More valuable to you and harder to acquire are my problem solving skills, which I can apply in any language."*

Sources of information

- Job description/person specification
- Company literature and website
- Examples of client literature
- Named contact for 'informal discussion'
- Press e.g. The Journal and The Firm
- Professional association websites
- Your network and contacts
- www.prospects.ac.uk – for generic information
- <http://targetjobs.co.uk> – graduate jobs



Employers quotes

"Don't over rely on academic achievement - stress transferable skills such as team working, report writing and leadership"

**Focus on the skills and competencies
required by the employer – relate them to the
commercial environment if possible**

Cultural Differences

- Be aware of such differences when applying for jobs.
- Prospects website a good source of information. E.g:
 - Do not send typical British CV to a French employer – prefer bullet points.
- Remember interview structures and styles differ too.

Recruitment Methods

- Recruitment by a major employer is usually a three-stage process:
- **Stage One** is to submit a written application in response to an advertisement.
- An increasing number of employers ask you to complete an online application form and/or send your CV and covering letter as attachments to an e-mail.

Recruitment Methods

- **Stage Two** is a preliminary interview, which might be conducted over the telephone.
- **Stage Three** is the final selection procedure, often called an 'assessment centre', which may involve a further interview(s) and/or a series of individual and group selection tests, following which you may be offered a job.
- Recruitment into the SME sector is likely to be less structured and may just consist of one interview.

The Next Step

- **Use the Career Development Centre!**
 - Speak to an adviser
 - Drop in **11am to 3pm, Mon to Thursday**
 - Information Room
 - Career Essentials – lunchtime workshops
 - www.careers.stir.ac.uk
 - Feedback on CVs and application forms
 - Mock interviews

Useful Resources

- www.prospects.ac.uk
- www.careers.stir.ac.uk
- <http://targetjobs.co.uk/>

Any Questions?

www.careers.stir.ac.uk

Career Development Centre

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