

EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

When you start exploring career options, it can be hard to know where to begin. This guide offers a range of factors to consider which can help you to research your ideas in more depth and find out what's most important to you.

Researching the opportunity

Gather information from relevant sources to help you answer the questions below. This could be directly from course providers or employers, or from friends, family or others working in the role, or sector. You could start conducting market research if you are considering self-employment.

The Careers Service website offers detailed information on a broad range of options including:

graduate occupations - [ncl.ac.uk/sector-specific](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/sector-specific)

further study - [ncl.ac.uk/careers/study](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/careers/study)

working for yourself - [ncl.ac.uk/careers/startup](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/careers/startup)

About the opportunity

What does the opportunity involve, on a day to day basis?

Which aspects might you find difficult?

What is the working environment like?

Where will you be based, and how much of your time will be spent there?

Who would you work with?

Will you be working with customers or clients? And if so, who?

Practical considerations

What is the average starting salary?

Are there any financial implications? (such as relocation, commute, or training costs)

What are the working hours?

Will you be expected to balance work and study?

What training and support would be available?

Would you gain any qualifications?

Where would you be located?

Would it involve travelling or moving to other places?

Initial requirements

What qualifications do you need?

What skills and experience do you need?

How can you make yourself stand out (e.g. during the selection process)?



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Progressing

- What other possibilities could it lead to?
- How long do people stay in opportunities like this?
- What are the employment prospects like?

Reflecting on the information

Think about the information you have found. Ask yourself if you are still interested in this career area and if you can see yourself doing it. If so, consider how you can gain experience and prepare for applications. If not, start researching information for another area.

Consider

- Is this a viable option for me?
- Can I match at least three of my strengths to this?
- Are there any gaps in my skills?
- How can I balance this with my personal life?
- Can I name three things I like about it?
- Is there anything important I don't like about it?
- How might this opportunity help me to progress in the future?
- Is there anything else that I need to find out?

Finding out more

If you need help getting started with or furthering your research, come in and talk to an information adviser. They can show you information to access online and talk through ideas of how to find out more: ncl.ac.uk/careers/about/visit

To get a real sense of what the opportunity is like, it is best to speak to people who are already doing it. Start with people you already know personally, or through family, friends, lecturers or other connections.

Have a look at our information on making contacts to discover how to find and approach people this way: ncl.ac.uk/careers/makingcontacts

Help with decision making

Talking through your ideas with somebody else can help you to make decisions. Discussing the pros and cons will show you if you're able to make a strong case for doing this or not. Some people find speaking to family, friends and lecturers helpful. For impartial and confidential support, you can talk with a careers adviser to help you weigh up your decisions and plan your next steps: ncl.ac.uk/careers/about/visit



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