You chose to study in the United Kingdom. You have recently graduated, or you are about to take your final exams. Building on an excellent international education you are returning to your home country, Australia. You stand at the beginning of an exciting career, but what are the steps you need to take in order to find a suitable job, and where do you find the information you need?

This careers profile provides you with practical advice about returning to work in Australia to help you make a successful start in your career in the Australian labour market. Included are key facts about current trends and jobs in Australian industry, advice about seeking employment in Australia, hints and tips for making a successful application, and helpful information sources.

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Country profile

Australia has a prosperous, Western-style economy, which has been expanding continuously for over a decade. In 2008, the country's GDP was slightly higher than that of the UK, Germany and France, at 842.9 billion US$. In the recent past, the Australian economy has experienced considerable growth in the service sector, which has taken a leading role ahead of the manufacturing sector. The export of agricultural products and mineral resources also contributes significantly to the country's GDP. The absence of an export-oriented manufacturing industry has been considered a key weakness of the Australian economy, but increasing tourism and Australia's unique relationship with the Asian market has alleviated this criticism.

**KEY FACTS: The Australian economy**

- **GDP real growth 2008:** 2.5%
- **Labour force:** 11.21 million
- **Unemployment rate:** 4.6% (January 2009)
- **Major sectors of occupation:** Services (75%); Industry (21%); Agriculture (2%)
- **Main trading partners:** USA, UK, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, China, India

Whilst Australia currently has an unemployment rate of 4.6%, a transition from a decrease in full-time employment to an increase in part-time employment levels has been noted. In order to sustain economic growth in the light of an ageing population, labour migration remains an important issue for Australian politics.

**KEY FACTS: The Australian graduate labour market**

- **Average age at graduation:** 24
- **Average graduate starting salary:** 40,000 Australian $ annually
- **Average working week:** Monday to Friday, approximately 37 hours (full-time)
- **Holiday entitlement:** 20 days annual leave and 10 days public holidays
- **GDP per capita:** 39,300 US $ (2008 est.)
Main routes to employment

Getting started

As a graduate looking for work in Australia, you should use a variety of strategies. Newspapers are a helpful starting point when it comes to the Australian job-hunt. The Saturday editions contain large amounts of vacancies.

KEY NEWSPAPERS TO LOOK FOR:
- The Australian (national)
- Sydney Morning Herald (New South Wales)
- The Advertiser (Adelaide)
- The Age (Melbourne, Victoria)
- The Canberra Times (ACT)
- The Courier Mail (Queensland)
- The West Australian (Western region)

However, around 70% of job vacancies are not advertised in any newspaper. Therefore, the use of alternative sources, persistency and well developed detection skills will help you to discover the hidden jobs.

ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON JOBS AND COMPANIES:
- Graduate Opportunities (www.graduateopportunities.com) Comprehensive information on graduate jobs in Australia, available in print and online.
- Australia’s Top 500 Companies / Business Who’s Who of Australia (www.thinkbusinessplan.com.au) available in print and online
- The Yellow Pages (www.yellowpages.com.au) available in print and online
- Jobson’s yearbook of public companies, available at public libraries across the country.

When looking for a job, it is important to extend your network of contacts. Let not only your relatives but also friends, former professors and teachers, neighbours and other acquaintances know that you are searching for a job and tell them what kind of job or position you are looking for.

Attending career fairs and joining professional networks can help you get in touch with valuable new contacts.

WEBSITES FEATURING CAREERS FAIRS:
- Graduate Career Australia, www.graduatecareer.com.au
- Reinvented Career Expo - Melbourne (July 2009), Sydney (October 2009) www.reinventyourcareer.com.au

When searching the internet for job offers and vacancies, it is advisable to bookmark webpages and re-visit them regularly. Make use of email alert services offered by online resources to stay updated with the newest jobs.
Main routes to employment

ONLINE RECRUITMENT AND VACANCY WEBSITES:
- Australian Job Search: www.jobsearch.gov.au
- Career One: www.careerone.com.au
- Careers Online: www.careersonline.com.au
- Gradlink: www.gradlink.edu.au
- Graduate Careers: www.graduateopportunities.com.au
- IT Jobs: www.itjobs.fairfax.com.au
- Job Network: www.jobnetwork.gov.au
- Monster: www.monster.com.au
- My Career: www.mycareer.com.au

It is advisable to register with any employment agency up to one year before the date of your return to Australia. Applications for a specific role, however, should be sent no sooner than one month before your scheduled arrival back in Australia.

Another strategy that has proven successful for some applicants is to approach employers directly and send open applications to companies you are interested in working for. An open application is an application that does not respond to a particular vacancy, and in some cases submitting an open application indicates a degree of creativity and your willingness to take initiative.

The right skills and competencies

In a country where class barriers are virtually non-existent, employers are more interested in whether you are able to do the job than in which school or university you attended.

Good news for those returning home following international study: an Australian study on ‘The attitudes and perceptions of Australian employers towards an overseas study experience’ (Brisbane, 2006) shows that graduates with international study experience are particularly appreciated by employers. In particular, employers seeking to expand operations into South East Asia indicate they value linguistic skills and cross-cultural competencies. Facing gradually increasing globalisation, Australian employers feel that it is becoming essential for organisations to employ people capable of working with foreign clients, suppliers and partners.

MOST WANTED:
- A positive attitude.
- Intelligence and the ability to apply this intelligence to problem solving.
- Strong communication and negotiation skills.
- Leadership qualities, as well as the ability to work in a team and strong interpersonal skills.
- Time management and organisational skills.
- Relevant experience.
- International experience and cross-cultural competencies.
- Australian employers generally also evaluate a candidate’s personal fit within their organisation.

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Main routes to employment

The application letter

A letter of application should attract the recruiter’s attention. It should make the potential employer want to look at your application in more detail, read your CV and hopefully invite you for an interview.

Precision, a positive attitude and honesty are the keywords when writing your application letter. Your letter should explain your motivation for applying and portray the competencies and skills you have gained during your studies, previous work experience or elsewhere. Try to give concrete examples and avoid empty phrases. Bear in mind that people in Australia are usually practically-minded; they tend to be more impressed by personal experience than by qualifications.

The curriculum vitae (CV) / résumé

In Australia a CV (curriculum vitae) is more commonly referred to as a résumé. Your résumé is an important part of the job application. A résumé is typically two to three pages long, yet it should be as concise as possible.

Your résumé should list your personal details, education and employment history, relevant skills, qualifications, and extracurricular activities. Referees and their contact details are usually listed at the end of the résumé.

Do not include personal details about your date of birth, your marital status, your gender or your health, as these should remain private to protect the employee from being discriminated against. Likewise, photographs are generally not included.

Digital applications

Digital application forms have become more common. The Internet is considered a fast medium of communication but completing an application form online requires the utmost attention – always check your submission before pressing send.

If you are making your application via email, write a concise application email with your CV/ résumé attached. Applicants should always remember to use formal language when submitting an online application or applying via email.

The job interview

Throughout the application procedure it is essential to make a good impression. Never lie or bend the truth during your interview, and avoid being pushy or showy.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW:

• Think in advance about questions that might be asked.
• Find out the objectives of the position and the skills required.
• Research the organisation’s background.
• Be clear about your skills, abilities, personal qualities and experience.
• Prepare your own questions to ask the employer.
• Make sure you arrive on time for the interview. If you are unfamiliar with the location it might be worthwhile checking it out in advance.

Some employers set entrance tests to enable them to judge more clearly each candidate’s suitability for the job. These will mostly test general abilities, aptitudes and interests related to the job in question. At times, employers might conduct group interviews. You should therefore enquire about the structure and process of the interview in advance.
Where will your career take you?

What makes you tick?

What are the issues that matter most to you when thinking about making career progress?

What do you want to get out of life?

Research from the i-graduate International Student Barometer study tells us the following about the main career drivers for Australian graduates:

**MAJOR CAREER DRIVERS FOR AUSTRALIAN GRADUATES:**
1. I want to develop myself.
2. I want to make a difference to the world.
3. I like to be recognised for my achievements.
4. I want people to listen to me.

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**TOP 3 FUTURE PLANS OF AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS ABOUT TO GRADUATE FROM UK HE INSTITUTIONS:**
1. Long term employment in the UK.
2. Employment in Australia.
3. Further study in Australia.

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Current career prospects

A recent study by the Australian Department of Employment, Education and Training indicates that sectors with a demand for highly skilled labour offer plenty of job opportunities. However, due to increased levels of training there will be greater competition for the positions. The current global economic crisis has caused the number of applications for online job advertisements to greatly increase, while at the same time fewer job advertisements have been published nationwide and beyond seasonal adjustments of labour demand.

Franchising has developed rapidly and is still growing. Australia is seen as ‘the most franchised nation in the world’. Wholesale and retail trade are the most important sectors in the Australian economy. Moreover, Australia has large sales potential for medical equipment.

Despite the ongoing economic downturn, expectations for Australia’s future are still relatively stable. Expansion is expected to occur in financial services, particularly accounting and investment management trusts. Likewise, growth is expected within the fields of telecommunication, retail, construction, wholesale, community services, recreation, tourism, hospitality and personal services.

E-commerce is by far the fastest growing industry, particularly as more and more businesses offer a rapidly growing variety of online services.

WHERE ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES?

Accounting and finance
A highly developed financial sector makes Australia a leading capital of financial activity in the Asia-Pacific region. Accountancy work is generally seen as a good way to enter the financial sector. Work opportunities lie particularly in the fields of investment banking, payment systems, retail banking, private equity and venture capital, insurance and funds management.

Advanced manufacturing
The originality and innovation of Australia’s manufacturing sector has triggered huge investments throughout the last decade. Today, there are numerous work opportunities in the fields of nanotechnology, material innovation and precision engineering.

Agriculture
With its diverse climate, Australia provides opportunities as well as risks for the farming industry. Product development, innovation of farming equipment, as well as research into science based farming to increase the annual production of agricultural goods, all offer work opportunities for skilled professionals. In response to climate change, water resource management technology has recently grown more important than ever before.

Architecture, planning and construction
The current career prospects for architects, urban planners, construction engineers and project managers on the Australian market are positive. In addition to the Australian government, private development consultants and private enterprises are also hiring professionals.

Biotechnology
Today, more than 400 companies and research centres coordinate their biotechnological operations from Australia. Work opportunities can be found in this sector, particularly in the field of diagnosis, human therapeutics and agricultural biotechnology.
Current career prospects

Engineering
Engineering professionals can find work across a variety of sectors in Australia, in particular water management and the development of renewable energy resources have are growing areas of opportunity for highly skilled professionals.

Health and medical care
The Australian health care sector has grown into a fully-fledged industry, offering job opportunities for medical professionals such as dentists, oncologists and surgeons. Additionally nursery personal, pharmacists, dieticians and patient service managers can currently find a broad range of vacancies.

ICT and e-commerce
ICT professionals can find work in various industries such as property and business services, communication services, government administration, finance and insurance and manufacturing. The rise of the e-commerce sector has caused the need for previously non-existent jobs such as web designers and web analysts, as well as entirely new professions such as technology risk consultancy. Other work opportunities lie in the fields of application and product development, content development, technical assistance, network engineering and global sourcing.

Mining and energy
Because of the country’s wealth in mineral resources, the Australian mining sector continues to provide work in development of mining equipment, as well as in engineering, mine safety and exploration, mineral processing and environmental management. With the government committing to the reduction of carbonic emissions, the development of low emission techniques and renewable energy resources has become a huge field of research and investment. In the near future, Australia is expected to be a leading competitor in carbon storage and the carbon trade business in the Asia-Pacific region.
Where to find more information

General information

Access to Australian Government information & services: www.australia.gov.au

Australian Department of Employment, Education and Training, P.O. Box 9880, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia.

Current International Social Security Agreements: www.facs.gov.au

Department of Affairs and Trade: www.dfat.gov.au includes names of foreign companies active in Australia under the heading ‘country information’ / ‘trade watch’

Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, Central Office, Benjamin Offices, Chan Street, Belconnen ACT 2617, Australia: www.immi.gov.au

Graduate Opportunities, Graduate Career Council of Australia, P.O. Box 28, Parkville VIC 3052, Australia: www.graduateopportunities.com


National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR), P.O. Box 1407, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia: www.detya.gov.au/noosr e-mail: noosr@detya.gov.au

Books and Articles:

Australia’s Top 500 Companies. Dun & Bradstreet, Australia: www.dnb.com.au


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Disclaimer

Whilst all efforts have been made to ensure the information in this Country Guide is correct at the time of writing, readers are advised that procedures and information sources may change regularly.