Starting your career in Brazil
Country Guide for International Students
You chose to study in the United Kingdom. You have recently graduated, or you are about to take your final exams. Building on your excellent international education you are returning to your home country, Brazil. 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 country guide provides you with practical advice about returning to work in Brazil to help you make a successful start in your career in the Brazilian labour market. Included are key facts about current trends and jobs in the Brazilian industry, advice about seeking employment in Brazil, hints and tips for making a successful application and helpful information sources.

CONTENTS

Country profile

Main routes to employment

Where will your career take you?

Current career prospects

Where to find more information
In the past two decades Brazil’s economy has seen a growth spurt, with a GDP average growth of 4.5 percent between 2004 and 2007. Before the credit crunch currently affecting the global economy, an estimate of average GDP growth for 2008 to 2010 had been predicted at 5 percent. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, GDP growth will now probably decrease to around 1.6 percent. However, the Brazilian economy is still one of the fastest growing economies of the world, together with the other BRIC countries: (Russia, India and China), which all have rapidly expanding economies.

**KEY FACTS: The Brazilian economy**

- GDP real growth: 5.1% (2008)
- Labour force: 93.65 million
- Unemployment rate: 7.9% (2009)
- Major sectors of occupation: Services (66%); Industry (28%); Agriculture (6.7%)
- Main trading partners: The United States, China, Argentina, the Netherlands, Germany

The Brazilian economy has been affected by the international recession, mainly due to a decrease in international consumption. Unfortunately, the current worldwide recession makes it difficult to predict which sectors will have the highest growth rates in the coming years.

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

- Average age at graduation: 22-24
- Average graduate starting salary: 22,000-35,000 R$ annually
- Average working week: Monday to Friday, approximately 35-44 hours (full-time)
- Holiday entitlement: Legal minimum is 30 days, which can be taken up after working at the same employer for a year. Additionally there are around 16 public holidays (depending on which part of the country you live).
- GDP per capita: R$18,327 (2008)
Main routes to employment

Getting started

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

KEY NEWSPAPERS TO LOOK FOR:

- A Notícia (Santa Catarina): www.an.com.br
- A Tarde (Bahia): www.atarde.com.br
- A Tribuna: http://atribunadigital.globo.com
- Agência Estado (São Paulo): www.ageestado.com.br
- Correio Brasiliense (Distrito Federal): www.correiobrasiliense.com.br
- Diário da Manhã (National): www.dm.com.br
- Diário Online (São Paulo): http://www.digbc.com.br/
- Folha de São Paulo (São Paulo): www.folha.com.br
- Gazeta Online: www.redegazeta.com.br
- Jornal de Santa Catarina: www.santa.com.br
- Jornal do Brasil (Rio de Janeiro): www.jb.com.br
- O Estado de Minas (Minas Gerais): www.estaminas.com.br
- O Estado de São Paulo: www.estado.com.br
- O Globo (Rio de Janeiro): www.oglobo.com.br
- O Liberal (Amazonas): www.oliberal.com.br

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:

- BNDES (O banco nacional do desenvolvimento): www.bndes.gov.br Provides detailed information on business sectors, programmes and funds, reports, publications, etc.
- The Brazilian Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain: http://www.brazilianchamber.org.uk Featuring advice on how to start a business, information sessions, job listings and contacts.

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:

- Biz Trade Shows Brazil: www.biztradeshows.com/brazil
- Ubrafive: www.ubrafive.org.br
- If you are already active in a particular industry or know specifically which sector you want to work in, check trade fairs to get into contact with companies. Check www.biztradeshows.com for dates and places.
Main routes to employment

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.

ONLINE RECRUITMENT AND VACANCY WEBSITES:

- Banco Nacional de Empregos: www.bne.com.br
- Bumeran: www.bumeran.com.br
- Brazil Jobs: http://brazil.jobs.com
- Catho.com: www.catho.com.br
- Click jobs: www.clickjobs.com.br
- Curriex: www.curriex.com.br
- Curriculum: www.curriculum.com.br
- Empregos: www.empregos.com.br
- Fast job: www.fastjob.com.br
- Gelre: www.gelre.com.br
- Guia de empregos: www.guiaempregos.com.br
- Yahoo jobs: www.catho.com.br/parceiros/yahoo/canal
- Yellow Pages of Brazil: www.listas-amarelas.com.br

It is advisable to register with any employment agency up to one year before the date of your return to Brazil. Some recruitment websites might require moderate payment in order to register you. Applications for a specific role, should be sent no sooner than one month before your scheduled arrival back in Brazil.

Another strategy that has proven successful for some applicants is to approach employers directly and send open applications to companies you would like to work 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

When looking for work in Brazil it is important to keep two characteristics in mind: flexibility and a positive attitude. Both are characteristics recruiters highly regard. Despite the informal manner of addressing each other, etiquette is very important, so remember good manners, but also try to be spontaneous and show your enthusiasm.

MOST WANTED:

- A positive attitude.
- Flexibility.
- Spontaneity and enthusiasm.
- The ability to work in a team.
- Strong communication and negotiation skills.
- Time management and organisational skills.
- Relevant experience.
- International experience and cross-cultural competencies.

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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.

Application letters in Brazil are a maximum of one page long and typed on a white A4 piece of paper. In Brazil, your application letter should be concise but well written, highlighting your positive characteristics, skills, and how you could contribute to the company in question.

The first sentence of your application letter should draw the immediate attention of the reader and raise interest. Proceed by stating your strongest points, showing interest in the company and explaining why you would want to work for that company. Secondly, state your objective and what role you would like to fulfil within the company. Show that you have knowledge of the activities of the organisation and explain how your capacities could grow within the organisation.

The letter should contain the following information: your name, address and telephone number as well as your email address. Furthermore, it lists the name of the professional or department named in the vacancy, his or her position and the name of the organisation concerned, and if possible a reference (code or name of the position sought).

The curriculum vitae (CV) / résumé

It is customary to include a career objective at the top of your CV, under 'Personal Information'. The intention is to give a clear and immediate understanding of the position you are applying for. Keep the objective short and concise.

In general the CV starts with personal information, including your age, civil status and nationality. Usually this is followed by a summary of your most important professional qualifications. These are typically summed up in five to seven bullet points, each bullet point not being longer than three sentences.

The rest of the format should be as follows: education, languages, international experience, professional experience, courses and computer skills. You may also include your hobbies, e.g. dancing, but remember that the document is intended for your future employer.

CVs should be written as concisely as possible. Long written sections are not suitable as they make a CV less comprehensive. Instead, the information is usually listed in bulleted sentences. Make sure that these are not too long, while still highlighting your strong points as succinctly as possible.

It is advisable to keep your full CV shorter than three pages if possible. You normally only send a shortened version of the CV, but it is good to have the longer CV prepared in case you are asked to forward it.

Include a sentence in your CV saying that references are available on request, or alternatively include names, titles, and contact details of referees within the CV. Do make sure that the individuals you mention as referees are aware of their inclusion on your CV and willing to support your application.
Main routes to employment

Digital applications

Digital application forms have become more common in the recent past. 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/resumé 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.

You can expect a few minutes of small talk before the actual interview starts. When entering the interview room, smile, be positive and self-assured. Speak clearly, naturally and spontaneously. Employers in Brazil value spontaneity and positivity and will seek applicants with these traits.

During the interview, do not only highlight your strong points, but also show your knowledge of the organisation and demonstrate that you are really interested in working for them. Be prepared for questions about your professional skills and personal strengths and weaknesses. Also, be prepared to talk in a brief but convincing way about your career goals and aspired job.
Where will your career take you?

What makes you tick?

What are the issues that matter most to you if you think 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 Brazilian graduates:

**MAJOR CAREER DRIVERS FOR BRAZILIAN GRADUATES:**
1. I want to develop myself.
2. I like to be recognised for my achievements.
3. I want to make a difference to the world.
4. Future job security is important to me.

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**TOP 3 FUTURE PLANS OF BRAZILIAN STUDENTS ABOUT TO GRADUATE FROM UK HE INSTITUTIONS:**
1. Undecided.
2. Employment in Brazil.
3. Short term employment in the UK.

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Current career prospects

Since 2003 market indicators for Brazil have steadily improved leading to increased job creation, and rising average salaries. With more and more low-skilled workers entering formal employment, tax and social security legislation has been widely reformed. Whilst during the last couple of years the Brazilian public sector has generated significant job increases throughout the country, private sector growth has been slower.

Due to the recent economic downturn, exports have been delayed, causing a slow down in the steel-producing sector and similar events can be witnessed in the automotive industry. An increase in wages and falling inflation somewhat stabilised the domestic market.

A large number of jobs in Brazil, for instance in the tourism industry or in the agricultural sector, are linked to seasonal deluges, which contribute to their insecurity.

WHERE ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES?

- **Infrastructure**
  Infrastructure has always been one of the most heavily invested sectors in Brazil, but despite this the quality of the infrastructure is still relatively poor. Brazil has a four year infrastructure plan, with $300 billion set aside for investments in road networks, power systems and ports. In addition, the World Bank has approved a US$ 482 million loan which will be invested in the São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro area. As Rio de Janeiro has been chosen as the host for the 2016 Olympic Games, infrastructural investments will be heavy in this area especially.

- **Environmental management**
  In 2009, the Brazilian environmental market was estimated to be worth around US$ 4.9 billion, of which US$ 2.3 billion is related to the water and wastewater sub-sector. Large multinationals in different sectors are investing heavily in sustainability management, including large Brazilian multinationals such as Petrobras. The government is also heavily investing in environmental management; the São Paulo state having taken steps to set up environmental regulations and ensuring industry compliance. Another upcoming sector in the Brazilian energy sector is renewable energy. Biofuel especially is becoming increasingly important. With the government supporting initiatives in renewable energy sources, this sector is expected to grow in the next decade.

- **Energy industry**
  The energy sector has always been extensive, and has grown after the markets opened up in the late 1990s. Now especially as Brazil needs to double its energy capacity before 2030 to avoid shortages, sustainable and renewable energy sources such as ethanol production and wind-powered energy are becoming increasingly important. In the last few years Brazil has become an energy net exporter, due to the growth of the energy sector, which means an increase in the jobs available in this sector in Brazil. Be aware this sector requires some solid work experience and you are unlikely to be able to enter it immediately after graduation. A useful route to entering this sector is as an intern or a trainee.

- **Engineering**
  Since Brazil is investing heavily in infrastructure as well as improving and expanding its industry, engineers are in high demand. Many products such as heavy machinery are still being imported as there is an insufficient number of highly trained staff available to produce it in Brazil. At the moment this importation is becoming less frequent and the number of jobs in engineering is increasing quickly. In the infrastructure sector especially, engineers are needed to build roads, ports and water control facilities. Most engineering degrees are in electrical, mechanical, civil, and industrial engineering. For junior positions, between two to five years of experience is preferred by employers; be aware this sector requires some solid work experience and you are unlikely to be able to enter it immediately after graduation. A useful route to entering this sector is as an intern or a trainee.
Current career prospects

• Petrochemicals
The chemical production market in Brazil has a strong focus on petrochemicals, as Brazil owns crude oil resources. Other large sectors of this industry are agricultural chemicals and inorganic commodity chemicals. Furthermore, Brazil is the world biggest producer of ethanol from renewable resources like sugar cane. From 2004 to 2005 the sector’s sales grew by 15.8 percent. At present, oil producer Petrobras extracts 1.9 million barrels a day, while at the same time the search for oil reserves continues. The recent discovery of ‘Tupí’, an oil field offshore from São Paulo will reinforce Brazil’s strong position amongst the oil extracting nations. With the government supporting initiatives in renewable energy sources, this sector is expected to grow in the next decade. Employment will particularly be available in sustainability consulting, engineering, oil exploration and chemical refinery.

• ICT and e-commerce
The forecasts are bright for Brazil’s IT sector, with growth of 36 percent predicted from 2007 to 2010. The largest growth drivers in the Brazilian IT sector are within hardware and software, and internet and wireless. The Brazilian software sector had sales of $13.7 billion in 2007, and this number is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years. Multinationals are increasingly outsourcing their ICT services to Brazil, increasing the jobs available in this sector.
Where to find more information

General information
Access to Brazilian Government information & services: www.brasil.gov.br
Correo Brasiliense, latest news and headlines: www.correiobrasiliense.com.br
Folha do São Paulo, general information and news: www.folha.uol.com.br
Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign trade: www.desenvolvimento.gov.br/sitio
Telephone: +55 (61) 2109-7000
Journal do Brasil, online news journal: http://jbonline.terra.com.br

Books and Articles:
Gringoes, information for foreigners by foreigners in Brazil: www.gringoes.com/default.asp
Witmer, Flávia / Ripmeester, Nannette: Looking for work in Brazil, Rotterdam 2009

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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.