

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

APPLICATION PACK



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

College of Human and Social Futures



A set amount of professional experience hours, as a requirement of your degree, may be referred to as career-ready placements, industrial experience, practicum, or professional placement, depending on your program. For the purposes of this resource, this will be referred to as **professional experience**.

Your professional experience placement is an excellent opportunity to expand your practical industry experience, gather career information, and to broaden your awareness of additional career options in your field of interest and beyond.

This resource contains:

- Tips for job search skills
- Effective use of social media, including LinkedIn
- Job application resources, including tools, examples, and templates, for resumes, cover letters, selection criteria, and interview skills

NEED TO FIND YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT?

Finding the right professional placement requires good occupational research, labour market trends, and career options related to your area/s of interest. Sourcing a suitable professional placement host can be daunting but learning and developing effective job search skills will ensure your efforts are efficient and successful.

Create a realistic job search schedule

Allocate time for your job search and stick to your routine to help make the most of your time and make your job search as efficient as possible.

Organise and professionalise

- Create a filing system for your job search activities that works for you. Use this [Prospective Placement Communication Tracker](#) to organise your job search activities.
- Ensure your social media profiles, voicemail message, and email address are professional.
- Prepare a list of potential referees and ask them if they are willing to be your referee.

Research your industry

- Conduct [information interviews](#) to learn more about a specific type of job, a person's career path, or details on an industry or company.
- Research your opportunities within your field of interest via [Industry Reports](#) and [labour market resources](#).

Search large and industry-specific job boards

Take advantage of filters and job alerts for efficient use of job boards, for example:

- [GradAustralia](#) and [GradConnection](#): Filter your search for internships, placements, or graduate programs.
- [CareerHub](#): Opportunities posted by employers for University of Newcastle students and graduates.
- [Seek](#), [LinkedIn Jobs](#), [Glassdoor](#): Discover new companies to consider as potential professional placement hosts.

You are encouraged to do your own research and find other job search sites that are relevant to your program of study. Examples of specialised job search sites that may be related to your discipline include:

- [Jobs in HR](#)
- [APS Jobs](#)
- [ArtsHub Australia](#)
- [Creative Jobs - The Loop](#)
- [The Creative Store Australia | Great Jobs. Great People.](#)

Join your Professional Association

Join your relevant [Professional Association](#) to access useful industry-specific resources and expand your professional network. Discounted or free Student Membership is often available.

You are encouraged to do your own research and find the professional associations that are most relevant to your program of study. Examples of professional associations that may be relevant include:

- [Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Australian Human Resources Institute](#)
- [Australian Marketing Institute \(AMI\)](#)
- [Chartered Accountants Aust NZ](#)
- [CPA Australia](#)
- [Association of Certified Chartered Accountants](#)
- [Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Screen Australia](#)
- [Media Federation of Australia](#)
- [Australian Publishers Association](#)
- [Australian Major Performing Arts Group](#)
- [Australian Music Association](#)
- [Australia Council for the Arts](#)
- [Australian Museums and Galleries Association](#)

Networking

To increase your chances of finding the right professional placement host:

- Learn effective [networking skills](#)
- Connect with [University of Newcastle alumni](#) to increase your network, awareness of placement opportunities, and industry insights.
- Attend [Industry Events and Employment Expos](#) to build relationships with the contacts you make.

Social media

Social media is a useful platform for promoting your 'personal brand'. Find out how to [establish a professional profile online](#).

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a vital tool for career development, allowing you to build your network online. It's also a great source of industry-specific news, career stories, and expert advice.

- Create a [professional profile for LinkedIn](#).
- Learn effective [LinkedIn strategies](#).
- Find potential professional placement hosts with the [LinkedIn networking tool](#).

Resume

A resume is a summary of your education, employment, skills, and experiences used to promote your suitability for employment opportunities. It is good professional practice to provide your resume to potential placement hosts. For some programs, this may be a requirement for placement courses.

- Learn [how to write a resume](#).
Need help getting started? Create your resume quickly and easily with the [Resume Builder](#).
- [Improve your resume](#) and use this resume checklist to ensure you have covered all the important things.
- Resume Reviewer: Score your resume against 50+ checks.
- Check out these [sample resumes](#) for ideas on how to personalise your resume.

Cover Letter

A cover letter is a one-page document submitted as part of a job application or as an expression of interest for potential opportunities, such as professional placement. It is an effective way to set a positive first impression, introduce yourself professionally, demonstrate your interest in the role and the value you can bring to the organisation.

- Learn [how to write a professional cover letter](#).
- Need help getting started? Create your cover letter quickly and easily with the [Cover Letter Builder](#). Learn more about cover letters, find a selection of examples and gain useful tips and advice.
- [Improve your cover letter](#) and use this [cover letter checklist](#) to ensure you have covered all the important things.

Selection Criteria

Selection criteria are the factors against which candidates are compared and will determine the selection decision. They may include qualifications, skills, personal attributes, and level of experience required. The selection criteria provide a framework for the structure of your application and allow you to demonstrate how well you match the employer's needs. Selection criteria may appear as lists in a job ad under a label such as Selection Criteria; Essential and Desirable; or Requirements. You may need to address selection criteria when applying for professional placement opportunities.

- Learn [how to address selection criteria](#), including [5 steps to addressing selection criteria](#).
- Use this [selection criteria checklist](#) to ensure you have covered all the important components.
- Stand out from the crowd and [tell your story through selection criteria](#).

Interview Skills

Prepare for interviews by understanding what you can offer a potential placement host, your interest in their organisation, and your placement goals. Prepare to talk about relevant examples of your skills and achievements. Practice expressing this in interview format.

- Learn effective [interview preparation](#) strategies.
- Figure out [what to say in an interview](#).
- Practice your interview skills online with a range of mock interviews on [Interview360](#) and receive instant feedback and advice.

Support is available

The Careers Service team offers students and graduates of the University assistance with job applications, job seeking support, interview preparation, and career decision making. To find out more:

- Visit the [Careers Service website](#).
- [Ask a Question](#) in CareerHub.
- Phone (02) 4921 5588.

EXAMPLE COVER LETTER

This is a generic example of a cover letter seeking professional placement opportunities. Be sure to personalise it to show your point of difference and expand to include relevant examples of your skills, experience, and achievement to show the prospective employer how you can contribute to their organisation. See cover letter resources for cover letter examples, layout, and formatting advice.

Re. Professional placement opportunities [use terminology relevant for your discipline]

Dear [hiring manager/ decision maker's name]

I am a final year [insert discipline] student at the University of Newcastle. I am seeking opportunities to complete the professional placement component of my degree [insert relevant terminology for your discipline]. All associated insurance requirements are covered by the University. I am contacting you because [insert reason for contacting eg. referred by mutual contact; met at an Expo; connected on LinkedIn; follow their research; use their products etc].

From my research into [insert company name], I understand that you specialise in [insert company focus/ specialty]. My interest areas are [insert relevant interests] and I have relevant skills such as [insert skills] which align with your organisation's focus. I am very interested in undertaking placement at [company name] because [insert reasons you have specifically targeted this company and connect to your own goals. Insert interesting and relevant professional points of interest and/or specific examples eg. did very well in a related course; experience].

I would appreciate the chance to discuss potential placement opportunities and how I can contribute to your team. I have attached my resume which provides details of my skills and experience. I can be contacted via [email] and [phone]. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

[name]