



# **APPLY**

## **Applications to Acceptance**

**Employer Research**

**Making an Application**

**Job Interviews**

**Assessment Centres**

**Job Rejection & Acceptance**





# Applications to Acceptance

## Final steps to gaining employment

This booklet will help you prepare for various stages of the job application process. The number of recruitment stages will vary. Some roles may require a CV, Cover Letter and Interview, whilst others will require multiple stages as covered in this booklet. When applying for roles it is important to pay attention to individual employers' recruitment processes.

### In this guide:

- Researching employers
- Making an application
- Job interviews
- STAR Technique
- Sample questions
- Assessment centres
- Psychometric and other tests
- Job acceptance and rejection

# Researching Employers

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Knowing as much as possible about an employer you wish to work with - as well as the role you hope to gain with them - helps show employers your work ethic and gives you knowledge that can set you apart from other candidates.

## Where to look

1

### News sources

Use a search engine that allows you to focus on news stories to search for a company name, or search directly on an online news publication. This will give you an overview of recent and past developments the company has been through.

2

### Social media

Find out what social media channels your prospective employer is on, and find out what messages they are promoting. If you have already looked up what news stories are going on about them, this may also give you an insight as to the company's stance on the developments. Look into mentions and reviews to see public interactions about and directly with the company to get some insight into public opinion about the company, and learn how they respond to issues.

3

### Employees

Look for websites that allow employees of various companies to leave information about what it is like to work for the company. This will give you some insight into the culture of the company, and perhaps even the requirements of the role. If you have a contact within the company you can speak to directly, this is also a good way to gain information.

4

### Industry sources and competitors

Knowing the market in which your prospective employer moves in will indirectly give you information about the employer - for instance, knowing about their competitors will help you know what makes your prospective employer different. Knowing industry news will help you talk about challenges and opportunities the company is facing, or may come across in future.

5

### Company website(s)

Among displaying their most important marketing messages of the time, the company's website may give you an overview of services that are on offer, a collection of media releases and perhaps even a mission statement and insight into the company's ethos.

# Researching Employers

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## What to look for

For each of these points of information, it's worth evaluating how your findings line up with your wants & needs - specifically in relation to the kind of employer you want to work for.

Locations  
the  
Company is  
Present

Company  
History

Media  
Presence  
and Public  
Image

Company  
Branding  
Messages

Company  
Growth and  
Developments

Services/  
Products the  
Company  
Offers

Company  
Culture

Who is the  
CEO?

Industry of  
Services

Competitions

Customers,  
Clients, and  
Stakeholders

Core Values  
and Aims

Industry  
Trends

Revenue  
Sources

Issues and  
Challenges

Employee  
Satisfaction

# Making an Application

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Online application forms are commonly used as part of the application process. Generally, they begin with straight forward requests for details, including your contact information, education, employment history, etc. They may then continue by asking more complicated role specific application questions and request a supporting statement.

## Answering questions

Application forms may require you to answer a variety of questions related to the key competencies of the role. These questions can be similar to interview questions. In your responses ensure you provide examples to support your evidence of skills from work, extra-curricular activities or university experience.

Use the STAR technique to help you structure your answers and demonstrate how you meet the role requirements.



### Situation

A **Situation** will cover a place you were working, a project you were involved in or some sort of challenge that you were faced with. Think through places you have worked, assignments you have worked on at university, or similar.



### Task

You might like to think of this step as 'Target' instead - within the **Situation** or challenge you came across, what was required of you? What was your motivation/ goal?



### Action

What did you do in order to achieve your **Task** and why? To explain yourself, you might like to outline why you chose this course of action instead of any alternatives that might have presented themselves within the **Situation**.



### Result

What happened as a **Result** of your **Action** - did you accomplish your **Task**? How did it affect the **Situation**? Regardless of your success, what did you learn? Numbers always impress, so use them if possible (eg. 'Increased sales by 50%')

# Making an Application

## How to Prepare Answering Application Questions

1

### Give yourself time

Take your time to prepare answering application questions, leaving enough time for someone to review it with you.

2

### Do your research

As well as doing research on the employer, you should put some specific research into the role; read through the job description and specifications carefully to identify the exact skills they want and need. Use this research to inform your answers.

3

### Work on your self awareness

Take what you have researched about the role and employer, and match it up with your skills and experience. Find specific examples of moments you have been involved in to demonstrate these in the context of what the role is asking for.

4

### Use a word processing program in a quiet space

Write your answers in a word processing program with spellchecking and word count functions. This will make it easier for you to proof your writing, keep within or reach word limits and ensure you can save your work and come back to it later. Work in an environment you won't be distracted to give your full effort to each answer.

5

### Check questions carefully

Consider all parts of the question carefully. What are you being asked and why? Below is an example question. If you don't read it carefully, it's an easy mistake to describe how you managed a complex project, but not include how you overcame challenges faced. Highlighting keywords as we have done will ensure you answer questions fully and accurately.

Describe a time when **you** have **managed** a **complex project**, including details of the **challenges faced** and how you **overcame** them within the **specified timeframe**

6

### References

Many application forms will ask for two or three references. Choose people who know you well enough to highlight your potential as an employee. Ask their permission before submitting your application. Most employers like previous employers as references. Lecturers, tutors, or people in senior positions from volunteer or interest groups you are involved in can also be used as references.

Remember:  
You can make  
an appointment  
with a Skills Adviser  
to check your  
application

# Making an Application

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## Supporting Statement

### What is a Supporting Statement?

The purpose of the Supporting Statement (also referred to as 'Additional Information', 'Personal Statement' and 'Supporting Information'), is to show the employer you are the right person for the role by addressing the requirements from the job description and job specification. The job description lists the tasks and responsibilities of the role. The job specification lists the criteria (qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience and qualities) needed to do the job. All criteria addressed need to be supported with evidence. The more criteria you meet, the more likely you are to get shortlisted to the next stage of the recruitment process. Some job specifications list 'Essential' and 'Desirable' criteria. You need to show you meet all the essential criteria. The desirable criteria are optional, but try to meet as many of them as possible.

You are usually provided a blank space in the application form to complete the statement. The form may typically state:

*'Please indicate in the space provided below why you think you are a strong fit for this role. Include details and examples of relevant experience and skills evidencing your ability to meet the selection criteria.'*

### What Roles Require a Supporting Statement?

Public sector roles, such as ministerial and non-ministerial departments, government agencies, local councils and the NHS usually require a supporting statement. The education sector, charities and other not-for-profits also often require one. Roles advertised by these employers usually include detailed job descriptions and job specifications within their application packs. These must be referred to when writing the statement.



# Making an Application

## 10 Top Tips for Writing a Strong Supporting Statement

- 1 Allow plenty of time – statements take longer to prepare than you think!
- 2 Align your statement closely to the job description and specification by addressing all 'essential' and as many 'desirable' criteria as possible.
- 3 Follow any requirements from the employer, such as statement length. If length is not stated then about one page of A4, two at the most, is acceptable.
- 4 Structure your statement well to make it easy to read and to show key criteria has been covered. A good approach is to use sub-headings, using the same or similar sub-headings as those in the job specification. If preferred use bullet points under each sub-heading to give different evidence examples. If sub-headings aren't used make sure the opening sentence of each section clearly states the criteria being addressed.
- 5 Give your most relevant examples. Consider examples from a wide range of experiences, such as part time jobs, studies, extra-curricular activities etc.
- 6 Use the STAR structure to give clear skills examples (see Interview section of booklet for details about STAR).
- 7 Add a brief introduction and conclusion to the statement to show motivation and interest in the role and organisation. The conclusion may restate your interest and include points not covered elsewhere in the statement, such as additional skills or experiences you feel are relevant.
- 8 Review draft statement for: organisation of content and ease of reading, inclusion of all key criteria, relevance of examples and STAR usage.
- 9 Have your statement reviewed in a Skills Appointment by a member of the Careers and Employability team.
- 10 Proofread for language and grammar errors before submitting!

# Equality, Diversity, and Job Seeking

The Equality Act 2010 states that the following nine characteristics are protected within the law: age, disability, gender reassignment/identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex or sexual orientation. This means jobseekers and employees who belong to one or more of the protected characteristics should not be discriminated against.

To find out more information about disclosure and your rights visit-

- TARGET jobs equality and diversity - [www.targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/668665-equality-and-diversity-issues-and-your-graduate-job-hunt](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/668665-equality-and-diversity-issues-and-your-graduate-job-hunt)
- University of Lincoln Careers and Employability - [www.uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/equality-diversity/](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/equality-diversity/)

## Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms

When you apply for a job, you may be asked to complete an equal opportunities form, which is separate to the rest of your application. This is not seen by the recruitment panel and will not have an impact on the rest of your application. Once an appointment is made, the data will be used solely by HR to make appropriate changes to the recruitment process to try to ensure more applications from underrepresented groups are received in the future.

## Disclosure and Discrimination in the Application Process

The Equality Act 2010 provides the right to not be directly or indirectly discriminated against. You are not legally required to disclose your protected characteristics to an employer. If you feel you have been discriminated against during the recruitment process the following websites might be of help:

- University of Lincoln Students' Union - [www.lincolnsu.com/advice/welfare](http://www.lincolnsu.com/advice/welfare)
- Citizens Advice - [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)
- ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) - [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

## Careers Support

The Careers & Employability service aims to support individual queries regarding equality and diversity. Whilst this page gives general advice it may not answer your specific concerns. If you have any concerns or questions about the impact your protected characteristics may have on your job applications or employment then please book a careers guidance appointment.

# Job Interviews

The purpose of an interview is twofold. On one side, an interview is a chance for an employer to hear more about your experience, skills and personality to see how you could be an asset to them. On the other, it provides you with an opportunity to learn more about the company and if the position and work environment they are offering is suitable for your own wants and needs.

Ensure that along with your employer research, you have thoroughly researched the role and know how your skills and experience suit the role. In order to excel, you will need to be enthusiastic about the role, persuasive about how you suit it and confident in your knowledge.

## Types of interviews



### Remote: phone and video interviews

In some cases, remote interviews may involve you talking directly to a person or panel as you would in a traditional interview. In others, you may be a part of a large screening process where you answer pre-recorded or text-based questions, with your answers being recorded to be reviewed by recruiters at a later stage - in this latter case, think of this interview as an application form. You may not be able to receive answers to questions or gain more information.

Be confident and prepared:

- Make sure you are in a quiet environment.
- Ensure you have a good signal or steady connection - if you are having a video interview, be especially careful to practice taking a call in advance to test your video and sound quality.
- Dress appropriately for video interviews, and keep your body language in mind.
- Keep a copy of any relevant information (the role description, your CV) nearby.



### Face-to-face

In-person interviews can be conducted on a one-to-one basis, or with a panel of managers and relevant employees. These interviews can follow a variety of different structures - ensure you have thoroughly researched as much about the company and process as you can in order to stave off nerves. Ensure you practice with a friend to note your body language and the confidence you have when answering questions.

Remember:  
You can make  
an appointment  
with a Skills Adviser  
to practice your  
interview skills

# Job Interviews

## Preparation checklist



### Location and travel details

Do you know exactly where the interview will be taking place? Do you know how you will get there and how long it will take, allowing for delays?



### Date and time

Do you know exactly when it will take place? For remote interviews, allow an hour or two to ensure your environment is appropriate and your technology is working correctly. For face-to-face, aim to arrive 10-15 minutes early.



### Appropriate dress

Are you dressed appropriately? Even if conducting a video interview, ensure you are able to dress the part so the impression you leave is the right one. Check carefully if the employer has detailed a dress code, otherwise assume you should dress in smart business-casual or a work suit dependant on the role.



### Materials

Unless the employer asks you not to prepare anything, it is a good idea to have your CV for both yourself and the interviewer to refer to. Ensure you check to see if the employer has requested that you have anything else such as a portfolio, papers answering some questions for them, or a prepared presentation.



### Employer details

If possible, it's a good idea to find out the names of those who will be interviewing you before going in for the interview. This will allow you to feel and appear more confident when you arrive and introduce yourself.



### Luggage

If you have travelled for this interview, ensure you have a plan regarding your luggage. If you need to have it with you, check with the employer if you can leave your luggage with reception so it is out of the way.



### Hydration

For phone or video interviews, be sure to have a drink of water nearby. Remember you can ask an employer for one if going for a face-to-face interview.



### Body language

Practice your body language including a firm introductory handshake (for in-person interviews). Practice sitting without fidgeting if it is an issue for you. Be sure you know how to appear open and confident.

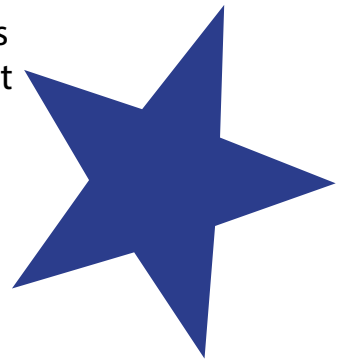


### Questions

Use your research to prepare questions for the employer. Make a note to also ask about when you will hear back, or what will happen next. You may also like to practice asking questions to clarify what an employer has asked you if you are worried about mishearing or misunderstanding questions.

# STAR Technique

In application forms and in interviews, you will often come across **Competency Questions** that seek to test your experiences against the requirements of the role. These questions will often start with things like 'can you tell about a time when...'. To answer these kinds of questions, it's useful to follow the structure of the STAR technique, which will help you clearly evidence how you meet each skill and requirement the employer wants to hear about.



## Situation

A **Situation** will cover a place you were working, a project you were involved in or some sort of challenge that you were faced with. Think through places you have worked, assignments you have worked on at university, or similar.



## Task

You might like to think of this step as 'Target' instead - within the **Situation** or challenge you came across, what was required of you? What was your motivation/goal?



## Action

What did you do in order to achieve your **Task** and why? To explain yourself, you might like to outline why you chose this course of action instead of any alternatives that might have presented themselves within the **Situation**.



## Result

What happened as a **Result** of your **Action** - did you accomplish your **Task**? How did it affect the **Situation**? Regardless of your success, what did you learn? Numbers always impress, so use them if possible (eg. 'Increased sales by 50%')

Find different **Situations** you have faced that you can use to demonstrate your skills, and practice talking through these so you can find a good way to make the STAR technique flow for you. It's always better to be able to sound natural rather than following a rigid template.

# Sample Questions

You may come across these questions (or questions like them) in application forms or interviews - we've included some suggested ways to answer these questions to help you form your own. Always answer questions honestly.

1

Can you tell us about a time when something went wrong, and how you dealt with it?

In this [Competency Question](#), use the STAR technique to show the employer skills or strengths they are looking for within the role or company, such as problem-solving, responsibility, resilience, organisation or even how you can acknowledge and learn from mistakes. Remember to think carefully about each part of these questions, as outlined in the Application Form section of this guide. In an interview, you can clarify the question with the interviewer to ensure you have understood it fully before answering.

Sample Answer:



Moving to the university campus was my first time living away from home, and I found out I was terrible at budgeting without my parents around. I ignored the issue out of fear and quickly found myself going into debt.



I knew I had to get back on track, and so set a meeting with the bank to persuade them to give me a large overdraft until I could get out of debt.



Before the meeting, I found several part-time job openings and sought help from the university's Careers & Employability team on tailored applications for those roles. I also drew up a detailed budget-plan, and brought details of both these actions with me to the bank.



My jobseeking efforts landed me a role with a local retailer a day before the meeting. Being able to show the bank adviser all the work I had done resulted in them granting me a larger overdraft than I was going to request. I followed my budget strictly and after excelling in my retail role, was out of debt by the end of the year - I've learned how to budget better, and to deal with problems as they arise rather than putting them off out of fear.

2

What gets you out of bed in the morning?

In this [Strength Question](#), the employer is looking for motivations, personality, work ethic and other qualities around your motivations here, in order to see how you will fit into their team.

Sample Answer:

My education has shown me so many interesting things in the world, and I always feel motivated to learn more. I get out of bed to discover new things and find joy in broadening my knowledge in this field. Coffee helps too!

Don't be afraid to use a bit of mild humour to show your personality!



# Sample Questions

3

A new steampunk themed café is opening up in the centre of Lincoln and has outsourced to us for its marketing activity. What issues will we face?

In [Case-Study Questions](#) like this one, the employer is not looking for a correct answer as much as they are hoping to hear the process you go through to get to whatever answer you do give. Ensuring you have done your research prior to the interview should make you more prepared for this kind of question. Use what you have learned in your university course to help you as well, ask for pen and paper if you'd like to write or draw something out like a SWOT analysis or mathematical calculation. These questions are also common in assessment centres.

Sample Answer:

Knowing what I do about Lincoln, the first consideration is that it targets a niche interest in a city with a small population. It has an opportunity in that we will be able to centre some marketing around the popular steampunk festival in August, but will need to find another strong customer motivator throughout the rest of the year. We will need to consider threats in competition from...

4

[Why do you want to work for us?](#)

Common questions like this [Organisational Question](#) are your chance to show your research and knowledge. Use stories to capture the employer's interest, but remember to be honest and genuine. Sometimes being completely honest can be what truly sets you apart from other candidates.

Sample Answer:

Honestly, I didn't at first. When I started my jobsearch, I was very specifically looking for a role I've wanted to have since I was a kid and I didn't mind what company it was attached to. I researched every employer I applied to though, and I was stopped in my tracks when I started looking into this company's community outreach; specifically with your current project. It made me really think about the impact my work could have on people, and since then this has been the interview I've most hoped to have. I want to work with a company who is community minded and wants to make a difference like this one.

5

[Do you have any questions for us?](#)

Most employers will ask you this in an interview- it's a chance for you to show your knowledge, but also a time for you to assess if this employer is really one you want to work for (though this may not be the time to ask about salary or benefits). Make sure you prepare some questions before the interview so you don't get stuck here - don't leave without asking a question or two to show your interest in the role.

Sample Answer:

It seems like the culture here is fun and relaxed and I would like to learn more about that. Your recruitment Facebook page posted last month about a day your team had at a theme park - what other activities or events does this company do in terms of company culture?

# Assessment Centres

An assessment centre may come as a late phase of a recruitment process. Many employers use these centres as an opportunity to see how candidates behave when faced with a diverse range of situations. These tasks will test your competencies, give you a chance to meet the team, help you gain a better understanding of the team and contribute to your decision of whether or not you would like to work there.

Assessment centres vary in structure and format. Throughout the exercises you work through, it's important to remember that you will be scored for your individual performance. Remember that you will be watched at all times, even during breaks. Make sure you remain professional throughout the day, and ask for feedback at the end.

## Preparation checklist

- ☐ **Research**  
Have you researched the employer and role thoroughly? See if you can find out exactly what to expect of the day as well.
- ☐ **Location and Time**  
Check the time and location carefully - it may not be at the employer's main building. Plan your route in advance, allowing extra time for delays.
- ☐ **Appropriate dress**  
Dress smartly as you might for a job interview. Ensure you have read instructions, as some employers will ask you to bring a change of clothes for physical exercises.
- ☐ **Materials**  
Check all instructions to ensure you have everything asked of you such as presentation materials. If there is an interview component, you may wish to bring your CV.
- ☐ **Luggage**  
If you have travelled overnight, ensure you have a plan regarding your luggage. If you need to have it with you, check with the employer if you can store it somewhere.
- ☐ **Body language**  
Practice your body language including a firm introductory handshake. Practice sitting without fidgeting if it is an issue for you. Be sure you know how to appear open and confident.

Book  
onto our  
Assessment  
Centres Workshop  
through our  
events page on  
[uolcareers.  
co.uk](https://www.uolcareers.co.uk)



# Assessment Centres

## Common features & exercises

1

### Employer introduction and information

This could involve a presentation about the company or role(s) being recruited, and may include a tour of the workplace. Pay attention to everything that is said; take notes if it will help you. Look interested, and ask questions - being careful that you aren't asking something that has already been covered.

2

### Informal networking

Throughout the day, you may be introduced to different members of staff who you will be able to socialise with over break periods. This is your opportunity to ask questions about what it is like to work in the company or industry in a less formal environment than that of an interview. Be aware of what you say - some companies will ask employees their opinions of candidates they have talked to.

3

### Group exercises

These will usually comprise of a group discussion and/or problem-solving task, with candidates assessing your individual behaviour within a group setting. Assessors here will be looking at your ability to communicate with other candidates - you'll need to use active listening, persuasion, analytical thinking and rapport skills. Read more about these on the next page.

4

### In-tray exercises

This will test how you would respond to challenges that you would likely face in your day-to-day role. You will be given a variety of documents like letters, voicemail messages and emails. You'll be asked to prioritise and respond to them within a timeframe. Be analytical, using what you know of the priorities of the organisation and role to help you. Use all of the information given to you, and keep within time and word limits.

5

### Psychometric Tests

Read more about these in the relevant section of this resource.

6

### Presentations

This is an opportunity to show your research and communication skills. You may be asked to prepare this before the day, or be given some time on the day. In both situations, read all information carefully and practice to time. Speak clearly, and use short bullet points at most to read from so you can keep eye contact. If possible and relevant, bring handouts for the assessors. Ensure to back up your slides if you have any to use.

7

### Interviews

Some assessment centres will include a standard job interview as part of their day.

# Assessment Centres

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## Group exercises

These exercises will usually involve you working with anywhere between five to twelve other candidates. While you will be working as a group, always keep in mind that assessors will be looking at you as an individual.

Often you will be given a large amount of information to read and discuss as a team within a set time frame. This information will usually be relevant to the role you applied for - for instance, a case study of a situation the company has been involved in before.

There may be too much information to read through thoroughly in the time given. If so, skim through and highlight key points as you do. Think about how you communicate with those in your team at all times - including how much you listen to them. You will need to strike a balance between taking on opinions from your group, and leading with your own. You can always use sector knowledge to assist you here. Ensure you read the key instructions as closely as possible to pass the task.

## Common group exercise issues

**One or more of your peers is aggressive and attempting to dominate the group**

Body language and tone are important. Don't shout down aggressive members of your group, but make sure you are clear if you do speak up. Diffuse aggression with interest, listening and calm/clear communication. Remember to focus on your own performance.

**You are speaking too much or too little**

Share your thoughts when relevant, but only if they have not already been covered. Praise your group member's ideas, and encourage those who have not spoken much to speak more - then be careful not to interrupt them and discourage others who try to. When they are done, don't be afraid to challenge any ideas you disagree with.

**You are indecisive and hesitant**

If the group is having trouble coming to a decision, present two options that have been motioned. Ask if anyone has further opinions to present and go forward with a short vote.

**The group is going off track and losing time**

Quality over quantity. Keep your contributions short and keep an eye on the time to note when you should move on to cover all that is asked of the group.

# Psychometric tests

## Why am I being tested?

Employers will often use psychometric tests as part of the recruitment process to assess aspects of a candidate that might not be clear to them in a CV, interview or other kind of assessment task. Psychometric tests can look at:

- 1 Verbal/numerical skills**  
These could involve exercises such as word sorting and sequential tests. They will look at your reasoning, logic, and analysis.
- 2 Diagrammatic and spatial reasoning**  
These will look at your sense of logic, visual thinking and your organisation skills.
- 3 Technical skills**  
These tests will relate directly to the role you are applying for. This may involve syntax for computer programming, data checking or mechanical questions depending on the role.
- 4 Personality and behaviour**  
These tests are assessing you for a cultural fit - answer honestly rather than saying what you believe the employer wants to hear. If your honest answer would get you eliminated, it is likely you would not enjoy the role. These tests give employers a profile of your interests and working style.

## Example test questions

### 1. Verbal

In the 100m Mens Running Final, Yohan Blake finished ahead of Akani Simbine.  
Yohan Blake did not place higher than Andre De Grasse  
Justin Gatlin finished ahead of Andre De Grasse, but was beaten by Usain Bolt.  
What place did Justin Gatlin finish in?

### 2. Diagrammatic

Which arrow comes next in this sequence?



### 3. Personality

I can work efficiently even when my environment is disorganised.

☐ strongly disagree   ☐ disagree   ☐ neutral   ☐ agree   ☐ strongly

### Correct Answers

1. Second 2. c 3. Which ever answer most applies to you

To practice  
Psychometric Tests  
visit our Graduates First  
Platform  
[www.graduatesfirst.com/  
university-careers-  
service/lincoln](http://www.graduatesfirst.com/university-careers-service/lincoln)

# Gamification Assessment

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## What is Gamification Assessment?

Increasingly employers are using video games as part of their assessment process. This is called gamification or game-based assessment. They have been developed from neuroscience theory and literature. Like psychometric tests they assess your skills and help employers discover more about your behaviours in certain situations. They are quick and engaging due to their game format, often with no wrong or right answers. No gaming experience needed.

## Top 5 Tips for Gamification Assessment:

- 1 It may be called a game, but it is a behavioural assessment so give it your full attention
- 2 Read instructions carefully
- 3 If given practice questions before the test, use this time well to understand the activity
- 4 Ensure you have good internet connection if it takes place online
- 5 Find a quiet and distraction-free environment to take the assessment in

# Job acceptance and rejection

## How to deal with being rejected

Rejection at any stage of a job application process can be a troubling and hard prospect to deal with, especially if you were passionate about the role being offered. It is completely valid and normal to feel upset about being unsuccessful - but also important to learn from it and not let rejection defeat you.

1

### Reflect

Take some time to identify exactly what went wrong. If possible, send a polite note to the employer asking for feedback. Ensure you keep this constructive and don't argue about their decision, simply see if they can assist you with future opportunities. A positive request may mean they keep you in mind for future roles.

2

### Plan

Using the information you have learned from your reflection and any feedback you have received, create a plan to improve and move onto your next steps. Remember that you can always visit the Careers Centre or contact us to receive assistance in building a plan or figuring out what to do next.

3

### Go to your support network

When you are feeling rejected, it's natural to feel like you want to isolate yourself. While difficult, it's a healthier option to work through this feeling and surround yourself with your friends, family or supportive staff members within the University (such as Careers & Employability, or Student Wellbeing). Be open about your troubles, and you will often be surprised by the support you receive.

4

### Find what makes you happy

Remind yourself that this is not the end of the world. Taking a moment to be thankful for even small things you enjoy can help lift your mood, and assist in motivating you to move onto more positive thoughts and actions.

5

### Do something different

While going through a jobseeking process, it is easy to be caught in a routine. Find a new hobby to be passionate about, or think about investigating opportunities in a different industry. A different direction can be refreshing and constructive.

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### Take purposeful breaks

While it is important to get back into jobseeking quickly after facing rejection, it is equally important to take care of your mental health. Plan breaks for yourself to relax and take your mind off your hunt for small and purposeful amounts of time.

# Job acceptance and rejection

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## Receiving an offer - next steps

If you have received a job offer, well done! You will now need to take some time to reflect and make some final considerations on whether or not the offer is right for you. Contact the employer, thank them for their offer and request a day or two to read over everything. Always get a full offer in writing. Request a written offer if you have not yet received it.

In some cases, you may have received an offer while you are still waiting to hear from another employer. This is especially difficult if the other employer is one you would prefer to work for. In this case, request some time to consider the offer but set an exact timeframe of no more than a week. It may be that you will need to risk rejecting the offer if you are determined to wait for a better offer.

Think carefully and do not accept an offer until you are confident it will suit you. Request a meeting to negotiate the terms of your employment if necessary.

## Areas to consider

- 1 What are your expectations of this role and this employer?
- 2 How does this offer fit in with your career wants and needs?
- 3 How much are you really able to compromise on?
- 4 Do other benefits make up for not having something you wanted?
- 5 What impact will this job have on your life?
- 6 Will you enjoy and feel appropriately challenged by this role long term?
- 7 Are the benefits (eg. retirement pension) appropriate?

# Job acceptance and rejection

## Asking for time to consider an offer or negotiate

Employers should be happy to allow you time to consider your offer if it is something you really need. The key is to set yourself a deadline, be positive, and not to dither on decision making. Know exactly what you need to know to make a decision (for example, you may need to ensure you have the offer in writing), and ensure the employer knows they won't be waiting forever for you. Generally it's advised to ask for this over the phone, only using emails if that has been your primary communication. Here is a sample of how you might approach this situation. This is not something you will need to do for all offers you receive - if you receive an offer you are happy with, accepting it outright is fine:

Dear Mr Garwood,

Thanks so much for giving me this opportunity. As I said in my email following the interview, I am very interested in the role and your company and excited about a future working with you. That being said, going from university into this role is going to be a significant transition for me and I would appreciate being allowed some time to consider this offer fully.

Firstly I would just like to clarify what is included in the healthcare plan - it's not clear if dental care is covered or not. I don't believe it will be an issue if it isn't covered, just hoping to make sure I have a complete picture. Could I please check with you that all details of this role have been sent to me in writing so that I can review them thoroughly?

I don't want to keep you waiting for my decision, and so would like to confirm my interest in this role by next Wednesday at the latest. Would you be available for a meeting before then so that I can ask a few more questions in person?

Thanks again for this great opportunity and offer, hope to speak with you in person soon.

Kind regards,

Johnathan Patch

# Job acceptance and rejection

## Rejecting an offer

It's possible you may realise after an interview that a role is not one you want to work in. It can be a positive thing to withdraw from the process before the employer makes you an offer. Rejecting an offer, or potential offer, that is not appropriate for you early will save the employer time and leave you in a favourable light if you would like to take a role with them in future.

At whatever stage you turn down a role, it is important to be polite and gracious, even if you feel they have mistreated you at some stage of the process. Remember that the employer has invested time and effort to offer you what they believe to be a great opportunity. Keep positive about your experience, and you may even gain a valuable extension to your network for future opportunities. In most cases it is more personal and polite to call the employer, but here is a sample email that may assist you in the wording to use:

Dear Ms Robinson,

Thank you for inviting me to interview. It was a pleasure to meet you and learn about the Accounting Assistant role and your team.

However after careful consideration, I felt that the role did not fit quite in line with my career goals.

I would like to wish you and the company all the best for the future.

Thank you for all your time and support and the opportunity to work for the company.

Kind regards,

Johnathan Patch





# Notes

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# Notes

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# Notes

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# Get support from your Careers & Employability Service

## What we offer

- **Careers Clinic**  
Our Skills Advisers are available to support you with your job search or the recruitment process for any role; part-time, placement, work experience or graduate.  
Careers Clinic runs Monday - Friday, 1pm - 4pm.
- **Careers Guidance**  
Our Careers & Employability Advisers offer 1:1 appointments to support you in exploring your career options and planning.
- **Career Events**  
We have daily events running to provide information and support your development; some are run by our expert Adviser team and others by employers. All events are advertised here; [www.uolcareers.co.uk/events](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/events)
- **Lincoln Award**  
Our employability award is designed to support you in developing and learning how to demonstrate your employability skills. At the end of the award you get the chance to put your learning to the test in our Assessment Centre Experience! Each one is partnered with an employer and students find the opportunity to practise and the feedback they receive invaluable. Full details can be seen here; [www.uolcareers.co.uk/lincolnaward](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/lincolnaward)
- **Vacancy Postings**  
CareerLinc is our online portal where all vacancies are advertised; part-time, placement, work experience and graduate roles. All students are already set up on the system so simply use your University log-in to get started! [www.careers.lincoln.ac.uk](http://www.careers.lincoln.ac.uk)
- **Campus Jobs**  
Our student Employment Agency which advertises all jobs for the University on campus from admin to retail, one off roles to ongoing part-time jobs, find out more here; [www.uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/jobs-employment-options/campus-jobs/](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/jobs-employment-options/campus-jobs/)
- **Online Resources**  
We have our own Careers & Employability online learning pathways on LinkedIn Learning. We also provide many other online careers resources. More information can be seen here; [www.uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/online-resources-and-learning/](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/online-resources-and-learning/)



# WHAT WE OFFER



The Careers Centre is open  
09:00 - 16:30, Monday - Friday

Telephone: 01522 837828  
Email: [careers@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:careers@lincoln.ac.uk)  
[www.uolcareers.co.uk](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk)