



**Maynooth
University**

National University
of Ireland Maynooth

**Careers
Service**

**Careers
Connect**

Take your next step

**Interview
Preparation**



Talk to us



**Maynooth
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Careers
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Take your next step

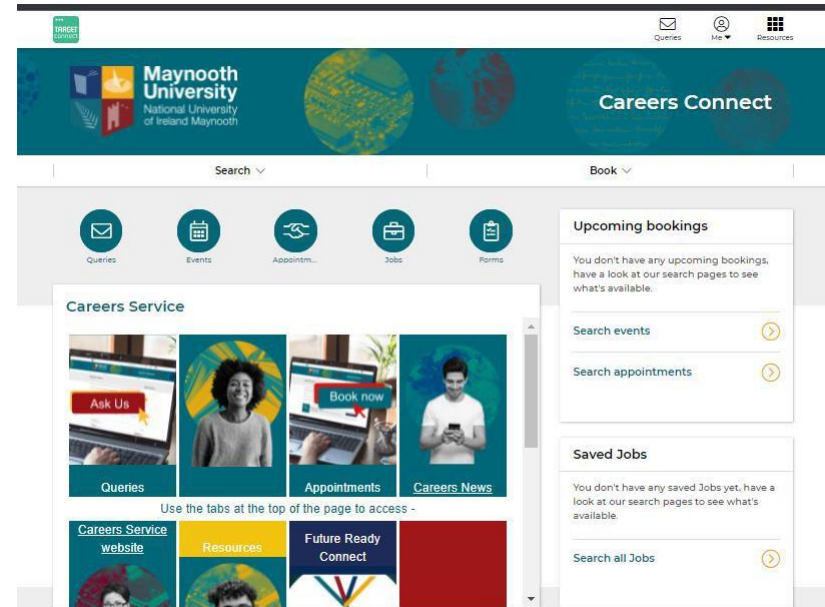
Interview Tips



How the Careers Service works

- Open Online
- Monday – Friday
- Use Careers Connect to engage with us
- Website

www.maynoothuniversity.ie/careers - lots of useful career/job search information and resources



Do you know...

Companies are looking to hire not to reject

- When called for interview employers want to offer you the job
- They are looking for the best person for their company....
- ...it is up to you to show them – That's you!
- Two way process - not an interrogation!

What you need to know

- The Basics:
 - Research: Company, Position, You
 - Appearance | Body Language
 - Setting
- Questions
 - Traditional
 - Strengths Based
 - Competency Based Questions
- Resources

Company research...Why? | Where?

You need to know

- Who they are, what they do, are they a good match for you?
- so you can answer when they ask “what do know about us?”

- Company Website
- Google
- Social Channels
- Company may send you information
- Other sources of information
 - Trade/Business websites and journals

Research the Job – what are they looking for?

- Carefully read the Job Description
 - Qualifications
 - Experience
 - Abilities/Technical Skills
 - Personal Skills – transferable skills

Know yourself... Why?

- Interests and Motivations
 - Is this the job for you?
- Skills and Abilities
 - Can you do this job?.... YES!
 - How will you convince others of this?
- What will you say when they ask...?
 - “Why should we employ you?”
 - “What will you bring to this company?”

Know yourself... How?

- Divide your experience into categories
 - work through your CV and application form
 - Course (see module descriptions)
 - Part-time work
 - Extra-curricular
- Make a list of your skills
 - List one example (or more) of how you use this skill

Prepare to sell yourself ...How?

- Compile a list of all the most important points you would like to make
 - Use the job description and match to your skills and experience convince the interviewer that you are the best person for the job
 - Know your Strengths and Weaknesses.
- Work through the likely questions.
 - Prepare your answers.
 - Practice your answers out loud – the more you do this the more polished your answers will become.



Browse by letter

Power statements...your skills

www.prospects.ac.uk



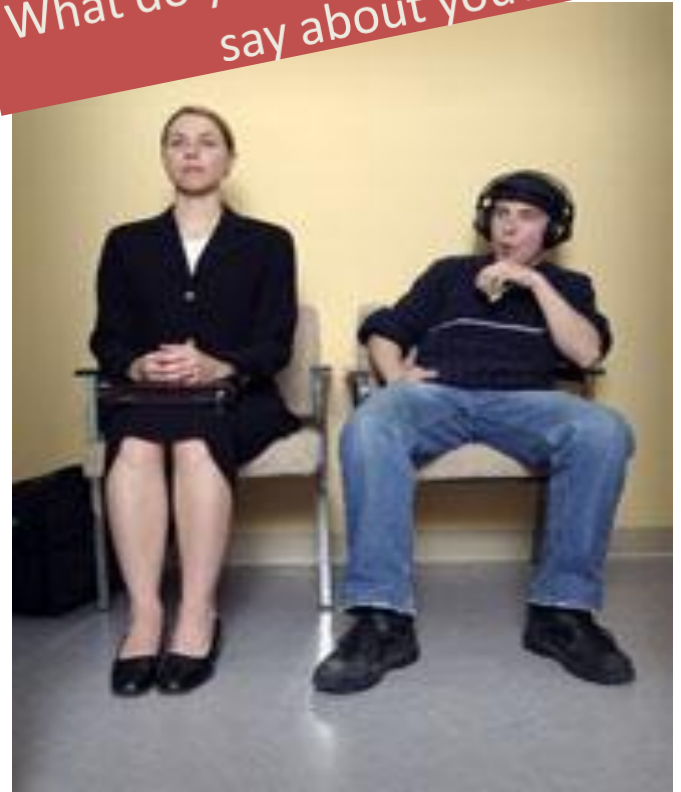
A

- Academic librarian
- Academic researcher
- Accommodation manager
- Accounting technician
- Acoustic consultant
- Actor
- Actuarial analyst
- Actuary
- Acupuncturist
- Adult guidance worker
- Adult nurse
- Advertising account executive
- Advertising account planner

Professional Appearance

- Only one chance to make a first impression
- Style consistent with the type of position
 - Convey professionalism and competence
 - Co-ordinate your clothes
 - Suit, jacket/trousers/skirt, plain shoes
 - Accessories: keep to a minimum – keep focus on you and your message

What do you want your clothes to say about you?



Dress and Appearance

- Conservative – convey professionalism
- Has to fit!!!
- Dark colours lend you more authority than light/pale ones



The Interview Begins... the moment you are at risk of meeting anyone from the company or institution

In Person Interview

- Be early (10-15 minutes)
- Check travel arrangements
- Exact location – do a “dry run” at a similar time of day
- Have details of invitation with you – directions/phone number etc.
- Let reception know you have arrived
- Freshen up - check the mirror
- Mobile Phone – silent is not enough! Switch off so no distraction or vibrate noises

The Interview Begins... the moment you are at risk of meeting anyone from the company or institution

Online Interview

- Be early (10-15 minutes)
- Check login arrangements
- Be polite and professional in all pre-interview email/phone correspondence with organisation
- Mobile Phone – if not using for the call, have on silent and out of sight so it isn't a distraction

The Interview Begins: **In Person**

- Be prepared to shake hands firmly!
 - A weak handshake creates a negative impression
- Wait to be asked to be seated
- Smile!
- General Chat...Warm up/Settle down question.
 - How was the journey?
 - Do not give a blow by blow account

Eye contact is important!

- Concentrate on the person asking question - glance at others from time to time.
- It is difficult to hold a conversation with someone who doesn't hold eye contact!! (Try it...)
- Eye contact shows that you are interested, involved and confident (i.e. what they're looking for!)

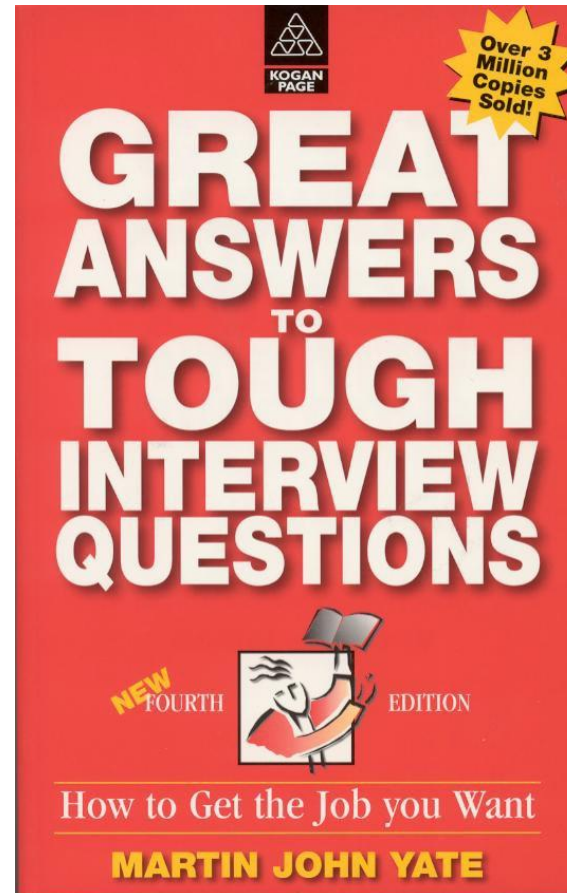
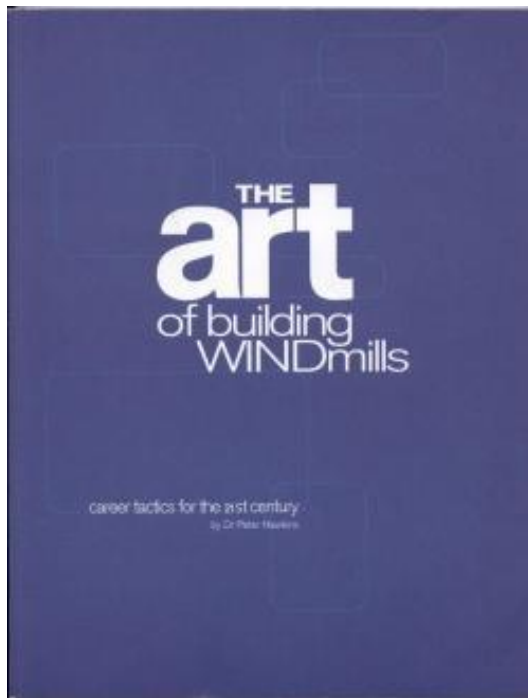
Body Language: are you “saying” what you mean?

- Do not perch on the edge of your seat.
- Sit well back but lean slightly forward.
- Do not fidget, play with hair, jewellery, tie etc.
- OK to use some hand gestures

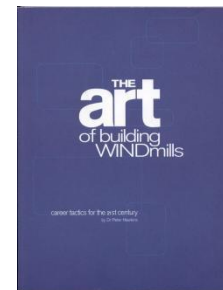
Body Language: What is your body language saying..?

- Take your cues from them
- Be wary of injecting humour but OK to laugh as long as you are sharing a joke
- Voice – practise your answers out loud before the interview
- Pause to gather thoughts
- Speak clearly
- Volunteer information
- Do not waffle
- Ask for clarification of question

Examples of interview questions & answers



“The Toughest Questions you’ll ever be asked”



- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you apply for the job?
- Tell me what you do in your spare time/to relax?
- When have you been involved in teams?
- What are your main strengths and weaknesses?
- Why should we employ you?
- What has been your biggest achievement? What have you learned from your past work experiences?
- When did you last work under pressure or deal with conflict - how did you cope? What is the biggest problem/dilemma you have ever faced?
- What other career opportunities are you looking at?
- Where would you like to be in five or ten years time?
- When have you had to.....?
- What would you do insituation?
- Sell me this product.
- What salary do you expect?
- How competent are you at....?
- You haven’t been much of a success so far, have you?
- Do you have any questions?

Interview Questions

“Tell me about yourself.”

- Employers are looking for a quick snapshot of you and how well you sell yourself and your capabilities.
- Don't ramble on - but make sure you get the main points in – Be Prepared!

Tell me about yourself!

- Be concise and to the point (3 or 4 sentences)
- Give the information most relevant to the job
- Education
- Relevant Experience
- Skills
- Career goal

Interview Questions - General

“Why did you apply for the job?” (You need to be familiar with the company and the job description!)

- This looks at your levels of motivation and commitment.
- Outline what you can offer them, and then what they can provide for you.
- Be positive - say why you want this job - not why you are leaving your present one.

Strength Based Interview

- Series of quick -fire questions to test how you see your strengths
- Testing
 - Who you are
 - What makes you tick
 - How you like to work
 - Will you fit in
- Be strategic
- Be honest
- Be succinct
- Be enthusiastic

Strengths based Interview

- What do you do well?
- What energises you?
- When are you at your best?
- How can you capitalise on your strengths more?
strengths more?
- Are you a big picture person?
- Are you a starter or a finisher?
- What would your friends say about you?

Competency Based Interviews

“Tell me about a time when you showed....”

- Teamwork /Relationship Building
- Initiative
- Communication Skills
- Customer Focus
- Excellence under Pressure
- Organisation /Planning
- Leadership
- Flexibility
- Problem-solving

Types of competencies likely to be assessed

- Individual competencies:
 - your personal attributes: flexibility, decisiveness, tenacity, independence, risk taking, personal integrity
- Analytical competencies:
 - the elements of decision making: innovation, analytical skills, numerical problem solving, problem solving, practical learning, detail consciousness
- Interpersonal competencies
 - dealing with other people: communication, impact, persuasiveness, personal awareness, teamwork, openness
- Motivational competencies
 - the things that drive you: resilience, energy, motivation, achievement orientation, initiative, focus on quality
- Managerial competencies:
 - taking charge of other people: leadership, empowerment, strategic planning, corporate sensitivity, project management, management control

Behavioural Questioning

- Organisation Skills
 - Ability to Plan Tell me about a time when you had to plan an event? What steps did you take? What were the results?
 - Ability to Set Priorities Could you tell me about a time when you were really busy with study or work or other commitments? How did you handle it? What did you do?
 - Ability to Delegate Have you ever been in a position when you were organising/managing something and had others helping you? How did you distribute tasks? What happened?
- Interpersonal Skills
 - Client Relations Tell me about any people-oriented or customer-service roles you've held? How did you feel in the role? How did they respond?
 - Being a Team Player Were you ever involved with a group of people and a problem arose? What caused the problem? How did you approach it? How was it solved?
 - Ability To Deal With People at All Levels Tell me about a time when you've worked closely with someone at a higher or lower level to you? Describe the situation? What was the outcome?

Behavioural Questioning

- Technical Skills
 - Problem Solving What was the most difficult work or school problem you ever faced? Describe it. How did you address the problem? What were the results?
 - Ability to Apply Knowledge Tell me about a time when you had to apply some newly acquired knowledge or skill? What was the knowledge or skill? What was the outcome?
 - Knowing Limitations Describe a situation when you had to turn to someone else for help. To whom did you turn? What happened?
- Growing With The Job
 - Taking Initiative/Leadership Tell me about a time when you had to step out from the crowd and take the lead in doing something different? What did you do? What was the result?
 - Ability to Learn on the Job Can you describe a time when you had to assimilate a lot of new knowledge and apply it. What was the situation? How did you apply the knowledge?

Behavioural Questioning

- Communication Skills
 - Ability to Communicate Tell me about a time when someone misunderstood something you said? How did you make yourself clear? What was the outcome?
 - Ability to Listen Can you tell me about a time when a friend sought you out as a confidante? What skills did you utilise in this role? How could you apply these skills in the workplace?
- Commitment
 - Work Commitment Describe a situation where you kept persevering with a task even though every one else had given up? Why did you keep going? What was the result?
 - Service Commitment Have you ever done any work in a customer oriented or community service organisation? What did you do? What was the outcome?

Preparing for Competency Based Interviews

Answer with a STAR

- Situation / Task- Set the Scene...
 - describe a situation where you used the relevant skill
- Action - Tell the story...
 - describe the action you took. Give plenty of detail. Use “I” instead of “We”.
- Results – In the end...
 - Outline the results or outcomes

Preparing for Competency Based Interviews

- Review the job description carefully
- Identify the skills/traits likely to be assessed.
- Match to your experiences.
- Competency-focused, well-structured answers are extremely powerful and will impress the interviewer

Your Questions?

- The Organisation
 - expansion plans, new services or innovations, products
- The Work and training
 - formal training programme, duration, reporting structure
- Location | Remote working?
 - travel/mobility required?
- Related to topics raised during the interview
 - demonstrates you were listening
- Chance to tell what has not been questioned

During the Interview ...Remember

- Keep answers balanced: not too long, not too short – take your cues from the interviewer
- Remember - Provide lots of examples of experience and skills match
- Speak of weakness in the past tense and explain how you overcame it
- If negative issues arise, be positive and focus on what you learnt

I don't know!!

- If you are asked a question to which you do not know the answer, you have two choices:
 - a) Say you don't know
 - b) Prove you don't know
- Waffle is not convincing!!

Telephone Interviews...

- Can be used as first stage of selection process
 - A quick screening tool for employers
 - Once you've applied – be prepared for a call
 - Avoid clueless response
 - Professional Voicemail ...and online/social media presence
- This is a Real Interview
 - Be Focussed – no distractions
 - Practice your answers out loud
 - Stand up – you will feel more confident
 - Smile – they will hear it!
 - Desk – have CV, application form in front of you
 - Phone AND Charger
 - Good signal

Teams | Zoom Interviews

- Simulate a business environment
- Desk or suitable surface to keep device steady
- Lighting – don't sit with light behind you.
- Background – have a professional setting - tidy area or use a background.
- Device charged and plugged in
- Good signal – check wifi and sound – ensure that you can be heard
- Remember to look at the webcam rather than the screen – Eye Contact!

Have your research ready...

- What competencies they want
- What strengths and skills you have
- Questions you want to ask

Video Interviews

- This is a Real Interview
- It is not Skype or Teams and not a telephone interview
- Employers frequently use this to allow them to review large numbers of applicants
- The interview takes place online (mobile device/laptop)
- You access the interview by clicking a link sent by the employer
- The employer will provide detailed instructions on how to access the platform and the structure of the interview
- Ensure you are familiar with what to expect

Video Interviews

- Questions can be asked by a person in a pre-recorded video, by a bot or will appear as text on the screen
- You will be given a set amount of reading/thinking them (e.g. 30 seconds) and then a set amount of time to answer the question (e.g. 2 minutes)
- Opportunities to re-record your answer are not normally offered

Video Interviews – Technical Set Up

- Check that your device supports the technology being used
- Ensure your device is charged (or ideally plugged in)
- Assess how you look on screen
 - No distractions in the background
 - Lighting – don't sit with your back to a window/light source
 - Ideally have the device at eye level, this facilitates eye contact
- Place the device on a secure surface – holding your mobile in your hand, while nervous will result in a “shaky” interview

Video Interviews - Prepare

- Preparation is similar to a face to face interview with a few key extras
- Practise – set up a call on Skype or Teams and record yourself answering typical interview questions
- Dress code – professional, dress as you would for a face to face interview
- Maintain eye contact and be aware of your posture and body language
- Speak clearly, take time to breathe, pause to gather your thoughts if you need to

Video Interviews – More Information

- <https://gradireland.com/careers-advice/interviews-and-tests/video-interviews-put-your-best-face-forward>
- <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/video-interview-tips>
- <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/interview-types/323749-expert-performance-tips-for-skype-and-video-interviews>
- <https://www.wearehilt.com/tag/video-interviews/>

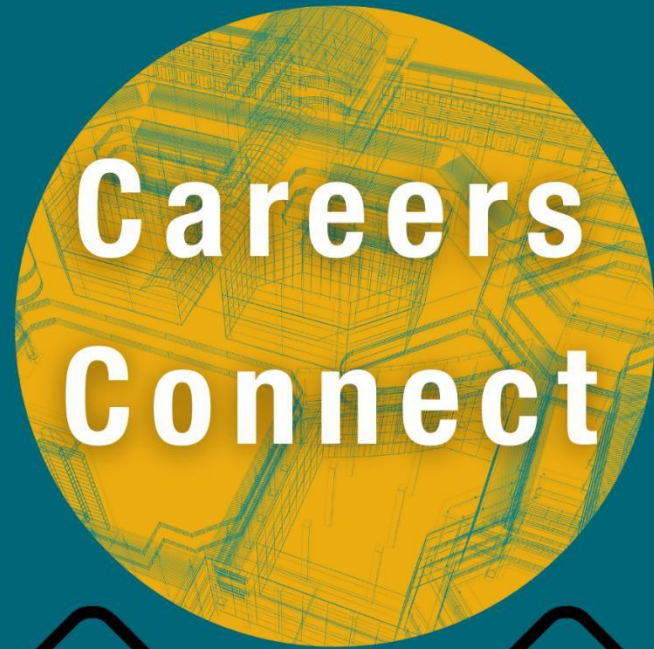
After the Interview

- How did I do? ...
- Self-Assessment
- Examine how you felt it went
- Make notes / tips for yourself for next time
- When you know the result...Get Feedback
- What you did well
- What needs work
- Learn from it ... “What can I do better next time?”

Careers Connect – Current Students

<http://mu.ie/careers-connect>

- **Send a Query** – Careers Advisers answer your questions e.g. Career plans, application/job search questions, CV reviews
- Search and Apply for **Jobs**
- Book **career guidance meetings** with Careers Advisers
- View Careers/Recruitment **Events**
- Set up Job/Events **email alerts**



**Careers
Connect**



Search ▾

Book ▾



Queries



Events



Appointments



Jobs



Forms

Careers Service



[Queries](#)



[Appointments](#)



[Careers News](#)

Use the tabs at the top of the page to access -



[Careers Service website](#)



[Resources](#)



[Future Ready Connect](#)



Upcoming bookings

You don't have any upcoming bookings, have a look at our search pages to see what's available.

[Search events](#)



[Search appointments](#)



Saved Jobs

You don't have any saved Jobs yet, have a look at our search pages to see what's available.

[Search all Jobs](#)





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Target Connect

Queries Me Resources

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Careers Connect

Search Book

Queries Events Appointments Jobs Forms

Careers Service

Ask Us Book now

Queries Appointments Careers News

Use the tabs at the top of the page to access -

Careers Service website Resources Future Ready Connect

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Search all Jobs

Use Queries
to send your
questions to
our careers
advisers

Careers Service

Book careers appointments

The screenshot shows the Maynooth University Careers Connect website. The header includes the university logo, 'Maynooth University National University of Ireland Maynooth', and 'Careers Connect'. Navigation links for 'Queries', 'Me', and 'Resources' are visible. A yellow circle highlights the 'Appointments' link in the breadcrumb trail: Home \ Book \ Appointments. Below this, a message states: 'Careers meetings are running through MS Teams. Please select an appointment time below and click book. If there are no appointments remaining and you require an urgent appointment, please send us a meeting request by clicking "Queries" above. If you require a meeting to discuss Job Interview Preparation, please send us an Interview Preparation Meeting request by clicking "Queries" above. Additional appointments are added frequently so please check back to view latest availability.' At the bottom, a 'Next Step...' banner promotes the 'Next Step Careers Meeting' with the text 'Take the next step in your career journey... Meet with a careers adviser to discuss your career... Find out more' and a 'View appointments' button.

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Careers Connect

Search

Book

Appointments
Home \ Book \ Appointments

Careers meetings are running through MS Teams

Please select an appointment time below and click book.
If there are no appointments remaining and you require an urgent appointment, please send us a meeting request by clicking "Queries" above.

If you require a meeting to discuss Job Interview Preparation, please send us an Interview Preparation Meeting request by clicking "Queries" above.

Additional appointments are added frequently so please check back to view latest availability.

Next Step...

Next Step Careers Meeting

Take the next step in your career journey... Meet with a careers adviser to discuss your career... [Find out more](#)

[View appointments](#)

Find graduate jobs,
graduate programmes
and immediate start
positions

The screenshot displays the Maynooth University Careers Connect portal. At the top, the university's logo and name are visible. A yellow circle highlights the 'Jobs' link in the navigation bar. A red arrow points to the 'Careers Service' dropdown menu in the top right corner. Below the navigation bar, a search bar and a 'Book' button are present. The main content area shows a list of job results. A red arrow points to the 'Jobs Archive' link. The left sidebar contains filters for 'Active filters', 'Quick search', and 'Job Type'. The right sidebar shows the number of results (1 to 50 of 27 results) and sorting options (Sort by: Published (Descending), Display by: Grid/List). The job listings include details such as the job title, location, salary, and a brief description.

Target Connect

Careers Service

Queries Me Resources

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Careers Connect

Search Book

Jobs

Home \ Search \ Jobs

Jobs

Search below for Graduate Jobs, Graduate Programmes, Graduate Internships, Immediate start jobs & relevant part-time jobs.

To find Undergraduate Summer, Micro or Research Internships, Insight Days and Competitions, use the drop-down menu to switch to the Experiential Learning Office FutureReady Connect page

Jobs Archive

Active filters

Reset

Save this search

Quick search

Text search

Reference ID search

Organisation search

Job Type

Occupational Areas

Match all | Match any

☐ Accountancy and financial management

☐ Banking, insurance and financial services

☐ Engineering

☐ IT and Telecoms

☐ Languages and culture

☐ Law, legal services and patents

☐ Logistics and transport

1 to 50 of 27 results

Sort by: Published (Descending)

Display by: Grid List

Education Services (ASD) Pre-School Tutors

Jonix

Dublin, Kildare, Meath | Salary: Competitive

Jonix Educational Services has been working with young children diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) since 2002. We currently have 8 centres located throughout Dublin, Kildare and Meath. Jonix operate specialised preschool classes that offer a unique and individualised learning experience. [more...](#)

Closes on 30-Sep-2021

Process Engineers (Graduate Opportunity) - Apply Asap| Year Round Recruitment

Intel

Kildare | Salary: Competitive

We lead the semiconductor industry by creating innovative technologies. As part of an Intel Engineering and Science team you will undergo a comprehensive training programme designed to support you. These Process Engineering roles are based in Leixlip. What you will do: Participate as part of a... [more...](#)

Closes on 31-Dec-2021

Telecoms Engineer (Graduate Opportunity) - Apply Asap Before 3/9/21

Cubix Telecom



Search



Queries



Events



Appointments



Jobs



Forms

Careers Service



Queries



Appointments



Careers News

Use the tabs at the top of the page to access -

[Careers Service website](#)

[Resources](#)

[Future Ready Connect](#)

rvise

Resources

Resources provided by the Careers Service | Maynooth University to support you in your career exploration.

CV



Other



Use ShortList.Me
Interview
Preparation Tool

Browse Jobs on Careers Connect

Search jobs for Maynooth University students & graduates

Go to Careers Connect

Search jobs, ask questions and book careers appointments

Careers Service

Careers Connect

Discover Your Career

Find a Job

Interviews

Postgraduate Study

Useful Resources

For Employers

For Staff

Graduate Career Stories

About Us

Archive

Contact

Events

View

Edit

Revisions

Access control

Supports for Students, Graduates & Employers

The Careers Service is open online.

Our team are available to help with your career questions.

Students / Graduates Do you need help with career planning, subject choice, postgraduate study, job search, CVs, interviews or other careers questions?

Ask questions, book career guidance appointments, search for jobs, find careers information. Find out how to [Connect with Careers](#) and take the next step in your career journey.

Careers Interest Tests



[Take the tests and explore what careers might interest you](#)

Careers Videos



Ask questions & Book Appointments on Careers Connect

Need career advice or don't know where to start?

Our Careers Advisers are available daily

Go to Careers Connect

Careers advisers are available daily - ask questions and book careers appointments on Careers Connect



Careers Service

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- [Clone content](#)

Careers Connect

Careers Connect is part of MU FutureConnect - your **Careers & Employability** portal, and is your one stop shop to engage with the Careers Service. On **Careers Connect** you can ask questions and/or book meetings with careers advisers and view our jobs and Events Listings. You can also set email alerts for jobs and events.

Current MU Registered Students (Undergraduate and Postgraduate)

[Login with your MU login details](#)

Once you have logged in to the system you can update your profile and if you wish, sign up for email alerts from us on advertised jobs and up-coming careers events.



[Send us your questions](#)



[Book Careers Appointments](#)

Any Questions?

The Careers Service team are here to help you.

Careers Connect

- ✓ Careers Information / Questions
- ✓ Careers Appointments

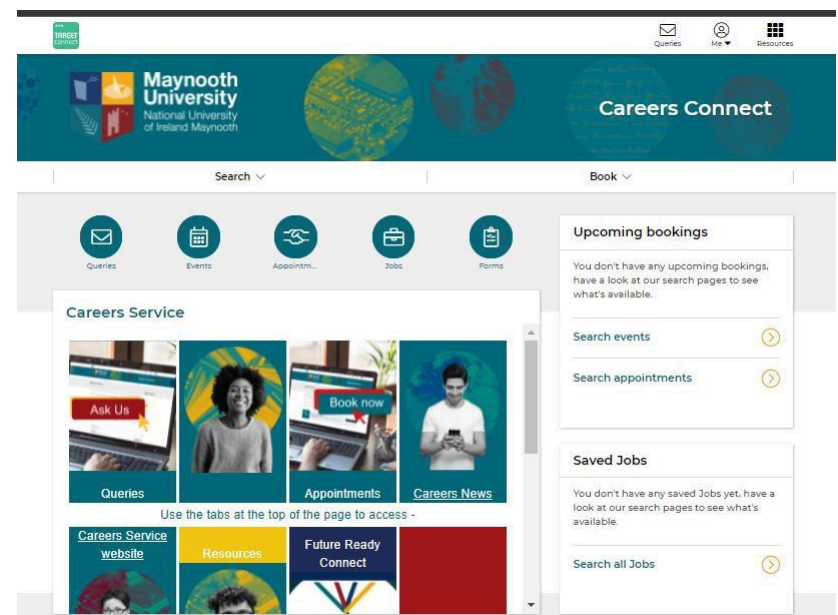
www.maynoothuniversity.ie/careers



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