



Durham
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Where can your Postgraduate Degree take you?

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Where can your postgraduate degree take you?

- Employability value of postgraduate study
- Developing skills as a postgraduate student
- Career options available to postgraduate students
- Support from Careers & Enterprise



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Employability value of postgraduate study



Postgraduate study and employability

- No guarantee that postgraduate study on its own will make you more employable but...
- Graduate Outcomes data indicates that postgraduate study does enhance employability
- Graduate Outcomes survey indicate that postgraduates are around **10% more likely to be in a professional occupational.**
- Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) 2020 report suggests postgraduates earn on average **18% more than first degree holders**, six months after graduation

Postgraduate careers		
Position	Graduate	Postgraduate (taught)
Managers, directors and senior officials	5%	7%
Professional occupations	63%	73%

Information in this table is based on data derived from the 2021-22 Graduate Outcomes survey, conducted by HESA. It reveals the destinations of UK university graduates after 15 months.

Postgraduate study and employability – Durham

- 88% of postgraduate leavers were in employment 15 months after graduation.
- 92% of postgraduate leavers were in high-skilled full-time employment.
- £41,000 was the median salary for postgraduate leavers in full-time employment.

Graduate Outcomes 2021-22 Durham Leavers (UK/EU Leavers)

Do employers value postgraduate degrees?

- Dependent on the type of employer and the role but postgraduate study can enhance your employability
- Generalist employers will not have specialist roles that require a postgraduate qualification. Doesn't mean they won't recognise value but **onus on you to communicate the value of your postgraduate qualification**
- Some employers, particularly in sectors requiring **knowledge workers/professionals**, are more likely to recognise postgraduate qualification and the associated skills and experience e.g. business/data analyst, management consultant
- Employers involved in areas requiring **specialist or technical skills, knowledge and experience** may actively seek to recruit postgraduates who have studied in aligned areas e.g. energy, environment, AI, market research, economics, international development.
- Postgraduate degree is a basic requirement in roles where professions are regulated (e.g. education, law, psychology, social work, town planning) but also in areas where **specialist knowledge and expertise** is required e.g. research science, public health, social research

Essential Requirements:

- Excellent oral and written English.
- Excellent time management skills.
- Qualifications relevant to social or environmental policy or research methods (graduate or postgraduate, for example but not limited to social sciences, economics or health economics, applied statistics, geography, environmental policy or management, political science, service design, psychology or sociology, public policy research or public administration).
- Experience of using a variety of methods (qualitative and/or quantitative) in research projects (either own project and/or as part of a team).
- Strong interest in UK policy, the improvement of public services and use of evidence in policy making.
- Intermediate or advanced computer user skills related to carrying out research and data analysis.



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Developing skills as a postgraduate student



Skills acquired from Postgraduate study – academic and cognitive skills

- Manage extensive reading lists
- Identify and interpret key information and texts
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Communicate complex topics and concepts
- Managing research projects
- Apply new research methodologies
- Develop new lab, fieldwork, or data analysis skills
- Presenting ideas in different ways and to different audiences
- Taking responsibility for learning
- Self-motivated and independent
- Subject understanding and knowledge
- Able to work with different types of data
- Make informed decisions based on the information available
- Find solutions to problems

Skills acquired from Postgraduate study – transferable skills

- **Effective communication** – Being able to express ideas with clarity in respect of writing, discussions and presentations.
- **Teamwork & Collaboration** – Ability to take on different roles in a team and work well with others to achieve aims and objectives.
- **Problem solving** – Identifying potential problems, assessing the risks and applying logical and creative thinking to come up with solutions.
- **Leadership** – Being able to motivate, inspire, and develop other people's strengths. Coordinating activities, delegating tasks and setting guidelines.
- **Project management** – The process of planning, monitoring and controlling in relation to a particular project.
- **Time management** – Ability to manage your own time and prioritise to be more productive and efficient in completing tasks.
- **Initiative** – Being proactive and enthusiastic, identifying opportunities, recognizing best practice and generating new ideas.
- **Adaptability** – Flexibility to work in different environments and teams on a range of projects and tasks.
- **Digital skills** – Familiarity with different digital tools and the ability to learn and adapt to new technology

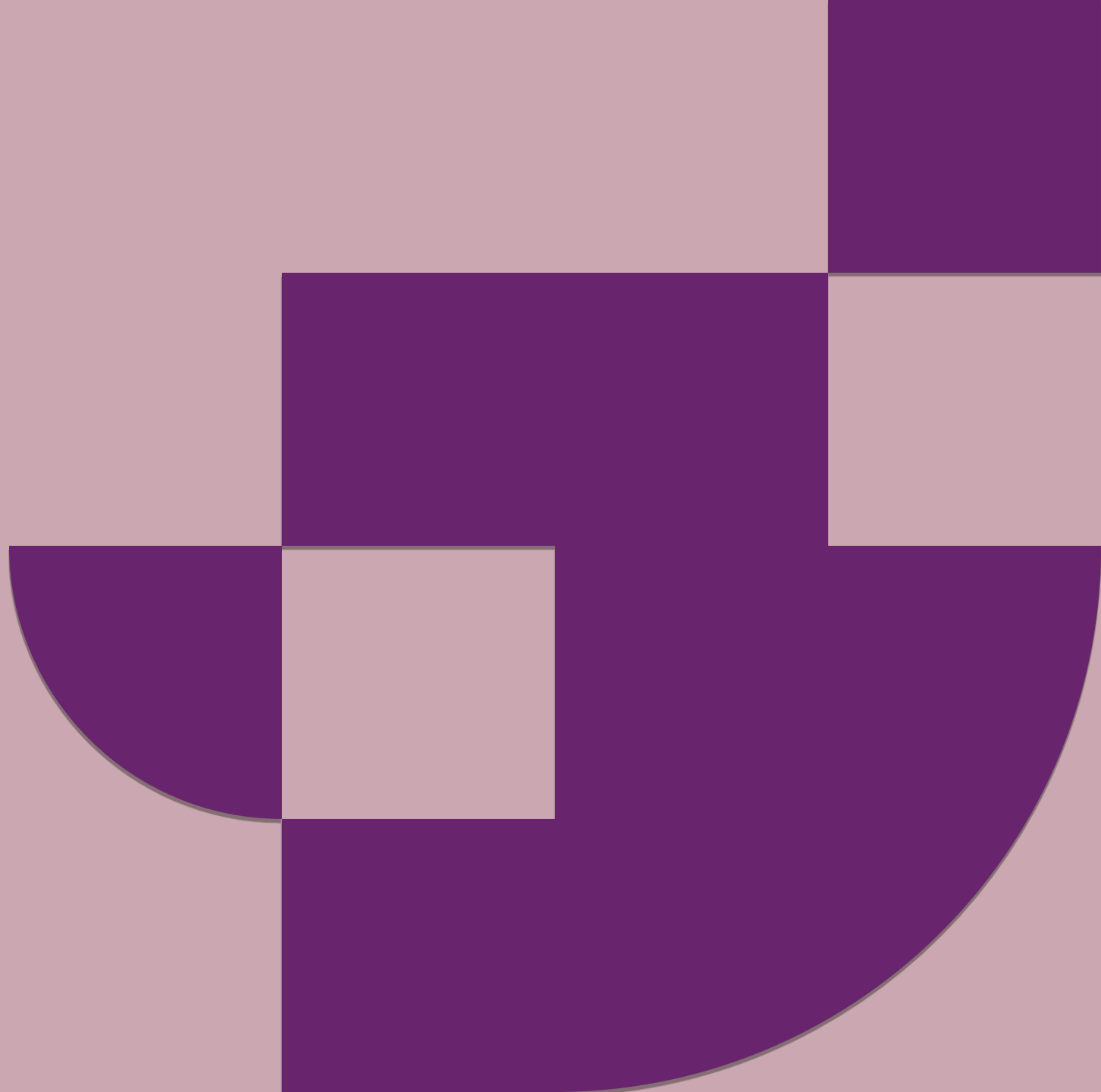
Skills acquired from Postgraduate study – building your evidence and professional profile

SKILL or ATTRIBUTE	EVIDENCE or EXAMPLE
Critical thinking and analysis	
Communicating to different audiences	
Managing own learning and development	

Personal Qualities:

- Ability to write skilfully and accurately summarise and synthesise information and evidence from a wide range of sources.
- Highly developed interpersonal / communication skills, and ability to work with a multidisciplinary team spread across the UK and Europe.
- Sound research and business ethics.
- Ability to manage own time and be flexible to handle multiple priorities, managing a varied workload to meet deadlines.
- High level of attention to detail and accuracy.
- Strong, demonstrable commitment to helping us build an inclusive team that values diversity.

Career options available to postgraduate students



Career Options

Graduate training schemes

- Structured training programme (1-3 years)
- General management schemes and functional schemes (e.g. HR, IT, R&D)

Direct entry roles

- Professional or associate professional/technical roles (depending on skills and experience)
- Graduate entry level roles and off-cycle internships

Specialist roles

- Require specific skills, knowledge and experience
- Opportunity to utilise postgraduate qualification

Career planning

- Engage in career planning from the outset of postgraduate study

Resources:

[Career Planner | What job should I do? | Prospects.ac.uk](#)

[Job sectors | Prospects.ac.uk](#)

[Careers advice: build your skills and get hired | targetjobs](#)

[What Can I Do With a Masters? | FindAMasters.com](#)

- Identify your career goals and develop an action plan
 - Skills audit
 - Understanding strengths and career preferences
 - Researching job roles – skills and experience requirements
 - Building your professional profile: CV, LinkedIn
 - Building your professional network – engaging with relevant employers
 - Engaging in job search
- Access support – use the services and support available from Careers & Enterprise

Support from Careers & Enterprise



Supporting your Career

- Careers information, resources and tools
- Work experience and placements
- Careers advice and guidance
- Enterprise support and development
- Employer events and opportunities

Employer Engagement - Opportunities

Over 6500 vacancies were published on CareersConnect in the 2023-24 academic year.

Opportunities include:

- Part-time jobs
- Graduate jobs
- Internships
- Placement years
- Durham Exclusive opportunities
- Positive action initiatives



Inspiring the extraordinary

Student Employment Service



Employer and Careers Events



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Summary Points

- Careers & Enterprise can support postgraduate students with career planning, skills development and employer networking opportunities
- Consider how a postgraduate programme will support your employability and career goals
- Consider other opportunities that will help you to develop your employability (e.g. extra-curricular activities, work experience, professional and skills development)
- Use Prospects to explore different career areas and gain insights into the labour market