

# STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

To successfully gain work you need to stand out from your competitors.

It is essential as you work through your degree that you gain the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes required to give you **'the edge'** on other applicants.

Following are our key recommendations to maximise your success in gaining graduate employment. Work toward completing as many of these suggestions as you can.

## ➤ **Develop your study skills and aim for good academic results**

Devote sufficient time to your studies. Make the most of the support provided by your lecturers, tutors, learning advisors and fellow students. Check the support and resources available through the [JCU Learning Centre](#).

Good results demonstrate competency in your area of study, a strong work ethic and commitment.

## ➤ **Get involved at JCU**

Get to know your lecturers, tutors, mentors and fellow students – they can be great support with your studies and valuable future contacts. Join your Student Club or Association and consider taking on a leadership role to enhance your skills. Become a [Student Mentor](#) or Student Ambassador.

Involvement provides a positive indication of the type of employee you will be.

## ➤ **Participate in activities outside of JCU**

Be involved in community groups. Pursue your interests e.g. sports, music, drama, environmental protection etc.

Employers look for well-rounded applicants who have evidence of involvement in **extracurricular activities**.

## ➤ **Develop your general work skills**

Consider [gaining part time and/or casual employment](#) whilst you are studying. Check [JCU CareerHub](#) for opportunities. Employers' value evidence of previous work, it gives them an indication of your potential to perform in their workforce.

Employers are particularly interested in the transferrable (general) work skills you have developed. Skills often sought include: interpersonal and communication skills; teamwork; analytical skills; reasoning and problem solving; and time management. Take every opportunity to develop these skills in your casual / part time work.

## ➤ **Consider volunteering or other forms of community service**

This can be a win-win situation. You provide your time, efforts and current skills to a community organisation. In return you develop your work skills, gain experience, build your networks and gain referees to add to your resume. [Volunteering](#) enables you to demonstrate your values and the causes you care about.

## ➤ **Identify employer expectations and work towards filling any gaps identified**

Talk to employers and scan online job vacancies to identify job opportunities and more importantly position requirements and employer expectations.

It is essential you work towards gaining the skills, knowledge and experience required for graduate positions to ensure you are competitive when it comes time to apply for employment. Work towards filling any gaps you identify.

## ➤ **Attend the JCU Careers Fair**

Hear about undergraduate job opportunities and future career paths at the annual [Careers Fair](#). Meet employers, develop industry contacts and identify employer expectations.

## ➤ **Build your networks – connect with professionals**

[Networking](#) is about building and maintaining professional relationships.

Participate in all opportunities to meet with employers whether in person or online. Attend the JCU Careers Fair, industry events and panels. Connect with employers on LinkedIn.

Through networking you will hear about undergraduate and graduate job opportunities and employers will hear about you.

## ➤ **Get LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is a free online networking site for professionals. [Develop a LinkedIn profile](#) to ensure you have a professional online presence and connect with industry professionals.

Regularly update your profile with the knowledge, skills and experiences you are gaining.

Employers advertise opportunities via their LinkedIn sites and search for potential employees via LinkedIn.

## ➤ **Compete in student competitions and challenges**

Employers look for risk takers and innovators and will be impressed to hear your stories about your initiative, problem solving, project management and team work skills developed through participation in these [challenges](#).

## ➤ **Become a student member of your professional association**

Join the [professional association](#) relevant to your degree. Student membership is often free or at a reduced cost.

The benefits include: access to mentor programs, industry specific information and publications, career information and professional development including conferences, seminars and online training.

Membership demonstrates your commitment to your future profession.

## ➤ **Gain course relevant experience**

[Course relevant experience](#) enables you to get your foot in the door, gain experience and skills and demonstrate your talent and potential to future employers. Plus you gain referees for future job applications.

Employers often prefer to recruit someone they know and have seen perform or who have evidence of the application of knowledge and skills gained in their studies in a work context.

Many courses at JCU offer Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities which may include placements, practicums, fieldwork, internships and/or projects.

Gain additional experience through volunteer work, internships, cadetships, vacation programs or work experience.

## ➤ **Follow employers' social media pages**

Employers use LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat to promote employment opportunities and connect with future staff. By [following their social media](#), you grow to understand their company culture and expectations and are able to more effectively market yourself.

Cultural alignment and values fit between the applicant and the organisation is a priority when determining the best applicant for the job.

## ➤ **Undertake additional professional development**

Gain extra skills and knowledge to increase your competitiveness and demonstrate commitment to your future profession. Pick up specific skills and competencies (e.g. database management) that are often required in your career area.

JCU subscribes to Lynda.com (a training company of LinkedIn). If you log in through the [University Library website](#) the courses are free.

Keep a record of your professional development – add it to your resume and LinkedIn.

## ➤ **Ensure your job search strategies and application skills are current and well developed**

Make use of JCU Careers and Employability resources and support.

- Access our online resources [www.jcu.edu.au/careers](http://www.jcu.edu.au/careers)
- Like our [JCU Careers Facebook](#) page
- Organise a one to one appointment
- Call in to our drop in service

Staff can assist you to **stand out from the crowd**.