

# STAND OUT IN EMPLOYERS' EYES

To successfully gain work you need to explain how your uniqueness will benefit the employer.

It is essential, as you work through your degree, that you develop the self-awareness, as you gain the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes that employers deem necessary. What is your personal story that connects these experiences? What motivated you to pursue them? What did you learn from them? How can you use what you had learnt to help the employer achieve their goals while continuing to develop yourself? Your answers to these questions will drive your recruitment success.

Following are our key recommendations to maximise your graduate employability. Complete as many as you can.

## ➤ **Demonstrate your communication, thinking, and collaboration skills through good academic results**

Devote sufficient time to your studies. Ask for the support provided by your lecturers, tutors, learning advisors student mentors and fellow students. [JCU Learning Centre](#) can help too.

Most workplaces seek effective and adaptable team players so treat your group assignments, reports and presentations as an opportunity to practice negotiating the complex human dynamics to achieve your team's goals.

Good results also demonstrate your ability to learn quickly, competency in your area of expertise, a strong work ethic and commitment.

## ➤ **Get actively involved at JCU**

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

Involvement demonstrates your interest and desire to apply what you learn in the complex reality to make a difference in real life.

## ➤ **Study Abroad**

Consider a [short or a semester-long stay overseas](#) as part of your degree. Build your global acumen, cross-cultural communication skills and cultural sensitivity; show adaptability and resilience; develop your ability to think on your feet dealing with unfamiliar situations and environments.

## ➤ **Volunteer and pursue your interests through extracurricular activities**

Employers look for well-rounded individuals who are sociable, have variety of interests, and can balance work and life sustainably.

[Volunteering](#) is a great way to show in action what causes you care about and thus demonstrate your values. You provide your time, efforts and current skills to a community organisation. In return you develop your workplace skills, gain experience, build your networks and meet future referees to add to your resume.

## ➤ **Compete in student competitions**

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

## ➤ **Develop your workplace skills**

Consider [a part time and/or casual job](#) whilst you are studying. Check [JCU CareerHub](#) for opportunities. Employers highly [value part time work](#) as a proof of your ability to act in a professional manner, follow workplace policies (health and safety, non-discrimination, non-harassment) and display transferrable skills such as: interpersonal and communication skills; teamwork; analytical skills; reasoning and problem solving; and time management.

## ➤ **Gain course relevant experience**

[Course relevant workplace experience](#) enables you to get your foot in the door, gain targeted experience and skills and showcase your abilities and attitude to future employers. You

can also gain professional 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 course relevant experience through internships, cadetships, vacation programs or work experience. Your previous involvement in student clubs, volunteering, competitions and part time work will help you compete for those opportunities.

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

Talk to employers (e.g. fairs) and scan online job vacancies to identify organisations, job titles, job tasks, selection criteria (skills and experience required). Save these for future reference. Work systematically towards filling any gaps you identify.

### ➤ **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 (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter). Attend the industry events and panels on campus or at the local Chamber of Commerce.

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

### ➤ **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 mentoring 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.

### ➤ **Attend the JCU Careers Fair**

Meet employers, develop rapport with recruiters, ask them about selection criteria, and future career paths at the annual [Careers Fair](#). Connect with them on LinkedIn to keep in touch.

### ➤ **Get LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is a free online networking site for professionals. [Develop a LinkedIn profile](#) to ensure you have a professional online presence, join interest groups and connect with industry professionals as well as recruiters.

Regularly update your profile with the job titles and tasks, skills and professional development you are gaining and follow organisations of interest.

Employers advertise opportunities and search for potential employees via LinkedIn.

### ➤ **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 specific skills and knowledge to increase your competitiveness and demonstrate commitment to your future profession.

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

Keep the record of your professional development updated on your resume and LinkedIn.

### ➤ **Ensure your job search strategies and application skills are effective**

Use JCU Careers and Employability support:

- JCU [Careers & Employability](#) website
- Like our [JCU Careers Facebook](#) page
- [Organise](#) a one to one appointment
- Come to our [drop in service](#)

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