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| COMMON vocabulary Used in the uk job market  |
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Introduction

We understand that engaging with the UK job market for the first time can be daunting, and the vocabulary used can often be new and confusing. To help you with these terms, the Careers Service has created this glossary resource. Whether you're a student or a graduate, this list aims to demystify terms that you may find confusing, and provide clear definitions to help you navigate your career journey. If you’d like to know more about a particular term, click on the relevant link to access related information, resources, and support.

**Job Applications – Documents and Activities**

**[Assessment centre](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/assessmentcentres/)** – An assessment centre is a series of tasks and activities that evaluate your suitability for the job. Lasting between half-a-day up and two days, this is often the final stage of a graduate recruitment process. There may be a mixture of individual and group exercises, such as group discussions, case studies, presentations, and tests.

**[Cover letter](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/cl/)** - A cover letter is a document sent alongside your CV when applying for jobs. It acts as a personal introduction and helps to sell your application. A cover letter gives you the chance to explain to an employer what motivated you to apply and why you're the best candidate for the job.

**[CV](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/cv/)** – A CV is a short, written summary of your skills, achievements, and experience related to your desired role. You use it in the first stage of applying for jobs. In countries such as the US, this document can be called a ‘resume’, although the term CV is far more common in the UK.

**[LinkedIn](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/job-search/linkedin/)** – LinkedIn is a professional networking platform used widely in the UK, which can be a great tool for job searching and networking with people to find information about work experience opportunities. You can create a professional profile on LinkedIn, connect with industry contacts and alumni from your degree programme, post about professional or academic achievements, and search for jobs or work experience. The Careers Service can help you to build and review a LinkedIn profile.

**[Psychometric tests](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/psychometric/)** - Employers use these (mostly online) tests to identify and evaluate applicants’ skills, knowledge, and personality types. There are several types of psychometric tests including verbal reasoning (reading), numerical (math), situational judgment, and personality assessments. They are often used in graduate recruitment, often during the preliminary screening stage, or later as part of an assessment centre.

**[References](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/faqs/references/)** – A reference is a document, usually an email or letter, confirming a record of employment or academic studies. There are two main types of reference document: **academic** and **employment**. An academic reference is used when applying for postgraduate study. An employment reference can be requested by a prospective employer during the later stages of a recruitment process, or after you have been offered a role.

For employment references, at least one reference will be requested by employers as part of the application process for work opportunities. This document can be provided by a current or previous employer, academic, volunteering supervisor or professional contact. You will usually not need to provide this document until the final stages of the hiring process, but you should contact your prospective referees before applying.

It’s worth noting that an academic who knows you well can provide references for a job, as well as postgraduate study applications. A reference document can include the dates of your employment/studies, and details about your skills, ability and experience.

For more information about requesting an academic reference, contact your [School Hub](https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/support-hubs/) team or academic advisor.

**[Speculative application](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/job-search/speculativejobsearch/)** – This approach to job-hunting involves proactively approaching an employer to seek out opportunities that have not been advertised. This can be effective across any sector, but particularly in areas where not all vacancies are advertised (e.g., journalism, broadcasting, publishing, television, and film).

**Getting Work Experience**

**[Careers Fair](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/events/fairs/)** – In the UK, Careers Fair events usually involve a large gathering of employers from a wide range of sectors. These events are a valuable chance to chat with employers, and to find out more about different opportunities being offered by employers, including work placements, internships and graduate roles. At UK Careers Fairs it is rare to be interviewed for roles – the focus of the event is around networking and exploring different career sector opportunities.

**[Insight day/week](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/internships/1styearopps/)** - An insight day/week is a short period of work experience designed to give insight into life at a particular company. Aimed at first and second-year students, they typically last between one to ten working days and take place during university holidays.

**[Internship](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/internships/)** – A period of work experience offered by an organisation. Internships last for a fixed period of anywhere between a week and 12 months and are typically undertaken by students and graduates looking to gain relevant skills and experience in a particular sector, role, or company.

**[Mentoring](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/services/mentoring/)** – Mentoring refers to a collaborative partnership which provides opportunity for an experienced individual to pass on information and advice to someone with less knowledge of that career area.

A mentoring partnership usually consists of two roles: the **mentee**, the person who is seeking advice and information and the **mentor**, the person who is providing that advice and information.

Mentorship can be formally or informally organised, with specific schemes organised by education providers, workplaces or by charities.

**MGT** – MGT, or [**Manchester Graduate Talent**](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/graduatejobs/mgt/), is a graduate internship scheme run by the University of Manchester. This scheme is for University of Manchester graduates only. The scheme offers paid and full-time internship opportunities both within the University, and in small-to-medium sized companies around Greater Manchester. These roles last on average between 9-12 months. You can apply for these opportunities via [CareerConnect](https://careerconnect.manchester.ac.uk/unauth).

**[Placement/Industrial Experience](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/placement/)** – While internships are usually undertaken over the summer months or after graduation to gain experience in a particular field, work placements are taken as part of a degree. For further information on placement years or years in industry, speak to your Academic Advisor.

**[Shadowing](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/workshadowing/)** - Job or work shadowing involves observing a professional to gain a better understanding of the role. Students and graduates often use work shadowing to get experience of the day-to-day realities of a particular job.

**Employment**

**[Direct Entry Role](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/graduatejobs/faqs/)** – Graduate-level direct entry roles are jobs that allow recent graduates to enter directly into their chosen career sector. Direct entry roles comprise most of the graduate opportunities within the UK. You can apply for these types of roles all year round, and most graduates apply for these roles either when they are about to leave university, or after they have left.

Direct entry jobs are more varied than **Graduate Schemes**, as you can find positions in businesses across all industry sectors. The hiring process may be less competitive than traditional graduate schemes, but relevant work experience and a degree are often regarded essential. Although training will be provided to help new recruits settle into direct entry roles, the training may not be as structured as that which would be offered by a graduate scheme.

**FTE** - FTEstands for full-time equivalent. It is a unit of measurement used to compare the working hours of employees in a business. For example, at a company where 40 working hours per week is considered full-time, an employee working 40 hours per week has an FTE of 1.0, while a part-time employee who works 20 hours per week has an FTE of 0.5.

**[Graduate scheme](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/graduates/graduate-schemes/) -** an entry-level job with an employer that doubles in function as a training program. Usually lasting between one to two years, schemes vary depending on the company. Some schemes may involve ‘rotations’ across different departments, whereas other schemes may focus on one specific area. Successful completion of some schemes may lead to guaranteed jobs, but this may not be the case for all schemes.

**[National Insurance (NI) number](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/paytax/)** - A National Insurance number (also known as an NI number or NINO) is a unique 10-digit number issued to people in the United Kingdom who are eligible to work. You need an NI number if you want to work in the UK, claim certain benefits, or start a self-employed business.

You can apply for an NI number online or by post. If you are applying online, you will need to provide your name, date of birth, and address. If you are applying by post, you will need to complete a form and send it to the National Insurance number helpline.

**Pro Rata** - A Latin term that means "in proportion." It is used to describe a situation where something is divided or distributed in proportion to a certain factor, such as time or effort. For example, if the standard hours for a role is 40, but an employee works 75% of those hours (equivalent to 30 hours,) their salary may be prorated. This means that they would only be paid for the hours they worked, equivalent to 75% of the salary of an employee who worked 40 hours in the same role.

**[Reasonable Adjustments](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/equality/disabilityandmentalhealth/) –** Candidates that have a disability or long-term health condition can request ‘reasonable adjustments’ to a recruitment process, to ensure that they are not treated less favourably than non-disabled applicants. Examples of reasonable adjustments include additional time to complete an assessment or requesting a face-to-face interview instead of one over the telephone. For further information on reasonable adjustments, see the[**MyPlus: Applying to Roles with a Disability pathway on CareerConnect.**](https://careerconnect.manchester.ac.uk/leap/pathways/preview-pathway.html?pathway=39)

**Sponsor** - A company/organisation licensed by the Home Office to assign a Certificate of Sponsorship to a worker. Depending on the visa route that a graduate takes, and the role applied for, a sponsorship may or may not be required. Sponsorship permits a worker or student to legally reside in the UK for the duration of their sponsorship by a sponsor. It’s important for international students to research and understand the different post-study visa routes available to them before applying for work opportunities. You can start this research on the [**International work and study section**](https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/international/)of our website.

The University of Manchester acts as the sponsor for its current students under the Student or Tier 4 visa, which allows limited working rights in the UK during a student’s time studying at university. It’s extremely important for students to understand the terms of their visa before applying for any paid work, internships, unpaid work, voluntary work, or otherwise during their studies. Further information is available on the [**Student Immigration Team website.**](https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas/working/working-during-your-studies/)