Resources for Researching Employers

Introduction

This leaflet provides a list of resources to help you research employers and the labour market. You can use them to gain an overview of your chosen industry or employment sector in preparation for making speculative job enquiries, filling in application forms and attending interviews. Most employers are looking for candidates who can give evidence that they have researched their organisation, its products or services and the industry they represent. These general labour market resources will point you in the direction of more specific websites, journals and industry associations to research your chosen sector or employer in greater depth.

When researching employers, particularly before an interview, don’t confine your research to the graduate recruitment site; look at all the organisation’s information on the site and if it is a publicly quoted company, look at the recent company reports for financial information. In addition, research competitors and read the relevant business press to see where the employer lies in the league tables and find out about general developments in the field. In addition, most employers will be expecting good knowledge of current and financial affairs.

This leaflet would be useful used in tandem with the Guide to Commercial Awareness handout which provides a more in-depth approach to researching a company or sector more relevant when preparing for an interview. This is also available through Careers Network.

Sources of Labour Market Information

The following links provide labour market information and intelligence across a range of industries.

Primary data sources

www.statistics.gov.uk - Free access to data sets including labour market (Labour Force Survey, Public Sector Employment etc).

www.nomisweb.co.uk - Provides labour market statistics from official sources for local areas throughout the UK including the Annual Business Inquiry.

www.hesa.ac.uk - The Higher Education Statistics Agency. Collects, analyses and disseminates data on higher education including the annual destinations survey.

Sources of general labour market information

- Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards www.fisss.org The Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards represents, promotes and supports the 21 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) across the UK.
- The Association of Graduate Recruiters www.agr.org.uk The Association of Graduate Recruiters produces labour market reports concerning graduate employment which are free to members and available to purchase online for non-members.
• Business services at the Library of Birmingham  
http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/article/businessservices/businessservices  
The Library offers free business information, advice and a planning service. To access some services, you must be a Library Member.

• Careers Network Vacancy Database  www.as.bham.ac.uk/careers  
The Careers online vacancy database allows you to search employers who regularly place graduate vacancies with the University. As well as current opportunities you can find contact information or search for employers in a particular sector or region who have recruited graduates previously.

• Careers on Canvas – Careers A to Z  https://birmingham.instructure.com/courses/12569  
Resources on graduate employment areas,

• Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development  www.cipd.co.uk  
The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development produce Labour Market Outlook a quarterly LMI report.

• Confederation of British Industry - CBI  www.cbi.org.uk  
The Confederation of British Industry is one of the UK's leading independent employers’ organisations. It produces a range of business and industry surveys which are available online to members. The annual Employment Trends Survey is available in hard copy from their online bookshop.

• Department for Business Innovation and Skills-Business Sectors  www.bis.gov.uk/sectors  
The Business Sectors pages of this Government site provide national industry snapshots across a range of business and industry sectors.

• Expertise in Labour Mobility  www.labourmobility.com  
A research and training institution which produces labour market information in more than 40 countries. Available to businesses and individuals, the organisation also runs workshops for students on various aspects of working overseas. There are also published guides available about working in different countries.

• The Higher Education Academy  www.heacademy.ac.uk  
The Higher Education Academy website resources section has downloadable reports on issues affecting the graduate labour market.

• National Guidance Research Forum LMI Future Trends  
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/ngrf/lmifuturetrends/  
This site for guidance professionals offers labour market information on 30 sectors and occupational groups.

• Prospects  www.prospects.ac.uk  
Provides information on a range of graduate employers, graduate destination reports as well as details of graduate employment conditions overseas. They also run the ‘Chatlive’ initiative – an online 5 day programme which enables students and graduates seeking employment to chat to company representatives.

• UK Business Park  www.ukbusinesspark.co.uk  
UK Business Park produce a subscription only newsletter called UK Business Activity Report: a weekly business news and sales leads service providing company information. Their online service however is free and allows you to see current developments in specific companies by sector.

• UK Commission for Employment and skills  http://www.ukces.org.uk/  
Publicly funded, industry-led organisation providing strategic leadership on skills and employment issues in the UK. Provides labour market information.

• Warwick Institute for Employment Research.  www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier  
The Institute engages in labour market research at national, regional and local level with some European comparison studies.
West Midlands and regional Labour Market Information

Want to know more about working in the West Midlands? The following websites can provide useful information about regional development priorities, regeneration projects, graduate retention, higher-level skills and technology initiatives.

- **Birmingham Forward** - [www.birminghamforward.co.uk](http://www.birminghamforward.co.uk)
  A membership organisation that exists to provide information about Birmingham businesses and to promote Birmingham.

- **CWN** [www.cwn.org.uk/business/index.html](http://www.cwn.org.uk/business/index.html)
  An independent Website and newsletter about Coventry and Warwickshire

- **British Chambers of Commerce** [www.britishchambers.org.uk](http://www.britishchambers.org.uk)
  The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) is the national body of 52 accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, representing 92,000 businesses.

- **West Midlands Regional Observatory**
  A research organisation providing information and data about the West Midlands Region. Now part of Marketing Birmingham, [www.marketingbirmingham.com](http://www.marketingbirmingham.com)

- **Connect WM** [www.connectwm.com/](http://www.connectwm.com/)
  A business networking organisation.

- **Birmingham Big City Plan** [http://bigcityplan.birmingham.gov.uk/](http://bigcityplan.birmingham.gov.uk/)
  Information about plans for the city and new growth areas.

- **Birmingham Economy** [www.birmingham economy.org.uk](http://www.birmingham economy.org.uk)
  Information about all aspects of Birmingham's economy, including employment information.

- **Birmingham Post Business pages** [www.birminghampost.net/birmingham-business](http://www.birminghampost.net/birmingham-business)

Business in the media

Websites

- **BBC Business** [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/)
  This BBC site provides topical information by business sector and geographical area.

- **Reuters** [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com)
  Sections dedicated to national and international business and technology news.

- **Bloomberg** [www.bloomberg.com](http://www.bloomberg.com)
  International business news site

- **The Economist** [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)

Newspapers

It is a good idea to read the business pages of one of the quality newspapers regularly.

- **The Financial Times** [www.ft.com](http://www.ft.com)
- **The Daily Telegraph**: [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)
- **The Guardian**: [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)
- **The Times**: [www.thetimes.co.uk](http://www.thetimes.co.uk)
Regional newspaper business pages:
- Birmingham Post - [www.birminghampost.net](http://www.birminghampost.net)
- Birmingham Mail - [www.birminghammail.net](http://www.birminghammail.net)
- Shropshire [www.shropshirestar.com](http://www.shropshirestar.com)
- Staffordshire [www.thisisstaffordshire.co.uk](http://www.thisisstaffordshire.co.uk)
- Worcestershire [www.thisisworcester.co.uk](http://www.thisisworcester.co.uk)
- Herefordshire [www.thisishereford.co.uk](http://www.thisishereford.co.uk)

University of Birmingham Library Services resources

Current students and staff can access the online catalogue of library resources via [http://findit.bham.ac.uk](http://findit.bham.ac.uk). Search Findit@Bham for the following resources:

Useful databases for company information include:
- Annual Report Gallery: Thousands of companies’ annual reports
- Companies House: To find information about UK registered companies.
- Fame: Information on UK company turnover, profit etc, number of employees and also the opportunity to see peer companies.
- Amadeus: A pan-European database containing the turnover, profit, number of employees for millions of companies and the opportunity to see peer companies.
- Business Source Premier: Selected company reports and full text articles
- Northcote: Free database of UK companies listed on the London Stock Exchange

Useful databases for Journals & Newspapers include:
- Nexis UK: Professional and business newspaper articles national and international
- ABI/INFORM Global: Full-text journal articles
- MarketLine: Company and industry profiles
- Key Note: Industry reports which include company profiles of large companies