English Literature

The sectors that most English graduates are drawn to include: Publishing, Journalism, Media and Internet and the Creative Arts and Design sectors. Charities and the Voluntary sector as well as the Public Sector also appeal to many English students’ values. Beyond these highly relevant areas you may find yourself venturing into Marketing or Advertising, Retail and often Education. These links and you will find a sector overview showing how the sector breaks down, the main graduate recruiters, characteristics of working in the sector and key current issues as well as lists of job roles available in the sector. Although it may not seem a logical link, English Literature students can do well in business areas such as professional services, management and other related areas.

Roles

Each job title links through to a broad job description, salary and conditions, entry requirements, typical recruiters and links to further, pre-assessed useful information.

- Editorial Assistant
- Broadcast Journalist
- Media Planner
- Newspaper Journalist
- Writer
- Librarian
- Public Relations Officer
- English as a Foreign Language Teacher
- Lexicographer
- Advertising Account Executive
- Advertising Copywriter
- Publishing Copy-Editor/Proof-Reader
- Arts Administrator
- Higher Education Lecturer
- Marketing Executive
- Retail Buyer

Finding Opportunities

Many of the above roles are often competitive, but not impossible to access. To work in media, publishing or a career using your writing skills, it will require you to have evidence of writing outside of your degree e.g. leaflets for charities, Spark*, Junction 11, local radio, work experience in publishing companies etc.

To work in museums, prior volunteering experience is essential, so secure some during your degree. The University also takes many students on as volunteers in one of its museums so make sure you check MERL Volunteering.

To work in teaching you will need to gain relevant experience of volunteering in schools whilst you have been at university. The University runs the Students in Schools scheme which will place you in a local school for a couple of hours a week for 10 weeks. Museum Education Officers, Arts Administrators and Heritage Managers do not require a relevant postgraduate qualification, but having one, plus experience, will make you more competitive. Many heritage properties, galleries, PR agencies and art festivals offer internships which is an excellent way to try out a career area before committing to it, check their websites for opportunities.

If you plan to become an academic, then a PhD is essential and you can get experience through the University Research Opportunities Programme (UROP). Commercial roles such as buying and marketing do not require...
a postgraduate qualification, but seeking out work experience during your degree is important and studying a professional qualification on the job later on will help you progress.

- The Public Relations Consultants Association (PRCA) provides careers information about PR and advertises internships and graduate jobs.
- The Institute of Advertising Practitioners (IPA) also provides excellent information about the different job roles within advertising, advice on how to get in and current vacancies.
- The Young Society of Publishers (YSP) has information and advice for people wanting to break into publishing and job vacancies.
- The National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) has excellent information regarding working in journalism and the different roles available as well as accredited training courses.
- The Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC) has information about multiplatform journalism training including information about training bursaries and awards.
- The Museums Association provides careers information and jobs listings.
- For speculative applications access lists of potential museums and galleries using the Museums and Galleries Yearbook.
- Budding Archivists should use the Archon Directory for speculative applications and the Archives and Records Association’s ‘Guidance on Work Experience Placements’ for listings of opportunities and also for listings of approved postgraduate courses.
- For academic roles look at FindaPhD for possible PhD opportunities and related advice and eventually Jobs.ac.uk for academic posts and post doc opportunities.
- Look for marketing roles try MAD and Marketing Week and for buying roles try InRetail and Retail Week.

Further Reading

For information on museums and galleries head to the Arts Council website and the Museums Association. To find out about volunteering at the University’s museum try contacting MERL; MERL has also produced a series of YouTube videos on careers in museums and archives.
- For jobs within charities, public sector and NGOs try JobsGoPublic.
- Publishers is a great website to find publishers to approach for work experience or vacancies.
- The Law Society gives a great overview of legal careers.
- Finding ethical jobs at Ethical-Jobs.
- Finding jobs in international development at the ThirdSector.
- To find media jobs (particularly media sales) look at MediaWeekJobs.