

# VARSITY

Guide to Careers 2021-22





# SOLVE PROBLEMS. SAVE LIVES.

Software  
Developer: **£50k**

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Business  
Analyst: **£50k**

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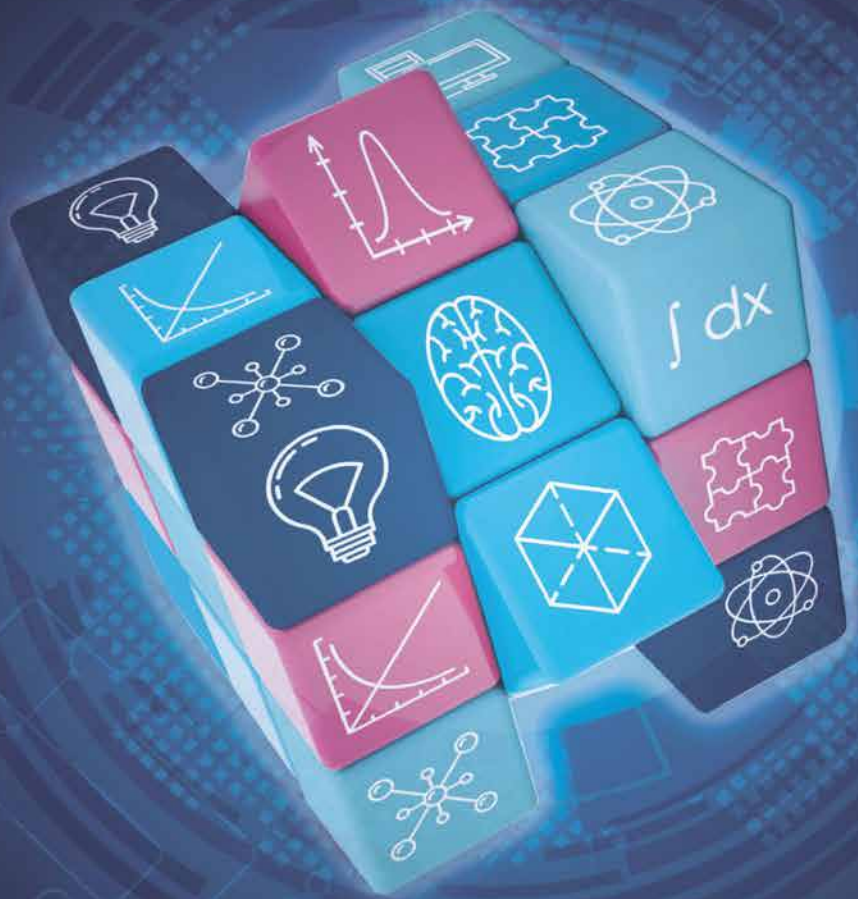
Technical  
Engineer: **£50k**

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Product Support  
Specialist: **£28k**

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Account  
Manager: **£50k**



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# Welcome to the latest edition of the Varsity Guide to Careers!

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There remains no doubt that many graduates will be facing a tough few years ahead, so we have opted to continue to take a slightly different approach with the Careers Guide this year. We are still, pleased and proud to feature introductions to some of the top firms, graduate schemes and post graduate education opportunities worldwide.

In addition though, like last year's guide we have again decided to reach out to a few Cambridge graduates from over the last ten years or so, and asked them to write about their own experiences since leaving "the bubble". Some of them have taken less obvious paths since finishing at Cambridge and we hope that you enjoy reading about their experiences! Like last year, we've brought these articles together under the broad heading of "Finding my way".

We all hope you find our publication useful. Your friends here at Varsity wish you all every success with your degrees and whatever you choose to do next!

**Mark**

Just as the world is beginning to seem normal again after the upheavals and disruptions caused by the pandemic, it can seem daunting to be faced with choosing what to do with the rest of our lives. Some of our peers may have used the last twenty months to reflect on their skillsets and interests, but some of us are clinging to our renewed freedoms, while career decisions are the last thing on our minds.

The battle of pubs, socialising and parties vs. CVs, LinkedIn and job applications is upon us. We hope that the experiences of some of our alumni, detailed in this Careers Guide, will help to make this process less of an internal struggle. You don't have to have it all worked out straight after graduation, as they certainly didn't.

**Amy**



# TPP

TPP is a global digital health company. With more than 7,600 organisations using their solutions to care for over 50 million patients, their software is used across all health and social care settings, including GPs, emergency departments, hospitals and mental health services.

Their technology helps improve people's lives across the world, whether it is scheduling immunisations for millions of children, allowing doctors to manage complex care for elderly patients, helping governments with the prevention of outbreaks, or developing new machine learning algorithms for the early diagnosis of disease. TPP is committed to helping tackle global health challenges, working with governments to deliver the technology required for the future of healthcare.

No other company has a digital healthcare solution on this scale. Their database is one of the largest in the world. It processes a billion transactions daily - more than the London Stock Exchange and Visa combined.

TPP has been consistently recognised as an outstanding graduate employer. In both 2017 and 2018 they were awarded the "Top Company for Graduates to Work For" by The JobCrowd, and in 2021 they were named the "Top IT Development and Consulting" company to work for! For the last three years, they have also been named in The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers list.

Over direct work experience, TPP values graduates who are keen to tackle challenges and solve real-world problems as part of a dynamic team. The company provides graduates with an excellent starting salary, fantastic benefits, and outstanding annual pay reviews.

With offices ideally located in a vibrant suburb of Leeds, TPP is a great place for graduates to learn, develop, and begin their career in one of the UK's largest, most exciting, and fastest growing cities.



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## Procter & Gamble

Day 1. It's something everyone experiences when they join a new company, whether they're a student, a recent graduate or a seasoned professional. P&G's Day 1 starts with you doing something that matters - making an impact on the world, P&G brands, and your career.

Nearly five billion times a day, P&G brands such as Ariel®, Fairy®, Gillette®, Head & Shoulders®, Oral-B® and Pampers® touch people's lives globally. P&G aspires to build a better world for all of us - with equal voice and equal representation for everyone and by being a leader in environmental sustainability.

P&G is the largest Consumer Goods Company in the world. We have operations in about 80 countries, building 65 trusted brands that make life better for five billion consumers in more than 180 countries. So it's not surprising that we offer opportunities for people of almost every skill set. From Sales to Brand Managers to

Engineers to Scientists and more, it takes a lot of very different people to bring our products to life—95,000 in fact! Every career area matters, every team makes an impact, and every single person does something that matters, from Day 1 and every day. P&G offers a career with responsibility, and a variety of challenging roles that develop skills alongside support from world class, industry recognised training and coaching. We recruit the finest people and develop talent almost exclusively from within. Following a successful internship, placement or career academy, we hire graduates into permanent roles with the expectation that they become one of P&G's future leaders... maybe even the next CEO.

Find out more about the daily life of our graduates by following us on Instagram or Twitter using **@pggradsuk**

To apply for a role with us and start your Day 1, visit **pgcareers.com**



**DAY 1.**

Nearly five billion times a day, P&G Brands such as Ariel, Fairy, Gillette, Head & Shoulders, Oral B and Pampers touch people's lives globally. We are one of the world's largest consumer goods companies, and aspire to build a better world for us all.

We hire based on the potential we see in people. At P&G, you'll be trusted to dive right in, take the lead, use your initiative, and build billion-dollar brands. We recruit the finest people and develop talent almost exclusively from within.

**Ready to get started ?**

Visit **PGCareers.com** and follow our grads on Instagram and Twitter @PGGradsUK



# Procter & Gamble

## Graduate Q&A

**Navya Ravulapalli** Studied History at Robinson College.

### Why did you choose P&G?

Although I'd tried several different career options during internships, such as consulting or law, nothing seemed to quite fit. After speaking to several people from P&G at a careers fair, I realised that the qualities that I'd most appreciated from other jobs such as creativity, analysis and early responsibility were all offered here. Everyone I met was really invested in getting to know you as an individual throughout the interview process, and there is a huge investment in graduates through the highly-respected training programme. The final Commercial Careers Academy was an amazing way to try out the role through a case study, and to see the impact that the huge brands at P&G have on everyday consumers.

### How did you decide which role to apply for?

I knew that I was interested in working in Sales or Brand from the start as they suited my previous experiences, such as being on the Ball Committee or volunteering with Pink Week. Watching the videos on the website and YouTube about what a typical day would look like, as well as speaking to as many people across functions as possible were the best ways to truly understand what the different roles involved. The ability to gain ownership of your business from early on, negotiate with external suppliers and work with a multi-million pound budget from Day 1 attracted me to sales specifically.

### What is the work/life balance like at your company?

P&G places a huge emphasis on ensuring that all employees find the right balance for them. Alongside options for flexible hours and working from home, there are also many social activities on offer to get involved in. As well as several sports clubs including football and netball, P&G also has a band and a dedicated network for new/recent grads which

puts on socials and training every 3 months. There are also many charitable and community initiatives, such as from providing careers advice to disadvantaged students to raising money or volunteering with our charity of the year – this year it's Little Roo, a neonatal care provider.

One of the highlights of the year is the annual Football World Cup, where employees from around the world come together for a weekend – the most recent one was in Croatia! P&G is a *build from within* company, which means they encourage a healthy work/life balance to build a long and sustainable career rather than burning out early.

### What do you enjoy most about your work?

Definitely the people that I get to work with on a daily basis. There is such a variety of people, both across functions and even doing the same role. Everyone is passionate about what they do, and more than happy to take time out of their day to help you or even just to catch up! You get exposure to employees at different stages of their career as a new graduate hire, since you're assigned a buddy who typically started a year before you, as well as a more senior mentor to help you develop your career how you want it.

### What's your top tip on applying for P&G?

Don't be afraid to ask questions as it's so important to really understand what your chosen role involves. By speaking to as many people as possible during careers events, you can truly understand whether P&G is right for you as well as gain a better insight into the company culture. P&G is most interested in understanding what you've skills you've gained, and how they apply specifically to the role you're applying for as well – these can be extra-curricular, academic or even any personal interests you have.



# Finding my way...

**Kiran Khanom** graduated from Emmanuel College in 2020 with a degree in History.

At the start of Lent term in my final year, while friends were applying for grad schemes and postgraduate courses, I realised I really didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. Grad schemes were dull and further study was too expensive so I decided to take a 'gap year' – work and travel for a bit and, importantly, relax after three years of the intensity that was Cambridge.

Little did I know, of course, that travelling was out of the question in 2020, and that Lent term would be my final ever term at Cambridge. The end of Lent term was a strange time – trying to plan for a future when I had no idea what would be happening the next week. Rather than ending with a week of May Balls and dinners, my Cambridge experience ended with goodbyes to friends that weren't quite goodbyes – I remember how, at our end-of-term *Varsity* social, we knew it was too optimistic to say we'd see each other next term, but we couldn't quite say goodbye forever.

After an unprecedented exam term at home, my time at university ended with me still not knowing what to do, but not being able to use a gap year as a way of figuring that out. I ended up working for a few months as a customer service assistant for Cambridge's Institute of Continuing Education and then took up tutoring while I looked for a 'proper' job, meanwhile applying for whatever looked interesting. A competitive job market was made all the more competitive by the pandemic – and experiencing lockdown after lockdown, while trying to keep my spirits up, while applying for jobs and trying not to compare myself to my friends wasn't easy. Job applications were a drag and made me yearn for supervision essays – and obviously, there wasn't much else to do.

But as time went on, job applications became less of a chore and I was starting to understand more about what sort of jobs I was interested in, until in March 2021, I received not one but two job offers in the same

week. I now work as a Publicity Assistant for a children's publisher and really enjoying it – it's a great mix of working with books, education and working with the media, which my *Varsity* days prepared me well for.

Starting my first ever office job in the middle of a lockdown was strange – rather than getting to know colleagues throughout the day, my breaks were spent having tea with my mum. But being able to work remotely made the transition into the working life easier – when I didn't know how to do something, I could spend a few minutes Googling it without any embarrassment, and not needing to do the London commute, having been used to a 15-minute walk to lectures, was a godsend. I'm now back in the office one or two days a week and the balance of getting to work in a real office with working from home has been fantastic – I can't imagine how people used to commute five days a week!

**I now work as a Publicity Assistant for a children's publisher and really enjoying it – it's a great mix of working with books, education and working with the media**

everyone from Emma, as well as being more appreciative of my time at Cambridge in general, having been away for so long. Returning to Cambridge was bittersweet, but also gave me a sense of perspective, knowing how far I'd come since leaving it – getting a job, but also getting through the strangest year of my life.





# BE INSPIRED

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*by your surroundings*



Designed by Sir Robert Smirke, the architect responsible for the British Museum, the Club's impressive façade illuminates Pall Mall. Inside, a burgeoning social scene sees a host of diverse events take place each month, including Cocktail Making Masterclasses, Wine Tastings and Themed Dinners, as well as visits from highly distinguished speakers, including politicians, authors, ambassadors and academics. Members needing somewhere quieter can seek inspiration in the Club's impressive library – home to nearly 20,000 volumes – or head to its dedicated business area.

For details on membership or a tour of the Club house, please visit  
[www.oxfordandcambridgeclub.co.uk](http://www.oxfordandcambridgeclub.co.uk) or call 020 7321 5103

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OXFORD AND  
CAMBRIDGE  
— CLUB —



A photograph of a modern, well-lit bar interior. The bar is U-shaped with a white countertop and a dark wood base. Behind the bar, there are shelves stocked with various bottles of alcohol. In front of the bar, there are several high-top stools with blue upholstered seats and dark wood bases. The ceiling is high and features a large, ornate chandelier. The walls are decorated with large, framed pieces of art. The overall atmosphere is sophisticated and contemporary.

**Graduate**  
CAMBRIDGE

# STUDENT + FAMILY SAVINGS

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# Finding my way...

**Jo Ashbridge** graduated from Jesus College in 2011 with an MPhil in Environmental Design in Architecture (RIBA Part II). She now works to end housing poverty through AzuKo, the architecture charity she founded.

## Think beyond the building

An architecture degree is a notoriously long and winding road; split into 3 parts, taking 6-7 years and often several more. It's a running joke that architecture students don't sleep, walk around with balsa wood stuck to their hair, and obsess over the most minute design details. It's simultaneously the most emotionally exhausting and overwhelming satisfying education. I'd even go as far as to say that it is a rite of passage.

When you reach part II (masters) you begin to specialise, and my time at Cambridge allowed me to explore social impact architecture (although we didn't use this term at the time). Architecture for the every-person, not just those who can afford it.

One evening as the wind whistled through a broken pane of glass into our Scroope Terrace studio, an email landed in my inbox from a Cambridge alumnus. You've got mail: an internship opportunity in Geneva, Switzerland at a 'shelter' organisation. I had been volunteering overseas over the past few summers, largely working in construction, and this felt like a rare door opening into the international development sector. A few months later I finished my final crit and jumped on a plane.

I grabbed every opportunity that came my way to learn from experts in the field as well as policy. I just about kept my head above water financially and found myself working along the Mekong, the Rwenzori Mountains and the Bay of Bengal as a shelter consultant. I had been taught how to make a building stand, but little about the people who would occupy it. This was a new type of education – how to design with empathy.

**An architecture education sets you up to work in a traditional studio, and that is a wonderful thing. But you will also come away with design skills that would be a great asset in other contexts too, a work ethic second to none and an ability to solve complex problems.**

The term architecture took on new meaning. Everyone has the right to a safe, clean, dignified place to call home, yet 1.6 billion are living in substandard housing. Too many are living in homes at risk of collapse, or hazardous for their health. Few are able to make their voices heard in the design of their own homes. Architecture has the power to inspire, elevate and transform but the reality is it's not accessible to the poor.



In 2014 I set up AzuKo. We work both in Bangladesh and the UK to end housing poverty by codesigning housing and infrastructure improvements, delivering design and construction training, and supporting communities to understand their housing rights. We're a small charity, but we believe we're a mighty one. Much of our work focuses on empowering women in the traditionally male dominated construction sector. It is a privilege to do my part towards achieving a more equitable world.

If I could offer one piece of advice to any architecture students reading this... an architecture education sets you up to work in a traditional studio, and that is a wonderful thing. But you will also come away with design skills that would be a great asset in other contexts too, a work ethic second to none and an ability to solve complex problems. Think beyond the building. – <https://azuko.org/>





# A CAREER AS A PATENT ATTORNEY?

An intellectually challenging and rewarding career option

## What Does It Involve?

Training as a Patent Attorney is a career path that will enable you to combine your understanding of science with legal expertise.

You will leave the lab environment yet remain at the cutting edge of science and technology, applying your knowledge and skill in a commercial context. You will help to protect intellectual property assets and grow businesses.



**Henry Male**

BA MSci in Natural Sciences,  
University of Cambridge (2013)  
PhD in Organic Chemistry,  
University of Cambridge (2018)



**Anna Miles**

BSc in Biochemistry, University  
College London (2014)  
MRes in Medical Science,  
University of Cambridge (2015)  
PhD in Medical Science,  
University of Cambridge (2018)

## Sound Interesting?

J A Kemp is a leading firm of UK and European Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys with offices in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Paris and Munich.

Applications for our Autumn 2022 intake are now open and applications close on 31 December 2022.

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# J A Kemp

Ranked in the top tier by The Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners, J A Kemp is one of the largest UK and European Patent and Trade Mark Attorney firms, with offices in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Paris and Munich. J A Kemp's patent attorneys handle patent applications in the UK, Europe and worldwide. The firm has particular expertise in patent oppositions and appeals, especially before the European Patent Office. J A Kemp works for a huge variety of clients, from startups, spinouts and SMEs through to some of the largest corporate clients and most prestigious academic institutions in the world.

Training as a Patent Attorney is a career path that will enable you to combine your

understanding of science with legal expertise. You will leave the lab environment yet remain at the cutting edge of science and technology, applying your knowledge and skill in a commercial context. You will help to protect intellectual property assets and grow businesses.

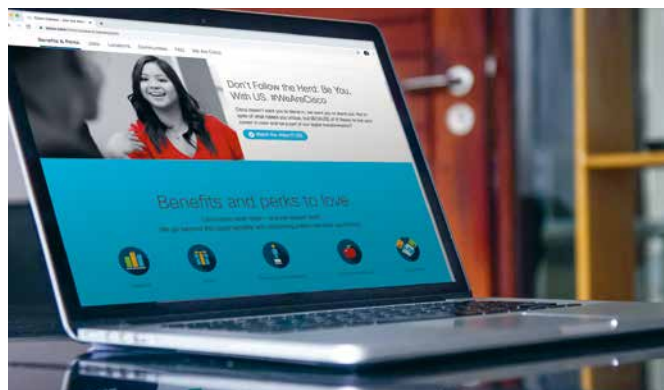
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## Why Cisco?

**Main locations:** Harpenden, Uxbridge and Feltham

**About us:** #WeAreCisco, where each person is unique, but we bring our talents to work as a team and make a difference. Yes, our technology changes the way the world works, lives, plays and learns, but our edge comes from our



people. We connect everything – people, process, data and things – and we use those connections to change our world for the better. We innovate everywhere – From creating a new era of networking that adapts, learns and protects, to building Cisco Services that accelerate businesses and

business results. Our technology powers entertainment, retail, healthcare, education and more – from Smart Cities to your everyday devices. We benefit everyone – We do all of this while striving for a culture that empowers every person to make a difference, at work and in our communities.

**Opportunities available:** Software engineering, Associate Solution Engineering and Consulting Engineering roles for graduates, summer interns and micro-interns

**Graduates sought:** Any STEM related degrees. Some of our teams accept applications without programming skills.

**Graduate Salary:** Competitive. Including extensive compensation plan – bonus, pension, 5 days to give to your preferred charity, birthday off – on us and much more.

**Vacation work:** Summer internships and micro-interns

**Annual vacancies:** About 25 graduates and 10 internships, but we will always consider exceptional candidates.

**Application advice:** CV application; see our website for details & deadline. We accept applications all year, but focus mostly on Michaelmas term.



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# James Whistance-Smith

Maths, & Computer Science,  
Working for Cisco's Ensoft Software Engineering Team.

## How did you start working for Ensoft/Cisco?

I reached the third year of my degree knowing that I wanted to do something that makes a difference within a small, vibrant setting that I would feel a part of.

I visited the careers fairs and collected the obligatory fliers and freebies but already knew the majority were of no interest. I knew Cisco as 'the' cutting edge networking company and was intrigued by the idea of Ensoft as a small team with its own culture and identity composed of highly motivated and like-minded folks.

I went along to a presentation by a senior manager within the Ensoft team and chatted afterwards to recent graduate employees that seemed to have a real passion for both the work and the environment. It seemed to tick all my boxes and applying was a no-brainer.

## What was the recruitment process like?

The application process couldn't have been easier, I simply submitted my CV and was contacted within a couple of days inviting me to the next interview day. The interview day consisted of a logic test followed by two interviews. I was back in the college common room within two hours and feeling optimistic but not wanting to get my hopes up. I received a job offer shortly after that.

## Can you describe what you do for the company?

Primarily I'm a project and people manager and take great pride in trying to organize projects that give my team challenging and interesting work suited to their strengths and individual development. However, my role is still very technical with plenty of scope to get hands-on in software development as well as technical design and review work.

Beyond the core work I'm involved in various 'virtual teams' such as helping with technical and network support, organizing Cisco-Ensoft social activities (including a family weekend away in May 2019) and looking out for people's wellbeing as a mental health first aider, to name just a few...

## What's it like working in Cisco's Ensoft team?

We enjoy the benefits of being part of a huge, progressive and forward-thinking company that additionally has a culture and dynamism of a small site.

As part of Cisco we have the opportunity to innovate and create software solutions targeted to the rapidly expanding needs of the world's biggest service providers and tech companies as well as enjoy the perks of working for a big company.

However, our identity as a small team with our own culture is a real positive. There are the small things like the office games (pool, table tennis, etc) and weekly breakfast, the daily self-organised sports clubs (football, climbing, running, etc) through to the organised social events such as rafting, the annual walking weekend or family summer BBQs.

Ultimately, it's a place where I find the work interesting and challenging, feel as though I'm realising satisfying career development with plenty of scope to go further and enjoy socialising with the people that I work with.

## What kind of work can people expect to be doing in their first year?

We expect to get new graduates working on production code and contributing as part of a development team in under a month. This typically means being assigned a module of code to write and test. At the same time, the close team structure includes a mentor for new graduates, which means there is plenty of support.

## Can you describe what you look for in an applicant?

We look for people who work hard and take pride in their work, and that should be backed up by a strong academic record. Some experience is useful, though not essential (we offer excellent training!). What we really want to see is an enthusiasm for software engineering - it's great to find recent graduates who have developed applications or run computer systems.

# Brilliant technology, brilliant careers

## Arm technology

**Y**ou know us. Or maybe you don't. But that does not change the fact we're with you morning noon and night. If you have a smartphone, digital camera, digital TV, gaming console or a smart meter at home, you've already used an Arm powered product. Our advanced processor designs play a massive part in optimizing the performance of 95% of all the world's connected devices.

We've worked with almost all the biggest names in technology. There are more than 35 billion Arm technology based chips in use, in everything from the world's fastest supercomputer and driverless car controls to revolutionary healthcare equipment. The sheer number of applications is why we're one of the world's biggest technology companies. Even if you don't know our name, over 70% of the global population is using our technology every day.

### Range of roles

Our success means we can offer a huge range of career opportunities. Naturally we employ platoons of hardware and software engineers, but there are roles for data scientists, project managers, technical writers, data analysts, researchers, marketers and many more. If you work at Arm you'll be joining a diverse team of 7,000 hugely talented people – but to us you're an individual. While our mindset is collaborative we will provide a training, development and progression plan just for you, with mentors on hand to help you carve out a unique and rewarding career.

**“I have built strong relationships with people I work with day to day and now my network is growing as I've met leaders within my own team and a diverse group of people from other groups”**

That means that even if you're not yet a world-class engineer, data analyst, marketing guru or hr expert, or even if you're not sure you can become one, we'll be with you every step of the way to help you achieve your goals.

We understand that our talented graduate recruits are often making the transition from education to workplace (including remote working) for the first time, which means they have different needs to more established employees. If you join us as a graduate we'll support you in creating a community where you can build a network, learn from each other, support each other and share thoughts and experiences.

### Warm welcome

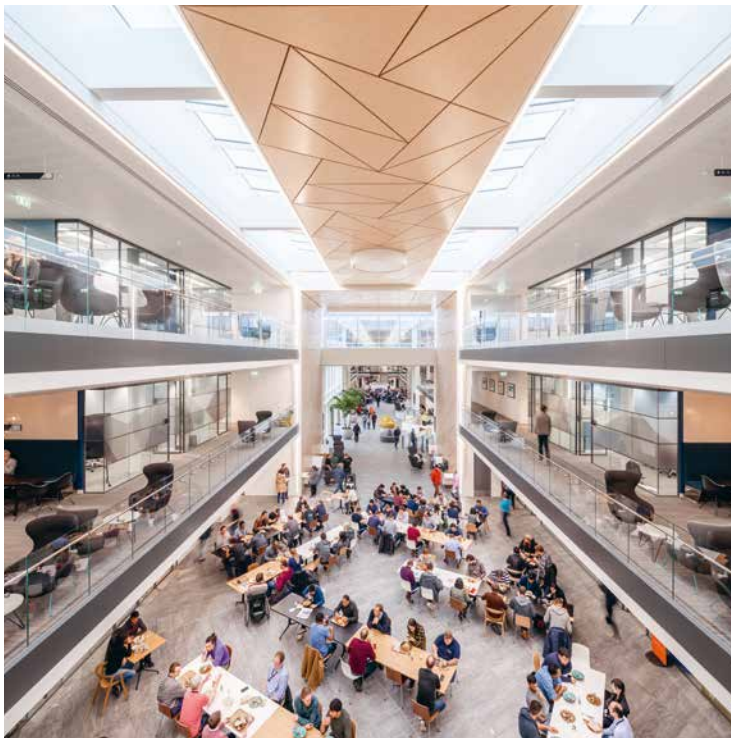
We offer a graduate welcome for new joiners, monthly learning workshops, technical training from businesses, and on the job learning opportunities. Our Graduate Committee – run by graduates for graduates – hosts social activities globally as well as talks, monthly learning events affinity groups, wellness sessions and buddy and mentor programmes, while our Global Graduate Conference allows you to meet fellow graduates and form a community with others who are at a similar stage to you. We are now holding extra conferences to allow those who are working at home more opportunities to meet others on their Arm journey.

But whether you are an intern, apprentice or graduate, our Early Careers team will provide you with a programme manager to support your transition into the ARM working environment.

World-class mentoring? We're with you. Excellent benefits straight out of University? We're with you there too. Our summer internships, permanent internships and graduate placements perfectly balance your freedom to experiment with support in vital areas. At Arm you'll be working on awe-inspiring projects from the start; you'll also have a team of the industry's best minds showing you the ropes and helping you to build a rewarding career.



**“I never knew my life ran on Arm software. Now I’m coding for hardware of 95% of the world’s connected devices”**



**“I know how my work contributes to the work of my team, and I feel a sense of belonging within that team. My voice is heard and I feel valued”**

**arm**

**For more information**

To learn about the fantastic graduate opportunities at Arm visit [careers.arm.com](https://careers.arm.com)



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INSEAD, one of the world's leading and largest business schools, is looking for 16-18 promising potentials to join its premier PhD in Management programme for mid-August 2022 intake in the following areas: Accounting, Decision Sciences, Entrepreneurship, Finance, Marketing, Organisational Behaviour, Strategy, and Technology and Operations Management. Candidates passionate about research and motivated to pursue an exciting and successful academic career are highly encouraged to apply.

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The INSEAD PhD is highly interdisciplinary across eight areas offered. Its intimate size ensures critical faculty mentorship and research support. Unlike many other programmes, it seeks to admit research partners for its faculty, not research assistants.

As many leading universities try to internationalise both

curriculum and faculty, having the INSEAD PhD gives students a tremendous edge with its global format over most management schools.

## What are we looking for in a candidate?

Our standards are high but extremely broad. We welcome applications from various backgrounds, including economics, engineering, psychology, sociology, etc., with a clear motivation to pursue an exciting career in business academia.

If you have a solid academic record, a competitive GMAT or GRE test, research exposure, strong faculty recommendations, and the desire to become an outstanding management professor and pursue unparalleled research, you are, then, poised to apply for the INSEAD PhD. Successful applicants, regardless of background, will receive **five years full scholarship**.

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Application deadline: 06 January 2022.

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# PhD in Management

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Recruit the brightest, most creative minds from around the world from many disciplines.



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# Finding my way...

**Eddy Wax** graduated from Queens' College in 2018 with a degree in Modern and Medieval languages (French and Spanish).

I never dreamt of spending my first post-university years in the Belgian capital Brussels, a city with a reputation for being an ugly bureaucracy factory with crap weather. But here's my story of how I got to *Bruxelles* and why I'm still here three years on.

I've always been drawn to humorous writing and political ideas, so I knew I wanted to try my hand at journalism after university.

I had already been satisfying those cravings at Cambridge by writing for *Varsity* (I nabbed the Interviews Editor gig so I could meet my favourite comedians) and creating the satirical student website the Porter's Log with my friends. But as the end of fourth year approached I realized I couldn't go on mocking forever — or at least, that it wasn't going to pay the bills and give me the independence I needed.

Since 2018 I've been working at the EU political news website POLITICO Europe, where I'm a reporter on the food and farming beat. As a north Londoner who's basically never been outside or seen soil I can't claim that writing about agriculture was an obvious path for me. But it's been eye-opening to track how politicians' decisions eventually determine what lands on our plates — or at least the plates on this side of the Channel (which are so much tastier, OK shoot me Boris).

Being a Brit in Brussels during Brexit has been quite odd. Most of the British friends I made here have already left and the rest of the Brits here are becoming Belgian.

I remember the Farage-lot celebrating the triggering of Article 50 by cutting a big cake at a pub called the Old Hack when I was here for an internship in 2017. I watched Dominic Raab's car glide into the European



Commission for Brexit negotiations. I saw the Lib Dems literally weep during a vigil they held on the steps of the European Parliament on January 31 2020.

One of my jobs when I was a BBC News intern during the third year of my degree (the reason I came to Brussels in the first place) was to prop up a life-size cardboard cut-out of Michel Barnier, the EU's then Brexit negotiator, during a piece of live telly. It was really realistic stuff: Our prop was just as lifeless, dry and one-dimensional as the real Barnier. I feel lucky to have got a chance to properly learn about how the EU works and the myriad ways it doesn't, as well. Even if it's about 5 years too late from a Brit's point of view.

I couldn't do my job properly without being able to navigate the labyrinthine decision-making architecture of the EU, knowing the difference between the EESC, ETS and EFSA, and being able to tell my comitology from my subsidiarity. Essentially Brussels is a bubble, jam-packed with its own jargon, cliques and outdated, dysfunctional practices. So in that sense it was easy to move here from Cambridge.

**Living abroad has been a great challenge and a great thrill. I would recommend it to any undergrad who's leaving University soon without a clear plan mapped out just yet (which is fine).**

In all seriousness though, living abroad has been a great challenge and a great thrill. I would recommend it to any undergrad who's leaving University soon without a clear plan mapped out just yet (which is fine). You see your home friends and family less often, you miss marmite and iPlayer, but in exchange you have experiences that you would never have had in a million years, and that's more or less why I got interested in journalism too.

I'm also happy to talk to anyone who reaches out about what it's like on the first couple of rungs of the rickety journalism stepladder — if I can be of any help.





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## Case Study – Mofe

### **What degree did you study and where?**

I studied international relations at the University of Birmingham.

### **What is a typical day like as a prison officer?**

One of the best things about the job is that genuinely no day is the same but there is a structure. I'd get to the prison and have a formal briefing with the team. I would then facilitate morning activities with each of the prisoners such as education, gym, or different workshops. After lunch, I would continue to support their daily activities while maintaining a safe environment. Throughout the day you would negotiate different tensions such as the problems they'd bring in from the outside and mental health needs. Within all this, you're talking with the prisoners, building relationships and solving their problems, such as helping them communicate with their family. You've got to remember that you're working in a team of four to eight officers to run a wing of 60 to 120 prisoners so it's very fast-paced and you never know what the day will throw at you. At the same time, being on the Unlocked programme meant that you might have a meeting with your mentor or some training. You'd also have regular study days and need to keep up to date on studies for your Masters.



### **What are you most proud of from your time as a prison officer?**

What was key for me was the relationships that I built and the ways in which I worked to change the perception of what a prison officer is. It wasn't me against them. It was me and them working to help them. Taking the time to have deep meaningful conversations and seeing the best in the prisoners. It was very important for me to help change the culture of what a prison officer is meant to be and do for a prisoner.

### **What were the challenges?**

Two things. First, in terms of the prisoners, not everyone would be receptive to you trying to build relationships with them. I had to focus on breaking down the prisoner vs prison officer mindset.

More widely, prisons are tough places and, when you see prisoners returning multiple times, it can be hard to stay focused on that belief in change and rehabilitation. Sometimes colleagues did not have the same mentality, and this can make culture change very hard. At Unlocked we're really pushed to think about what we can do today to fix the problems we can see so it's a challenge but in best way!



## How did working as a prison officer prepare you for the job you have now?

I've just started work as a management consultant. When I left university, this was probably more of the type of job I imagined doing but when I saw the Unlocked programme I loved the idea of getting some real frontline experience. It's a leadership programme and working as a prison officer definitely give you the opportunity to be a leader as well as developing a lot of soft skills which I can really use in any environment. Whether it be relationship building, leadership or teamwork. It gave me the capacity to understand how to deal with difficult conversations and make decisions under pressure. I'm currently working on a project that deals with prison technology. My knowledge of the prison system has helped significantly in understanding the dynamics of this project.

I definitely did not imagine being a prison officer when I was in my final year but I just loved the idea of Unlocked. I also found it reassuring that they had some great corporate links. I even did a work placement at PA

Consulting while on the programme which allowed me to see how the public sector can link with that world.

## What was the assessment process for Unlocked like?

It's a very memorable assessment process! It has changed slightly since I did it but these days you do a short situational judgement test and then a video interview. At every stage they're trying to understand your motivations and to identify whether you had the key attributes like leadership and resilience. The assessment day is really fun. There was a group task and an interview where you are interviewed by a prison officer and an ex-prisoner which gives you a really good insight into the role. The most interesting bit was the role play where an actor plays the role of a prisoner and you have to walk into a situation. It's designed to give you a real flavour of the job and it was definitely the most interesting assessment centre I attended! I also really liked the fact that, once you were offered a place, you got a chance to visit a prison so you could see the environment and make sure it was for you.





# Hints and tips for job interviews

**A**s the summer approaches so too does the likelihood of change in the job market. According to recent statistics, 56% of us are unhappy at work. Another study shows that over a third of unhappy employees will quit their position at the start of summer. How then can we best prepare ourselves for a transition into the world of work? Before we get there, what can we best do to prepare ourselves for the interview process?

**First impressions** are essential. It is the first glimpse of your personality; your skills sets and your values. According to most job experts, the interview begins well before you set foot in the interview room.

In this way, it is crucial to **plan ahead**. Adrian O'Connor, founding director of Global Accounting Network, advises doing research before the interview to ascertain points of common interest and convergence with the interviewer, perhaps by 'Identify things you have in common by checking the interviewer's LinkedIn profile.'

**First impressions are essential. It is the first glimpse of your personality; your skills sets and your values.**

It is important to **remain aware** throughout the entire interview experience. Interviewees should engage with everyone who they encounter throughout the experience, irrespective of the position or status of those people they meet. This means interacting with the receptionist in the same way as you might interact with the CEO or the office cleaner!

The **opening statement** is the opportunity to step into the space with strength and appeal. In the early moments, as well as throughout the interview, it is important to **play to your strengths**. 'Tell me about yourself is a gift question', says career consultant Sherridan Hughes.

'Respond by explaining why you want the job and why you can do it, as well as why you'll fit in.'


The weight of your responses are significantly enhanced through body language. Be confident and smile at the interviewers where possible. Eye contact is equally important to establish a comfortable and mutually respect environment.



Similarly, maintaining a **professional approach** throughout is essential. You should refrain from colloquialisms and of course, inappropriate language and comments.

When it arrives at the time for questions during the interview process, it is important to use **examples**. Almost every answer should be followed up with a concrete example to substantiate an explanation. 'Candidates who just read from their CV do not have the same success as candidates who can give real-life examples,' explains recruitment company director Guy Jassal.

Avoid using **clichés**, and instead focus on being the most authentic and real version of yourself. There will almost inevitably be a question which you find disorientating or



The weight of your responses are significantly enhanced through body language. Be confident and smile at the interviewers where possible. Eye contact is equally important to establish a comfortable and mutually respect environment.

difficult to respond to. In these instances, **be personal and logical**. Show your personality and your self-awareness. Equally, employers are interested in the way that you think. Walk them through the process of your decision making to show how you arrived at a particular answer or conclusion.

Finally, **make the most of your closing statement**. The final part of the interview is the opportunity for you to show your curiosity about the company to which you are applying. Turn the tables and ask the interviewer what you want to know about the company and the role. Focus on asking about their company values, vision and plans for the future, rather than asking to ask what you can get out of it!

**Nick Bartlett & Isabel Sebode**

# Think Ahead

Most people know someone who's had mental health problems. But not everyone knows someone who can make a difference. The Think Ahead programme is a new route into social work, for graduates and career-changers remarkable enough to make a real difference to people with mental health problems.



At Think Ahead, we want to see a society where everyone with mental health problems can flourish. That won't happen unless people can improve their social circumstances – because life issues like relationships, living arrangements, and employment have profound effects on mental wellbeing.

Our two-year graduate programme combines on-the-job learning, a master's degree, and leadership training, all of which help our participants to become great social workers, strengthen mental health services, and spread social approaches to mental health across society.

On Think Ahead's paid two-year programme, you will:

- Take on a challenging and varied role, with responsibility from day one.

- Be paid to spend two years training on-the-job and working in a community mental health team, alongside clinical professionals.
- Make a significant difference to the lives of people with mental illness.
- Gain two qualifications, qualifying as a social worker and gaining a master's degree.
- Start a fast-track career with leadership training and transferable skills.

Think Ahead is a highly selective programme. While you need no prior experience of social work to apply, our criteria states that you must:

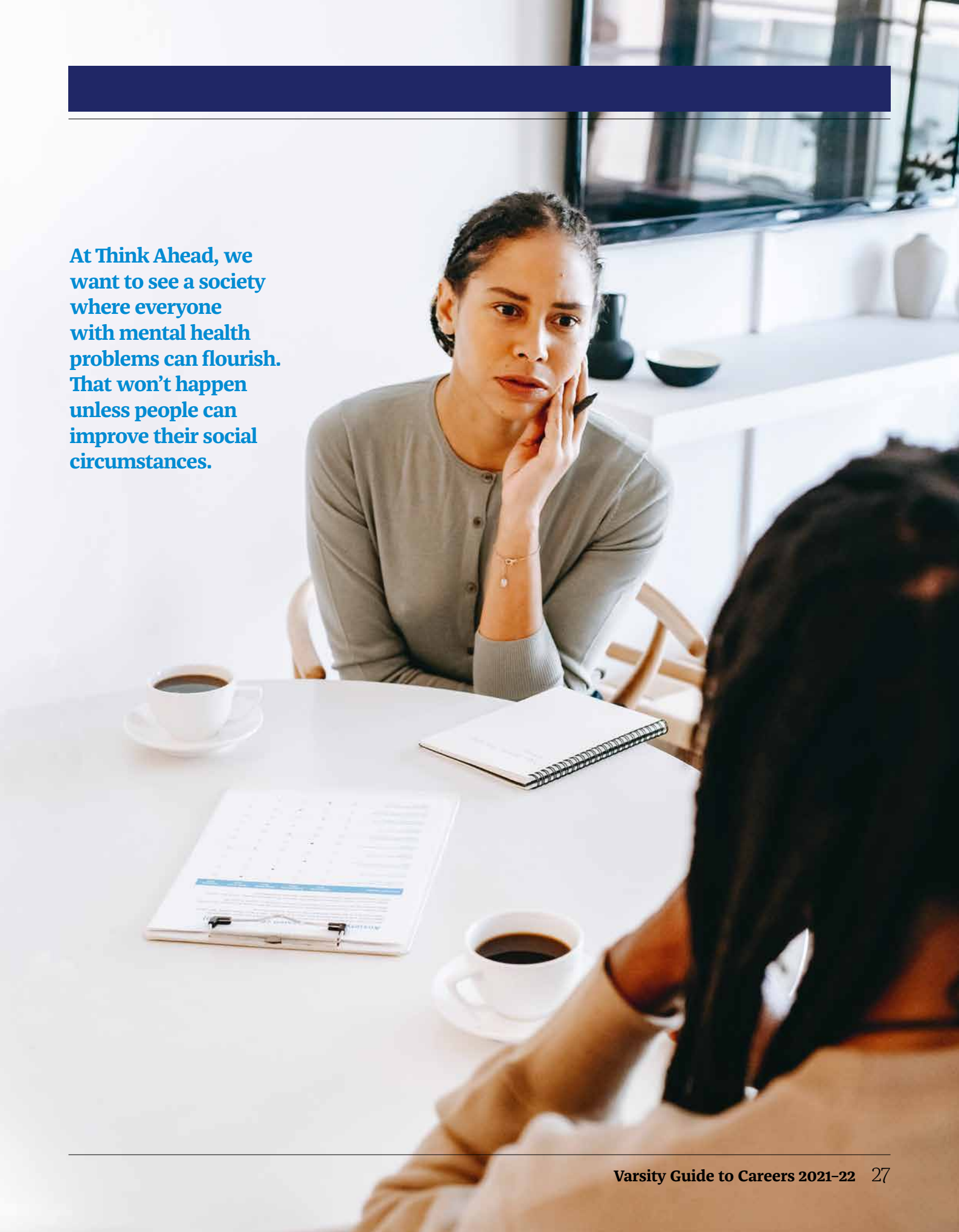
- Hold or achieve at least a 2:1 degree or equivalent in a subject other than social work
- Show a passion for improving the lives of people with mental illness.
- Demonstrate key attributes including resilience, empathy, and communication skills.

When you complete the two-year programme, you will become part of the Think Ahead alumni network. Most people choose to stay in the social work profession, but there will be a number of career options available to you including becoming a leading frontline practitioner, moving into service leadership, or using your leadership experience in an alternative career.

<https://thinkahead.org/>





A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a grey cardigan, sits at a white round table. She is resting her chin on her hand, looking thoughtfully towards the camera. On the table in front of her are two white cups of coffee on saucers, a spiral-bound notebook, and a clipboard with a document. The background is a bright, modern interior with large windows and white shelves holding decorative items.

At Think Ahead, we want to see a society where everyone with mental health problems can flourish. That won't happen unless people can improve their social circumstances.

# Finding my way...

**Ryan Roark** graduated from St John's College in 2011 with a PhD in Oncology.

Just over ten years ago, I received my PhD in Oncology at Cambridge. Today, I'm in my third year of teaching architecture full-time at the Georgia Institute of Technology. There are some similarities between research science and architecture – most notably to me, the collegiality of working side-by-side in a laboratory or studio environment – but for the most part, it was a hard break to an entirely new field.

**My female supervisor's primary career advice to me was to marry rich, although that didn't help.**

I spent five years at Cambridge, thanks to generous funding partially from the National Science Foundation in the US, where I'm from

and where PhDs are expected to take a minimum of five years. If I had to name one reason why I left science, it wasn't the fact that my female supervisor's primary career advice to me was to marry rich, although that didn't help. Instead, it was the massive amount of time I spent generating negative results. I observed that about 80% of results from truly experimental lab work are negative, and in my experience during my PhD, it wasn't four days a week of negative results and a breakthrough on Friday. It was four years of trying to develop a new assay system and one year of things working. That year was exciting, but it wasn't enough to make me want to continue down that path.

I also spent a lot of my time at Cambridge working on student publications – first *BlueSci*, then *The Mays*, and finally *The Cambridge Student* newspaper and its short-lived weekly print magazine *Thursday*, which I edited for two years. I started off at TCS as Arts & Literature Editor and became increasingly interested in the content. I also found that I had a knack for coordinating different types of contributors – writers, photographers, artists.

As I was becoming disenchanted with research science, I was also paying close attention to several building projects in Cambridge, including the Grand Arcade and the Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute, both of which opened

in 2007. It was only when I went on holiday to Australia in December 2008, and I saw the Sydney Opera House, as well as the highly rational geometric model that shows how the opera house was created from perfect slices of a sphere, that I first thought I would like to be an architect.

For years, this hunch would feel like a “quarter-life crisis,” but the thought persisted. After I finished my PhD at the end of 2010, I moved to Los Angeles, where I had never lived before, and began UCLA Extension's interior architecture certificate program. As it turns out, interior architecture is quite different from non-interior architecture, although I did learn some useful skills. I wasn't sure I had made the right decision until 2012, when I started architecture school at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), one of three schools I got into with my minimal portfolio and the only one that offered me full funding. SCI-Arc turned out to be a bad fit for me, so I dropped out after my first year, worked for an architect for a year, and then started anew in 2014 at Princeton, which funded my Master of Architecture (MArch) based on the portfolio I produced at SCI-Arc. After earning my MArch, I got a fellowship to spend six months in

London studying adaptive reuse; worked for a year at a firm in New York; received an unexpected offer to start teaching at Rice University in Houston, where I met my now-domestic partner; and got a teaching fellowship at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, where I am also finishing up my exams to be a licensed architect.

One thing I will say about my experience in lab at Cambridge – my lab mates were amazing, and the atmosphere was extremely social and enjoyable. My first few years in Los Angeles were lonely, my having gone from being an award-winning PhD student at Cambridge to an extension school student with no credentials at all in my newly chosen field, and few friends nearby. However, that part of my journey taught me a lot and solidified my confidence in my choice and in my abilities once I started to learn about architecture.

Today, I'm a well-published academic, largely on the topic of English architecture, and I'm confident things wouldn't have turned out this way if I hadn't done my PhD at Cambridge.



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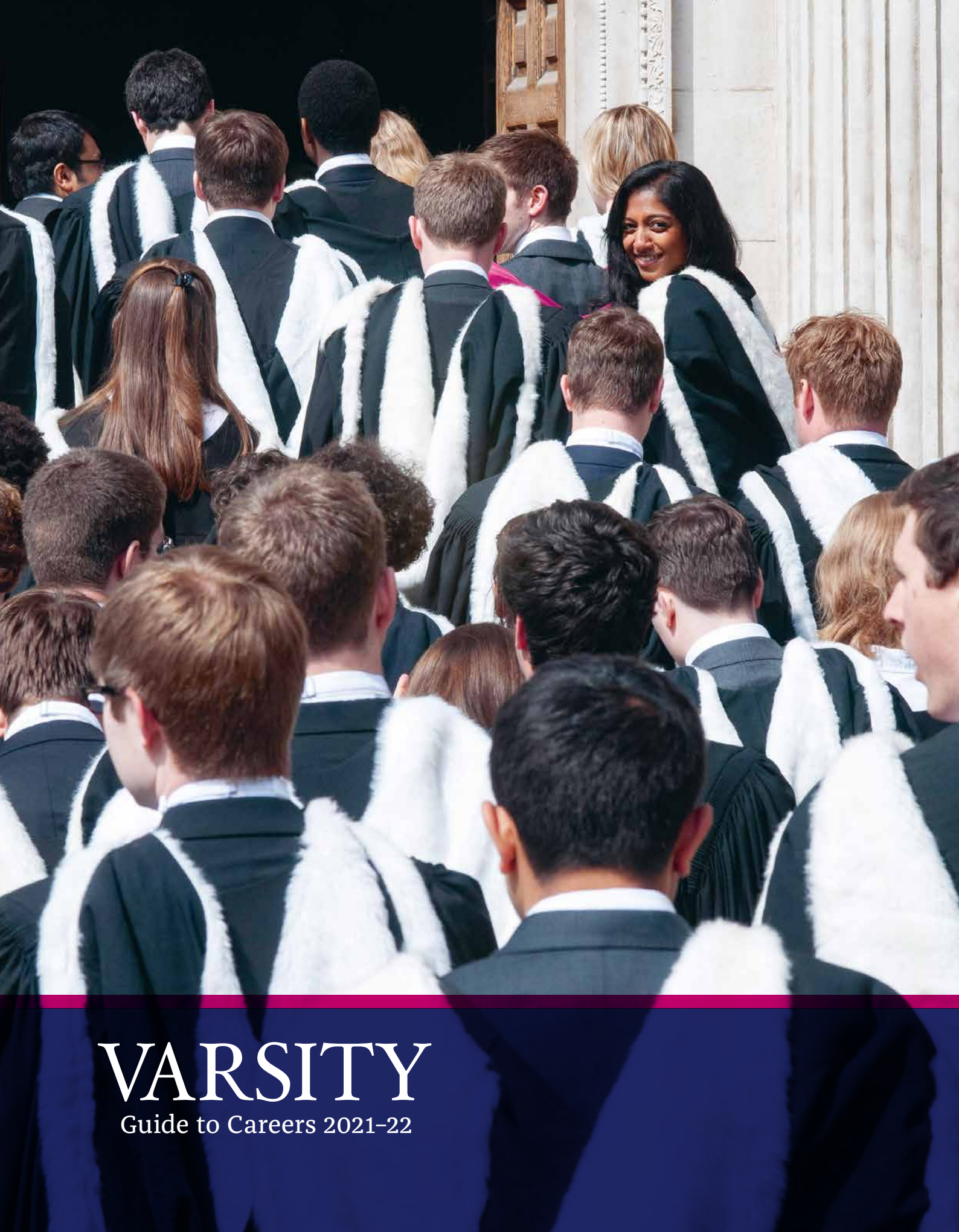


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