

St Mary's University Careers Service – A Guide for Parents – 2017/18

Getting your child into university on the right degree course to fit their interests can be challenging. How can you be sure that they are choosing the right university and course? Rest assured, from their first day at St Mary's until their graduation and beyond, we are here to support them all the way.

This guide sets out detailed information on how best you can help and support your child through their career decision-making process. We'll consider how your child's choice of degree can affect their future employment opportunities and how they can best make use of their time at university to enhance this.

Choosing a course

More students these days consider their future careers when they decide where and what degree to study. A recent 'Graduates in Labour Market' survey shows a higher employment rate for graduates (86%) compared to non-graduates (72.3%) (Source: ONS). Although many careers require a degree or qualification in a certain subject there are many positions available for those that are non-degree specific. If your child is unsure about what to choose, we suggest they consider the following:

- **What subjects do I really enjoy?**

If you enjoy studying something now you are likely to continue doing so at university.

- **What career do I want?**

In the UK around two-thirds of graduate jobs do not require a specific degree.

- **What else am I interested in?**

Going to university can give you the opportunity to study something new or get involved in a new activity.

Get involved

Employers are not just interested in academic qualifications; they will be looking for transferable skills from future employees so we recommend your child researches their preferred degree, gets involved with clubs and societies at university and encourage them to find part-time work, an internship or summer work experience to boost their CV. A recent 'High Fliers' survey showed that 80% of 100 employers surveyed offered paid work experience programmes in 2012-2013.

Get informed

We recommend your child engages with the Careers team here at St Mary's early in their university career. We offer information, advice and guidance tailored to the needs of your child to help them get the most from their degree and university experience. Gaining a degree is a great benefit:

- On average over the last 10 years, degree-holders earned more than £12k more than non-degree holders (Source: ONS).
- A degree will be a qualification that will last graduates until the end of their working lives.
- 80% of graduates are in graduate level jobs within 3.5 years.

At St Mary's we are proud to have a 95% graduate employment rate (Source: DLHE survey).

Get thinking

Your child's degree will develop their reflective and analytical skills. Encourage your child to reflect on how these may relate to their future career.

How we can help

We are here to help your child prepare for their future. We offer one-to-one guidance appointments throughout the year where your child can discuss their options, ideas and ambitions. We support them through a range of activities and tools including:

- Assistance with CV writing and making applications.
- Practice interviews to help prepare your child for employment or further study.
- Careers fairs and networking events to connect your child with potential employers.
- Skills development programmes and alumni engagement opportunities.

We also produce useful factsheets for each programme outlining the types of sectors graduates from each typically work in, as well as careers handbooks for each academic school.

Next steps

Outlined below are a number of key steps that you can help your child with prior to and whilst they attend university to develop and improve their graduate prospects:

- Register for the UCAS monthly parents' newsletter at www.ucas.com/parentform.
- Get involved: Help develop their skills through extracurricular activities and part-time work.
- Talk, talk, talk: Attend careers events with former students and employers to get a true insight into potential careers.
- Visit us: Get the thought process started – come and see us, email us or arrange a Skype.
- Research career paths for useful overviews of typical career paths from each degrees and the realities of the graduate employment market visit www.prospects.ac.uk
- You can find out more about our services at www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-support/careers/ or contact us at careers@stmarys.ac.uk or at +44 (0) 20 8240 4055 (plus Facebook and Twitter)

We're here to support you in preparing for your future!

What our students say

I just wanted to thank the Careers Service, who successfully helped me through to the application stage for the London Fire Brigade. I have now have got through the interview/assessment stage and more recently have passed the physical stage. I just have the medical and reference stage left.

Sports Science Student

I am starting my teaching job in September and I used the Careers Service extensively after graduating. I had help with developing my CV, with interview practice and with my career strategy. The team was always ready to give me good advice and to encourage me to keep going when I had a tough week job hunting! Their help and support has been amazing and they are committed to helping you get the right job whatever it takes. Many thanks to everyone in the Careers Service and to Anna in particular, for her constant support.

Alumni Student

I just wanted to drop careers a line to say thank you so much for all your amazing help and to let you know that I've now been offered a job for September!! I'm really happy and really appreciate all the support everyone at careers gave me!

PGCE Primary Education Student