

GET OFF TO THE RIGHT START

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GET SET...GO!

WELCOME TO IN THE ZONE

It's an Olympic year, a time when people are thinking about travelling to Japan to compete for medals in their chosen field (or track!). It was a theme that was too obvious to resist for this year's edition of In The Zone because it's a metaphor for Exeter students leaving to go on to start their own races, to compete and succeed in their careers or further study, and the similarities don't end there.

In this edition, we wanted you to read about finishing (your degrees) strong; starting (your post-degree lives) well; being well prepared for major events; sharpening your skills; standing out from the crowd; making the most of your experiences and making good decisions. In this metaphor, we're your coaches, we're still here for you, forever, to support you to succeed in all the trials and tribulations that await you after graduation.

Go for gold, we're in your corner.



Oliver Laity,
Careers Information and Systems Manager

MESSAGE FROM A GRADUATE

When I first started at Exeter, three years sounded like a long time to prepare for entering the 'real world'. In fact, University went in the blink of an eye. Concerned about my lack of a plan, I applied for a masters. But the closer I got to the start of the academic year, the more I realised that it didn't feel right for me. I realised I wanted to travel. I started my graduate year working at Wimbledon for six months and I then travelled to New Zealand and South East Asia, before returning home, and working as a Logistics Manager in London. Travelling gave me the confidence to enter the world of work and to leave the world of education behind, for now at least. I never thought I'd be doing the job I am at the moment but I'm learning so much and enjoying every day.

The period after Graduation can be a very confusing time. There's a lot of pressure to know exactly what you want to do after you have finished your undergraduate degree. But with the help of the Career Zone and my friends and family, I've realised that there is no one right path after graduation and the most important thing is to pursue your passion, whatever that may be. As Exeter Alumni, we're lucky to have support from the Career Zone following graduation. Even on the other side of the world, Exeter is always with me.



Anna Hartley
BA Philosophy and History

SPRINTING ACROSS THE FINISH LINE

We have interviewed a soon-to-be graduate about his University experience, future plans and long-term goals. Jeeves will be undertaking the Generalist stream of the Civil Service Fast Stream graduate programme in September 2020.

How would you describe yourself?

I would describe myself as:

Positive and confident,

A people person,

Someone who doesn't take themselves too seriously.

How would you describe your time at University?

I've managed to take advantage of some amazing opportunities. I've represented the University all over the world, from Mumbai to Geneva and Helsinki. I was also able to volunteer in a mobile health clinic in Tanzania. I've started a society that I'm passionate about - for youth political engagement. I absolutely loved my time at University.

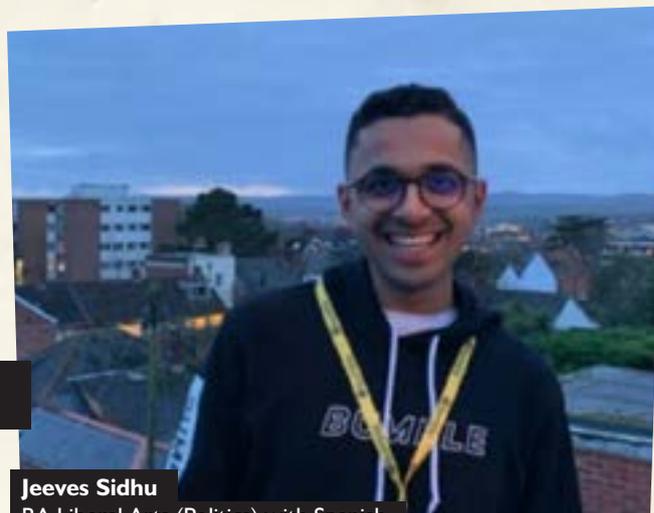
What was your graduate job search like?

I've always been focused on the Civil Service, although I did research the Consulting sector. In my first year, I was able to secure a Spring Insight Week with them, then a Diversity Internship in my second year, and finally I've been accepted onto the graduate scheme.

I loved the culture of the Civil Service; they really focus on people. I'm excited by the range of projects that I'll be working on. I also think the political landscape is exciting at the moment. Regardless of your position, it's a dynamic time to voice ideas, get involved and have a stake in government and politics. In the future, I see myself working in an international-facing role, either within the government or in a politically engaged environment.

What have you learned/what would you do differently?

I would say, don't put all your eggs in one basket. Research a few different routes and get experience of several things. I was always very focused but perhaps I may have benefited from casting my net wider. It's about finding the right fit for you and exploring what makes you happy. I was lucky to find something very early on, but I would say take your time.



Jeeves Sidhu
BA Liberal Arts (Politics) with Spanish



**GOLD
MEDAL
TIP**

SOON TO BE GRADUATES - DON'T TRY AND FIT AN EMPLOYER, FIND AN EMPLOYER WHO FITS YOU!

SCORING A 10/10

Interview Advice from a Careers Consultant

The pressure of performing well at job interviews can sometimes feel overwhelming. The good news is that preparation, preparation and more preparation followed by practice can turn apprehension and nervousness into positive energy and confidence.

Interviewers want you to do well and build on a successful application. They won't use an array of interrogation techniques or hope to stun you into silence by asking complex and convoluted questions. What would be the point if they want to see the 'real you'?

Thankfully, approximately 80% of questions can be predicted in advance such as 'why do you want the job?', 'why do you want to work for us?' and 'why do you want to work in this sector?' But what about the other 20%? Employers have a tendency to ask the odd question that requires you to think on your feet. This can be a deliberate technique to see how you react under pressure. Smiling nicely and asking for a few seconds to think it through shows composure, a desire to give a considered response and, most importantly some additional time to produce a well-crafted answer. Asking for some thinking time also diffuses the increased anxiety that can be created by unexpected silence!

After a long day, interviewing a number of candidates, employers will decide who stood out, who demonstrated real passion to be appointed. How can 'passion' be demonstrated without appearing desperate? It can be conveyed through an upbeat, enthusiastic and energetic delivery but also through skilful management of questions. For example, when addressing the question 'Why do you want this job?' emphasise a range of motivational factors; "there are a multitude of reasons why I'm attracted to this role and I will talk through three of the key factors that influenced my decision to apply but I'm happy to provide others if required..."

At the end of most interviews you will hear the words 'Have you got any questions for us?' Its good practice to have a few prepared but why not create an opportunity for a final sales pitch; "Thank you, I have a question around career development, but would it also be OK to provide you with one additional, brief piece of evidence that I think makes me a strong candidate for this role?" At the very least, your passion for the job cannot be questioned!



David Pritchard
Careers Consultant

VIDEO INTERVIEWS



Interviewing for new staff can be expensive and time consuming, that's why many large employers use video interviews early in the selection process.

As with face to face interviews, you will be asked for evidence of motivation and competencies related to the role and therefore preparation should involve anticipating such questions. The difference is in the delivery, and interacting with a recorded image on screen takes some getting used to!

Preparing for pre-recorded video interviews involves adjusting to the absence of non-verbal communication and any supplementary questions linked to your answer. Using video interview software will give you an opportunity to practice and get accustomed to self-promotion in front of the camera. It will feel strange at first being asked to talk for a limited period of time, usually one or two minutes in response to a question, but as with any interview, practice will give you the confidence to succeed.

The beauty of this technology is that you can record yourself in action and conduct a detailed self-appraisal, adjusting elements such as pace and testing your ability to answer common questions.

“ Video Interviews can be more nerve-racking. For me, I miss the interaction with the interviewer and the ability to read their reactions to what I’m saying. It makes me feel more comfortable. So put me in front of a screen, and I don’t do as well. In fact in my first video interview, I cried. Not to worry though, because I was able to take a breather and re-record my answer. Always find out if this will be available and if it is, make use of it. I treated my first answer as a test run. Then, I thought about what worked well, did I speed up trying to say too much in my time limit or did I not talk about something important. I try and have my notes leaning really close to the camera so if I do freeze I have a few prompts and it’s not too obvious I’m quickly looking at them. My second video went much better after learning these tricks and allowing myself to calm down. ”

Brittany Willis, BA English



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TIP

BRUSH UP ON YOUR INTERVIEW SKILLS USING MY CAREER ZONE DIGITAL

INTRODUCING OUR NEW SKILLS TEAM

The Skills Team are here to make sure that you all have the chance to develop the skills you need to head into the world as an Exeter Graduate. Getting involved in our activities will also help you work towards the Exeter Award, another thing that will help you stand out to employers. Below each member of the team reflects back on their University experience, and on a skill that they wished they had developed before graduating; luckily a huge number of resources are available to students even after graduating.



I'm Rae and I head up the team. I'm so glad we have sessions around interview techniques. When I had my first graduate job interview, I didn't even understand one of the questions!

I'm Rachel S; an Employability and Placement Advisor. As an Exeter Graduate, I wish I'd used the skills sessions around resilience when I was a student. They would have reassured me that it's okay when things don't go to plan (which happens!) and understand how to maintain resilience over time.



I'm Rachel G also one of the Employability and Placement Advisers. When I graduated I wish I'd had more of an idea about how to evidence my transferable skills when completing job applications. I would never know where to start with the personal statement part of the application form. It's so much easier now I've learnt tips about how to structure my answers. I'm really pleased that we embed this skill into all of our sessions as it's such a valuable tool to enter the competitive job market with.



I'm John, the final member of the Employability and Placement team. There wasn't a lot of careers support offered when I was at university. I would have loved the opportunity to develop my assertive communication skills. I think this is one of the key sessions we offer, that I would have certainly benefited from, not only for my career, but also for my personal life!



**GOLD
MEDAL
TIP**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE ADVICE ABOUT DEVELOPING YOUR EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS,
YOU CAN BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WITH OUR SKILLS TEAM VIA THE CAREER ZONE**

SHOOT STRAIGHT AND HIT YOUR MARK

Assessment Centres

Worried about an upcoming Assessment Centre? Katie has shared her experience of preparing for a Deloitte Assessment Centre and has plenty of tips for how to prepare and present your best self on the day.

Getting to the Assessment Centre:

It was through the Career Zone website that I booked a place at the Deloitte Autumn Careers Evening. This event was instrumental in inspiring me to apply to Deloitte. I then attended a Preparing for Psychometric Tests workshop and borrowed numerical reasoning books from the Career Zone's loan library. This refreshed my maths skills and explained how to answer typical psychometric questions. Using the Industry Reports on My Career Zone Digital gave me a better insight into the Consulting sector, and attending the Business School Career Zone's Careers Café helped me refine my CV, and get some last-minute advice.

Prepare:

When preparing for the assessment centre stage of the application process, the 'Assessment Centre Tool' on My Career Zone Digital gave me insight into the assessment centre format, as well as information about group, e-tray and interview exercises. In addition, I consulted Deloitte's website, as well as forums, blogs, news articles and podcasts. I planned out interview answers and practised answering them out loud. This gave me a foundation for my interview.

On the Day:

I was most nervous about the group exercise. I recommend speaking up as early as possible – you don't have to be the first one to speak, or take on the role of primary leader, but try to say something early on so that you can find your voice. Remember that nominating yourself to be the timekeeper, and bringing quiet members of the group into the conversation, or showing your agreement with your teammates' ideas, are effective ways of showing leadership and teamwork.



Katie Bennett
BA Spanish and Management
with UK Work Experience

The assessment centre is a chance for you to perform to the best of your ability. Everyone is in the same boat as you. Thorough preparation is key to building your confidence, but you should also have confidence in your abilities and who you are – the company sees potential in you and wants to get to know you better, so have some self-belief and do the best you can.

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PREPARE FOR AN ASSESSMENT CENTRE BY USING MY CAREER ZONE DIGITAL

STAND OUT ON THE PODIUM:



LinkedIn is a fantastic way to research a company, hunt for jobs and speculatively approach businesses which interest you. It's important to know how to present yourself effectively. Put your best foot forward and check out our breakdown of a successful LinkedIn profile. Here we review the profile of recent Exeter Graduate Rick Taylor.



Tips about this section:

Did you know you can edit the text that comes under your name? It doesn't have to state your most recent position; instead it could say a 'headline' about what you are looking for.

What has Rick done well?

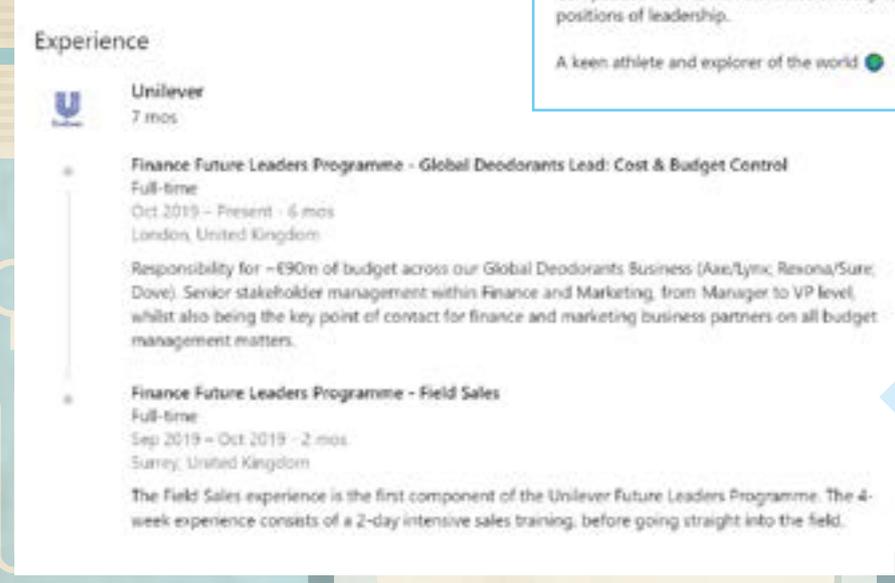
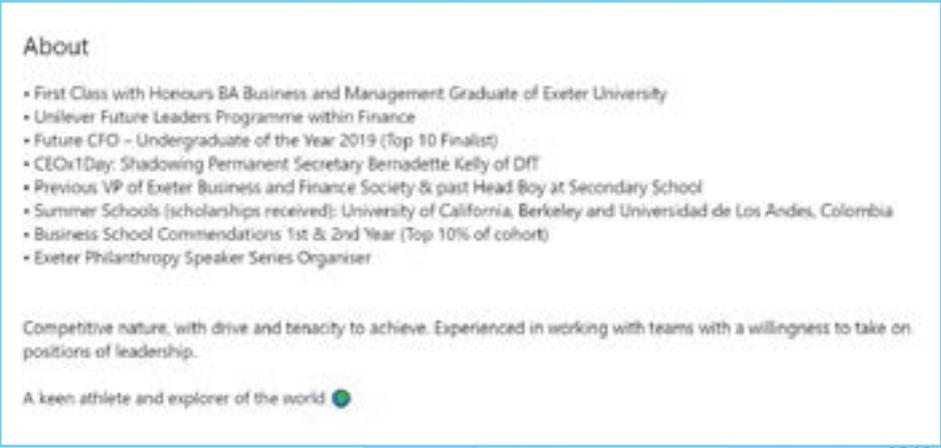
Rick has put an image in the background at the top which conveys his professional qualities. This is a great way to help your profile stand out to recruiters and make a strong visual first impression!

Tips about this section:

This is where you can highlight a few brief things about you to convey your key skills and experience in relation to your chosen career.

What has Rick done well?

Rick has used bullet points to avoid overloading the reader with text and effectively show how he has excelled through awards and achievements.



Tips about this section:

This is where you can give more than a list of the tasks you did in your role, you can also give mini examples to prove how you have used your skills.

What has Rick done well?

Rick has been nice and specific by using numbers to convincingly evidence what he has worked on.



Tips about this section:

It is worth highlighting a few relevant skills from your modules to show how your degree has equipped you for work.

What has Rick done well?

Rick has included just a few key modules so he isn't overloading the reader with too much information.

Education



University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business
Competitive Strategy, A
2019 - 2019

Scholarship received to study an intensive 'Competitive Strategy' summer session.

This course draws upon theories and frameworks from industrial organisational economics, game theory, and resource-based views to address the unique challenges confronted by senior executives of organisations.

The focus is strategies for competitive advantage at an organisational level.

Topics include industry and competitor analysis, horizontal and vertical boundaries of the firm, strategic positioning, internal competencies, and dynamic capabilities.



University of Exeter
Business and Management, First Class with Honours
2016 - 2019

Skills & Endorsements

Teamwork - 14



Endorsed by Josh Ash and 5 others who are highly skilled at this



Endorsed by 3 of Rick's colleagues at Unilever

Management - 12



Endorsed by 2 of Rick's colleagues at Unilever

Team Leadership - 11



Endorsed by 2 of Rick's colleagues at Unilever

Tips about this section:

Did you know that if you endorse other people's skills then they will be prompted to endorse yours, so it's well worth doing!

What has Rick done well?

Rick is using his current network at Unilever to start building his skills and endorsements profile.

Tips about this section:

If you have won any awards it is worth putting them here, and, if there is any information about them online it's worth including a link too!

What has Rick done well?

Rick has done a good job of highlighting the skills he has developed through these awards.

Accomplishments

4 Honors & Awards

School Commendation

Jul 1, 2018 • Exeter University Business School

Awarded a School Commendation for excellent academic performance, achieving an overall programme average in the top 90th percentile in comparison to my peer group.

Exeter Leaders Award

May 2018

- demonstrate leadership skills and attributes via a designated leadership role, undertaken whilst studying at Exeter
- attend a programme of leadership development workshops
- complete a reflective application form
- deliver a presentation to a panel showing how you've developed as a leader.



GOLD MEDAL TIP

NEED HELP WITH LINKEDIN? ATTEND ONE OF OUR LINKEDIN LABS

VAULT AROUND THE WORLD WITH GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Global Opportunities team supports all Exeter students by providing advice and finding international graduate jobs, work placements and internships.



Naomi Zoeller
BA Management with Marketing
with Industrial Experience

I spent 6 months working for Singapore Airlines in Germany before moving to Singapore for 6 months to work for a local language services firm. I am super excited to have just secured a graduate job as Assistant Brand Manager with Procter & Gamble UK!

The key points I took away from my placement year are commercial awareness and independence. As a business student, I was taught theory, but the day-to-day reality of business is so different. Moving from Europe to Singapore forced me outside of my comfort zone and I feel prepared for working life after fending for myself in a country so different to my own. I did experience somewhat of an office culture shock, as Singaporean business culture is quite different to how we do things in Europe. I still, however, had an amazing experience and recommend working abroad.

'With Industrial Experience' gave me an edge when applying for graduate jobs. I had plenty of competency examples for interviews and was able to confidently conduct myself in assessment centres. Companies also love the cultural awareness and adaptability international work experience gives you.

For the foreseeable future, I plan to stay in the UK (as a German citizen, I applied for pre-settled status), but since P&G has offices all around the world, I am excited to see where my career will take me!



MY YEAR IN JAPAN AND AUSTRALIA

I spent my Study Abroad year in Australia and Japan and the skills and experiences I have gained from it are invaluable, not only to my personal development, but also to my career planning. There are few experiences that teach you more about who you are and what you want than living abroad.

You'll develop transferable skills – You'll find yourself in situations where you'll be pushed to the edge of your capability; these are the situations that force you to develop new skills. For example, you might find upon your return that you're a lot more confident in your ability to self-motivate and be independent in your work - you've had to develop those skills to look after yourself while living in a different country (translated into employer-speak: you've 'become proficient in self-management').

You'll gain valuable and novel experiences – Studying abroad is the ultimate 'blank slate' opportunity – you get to pack your life up and have time away from your normal responsibilities and commitments. Even navigating the ins and outs of living in a new country means you'll be learning valuable lessons, and overcoming challenges that not many people face. Linking these experiences to the skills you've gained from them looks great on job applications, and gives you a comprehensive answer to interview questions!

You'll gain a new perspective on life – This is a rare opportunity to question your career plans without the external influences you're used to – you have to time to sit down and properly ask yourself: Is where I'm headed really going to make me happy? You can't predict how your experiences will change what you want from your career, but you'll find it broadens your perspective - there's a whole world of opportunity out there that you might not have previously considered. The 'global perspective' is a real thing - it will made you a more well-rounded person, and will also give you a competitive edge in the job market.

Daisy Newbold-Harrop
BA Philosophy and Politics
with Study Abroad

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TIP

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN STUDY/WORKING ABROAD BOOK AN APPOINTMENT
WITH THE GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES TEAM

THE POSTGRADUATE RELAY:

Your Masters' Guide

If you are currently considering studying for a Masters, you might be wondering whether it is the right option for you. Below we have three case studies from students who are at different stages of their postgraduate journey. Each student has described why studying for a Masters was right for them.

Before...



Katy Cottrell
BSC Psychology

Before applying to the Conflict, Security and Development Masters course at Exeter, I researched my graduate career options. I decided that this course would be a practical route to achieving my career goal of working within an NGO. Initially I was unsure whether my personal statement was strong, so I booked an appointment with a member of the Careers team. The feedback I received was really helpful and encouraging. For example, we discussed how I could evidence various soft skills (such as time management and resilience) and how I could make my personal statement more academic. If you are applying for postgraduate study, I recommend speaking to the Career Zone.

During

I completed my undergraduate degree at Exeter and loved the friendly approach of my department as well as its innovative research. Adjusting to postgraduate study was initially demanding – the financial costs are challenging and there is much less teaching. The emphasis is on developing your own research, and getting to grips with this been a learning curve. But there are lots of opportunities to practice this at Exeter – the postgraduate community is particularly strong and I have had the chance to be involved with student conferences and postgraduate events. Overall I've really enjoyed my time at University, and currently I think I would like to undertake further study or enter a career in the charity and development sector.



Chrissie Thwaites
MA Theology

After...



Ellen Lesser
MPH Theology and Religion

Studying for a Masters by Research really helped develop me as a researcher and as a person. The Research degree is two years and involved writing a 40,000 word thesis which allowed me to study a topic I wanted in detail. Being so focused on one piece of work took perseverance and determination, but at the end I had a piece of work I was really proud of. I want to write for a living, and now that I have finished my Masters by Research, I am studying for my PhD and trying to answer a question I didn't have the space for in my Masters. Studying for a PhD is so much more than just study and I have had opportunities to teach and get acquainted with technology I didn't know existed. It's my Masters to I I and so much more.

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**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS WHETHER A MASTERS IS RIGHT FOR YOU –
BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE CAREER ZONE**

GRADUATE RESILIENCE: Pacing Yourself

This year, I applied to the Wellcome Trust graduate programme. I reached the Video Interview stage but was unsuccessful in progressing further. After the initial disappointment, the feedback I received caused me to reflect and consider what I wanted as a graduate.

The feedback included practical advice on structuring question responses. It also included insight into how I could have improved the content of my questions. Significantly, it highlighted reasons why the graduate programme might not be the best fit for me:

“Overall, I saw a very keen interest in D&T, data and innovation and I wasn’t sure that the graduate scheme would be the best fit for you as we would struggle to offer four rotations that will allow you to focus on this. I am currently looking into whether we could have a more data/ digital focused graduate role which we would recruit for in late spring for a September start (it would be part of the same cohort as this role). Would you like me to keep you updated on this?”



Bethan Watson
BA English

In my rush to secure a position by graduation, I hadn’t realised that there might be opportunities available that suited me better. I learned that getting knocked back is sometimes a blessing; I then thought carefully about my future steps.

So for all soon-to-be graduates, don’t feel pressured to secure a position that isn’t right for you. Take some time and pursue your interests. If you are seeking a graduate role, make sure your employer invests in you as much as you do in them.



**GOLD
MEDAL
TIP**

BECOME WORKPLACE READY WITH OUR ‘MCZ DIGITAL EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMMES’: <http://ex.ac.uk/bUF>

To discuss any application feedback, book an appointment with the Career Zone.
Feeling stressed about applications? Wellbeing Services: <http://ex.ac.uk/bUE>

TAKE YOUR MEDALS HOME:

Attending University in a different country gives you a diverse perspective on the world; here's how some of our alumni have taken their success home with them:



Kanon Clifford

How was the job hunting experience?

There is no doubt job hunting with a degree from another country can be difficult. Most individuals who interview you will not have heard of your University. To overcome this difficulty, I found it beneficial to highlight the achievements of Exeter at every turn.

We have a lot to make us proud:

- We attended a Russell Group University
- Exeter's national and international rankings are top-notch every year
- Exeter's teaching standard is of the highest quality
- Exeter's research is internationally recognised and world-leading
- We have diverse and international alumni from countries all over the world

Highlighting these achievements creates interest which can lead to a successful job offer. Mix this with a bit of passion for your alma-mater and you are well on your way to a successful job hunt.

Originally from Canada, Kanon returned home after graduating in 2018 with a Law degree, and began working at a law firm. Below Kanon discusses his decision to find employment back in his home country and advice for international students looking to do the same.

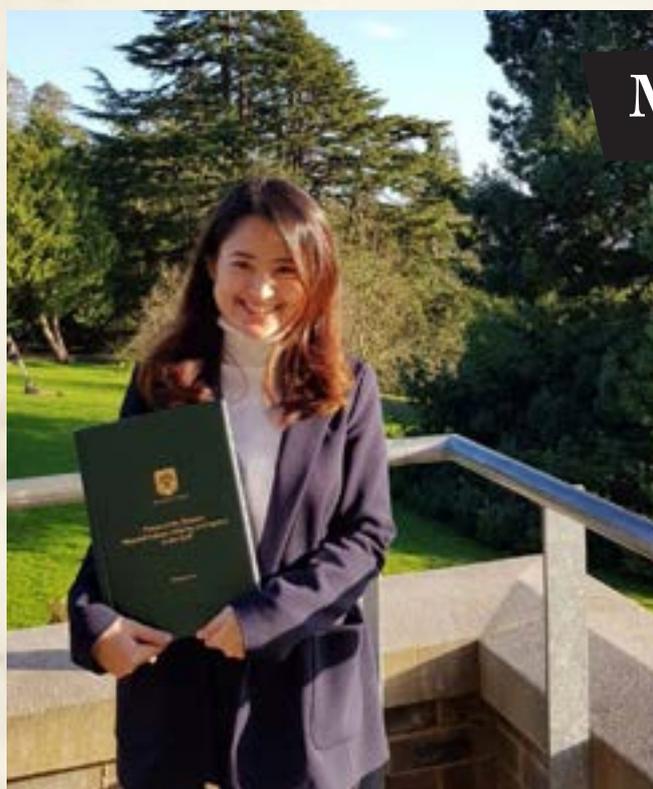
Why did you decide to return home to find work?

The summer between my penultimate year and final year, I had returned to Canada and found myself working with a law firm. I fell in love with the work and the firm's team. They were fighting in the legal trenches for injured clients and I found myself with the opportunity to help vulnerable individuals in the legal system. As my summer role was ending, the firm's partners offered me a full-time position and the opportunity to return to Canada.

What advice would you give current international students who are home after graduating?

If you are specifically looking to become a practising lawyer in North America, a strong quality employers look for is affability. Are you friendly, are you hardworking, and are you a team player? When you go in for an interview, a significant emphasis is placed on how much the interviewer likes you. Smile, be prepared for an open discussion, not just question-answer talk, and look to show you are a quality candidate. Be personable, show passion, hard work and dedication. Do this, and you will go far.

INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI



Manami Goto

researchers and being a mediator between scholars in my field. So I decided to look for a postdoctoral position in Japan in order to build my own network with scholars.

How was the job hunting experience?

It was very difficult and stressful, as there are not many opportunities in academia. I looked for job opportunities both in and outside academia and in and outside of Japan in my second year of doctoral research. In my third year I decided that I would return to Japan to look for a postdoctoral research fellowship. I applied for several conferences in Japan to present my research. At one of the conferences, I met my current supervisor and asked him to support my application for a postdoctoral fellowship in Japan. Since April 2019 I have worked as a postdoctoral research fellow of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

What advice would you give current international students who are thinking about returning home after graduating?

I think attending conferences and presenting papers in your home country will provide you with more opportunities after graduation, especially if you are planning to work in academia in your country. This is because letting people know your work, and getting to know professors in person, are the keys to getting a job! For someone looking for a job outside academia, I advise you to do internships during the summer/winter holidays, as I gained a lot of experiences when I took up short-term employment at an NGO between semesters during my MA.

Manami Goto graduated from her PhD in Arab and Islamic Studies at University of Exeter in 2019. She proceeded to work within academia in Japan.

Why did you decide to return home to find work?

Since graduating at a Japanese university with a law undergraduate degree, I have worked and studied abroad, such as my PhD at University of Exeter. I was often asked in academia to provide information about Japanese scholars. This made me realise that one of my strengths was having personal contacts with Japanese

**GOLD
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**GRADUATES ARE ABLE TO ACCESS SUPPORT FROM THE CAREER ZONE FOREVER
WHEREVER YOU ARE IN THE WORLD WE CAN HELP**

Stay connected after graduation by signing up for the newsletter, or joining a alumni network: <http://ex.ac.uk/bUD>



FOREVER IS FOREVER

**As a graduate from the University of Exeter
the Career Zone is available to you forever.**

We aim to offer the following services to our graduates:

- Careers advice and guidance, via 1:1 appointments with a Careers Consultant
- Career information and resources
- CV, Covering Letter and Application Form checking
- Access to My Career Zone job listings
- Interview support
- Internship opportunities
- Online webinars
- Career Mentoring
- Alumni careers networking
- Alumni events
- Enterprise and entrepreneurship support

For more details go to

www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/graduates/