Career ideas for students in Biomedical Science

Getting started
Want some ideas about what to do with your subject? Start off by investigating the Careers with my Degree section of the Careers Service website: www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/students/degree/bms. On this webpage, you’ll find information about what graduates from your course at Sheffield go on to do after their degree along with BMS graduate case studies. Also see the section Your options, which provides a broader picture of what BMS graduates could go on to do as well as useful downloads that contain more information about careers in research, the healthcare sector and other areas relevant to BMS.

To generate ideas more personal to you have a go at 'What jobs would suit me?' which you can link to from the Understanding yourself section of the above website. Take your time completing the online questionnaire to generate more meaningful suggestions of what jobs might suit your interests, skills and motivations. If you need help thinking about your skills, interests, personality and motivation, have a go at the 'Profiling for Success' activities in the Understanding yourself section or speak to a Careers Adviser. For more information on getting started: pick up a copy of 'See the Bigger Picture' from the Careers Service or download a copy: www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/bigger_picture/see_the_bigger_picture.pdf

What do Sheffield's BMS graduates do? (And resources to find out more)
Each year, the Careers Service collects information about what graduates from this University are doing 6 months after graduation. Although this is only a snap-shot in time, the information collected gives an indication of the range of employment options open to you as a graduate. Below are some of the more common destinations for BMS graduates, along with some useful links for you to find out more about jobs and careers in these areas.


Medicine, dentistry and other medical-related professions - www.nhscareers.nhs.uk has comprehensive information about various health care related roles, as does www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm. The Careers Service produces a range of information sheets about getting into medicine and dentistry and carries useful publications:
www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/infotree/Health.php. Also see our online talks:
www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/presentations/gettingmedicine/player.html and
www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/presentations/medicinetests/player.html
**Teaching** - see the Get into Teaching website for comprehensive information on becoming a teacher in primary or secondary school (www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching). If you are interested in teaching in FE see www.feadvice.org.uk and nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/furthereducationlecturer.aspx. Those interested in becoming a lecturer in HE require a PhD - talk to your tutor about this.

**Other jobs** – many BMS graduates choose to work in non-scientific roles, some relating to their course, others being completely different (around 60-70% of all graduate jobs are open to graduates of ANY discipline). In the past, BMS graduates have gone into jobs as diverse as medical sales, medical information officer and scientific journalism through to retail, recruitment, human resources, business, finance and management roles. For other ideas about what to do with your subject, go to the Careers Service’s ‘Careers with my degree’ web pages: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/degree/bms. Also see Next Steps after a Bioscience degree: www.sebiology.org/education/docs/Next_steps_web.pdf

**Additional ways to explore types of careers**

There’s a useful blog dedicated to careers after biological science, which you may find useful: biosciencercareers.wordpress.com. The ‘Prospects’ website can help you find out about a range of occupations, see www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm. This includes information such as job descriptions, salary and conditions, entry requirements, training, career development and case studies. Societies and professional bodies can be a good source of careers information. Each and every occupational area will normally have at least one society and/or a professional body associated with it. Many have careers pages. Some of those most common to BMS include: the Society of Biology (www.societyofbiology.org); Physiological Society (www.physoc.org); Genetics Society (www.genetics.org.uk); Society for Experimental Biology (www.sebiology.org); British Society for Cell Biology (www.bscb.org); Institute of Biomedical Science (www.ibms.ac.uk), Society for General Microbiology (www.sgm.ac.uk), Society for Reproduction and Fertility (www.srf-reproduction.org), Society for Endocrinology (www.endocrinology.org), Pathological Society (www.pathsoc.org), British Neuroscience Association (www.bna.org.uk) and Scientists for Global Responsibility (www.sgr.org.uk - search the publications section for the keyword ‘career’). The Careers Service has information about societies and professional bodies associated with other occupations. Also ask your tutor or lecturer for ideas. For added inspiration, see New Scientist Careers Special: www.newscientist.com/special/graduate-careers-2013. Also useful are Guardian Careers: http://careers.theguardian.com and Professional Network: www.guardian.co.uk/guardian-professional

**Job hunting strategies**

- Be proactive and imaginative in your search. Don’t limit your chances by only looking at online jobs databases or vacancy listings. Find out which organisations operate in your area of interest and check out their website - if you can’t find a jobs page, contact them directly. The Careers Service and your department can help you identify organisations, as might professional associations. Even try a search on Yellow Pages - www.yell.com. Use a professional, targeted speculative application (CV and covering letter) to tap into the ‘hidden’ jobs market: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/jobs/creative. Use social networks such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook: www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/students/gettingajob/media.

- Don’t just aim for the larger, well known organisations but also consider employment with Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs), who make up a good proportion of graduate employers. Watch the DVDs for more information on working for an SME: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/worktypes.

- Talk to people in the know – the employers themselves. Whilst many of us dread the idea of ‘networking’, try doing simple things like attending talks and fairs run as part of the Careers Service’s What’s on programme (www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/events) or those running within your department. Be prepared – find out which employers will be at the event and research them on the web first, so that you can chat with them. Most will be happy to share your enthusiasm. Talk to your tutor as they (or others in your department) may have some useful contacts for you to follow up. Again, make use of social media (see the Careers Service handout for help).

- The Prospects website: www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm has sources of useful information. Choose a relevant occupational area and then look for the links to ‘Employers and vacancy sources’.

- If you are thinking about jobs further afield, check out ‘myInternational Career’ on the Careers Service website: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/inter.
You can find information on ethical opportunities by referring to information available from the Careers Service (www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/infotree) and Prospects (www.prospects.ac.uk) by using 'ethical' as a search term.

Make use of online databases for a wide variety of job opportunities suitable for students of all degree disciplines, including biosciences. Look at the Careers Service’s MyVacancies listing at www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/jobs. Also see TargetJobs - http://targetjobs.co.uk

Competition for jobs is often strong. Ensure your applications are effective by getting help from the Careers Service: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/gettingajob. Previous work experience is often vital. If you think you need to add some experience to your CV, the Careers Service can help you make a start; see our handout ‘Finding work experience – Information for BMS students’. Be flexible in terms of the length and type of experience you seek. It may be necessary to seek several short placements with different organisations in order to gain a good level of experience. A day or two work shadowing is a useful way into an organisation and may lead to further work experience. This is also a great way to build networks for graduate job hunting.

Have realistic expectations. You may have to serve your time in voluntary or lower-paid roles to gain experience and a true insight into the field you are interested in, before you can progress.

Further study
Some occupations require you to have first completed further study or post graduate research. Go to www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/worktypes/study to help you get started and talk to your tutor as soon as possible.

The Careers Service
If you need help getting started, making career decisions, job hunting or seeking further study, then book an appointment to see a Careers Adviser at the Careers Service on Level 1, 388 Glossop Road.