

Getting the most from your job advert

Introduction

When trying to attract University of Sheffield students and graduates to opportunities offered by your organisation, it is easy to fall down at the first hurdle by putting together an ineffective vacancy advertisement.

This guide is written to help you get the best possible response to your advert from candidates who have the skills, knowledge and qualifications which you are seeking. It will help you ensure that the information you provide is clear, concise and sufficient to enable jobseekers to decide whether or not they wish to apply to your organisation.

Where to advertise

myVacancies is a FREE online vacancy service for employers wishing to advertise graduate jobs as well as part-time, vacation and voluntary work, placements and internships. Run by the University of Sheffield Careers Service and managed by Prospects, this self explanatory system guides you through the fields to help you create quality adverts. You can also check how many times your entries have been viewed and edit and re-run previous entries - particularly helpful if your recruitment runs on an annual cycle.

To advertise visit <http://tiny.cc/advertiseshffield> Creating an account only takes a few minutes. You can add as many adverts as you like and your entry will be checked by our Employer Liaison team before it goes live.

The content of your entry

Job title

Clearly name the position available in a meaningful way and avoid using generic terms such as 'Graduate Trainee' or vague terms such as 'Project Worker' wherever possible. A more specific job title helps your advertisement stand out from others which may appear in search results, enabling jobseekers to easily identify that the post may be of interest to them. If unsure, search online for similar jobs for inspiration.

Organisation information

If your organisation name is unlikely to be recognised by students and graduates, consider adding a 'subtitle' that describes your organisation's activity in an interesting way eg. ABC - world innovators of medical devise development for the healthcare sector.

Company information is key and needs to be short and concise, accompanied by a link to your website for further information. Emphasise very briefly key activities your organisation undertakes, any unique features, awards, or aspects of work with which jobseekers may be familiar eg work on nationally recognised projects. You may also like to make reference to organisation growth, diversification of products or services, innovation, geographical

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spread of offices, sites or clients and the variety of markets in which the organisation operates. However, remember to keep it short so that you do not lose readers before they even get to information about the role. It would be more suitable to make detailed background information part of the job description which applicants can either view via a URL link or request separately.

If you are a small to medium-sized organisation, it is worth highlighting the benefits of working for an organisation of your size eg hands-on experience from the start, on-the-job training, early responsibility etc. Many students and graduates are unaware of the benefits and may be in fact be more suited towards a smaller organisation.

Role information

Jobseekers are most interested in finding out about the job on offer, so use the majority of your advert copy to promote the position. Generate interest in your current opportunities with enthused content and be sure to include keywords from the 'desired' category in your 'person specification' throughout.

Elements that will attract candidates to your opportunities include:

- Career progression opportunities
- Graduate training scheme or other formal on-the-job training
- Health package/gym membership
- Flexible working hours
- Salary, performance related bonuses, company car or perks

When posting your advert, ensure that you only select the job categories that are relevant. Although you may feel you will receive a better response by selecting every category, you will in fact simply increase the number of irrelevant applications submitted.

Salary

Ideally you should provide an actual salary figure as opposed to 'Competitive' or 'Negotiable'. Jobseekers rarely have the time in their job search to research what they think is an appropriate salary for the job advertised. Even if the salary is below industry standards, your advert is more likely to receive a greater number of responses where a salary is quoted. If using a salary range, try to make it as narrow as possible to give applicants a realistic view of what they are likely to be paid. If you indicate 'Up to £X', most applicants will expect no less than 85-90% of the figure quoted. To maximise interest, you are better off stating the basic salary in addition to any on-target earnings (OTE).

Clear call to action

Ensure that an outline of the stages of application is supplied, including dates of any assessment centres. Include links to further information eg job description, person specification. Be clear about whether potential applicants need to apply online, complete your application form or submit a CV.

Consider setting a closing date if you wish to generate applications by a certain date. A closing date can encourage potential applicants to apply sooner rather than later, but be realistic when setting one. You should allow a minimum of two weeks from the date an advert is posted. If you are recruiting final year students for positions which start after they graduate, consider that many finalists do not start looking for work until late on during their course, or even after graduation. You should therefore avoid setting closing dates which are too soon in the academic year if you want your vacancies to receive maximum publicity. Some employers set two or three closing dates throughout the academic year to ensure that they receive a steady flow of applications, whilst maintaining a year-round profile.

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