



Keeping safe during your job search

Avoiding phishing scams and fraudulent employers

Tips to protect yourself from phishing scams, include:

- Checking that the sender's email address matches the sender's name, and that the contact's email address matches the company's website domain (i.e. JohnSmith@gmail.com rather than JohnSmith@companyname.com).
- Being on the lookout for misspellings and poor grammar, which may suggest that an email or job advert does not originate from a trusted source.
- Watching out for unsolicited emails, phone calls or text messages that push you to act hastily or that seem too good to be true.
- Before clicking on a link, hover your mouse over the link. This will show you the actual web address embedded in the link. Check this against the actual web address of the trusted source.
- Do not share personal information prior to a formal recruitment process. For example: National Insurance Number; bank account numbers; PIN number; PayPal account; credit card information; copies of your passport or license and/or other personal documents (during any recruitment process always retain possession of personal documentations).
- Take care when you are contacted by someone you do not know via phone or email, especially if the communication is unexpected and/or references your CV.

Advice for avoiding potentially fraudulent employers:

Generally, if a job posting, email, or interaction with an employer contains any of the following, end all contact with the employer and notify the University of Winchester's Careers and Opportunities Hub immediately:

- Offers to pay a large amount of money for very little work or the payment method is via cash or a cheque (especially if you have little or none of the required experience).
- Focusses more on the money you will make rather than the responsibilities of the job.
- Offers you a job without ever interacting with you.
- Offers to send you a payment before you do any work.

- Requests that you forward, transfer or send money via courier (i.e., DPD, UPS); use your personal banking/payment account(s) on behalf of an employer; or any other practices which may indicate money laundering activity.

Information and Professionalism

- A lack of clear information about a job and/or company is a red flag.
- Be careful if an employer cannot communicate accurately or effectively on the website, by email, over the telephone, etc. *-If communications are unprofessional, how professional is the organisation?*
- You can get information about a company through Companies House

Does an opportunity sound too good to be true? - *If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is! Just because a job advert appears in a legitimate publication, it does not mean that the job or company is, necessarily, legitimate.*

Exercise Extreme Caution When Asked to Pay Any Fees

Legitimate employers will not charge to hire you! Don't send money for advice on getting hired, company information or anything else related to the job. Remember that CareerConnect and other websites can provide students with free help in locating internships and jobs.

Review Payment Information

- When information about salary is not listed on a job posting, try to find out if you will receive a salary or be paid on commission. 'Commission only' roles still need to pay you at least the national minimum wage for every hour you work.
- Find out how much, how often, and by what means you will be paid.
- If the company does not pay an hourly rate or a salary, be cautious and seek guidance from the Careers and Opportunities Hub.

Follow these safety tips when going on an interview:

- Always ensure it is held in a public place or official company premises and that someone knows about your plans to interview and the location.
- There should be more than one interviewer present, and interviewers should be able to prove that they work for the company (e.g., through company ID cards).
- If your instincts tell you it's suspicious, it probably is.
- Do not feel pressured to give personal identifiable information in an application if you are not comfortable during an interview or during online/phone correspondence. Ask to take the document with you to complete and return so you have time to research the issue further.
- Your safety is paramount, you should end an interview if you feel uncomfortable at any point and wish to leave.