

## Using LinkedIn to Help Start Your Graduate Career

You've created a profile, connected to a few of your university friends, but that's it! LinkedIn can be a valuable online tool for students when it comes to career planning & job/career searching. This guide provides introductory tips to help you to start making the most of your LinkedIn profile, and getting to know some of the key features of this valuable online networking platform.

LinkedIn can help you in 3 main ways:

### 1. Identity: who you are (your profile)

Include the following sections in your profile (the next page contains example of the sections of a LinkedIn profile):

- *Photograph*: profiles receive more views if they have a photograph
- *Headline*: what you are studying/what you do, your passion, careers/roles of interest
- *Summary*: outline of your experiences, achievements and career interests/passions
- *Work Experience + Education*: outline of your experiences including degree and job roles with responsibilities
- *Skills/Recommendations*: a number of skills listed on your profile. Any of your connections who know you/have worked with you can "endorse" you for your skills
- *Additional sections*: used to showcase accomplishments such as additional courses, project work, certifications, publications etc

### 2. Networks (Who you know)

- Create your profile first and then "connect" with other professionals.
- Connecting with people can help you to build your professional relationships, gain job insights and learn about career opportunities. Learn more [here](#) about how to network using LinkedIn.
- Connect to people you know (fellow students, friends, family, lecturers/tutors, previous and current work colleagues, university staff (e.g. careers service etc)
- The more people you connect with, the larger your professional network (if you connect with 50 people, they are connected with 50+ people – your network grows). For an explanation of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level connections see [here](#)
- Connect in the right way; if you request to connect with someone you don't know, send a personalised message e.g. "I see that you graduated from Aston University with a degree in Chemical Engineering. I am studying the same degree at Aston and am now exploring potential work opportunities. I wondered if you would mind becoming a part of my professional network of engineers?"
- BE ACTIVE - Engage your network by liking/sharing/commenting on posts, post your own content, publish a blog post. These can be good ways to get noticed and build your network.



### 3. Knowledge (What you know)

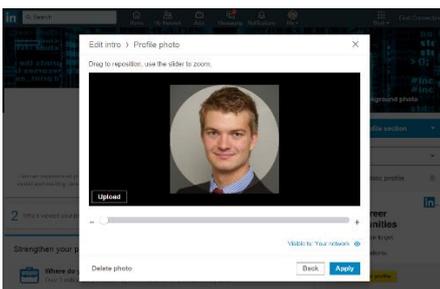
- Use LinkedIn to develop your knowledge of careers, companies and job roles in the following ways:
  - a) *Alumni* – find other graduates from your university, see what they are doing/where they are working in their careers, try to connect to ask them questions. See what skills they have whilst working in a company/career of interest (for more information about using the “alumni tool” click [here](#))
  - b) *Find and follow employers* – search for employers of interest & “follow” them – receive company news and updates. To find out how to search for and follow employers click [here](#)
  - c) *Join Groups* – Find groups relating to your industry, career and job role of interest. Discover how to do this [here](#). This can help you engage with other like-minded professionals.
  - d) *Job search* – LinkedIn advertises a range of job roles. Either find them on an employer’s LinkedIn page or through the “jobs” link in the menu bar at the top of the page when logged in to LinkedIn

### Key Tips for making the most of LinkedIn

1. Make sure your profile is as complete as possible...it’s about first impressions. LinkedIn will provide an indication to you of how “complete” your profile is.
2. You have the responsibility to control your account, privacy, public profile and email settings. Take the time to review this and adjust the settings to what you feel is comfortable. Access your settings page by logging in to your account. Access the drop down menu in the top right hand corner and select “settings & privacy”.
3. Be active on LinkedIn – follow companies, join groups, connect with people, comment on posts, post your own links to articles or even write a LinkedIn blog post. Don’t expect to create a profile and employers or connections will just find you.
4. Keep it professional – remember LinkedIn is about your own personal brand.

### Creating your Profile

#### 1. Photograph



- Add a professional looking photograph
- Profiles with photographs receive more views

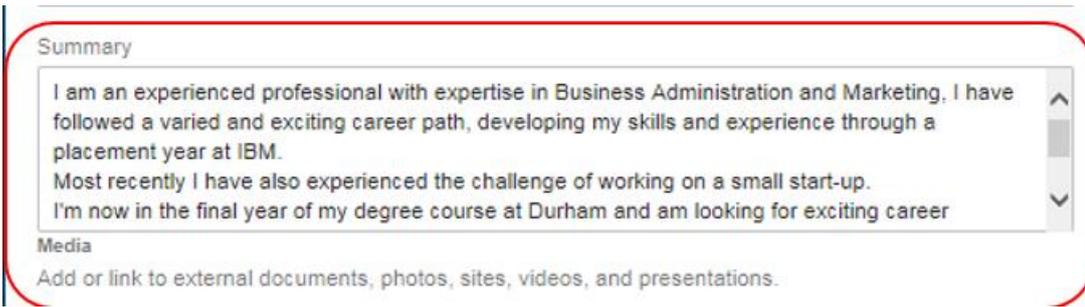
#### 2. Headline



- What you are doing/studying
- Your career passions
- Career area/role of interest

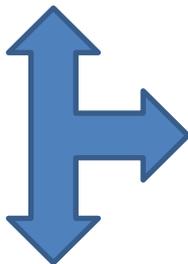
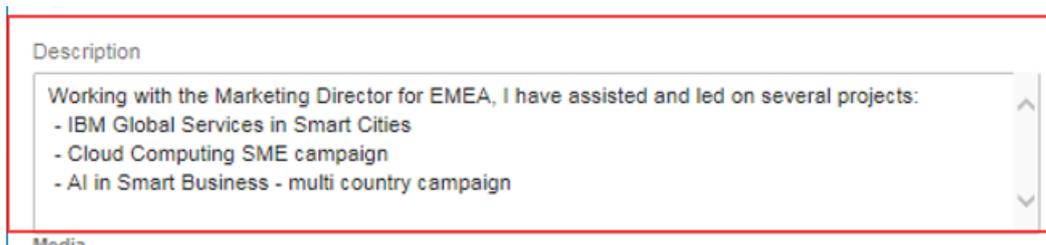


3. Summary



- A summary can enable an employer to find your profile in a future search
- Write about your experience, accomplishments & aspirations
- Tip:** Use keywords that may come up in job descriptions for career areas/roles of interest to you

4. Work Experience + Education



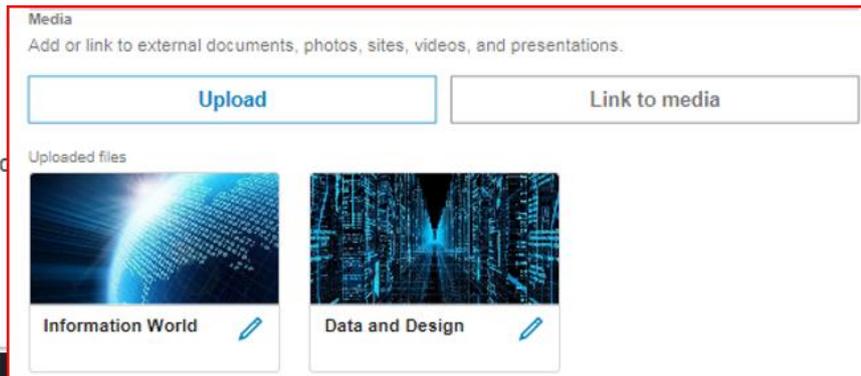
- Add your university and degree course (even if you haven't finished it!)
- Add any modules or coursework that may be relevant to a career/job role
- Include any work experience/temporary jobs, with bullet points outline key duties/responsibilities

Education



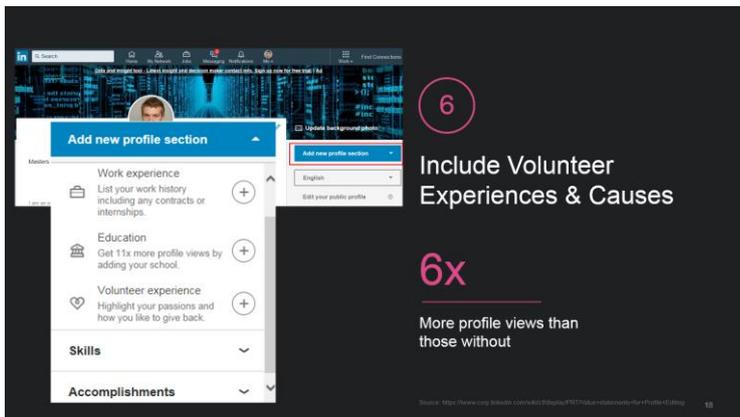
 **Durham University**  
Master's degree, Business/Managerial Economics  
2013 – 2017





-If relevant you could include examples of projects, websites you may have worked on, blogs you may have written etc

**Tip:** It's ok if you don't have examples to include, as not everyone will do so



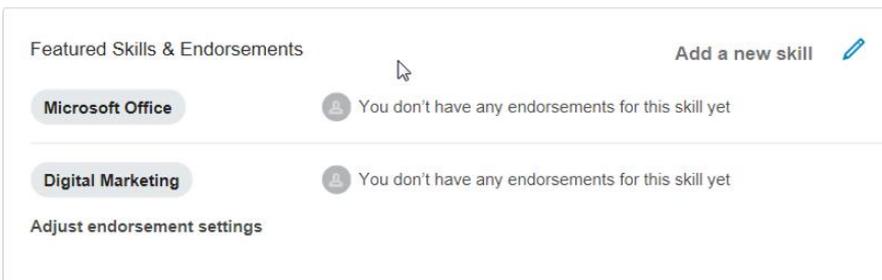
-Include any volunteering experience you may have had

- Add the organisation(s), your role/responsibilities/achievements

-Demonstrate the skills gained through these experiences

**Tip:** Many employers are keen to know about your voluntary/extra-curricular experiences and achievements





- Add skills you possess to your profile e.g. technical & transferable skills such as communication, analytical etc
- Your connections can “endorse” you for skills if they are on your profile
- The higher the number of endorsements the more likely you are to appear in searches by companies
- You can also have “recommendations” visible on your profile. To add a recommendation to your profile, you will need to request these directly from one of your connections e.g. someone who has worked with you or managed you etc.

#### Further useful links

1. LinkedIn for Students guide: <https://students.linkedin.com/uk>
2. An overview of what LinkedIn can do for students: <https://university.linkedin.com/linkedin-for-students>

Leaflet created 9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2018 by Sarah Warburton, Careers Consultant

Content has been adapted from a “You’re Closer Than you Think; How to use LinkedIn to Kick-start your career”

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