



University of
Bedfordshire

Guide to finding part-time work



We have put this guide together to point you in the right direction if you are looking for a part-time job. It is a general overview of the local opportunities together with some advice and information to help you.

The financial benefits are obvious but working part-time also gives valuable experience and it will help you to develop what are called “employability” skills.

These are the skills that employers are looking for when recruiting graduates and you will need to manage your career development.

The social side of part-time work should not be ignored and certainly for new students to the area is a good way to make contacts as well as developing the social, team working and communication skills that employers seek.

How to find a part-time job

Fact: 80% of jobs in the UK are not advertised

Part-time jobs are not going to come to you; you are going to have to go out and find them.

Demand is high and there are typically hundreds of people competing for the jobs that are available.

A strategic and organised approach is needed. Research and plan your job-hunting strategy.

A tip from one of our recent international graduates was “take chances, explore different opportunities and do not be afraid to knock on all the doors”

This is a great opportunity to use and develop key employability skills, particularly being proactive, self-promotion, networking and planning.

Speculative applications

The speculative approach is when you contact the company yourself. It can be a very productive strategy.

Research companies that you would like to work for and approach them directly, but be clever about it and approach them in a professional manner. Find out what they do, who is the right person to talk to and think about how you will introduce yourself. Make sure that the first impression is the right impression!

Listen and ask questions first rather than just asking for a job as at this stage you are just trying to develop a relationship with them, which with luck may be a productive one.

If you are visiting an employer to drop off a CV in person, then do make sure that you look smart and presentable. First impressions count!

Social media

This can be a good way to find a job, as long as you follow the rules and etiquette.

Facebook

You may well be familiar with. But take care and ensure that your privacy settings protect your digital persona.

You may want to consider having a completely separate account for your “professional” presence if you use Facebook or other social networking sites.

Your own personal network may be your best source of job opportunities.

LinkedIn

Join online discussions to build your knowledge of different sectors. If you do contribute try not to say anything too controversial, political or inappropriate!

Search for companies that you would like to work for but you will still need to employ a targeted approach so do your homework beforehand and send a tailored message explaining who you are and what you are interested in.

Build up a professional relationship, you can move onto the job opportunities when the time is right, do not just ask for a job.

Twitter

Follow recruiters to find out their latest news and developments.

Twitter is instant, followers can see in real-time that you are looking for work. If you have put in the hard work and taken the time to develop the right relationships, your followers are more likely to help.

Remember:

1. To fully complete your profile on each social media site and include links to any blogs or online CVs.
2. Add an appropriate photo, remember impressions can count when you are looking for a job.
3. Use keywords in your profile so that it makes it easy for employers to find you. Look at the words used in job advertisements and make sure you relate to these.
4. Let people know that you are looking for a job and what you are looking for and what you have to offer. Alternatively ask for help and advice in the first instance and take it from there.
5. Do not be fooled by the word "social". In business you need to be professional at all times, in your written communication and how you portray yourself.
6. Many employers now use social media to do a check on potential employees. Take care of your digital footprint.

JobSavviGrad

We advise that you register for a JobSavviGrad (JSG) account on the Careers website www.beds.ac.uk/careers

JSG is the University's online job search and application management system. In addition to the job-search facility it has many more benefits.

Employers are looking for evidence of skills and JSG is the best way to start evidencing your skills. Make sure that you understand what skills and personal qualities the employer is looking for. Then evidence your suitability using real-life experiences to provide examples to support your application.

Empty claims are worthless. Evidence your skills and make sure that these relate to the opportunity.

Online applications

Some employers will only accept online applications. If this is how they want you to apply, then please do not ignore these instructions. It will not do you any favours with the employer and simply shows that you cannot follow basic instructions!

Most online application forms will include a section where you state why you want the job and why you are the best candidate. Just as with CVs – evidence the skills that the job requires and remember to check your spelling and grammar.

Watch out – some jobs may not be what they seem and may be with disreputable companies. Not everything online can be trusted!

CVs

Producing a good CV takes time and effort, even for part-time jobs.

Each opportunity is unique so each application should be unique.

The importance of getting your CV right for each application cannot be overstressed. That means that you should tailor your CV for each application.

Look at the skills and experiences that they are looking for and try and match them with your own, giving examples where you can.

Think about it from the employer's point of view, they want the best people possible to fill their part-time vacancies.

Top 10 CV tips:

1. Check your spelling and grammar. Remember the “spell check” only tells you if it is an English word – not the correct one
2. Get someone else to read your CV for spelling, grammar and meaning
3. If you are being invited to interview, then your CV is working, if not then be prepared to change it
4. You will need more than one CV for different types of applications
5. As your experience grows, update your CV. It is a “living” document , never a finished piece of work
6. Put a positive spin on everything you have done – identify your strengths and maximise them on your CV
7. Make sure that your career profile or objective is worded around what the employer wants and what you have to offer them
8. Your CV must be two pages and fill two pages – you do not want a lot of white space on your CV. If it is too short you are going to have to rethink it
9. If the above is the case, you can emphasise your skills, for example IT and language skills
10. You can add value to your CV by undertaking courses or developing your transferable skills (if you are not sure what transferable skills are do a Google search... makes for interesting reading ...)



Local Employers

University of Bedfordshire

All opportunities are advertised online.

Check what opportunities are listed on JobSavviGrad, available from the Careers and Employment Service website www.beds.ac.uk/careers and on the University website www.beds.ac.uk.

Check the Student Union website www.ubsu.co.uk/ and make sure that you join their group on Facebook where opportunities may be advertised.

Warehouse and Distribution

Amazon Fulfilment Centre

Is located at Marston Gate, nearest rail station is Ridgmont, Bedfordshire.

There are only opportunities for Christmas temporary work. Apply online through their site and look for Amazon Careers.

It is a hard-paced and fast environment.

Argos Distribution Centre

In addition to their retail outlets in Bedford and Luton Argos have a major distribution centre just south of Bedford.

Check online at www.argoscareers.com for opportunities that may be available.

Alternatively it might be worth contacting the distribution centre in person.

Retail

Gypsy Lane Retail Park, Luton

Close to the Luton Campus, retail outlets include Next, Halfords, B&Q, Comet, Argos and Toys R Us.

NB B&Q do not accept speculative applications in-store. Only apply online. The other stores are happy to accept either online or speculative applications.

Next are very strict with their recruitment of Christmas temporary staff. If they offer you a contract you have to commit to their terms and conditions and have to be there for their "prep and sale" period. Its either work or hand in your notice, so you need to be 100% committed to working for them.

The Mall

Situated close to the Luton campus this is a great place to find a part-time job!

All jobs at The Mall are advertised online www.themall.co.uk/my-mall/luton/vacancies.aspx

There is also a jobs board located in the Mall.

Top tip though is that when retailers are recruiting they will often simply put a poster in their windows, so keep popping in to see what is on offer. But only go in once you see a poster up, they will not be recruiting if they are not advertising the fact.

Or you can visit the Customer Services desk to find out what part-time jobs they have and to pick up an application form.

Interchange Retail Park

Located just south on Bedford off the A6 there are a number of retailers including Toys R Us, JJB Sports, Harvey's and Argos etc.

Close to Bedford Campus

Off Goldington Road in Bedford there are a number of retailers including Tesco, Wickes DIY and Homebase. Further along on the Elms Industrial Estate, the big leisure retailer Go-Outdoors can be found.

Just outside of Bedford town centre at St. Johns retailers include: Halfords, Homebase, Matalan, PC World etc.

There are a number of the big retailers Bedford Town Centre including Debenhams, M&S, Boots, Primark etc.

Leisure

Cinemas

The Luton Galaxy Centre is a large leisure complex in the centre of Luton (in Bridge Street, opposite The Mall). It has a cinema, a bowling alley and restaurants, so lots of opportunities for part-time work.

In Bedford Cineworld is close to the University and is worth contacting.

The best approach would be to visit with copies of your CV and use the speculative approach.

Hotels

There are a number of hotel chains in the area, particularly in Luton.

Check online to find the hotels chains and look for any opportunities advertised.

Or you may wish to approach the hotels direct with you CV.

London Luton Airport

Any vacancies in the retail outlets at arrivals and departures will be advertised online. Google – London Luton airport recruitment to find the relevant sites.

Also look at the vacancies for ground or baggage handling, car parking and cleaning staff. In most case you will need to contact the employers direct.

AVS are a recruitment agency who also handle roles at the airport. Find them online or email jobs@av-s.co.uk

Gyms and Fitness Centres

The David Lloyd in Luton can be found at Capability Business Park on the outskirts of Luton.

To apply online go to www.davidlloyd.co.uk/home/aboutdavidlloyd/careers#welcome

There is a Bannatyne's Health Club on Regent Street, Luton. To apply for jobs you need to register with Leisure Jobs at www.leisurejobs.com – good for registering for jobs within the leisure and health sector in general.

Close to the University near Cineworld, Bedford, Fitness First have a gym. They also have gyms in Luton and Dunstable.

LA Fitness and Body Hub are both close to the Alexander Sports Centre in Bedford and may be approaching to check for any part-time opportunities.

Supermarkets

Local supermarkets include Asda, Sainsbury's and Tesco.

The nearest Tesco is situated in The Mall Shopping Centre, next to the University. There is an out of town Asda at Wigmore Shopping Centre, Stopsley. The nearest Sainsbury's to the University is in Dunstable Road. There is also an out of town Sainsbury's at Bramingham Park.

All of them will only accept online applications, so find the jobs site for each supermarket and apply online. Do not take in a CV because you risk your CV just getting filed away and never seeing the light of day again.



Pubs, Clubs and Restaurants

These are ideal for weekend and evening work. Many of them will advertise in their windows when they have vacancies, especially if they are a small independent pub/bar/restaurant.

The best approach is just to go in and ask if they have any vacancies, they do not necessarily advertise.

Check all of the major fast food chains including Mc Donalds, Burger King, KFC etc.

Whitbread are a major employer in Luton and Bedfordshire. They own a number of pubs and restaurant chains and run a call centre in Luton.

Find jobs at www.whitbread.co.uk/whitbread/careers/jobssearch.html

Check the major pub chains in the area using Google such as Weatherspoons, Beefeater, Harvester etc.

There is the Liquid Nightclub and Chicago's Luton on Gordon Street, Charlie Brown's on Midland Road, Luton.

Saints and Sinners on St Peter's Street, Bedford.

Check online for others in the area.

Recruitment Agencies

Most agencies are member of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC). Their website includes a directory of members that you can search by location and sector www.rec.co.uk and look under "Members".

However there are very limited opportunities for part-time work through agencies other than for warehouse or industrial work.

They are a much better option for full-time work during the University holidays. But you must go and see them at least a month in advance of the end of term to register with them. If you are interested in full time work remember to keep in touch with them and let them know what you are doing and when you are available.

If you are an international student you are only allowed to work during the University's holidays and remember to take a letter into the recruitment agency stating the term dates.



Major employers in Luton & Bedford

The opportunities for part-time work may be limited but you could do some research on any companies that you would like to work for and try the speculative approach.

Luton Borough Council

Have a look at the part-time jobs on offer at Luton Borough Council. They offer roles in areas such as legal, adult social care, customer services, administration, PR and Marketing,

Teaching and School vacancies and many others. If you could get a part-time job linked to what you are studying then this would be invaluable.

NB they offer feedback if your application is not successful. To find out how to get feedback, go to the Guidance Notes section of the website.

Bedford Borough Council

As with Luton Borough Council there may be some good part-time job vacancies at Bedford Borough Council. Take a look at www.bedford.gov.uk/jobs_and_careers.aspx

Luton and Dunstable Hospital

They do offer part-time work www.ldh.nhs.uk/Working_at_the_L&D.htm

Apply using the NHS jobs website where you can search for part-time jobs at Luton and Dunstable NHS Trust.

Unfortunately they do not accept speculative applications.



Don't over-commit

First and foremost you are here to study so you do not want to jeopardise your chances of success by working too many hours. The University recommends a maximum of 20 hours per week.

International students on a student visa are only allowed to work up to a maximum of 20 hours a week during term time.

What help is available?

- Check the Careers and Employment Service website www.beds.ac.uk/careers for details of how to access the information, advice and guidance that is available.
- Current students can send enquiries and request feedback on CVs and applications through SiD Online.
- Register through the Careers website for a JobSavviGrad account. You can expect approval within two working days and will then receive an activation email. But do check your Junk and SPAM filters for this email just in case it ends up here!
- Register your interest in finding work by sending your CV to hireme@beds.ac.uk Make sure you let us know what type of work you are looking for. If we are notified directly of any opportunities we will let you know.
- Visit Recruitment Services on the ground floor of the Luton Campus Centre where a drop-in service is available to answer your queries.



Log an enquiry through [SiD online](http://www.beds.ac.uk/careers)

Call: 01582 489293

Visit Recruitment Services – Campus Centre, Luton

See us in Bedford in the Learning Hub

www.beds.ac.uk/careers

Remember:

Where are they advertised?

Did you know that 80% of jobs are not advertised?

The “hidden” job market means that you will have to carry out research, contact potential employers and be proactive. Keep your eyes and ears open!

The job hunting skills you develop now will help you when you start looking for full-time work.



Speculative applications

Do not be afraid to approach companies yourself.

Research companies that you would like to work for or who may have interesting job opportunities.

Send the company your CV and a covering letter so that they have your details available. You may save the employer the cost of advertising!

Seasonal work

Many part-time opportunities are seasonal, Christmas and Easter being good examples.

Employers plan ahead and start recruiting early. Do not leave it too late to start looking, you may miss out!

CVs

Sending the same CV out for every job you apply for will limit your chances of success.

Target your CV to the needs of the employer or the type of work.

Check spelling and grammar!

Don't over-commit

Do not let it affect your studies or your health!

Do not exceed 20 hours a week