



University of
Lancashire

Job ready?

Gillian Kendall

Careers & Employability Adviser

Semester 1 2025

Where opportunity creates success



Did you know?

- 65,000 people applied to BAE's graduate scheme last year for 2,400 vacancies
- Thales 10,000 people applied – 2,000 were dismissed straight away. People didn't do the assessment in the time frame.



Gillian Kendall

- 9 years within the Careers Team
- 9 years liaising with graduate employers
- 6 years as a Careers Adviser for the School
- 25 years as a Careers Adviser



Who has applied? Hands-up

- 3k + on Bright Network
- 680+ on Gradcracker
- etc

The screenshot shows the Bright Network homepage. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation links for 'For employers', 'Login', and 'Signup'. Below the navigation, there's a banner for 'Last chance to join Black Talent in Banking' with an 'Apply today' button. The main section is titled 'Other, Graduate Jobs & Work Experience'. On the left, there are filters for 'Content types', 'Sectors', 'Employers', 'Locations', and 'Job types'. The main content area displays three job listings from NATS: 'Research & Development Graduate Scheme 2026', 'Safety Transformation Graduate Scheme 2026', and 'Sales Graduate 2026'. Each listing includes the company logo, location, salary, and deadline.

The screenshot shows the Gradcracker homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'About Us', 'The 5-Year Club', 'For Employers', 'For Universities', 'For Schools & Parents', 'Contact Us', and 'Log in/Register'. Below the navigation, there's a section for 'OPPORTUNITY TYPE' with filters for 'Graduate Jobs', 'Placements/Internships', and 'Degree Apprenticeships'. The main section is titled 'JOBS ACCEPTING COMPUTING/TECHNOLOGY DISCIPLINES' and shows 153 Employers and 680 Graduate Opportunities. On the left, there's a list of 'JOBS ACCEPTING...' with various disciplines and their counts. The main content area displays two job listings: 'Trainee Patent Attorney - Computer Science' from Withers & Rogers and 'Scientific Computing Graduate' from the University of Oxford. Each listing includes the company logo, location, salary, degree required, and starting date.

What are your priorities? With all this choice – how do you choose?

[illegible]

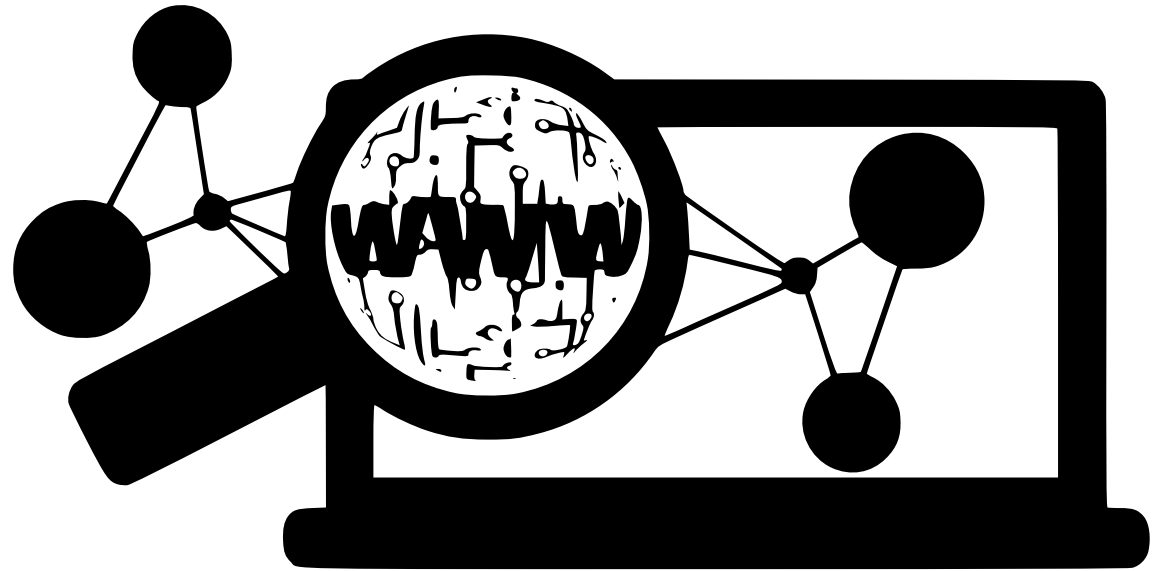
What industries would welcome a tech/computing qualification?

- **Banking and Finance** - [Barclays](#), [Deloitte](#), [EY](#), [J.P. Morgan](#), [KPMG](#) and [PwC](#).
- **Construction** - [Mace](#)
- **Government departments** - [Civil Service](#) & [Local Government Graduate Scheme](#)
- **Engineering & Manufacturing** - [BAE Systems](#), [GE Aviation](#), [Jaguar Land Rover](#), [MBDA](#) and [Rolls-Royce](#).
- **Healthcare** - [National Health Service \(NHS\)](#) & [Graduate Scheme](#)
- **Education** – [University](#) & [College](#)
- **Insurance** - [Aviva](#) and [AXA](#)
- **Marketing/Advertising/PR** - [WPP](#)
- **Media** - [BBC](#), [Sky](#) and [Virgin Media O2](#)
- **Retail** – [Amazon](#)
- **Armed Forces** – Army, Navy, RAF,



How many student/ graduate websites do you know?

- Shout out which ones you know.....
- [GradCracker](#)
- [Student Ladder](#)
- [Glassdoor](#)
- [Step](#)
- [Bright Network](#)
- [Target Jobs](#)
- [Milkround](#)
- [Rate My Placement](#)
- [Prospects](#)
- [Handshake](#)



How do you make your CV specific?



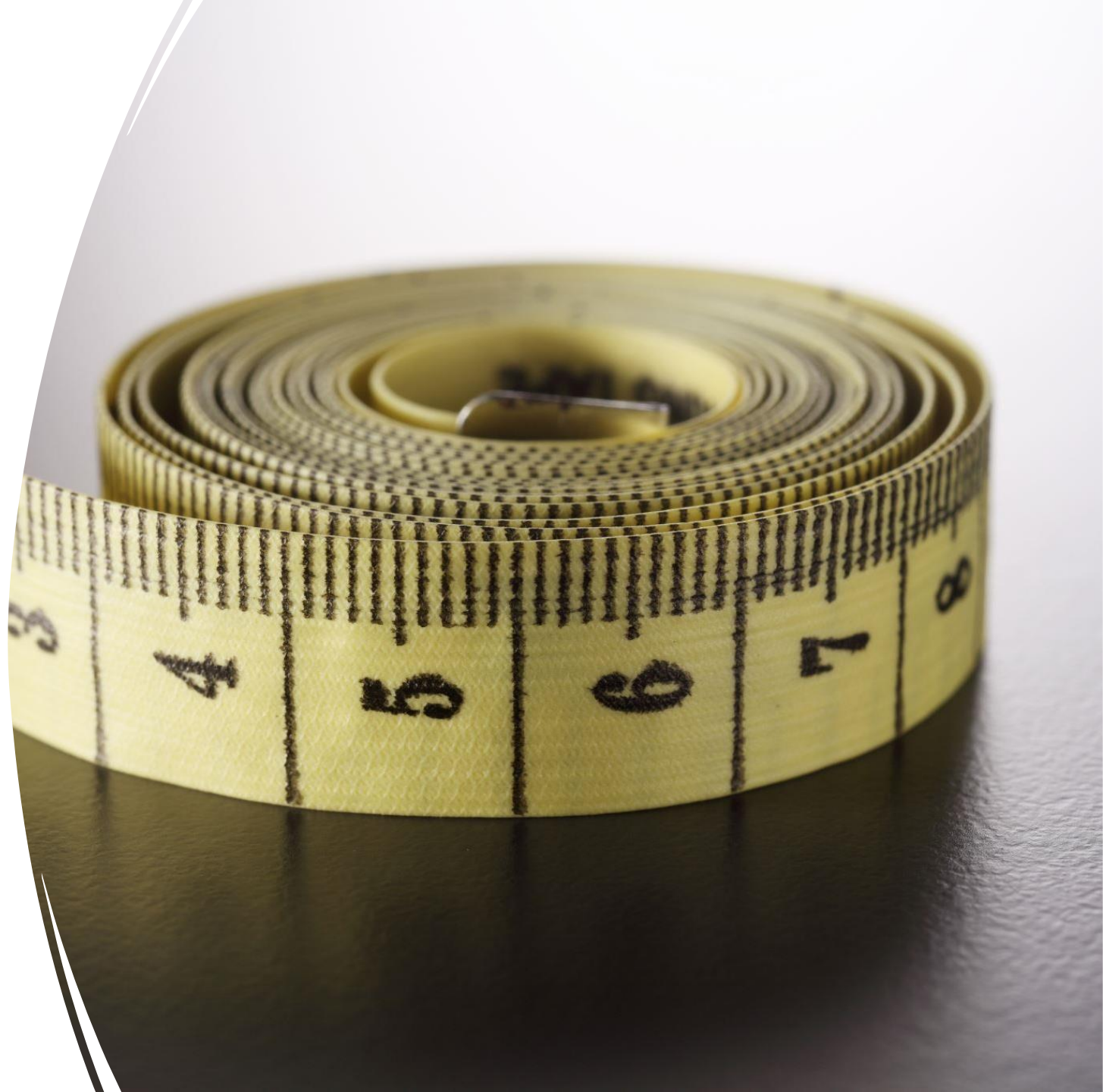
In 2's 2mins



feedback

Tailoring your CV

- Study the job details
- Speak the employer's language
 - Make sure you understand what the employer is looking for.
- Keep your CV relevant to the employer – ensuring the important information that aligns with the employer is clear for them to identify.



What does the employer want?

- **TASK - Please look on Gradcracker at this job. Look at the job description/company profile**
- What important information is the employer telling you about the skills and experience they want you to demonstrate?
- How would you tailor your CV/cover letter to this role/company?
- Work in groups of 4/5 for 5 mins



**Graduate Software Development Engineer**Deadline: Ongoing

Computer Science, Software, Technology.

Salary Competitive	Location London	Degree required Bachelor's
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[Follow this employer](#) [Shortlist this job](#) [View job →](#)

What do employers look for?



What do employers want?

TASK: Employers were asked what skills they valued most. Which do you think were their top 3?



Commercial Awareness	Problem solving	Confidence
Resilience	Organisation and Time Management	Digital Skills
Passion for the Business	Leadership skills	Existing Industry Experience
Communication Skills	Teamwork	Academic – 2.1 or above

What do employers want?

Bright Network Report

Skills valued most

Insights from students

Q. What do you think employers value most in graduates joining their scheme(s)?

Existing industry experience	1
Problem-solving skills	2
Passion for the business	3
Communication skills	4
Confidence	5
A 2.1 or above	6
Commercial awareness	7
Resilience	8
Organisation & team management skills	9
Teamwork	10
Digital skills	11
Leadership skills	12

Insights from employers

Q. What do you value most in graduates joining your scheme(s)?

Passion for the business	1
Resilience	2
Problem-solving skills	3
Commercial awareness	4
Communication skills	5
Digital skills	6
Teamwork	7
Leadership skills	8
Organisation & team management skills	9
A 2.1 or above	10
Confidence	11
Existing industry experience	12



Statistics...

- The UK IT technology sector is growing more than two-and-a-half times faster than the overall economy.
- Where will you play your part?

Source – [Computer Weekly.com](http://ComputerWeekly.com)

Why don't employers short list a CV?

- AI – they have apps to check
- AI – it's blatantly obvious someone has used AI – left in the “” speech marks (Easy Jet)
- Don't tailor your CV
- Don't understand about the company/job
- Apply for every job that the employer is offering (Airbus)
- CV is more than 2 pages
- CV doesn't have dates, predicted grades (essential)
- Missed the deadline
- Spelling

nFocus Testing – Which one did I write? AI?

AI?

1. Recent Computer Science graduate with a strong interest in software testing and automation, seeking to join the nFocus Graduate Academy as a Software Developer in Test. During my degree, I developed practical experience with Java and Python, along with exposure to unit testing frameworks such as JUnit and PyTest. I'm particularly drawn to nFocus' emphasis on professional development, including ISTQB certification and hands-on training with real-world test automation tools.
2. Known for my analytical thinking and attention to detail, I've enjoyed debugging code, identifying edge cases, and improving the reliability of software in both academic projects and personal development work. I'm a clear communicator, comfortable working both independently and as part of a team, and I'm excited by the opportunity to build a career in test automation and quality engineering. I'm flexible with travel and relocation, and fully committed to growing into a high-performing SDET with the support of nFocus' award-winning team

AI?

1. Recent Computer Science graduate with a strong interest in software testing and automation. Practical experience with Java and Python, and familiar with unit testing frameworks. A clear communicator with strong problem-solving skills and a keen eye for detail. Eager to develop as an SDET through nFocus' structured training and certification programme
2. I am a hardworking and motivated graduate seeking a role in the technology industry. I have good communication skills and enjoy working both independently and in a team. I am looking for an opportunity where I can use my skills and continue to learn. I am enthusiastic about starting my career in IT.

When would you use AI?

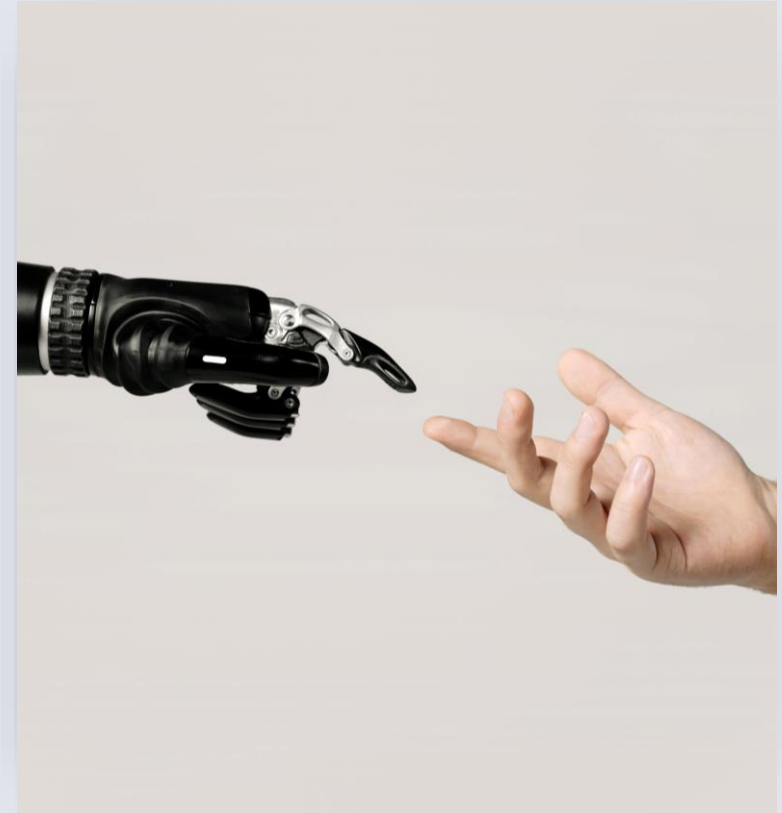
Using AI Wisely

Recruiters and employers are humans and look for **authenticity**.

AI hallucinates, so all the information needs to be **verified**.

Some employers have **policies** on the use of AI in the application process.

Careers conversations explore much more than just job descriptions.



Timeline



2nd year timeline

Sept 2025 – December 2025

- Over the next 2 weeks spend time compiling your CV. Get your final draft checked on-line or in Careers.
- Start to search for placements. Register on relevant sites setting up job alerts.
- Attend Careers Fairs, master classes and employer insight sessions.
- Create a LinkedIn account & create a standout profile
- Apply for summer placements/Internships (8 week paid work experience).

January 2026 – Easter 2026

- UURIP at the University will start to be advertised
- Prepare for the next stage of the process by using resources on CareerEdge & getting support from the Careers team.
- Attend Assessment Centres and Interviews either on-line or face to face
- Keep applying for placements. Consider applying for supplier companies.
- Start to identify local Small to Medium sized businesses.

Easter 2026 – July 2026

- Spend time on your studies in preparation for your exams. A lot of placements will want a 2:1 prediction.
- Job offers for placements will start to come in
- Carry on researching and networking the small/medium sized companies/suppliers
- Consider getting some part-time work over the summer to help with applying for graduate schemes in 3rd year.

Consider....

1

Applying for entry level roles
such as technician, junior,
assistant roles.

2

Applying for 12-month
contracts
Use recruitment agencies

- What do Graduates do?

Top 10 professional jobs

- 1 Programmers and software development professionals
- 2 IT user support technicians
- 3 Cyber security professionals
- 4 IT business analysts, architects and systems designers
- 5 IT operations technicians
- 6 Information technology professionals n.e.c.
- 7 Graphic and multimedia designers
- 8 IT quality and testing professionals
- 9 IT network professionals
- 10 IT managers

Women in Tech

- Please express your interest



Women in Tech

"Her Code. Her Power. Her Future."



Exclusively for female* STEM students, this transformative 6-week programme is designed to equip, empower, and elevate the next generation of tech leaders. Through hands-on sessions you'll build practical skills, confidence, and a powerful network of peers.

- Discover your unique strengths with a FREE personal DiSC Assessment
- Learn from Industry Experts - Inspiring guest speakers who will share their career journey in tech.
- Master the mindset and skills to thrive in tech — while growing together with a community that empowers and uplifts.



Wednesday's 1:30-3:30pm
5th November – 10th December
Hosted by Gillian Kendall, Careers & Employability Adviser, School of Engineering & Computing.



Scan to Register

Register by October 29th
For all those who identify as female



Feedback & Questions

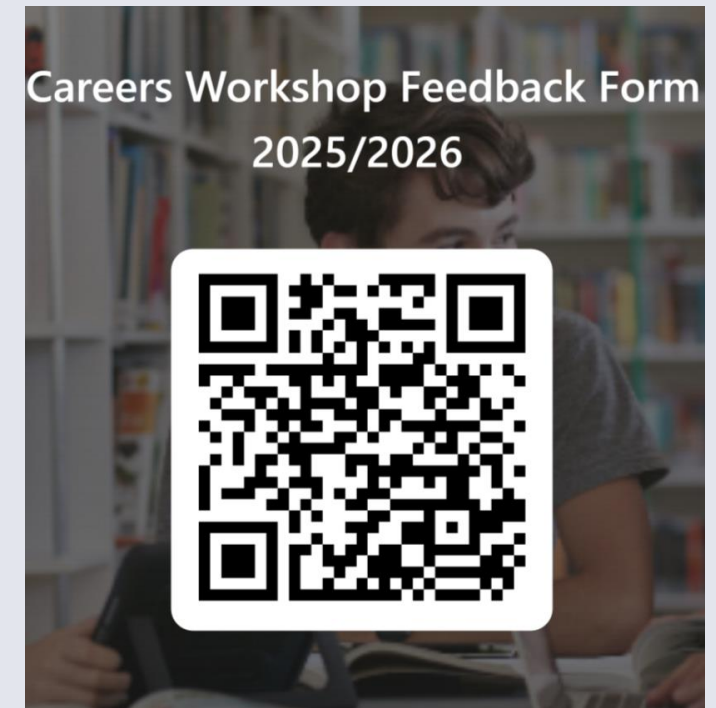
Don't hide

Be:

- Proactive
- Persistent
- Prepared

Become:

- Resilient
- Adaptable
- Resourceful



Set 3 mini goals for the semester

- Example:
 - Finish my CV by Friday.
 - Apply to 2 placements making my CV specific.
 - Reach out to 1 alumni on LinkedIn.



Activity

- **TASK** - In small groups. Think about:
 - “One project I’m proud of...”
 - “A technical skill I can show...”
 - “Something that makes me different...”
 - “The kind of company I want to work for is...”

