

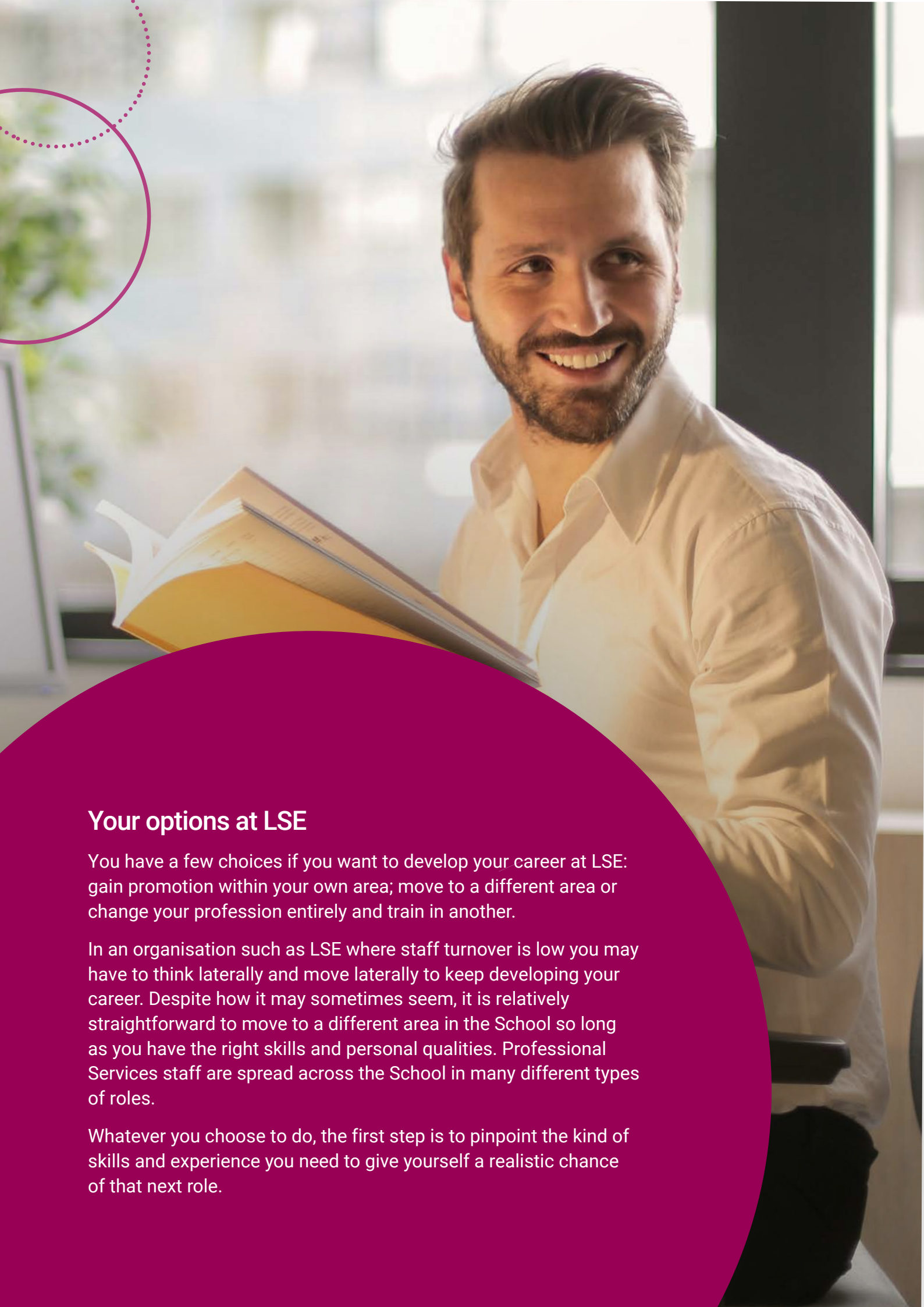
LSE

Human  
Resources

# THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT:

How to develop your career





## Your options at LSE

You have a few choices if you want to develop your career at LSE: gain promotion within your own area; move to a different area or change your profession entirely and train in another.

In an organisation such as LSE where staff turnover is low you may have to think laterally and move laterally to keep developing your career. Despite how it may sometimes seem, it is relatively straightforward to move to a different area in the School so long as you have the right skills and personal qualities. Professional Services staff are spread across the School in many different types of roles.

Whatever you choose to do, the first step is to pinpoint the kind of skills and experience you need to give yourself a realistic chance of that next role.

There are a number of ways you can gain new skills and experience and develop your current ones.

**Organisational Learning** offer a wide range of learning opportunities covering topics such as:

- Leadership and management
- Personal development
- Coaching and mentoring

Our learning offer is a mix of workshops, e and microlearning, toolkits, guides, apprenticeships and longer programmes.

To complement this toolkit, we have put together an accompanying microlearning pathway that takes the key concepts from this toolkit and explores them in more detail in short 10 - 30 minute online modules.

You can dip in and out of this pathway as you need to. Topics covered include:

- Understanding and leveraging your strengths
- Seeking feedback
- Developing a growth mindset
- Driving your career and creating a career development plan
- How to look for a new job or move laterally
- Finding a mentor
- Developing a professional network
- Overcoming imposter syndrome
- Applications, CVs and interviews

You can find all of these modules on the [MyStaffDevelopment platform](#) in the Career Development catalogue.





**Apprenticeships** are structured work-based programmes that give individuals the opportunity to gain hands on experience, develop, and put into practice new behaviours, knowledge and skills through the completion of process improvement projects. Apprenticeships can support career development as it allows individuals to gain professional qualifications and the skills required to assist with preparing for a future role, or to thrive within their current role (especially if the role is evolving and there is a need to be retrained). Apprenticeships show the individual's commitment and dedication to their profession and the desire to progress professionally and personally.

To find out more about apprenticeships and what they can do for you, watch this [short video](#) and check out our [apprenticeships toolkit](#).



'I enjoyed studying and learning new skills, understanding the extent of my existing skills and the opportunity to develop more. Our workshop days were always brilliant and as a group we were always supportive of each other. I was able to use the different tools and skills learnt when planning large projects. The project management units were hugely impactful when I was planning the turnaround in the halls of residences. I was able to plan, track and deliver the project much more effectively last year due to the apprenticeship.'



Kathleen Lee from our Residences Team completed a Level 3 Team Leader/ Supervisor Apprenticeship

Claudia Niruban (Head of Financial Management, IGC) completed a Level 7 Accountancy Taxation Professional Apprenticeship



I now have full ACCA membership and am a qualified chartered accountant. This has helped me enormously within my role by enabling me to make complex financial decisions on behalf of the IGC and giving both myself and my managers the confidence in the autonomy of my role. On top of this, I am able to assess my own professional development more concisely by focusing on continuous improvements to be made in the way I work. This is particularly the case regarding management, as I now lead a finance team who are themselves looking to complete professional qualifications. I feel confident that the apprenticeship topics such as 'Leadership and Business Insight' will continue to help me as I develop my role both at the LSE and beyond.



## Mentoring

The School offers mentoring to all staff. If you are new, this can help you become orientated to LSE and helps make contacts across the School. If you have been at the School for a while speaking to mentor can help you make career decisions, give you different insights to other areas and help you meet new people.

Your mentor will likely be someone completely outside of your area of the School, they will act as a sounding board and help give you confidence to move to the next level if that is what you want.

## Get involved in wider School activities

There are lots of ways you can add to your skills and experiences outside your immediate role. There are the School's staff networks:

- Power
- Embrace
- Spectrum
- Dawn
- Parents and Carers

There are also working groups and committees at LSE. Becoming involved in these can improve your CV in terms of showing motivation, organisational skills, team work, leadership and networking.

## Get involved in a stretch project

Ask your manager for additional responsibility. Think about where your weak areas or gaps are in terms of skills and experience. If you haven't any experience of managing budgets, for instance, perhaps your manager would allow you to be responsible for a small budget within your department or if you are weaker at liaising and networking, ask if you can represent your department at a particular meeting or consultative forum if this is appropriate.

Stretch projects don't need to be big, they can be as simple as chairing a meeting or presenting a report, if you've not done these things before and would like experience of doing them.

When you do a stretch project, don't forget to ask for feedback from those involved, that's a key part of learning by doing. Also take time to reflect on what you learnt and what you could do differently next time. These insights will help you as you move through your career.

## Case Study: Utilising internal opportunities

### Esti Sidley

Network Analyst, DTS



I started at LSE as a temp in the graduate admissions department in October 2008. In the summer of 2009, during their “quiet season”, I took on another role as maternity cover in what was the Research Degrees Unit (now known as the PhD Academy), which was a completely different type of job! In the summer of 2010, I took on my second maternity cover post for the deputy DM in the Department of Social Policy. This was a fantastic opportunity to take on new experiences where there was no need for prior experience, and to therefore prove myself! When the person I was covering returned to work, a new admin position opened up in PSSRU (now known as CPEC), which is a research centre focussing on health and social care.

I learnt a lot in that role on the topic at hand, along with organising events, learning about the academic research world and how it runs, and maintaining a few project websites.

After returning from my own (second) maternity leave in the Autumn of 2016, I joined the Department of Methodology, again in an administrative capacity, whilst providing support for the newly set up SEDS (Social and Economic Data Science) research unit, utilising my prior experience in a well established research unit. I was incredibly happy in this role, with an amazing manager who also acted as a career mentor, who always pushed me to take on new things to develop my career. However, in Autumn 2017, a one year secondment opportunity in DTS arose which was almost too good to be true.

Since graduating from university, I was stuck in the trap of trying to find a technical job that didn't demand x number of years of experience, even at beginners level. The role was for a network analyst (running and maintaining the network at LSE), but it was a role where you learnt on the job – no prior experience required – just evidence of an ability to pick up new skills and knowledge. I applied – and was successful! During that year, I studied for and passed an exam on entry level networking. When the secondment came to an end, I was offered to stay in the role for a one-year fixed term contract, which was a bit of a gamble as it meant relinquishing my permanent post in the

Department of Methodology. Again, I felt it was too good to turn down – but luckily that worked out well and the post was made permanent after one of my colleagues retired.

Three years on and I still absolutely love my role. I'm still developing new skills as there is so much to learn, and there are always new things. However, I credit getting to where I did from having fantastic encouraging mentors, those two maternity cover posts, and having worked across departments, along with the secondment of course! My tip is keep an eye out for new roles, and especially secondments where there is that opportunity to try something new without the prior experience... and if your gut feeling says it's good then you should probably go for it! ”

“

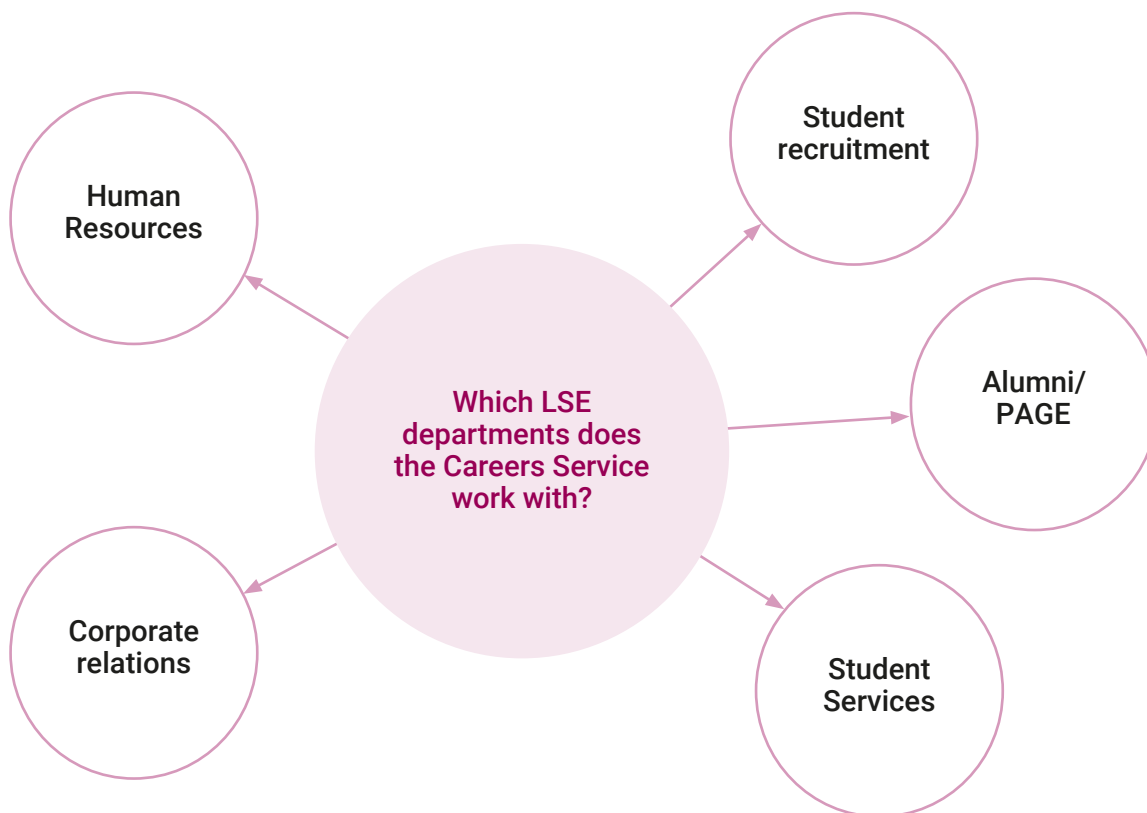
*Keep an eye out for new roles, and especially secondments where there is that opportunity to try something new without the prior experience. ”*



## Moving sideways, then upwards

In an organisation such as LSE, where the staff turnover is generally low, you may have to think laterally and move laterally to keep developing your career in a way that satisfies you. Despite what you may think, it's relatively straightforward to move to a different department within the School, so long as you have the right skills and personal qualities. Professional Services staff are spread over many different areas.

If you want to make a lateral move, but you are not sure where to go, consider the overlaps between your areas and another. Many areas at LSE are related or in "families". You can use a spider diagram to think creatively about this. See the illustration below, using the example of the Careers Service.

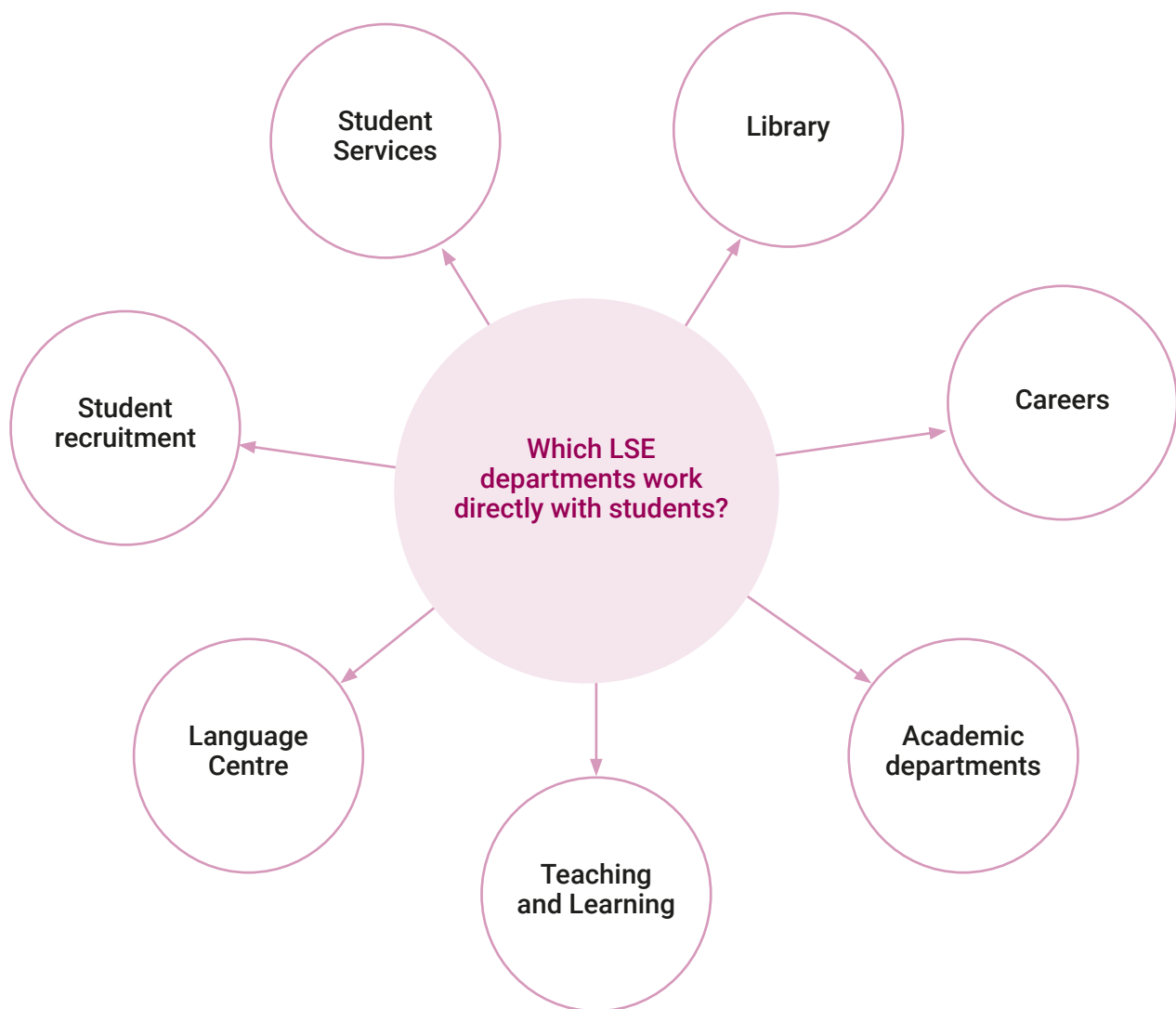


In careers work, there is a mixture of one-to-one work with current students and alumni, training and teaching groups, and working with external employers. Many prospective students also ask about future careers before they come to LSE. There is also a careers dimension to some of the work HR and Organisational Learning carry out too, but focused more on staff. So think about your current area and ask yourself: which other areas do we deal with very often, and where are there similar themes between what I do and what another area does?



As well as thinking about related areas, you could also think in terms of a main feature of a job that you want. It could be that you are in an administrative role at the moment and you want to work more directly with students.

There are probably other areas that work directly with students. But the point is that you can really start to think beyond your own sphere of work. This is why there is also real value in making contacts throughout the School – you get to find out about what people do in in their jobs.



## Career options within the HE sector as a whole

Universities have to compete more and more for students – particularly international students. This has meant that there's been more focus on marketing to prospective students, ensuring current students have a positive experience and keeping the institution's research and teaching reputation as high as possible. It's become a serious business and, to keep a serious business going, you need seriously good people working for you. There are many more jobs now in planning, marketing and communications, administration, IT, finance and student support than ever before. What's more, the number of HE students has increased significantly over the last decade; consequently, there have been many more opportunities for professional staff.

Probably the best source of opportunities is [jobs.ac.uk](https://jobs.ac.uk)

Universities tend to advertise vacancies as they arise. As well as checking universities' websites, you can look for jobs in the appointments pages of Tuesday's *Guardian*, Thursday's *Independent* and Thursday's *THE (Times Higher Education)* – Alternatively, you can look at:

[jobs.guardian.co.uk](https://jobs.guardian.co.uk)

[timeshighereducation.co.uk/jobs](https://timeshighereducation.co.uk/jobs)



## What are the best courses and qualifications for a career in HE?

In the eyes of recruiters, it's generally true that relevant experience and previous achievements are more important than qualifications. Having said that, completing a relevant course can sometimes make a strong statement on your CV about your motivation. And it is true that, for some specialist jobs, you might need to do a particular course. However, many people get into the mindset of thinking that they need a professional course or qualification before they can apply for certain positions. Usually, it's not the case.

If you are not sure whether or not to do a course, try and have an informal chat with people who already do the job you want. Ask them if a course or qualification is needed. Better still, talk to the managers who hire for the positions you are interested in. Ask them what they would look for. If you do need to study further, the type of course you need will vary enormously depending on the type of role you are interested in.

Before you leap into doing further study, ask yourself three questions:

- 1 Do I really need to take this course?
- 2 Which course is the most relevant, practical and useful in terms of the kind of jobs I'm interested in?
- 3 Where's the best place to study it? (Think about academic reputation and the support you might receive as a student.)

## Other public sector options

You might want to leave the HE environment, but still work in a public sector or not-for-profit setting. University experience can often stand you in good stead when you are applying for other public sector roles. The following areas are usually the most common destinations:

- Local government
- Central government
- NHS
- Charities
- Teaching
- Other policy-related roles

Let's have a brief look at these in turn.

### Local government

Local councils have many professional services, administrative, policy and management jobs in different departments. You can sign up to individual councils' mailing lists and look on their websites.

There is also a central portal of local government jobs at [lgjobs.com/?ga\\_client\\_id=a18263dc-5cff-428a-9606-b98decae6481](https://lgjobs.com/?ga_client_id=a18263dc-5cff-428a-9606-b98decae6481)

### Charities

The charity sector has many different types of opportunities, from fundraising and administration, to policy work and working in the field. A good site to look for vacancies is [charityjob.co.uk](https://charityjob.co.uk)

### Central government

People with HE experience sometimes move into related government work.

The most obvious choice is the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. As with local government, there is a centralised portal of civil service jobs which you can access at [civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/index.cgi](https://civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/index.cgi)

### NHS

As the biggest employer in the UK, the NHS has lots of professional services, administrative and managerial roles. A good place to start is: [jobs.nhs.uk](https://jobs.nhs.uk)

NHS organisations also advertise jobs on their own websites.

### Teaching

There are many transferable skills from the HE sector into teaching and there are many routes into this rewarding profession. You can find teaching and education jobs here: [tes.com/jobs](https://tes.com/jobs)

### Other policy jobs

Lots of staff at LSE say they are keen to have some sort of policy job. There are many different types of policy jobs, in many different sectors.

To summarise, you could work in policy in any of the following environments:

- Higher education
- Local government
- Charities
- Trades' Unions
- Business
- Central government
- Think tanks
- NGOs

The best thing to do is to find a list of organisations you are interested in, and look at their websites for opportunities.



## Making a complete change in your career

Your work situation is made up of two different elements: the content and the sector. When you are changing career, you need to consider both of these aspects.

### Changing career: step-by-step

Below is an example of someone who wants to change both aspects of their career and who's approaching the change incrementally.

**Current role:** HR at LSE

**Target:** Marketing in the private sector

**Step 1:** Gain experience in a marketing/ communications role within LSE or HE sector

**Step 2:** Apply for marketing roles within the private sector

**Changing career:** everything at once

If you are too impatient to try the step-by-step approach, it is possible to make a more radical change. However, it's a bit harder to convince potential employers because you are changing sector and content all at once. But it can be done if you are determined, active and enterprising.

Below are some top tips for those of you who want to change career:

- 1 Develop your network of contacts.** Don't just think about your friends, colleagues and relatives, but also their contacts too. Let people know, in a roundabout way, what kind of job you are looking for. Use a spider diagram to generate possible sources of contacts.
- 2 Ask people about their jobs and the sector.** This is also called "information interviewing". This sounds complicated, but once you have found people who do a similar job to the one you want, see if you can arrange to speak to them for 15 minutes. Don't beg for a job or thrust your CV on them. Just gather information about the sector and opportunities. The person you speak to might also refer you on to someone else in the sector. Follow-up with a polite email or thank you note.

The questions you can ask might include:

- What are the main skills you need to do this job well?
- How did you get started in this field?
- Is it necessary to do any qualifications or courses?
- Where are most vacancies advertised?
- Do you know of anyone hiring at the moment?

**3 Try speculative applications.** This means contacting organisations on the off-chance they are looking for someone. Try and find out who's in charge of the department you are interested in and send your CV and a covering letter to them. This may sound like a long shot. In some ways it is, but in other ways your odds of success are better because you will not be competing with anyone else in a normal selection process. Managers are often on the look out for good people. You could be the answer to their prayers!

**4 Change your CV.** Applying for a job and sector for which you have no relevant experience in can be tricky. Part of the battle is convincing the reader of your CV that you at least have the ability or potential. Sometimes it's worth trying to present the information in a more meaningful way for the recruiter. For instance, let's say you want to go into marketing but you have no marketing experience. Instead of a regular reverse chronological CV, you could try and emphasise the skills you have relevant to marketing. For instance, at the top of your CV, you could create a section called "Marketing skills" and within it you could have a few bullet points saying how you have developed skills relating to marketing. For example:

You could list as many relevant skills as you think are appropriate, but don't go overboard. This approach sometimes works, but it's a slight gamble as some employers do prefer a traditional CV. If you try this technique, use specific examples to back up your skills.

**5 Do some work shadowing or volunteering.** If all else fails, this is still a good short-term option. Anything that gets some relevant work experience on your CV will put you in a better position.



## How to develop your career in the short term

Development planning helps you identify areas where you can improve your skills and knowledge and where you can support your own growth.

Firstly, think about development in three separate areas:

- Personal development
- Professional development
- Career development

Personal development is there to support and improve your physical, emotional, or social well-being in some way.

Professional development is there to support improve your performance in a your role and may have a strong link to Career development, which is there to support and develop you for your desired broader career path, if you have one.

Now it may be that all three are covered by the same one or two development actions and opportunities, or it may be that all three areas need specific, unique actions. That's all fine. It may be that personal and role-related development is very important to you and that wider career development is not. All of those things are fine too.

Use your annual CDR as the cornerstone of your career development. Earlier in this toolkit, we talked about getting experience from stretch assignments to help show skills and experience on your CV. This is a key area where your manager can help you. Discuss your goals with your manager and get their support and suggestions for your development plan and actions.

You don't have to try and achieve all of your goals right now. Think about where you want to get to in three, four or five years and think about the development actions you can take as part of this year's CDR that will move you on the path toward this goal.

Add your goals to your CDR form for the year, but remember that this is a living document, so frequently review it and update it as you make progress, and of course take time out both to enjoy your learning activities and reflect on them.

### Utilise your CDR


Think about where you want to get to in three, four or five years and think about the development actions you can take as part of this year's CDR that will move you on the path toward this goal.



You can use the CDR record form to document your development plans for each CDR cycle (see the picture below, but you may want to think about a longer-term development plan and that is where creating your own PDP or personal development plan, may be useful.

**Reviews**

End of year review - select the date when you had your end of year review. (dd/mm/yyyy)



**SECTION 1: STANDARDS / OBJECTIVES**

Please add up to 7 SMART key performance standards / objectives and activities for the coming year.

**OBJECTIVE / STANDARD 1 - Describe your first objective and actions planned to achieve it.**

Add response here

**OBJECTIVE / STANDARD 2 - Describe your second objective and actions planned to achieve it.**

Add response here

**OBJECTIVE / STANDARD 3 - Describe your third objective and actions planned to achieve it.**

What are some examples of learning goals?

#### **Personal development:**

improve my time management, be a better active listener, be more resilient, make better decisions, be more proactive, develop better workplace relationships, develop a growth mindset, manage stress, gain a better work-life balance.

#### **Professional and career development:**

Be better at X part of my role, develop my management or leadership skills, learn a new skill or how to use a new programme or piece of equipment, develop my project management skills, gain the next level professional qualification, develop a professional network, develop my presentation or report writing skills.

#### **What support is available to me?**

Your line manager should support you with time and opportunities to action your plan across the academic year. In terms of professional and career development, we offer lots of opportunities from coaching to external course funding, to online learning to full workshops. You can find out more on the [\*OL webpages\*](#). But you shouldn't just think about formal learning activities such as course and workshops. Practical activities like shadowing and stretch assignments can be even more relevant and useful learning.



## How to develop your career in the longer term

Thinking about your longer career aspirations will help you inform your annual CDR, but you need to think of the longer plan of how to get to your goals.

The following has been designed to aid in putting together a Personal Development Plan, and show how you can use it in support of your longer term career goals.

3 questions to ask yourself:

- What is a Personal Development Plan (PDP)?
- Why Should I have one?
- How can I write one to reflect my own aspirations?

The answers are straightforward.

### 1 What is a Personal Development Plan (PDP)?

A PDP is just another name for an action plan, only this one refers specifically to your aspirations regarding your personal development. We make plans every day, but do not always write them down. A PDP allows you to set your own personal targets and find the best way to achieve them.

### 2 Why Should I have one?

An action plan will help you to visualise what you are doing and keep track of your achievements. To be most effective, it must be a live document that is reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it is always accurate, relevant and realistic.

Remember that the PDP is your personal document.

### 3 How can I write one to reflect my own aspirations?

You now have 2 options. You may feel confident enough to go straight ahead and fill in a PDP. Any layout will be acceptable, provided it satisfies the 3 questions discussed on following pages.

Some people need a little more time to consider the various factors that will affect their future decisions. If this is the case, take some time to go through the guidance on the following pages.

The questions aim to promote thought and consideration of the direction that you want to take and the methods that you want to use. They also encourage you to take account of your own personal circumstances before you decide on a course of action.



## Simple steps

Ask yourself three key questions:

**Where am I now?**

**Where do I want to be?**

**How do I get there?**

## Where am I now?

Firstly you will need to decide what your current situation is. This will form the lower edge of your “Learning Gap”. You may find it helpful to consider the following questions.

- What am I good at?
- What do I need to work on?
- What could help me along?
- What might stop me?

Consider the following example and then repeat the exercise to reflect your own circumstances:

### What am I good at?

- Good interpersonal skills
- Sound IT skills
- Fair organisational skills

### What do I need to work on?

- Limited qualifications
- Don't like formal exams

### What could help me along?

- Attending relevant courses
- Involvement in projects underway at work

### What might stop me?

- Change to organisation imminent
- Possible redeployment
- Lack of resources (money/time)

- The above example could apply to someone wanting to improve their professional qualifications by concentrating on work-based skills (see box 1) rather than more formal exam-based courses (see box 2).
- They could use this exercise to identify that work-based learning would be an ideal solution as it involves gathering evidence from the many and varied projects that service personnel get involved with on a daily basis (see box 3).
- The skills gained are transferable and learning could continue wherever they are in the organisation (see box 4).



## Where do I want to be?

This is probably the most difficult stage to define. Only you can answer this question, but be aware that there are many factors to consider when finding the solution. You may find the following questions provoke thought in many areas...

### What do I like doing?

*In my job, as a hobby...*

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### What is my motive for learning?

*Promotion, Personal Improvement, Overcome a difficulty...*

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### What qualifications and/or experience do I already have?

*Some of these may be transferable.*

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### What method of study would suit me best?

*Courses, Book-based Learning, E-learning*

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### How much time do I have to complete my learning?

*Be realistic, development takes time.*

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### What effect will studying have on my home life?

*Consider commitments that you already have.*

---

### Are there any imminent changes to my life?

*Marriage, Children, Job change.*

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### What will happen if I change job?

*Will your plan need to change?*

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### What is my ultimate goal?

*Personal fulfilment, career development, business need*

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### How will I measure my success?

*Recognised qualifications, personal goals, business plan.....*

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### Where can I get help and advice?

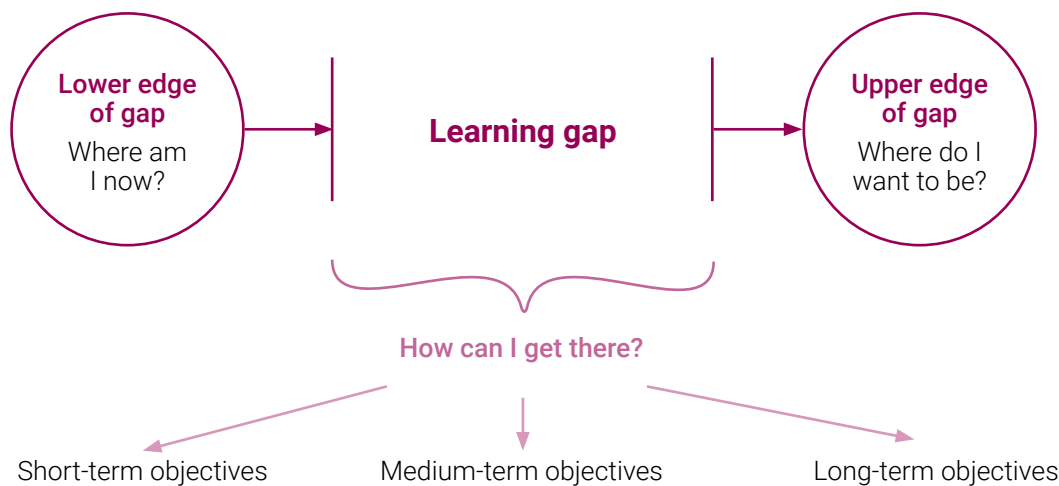
*Your Line Manager or executive coach will be available for advice. Also consider discussing problems or questions with colleagues who are also developing their own plans.*

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Once you have considered all of the factors, you will have decided on a future goal. This may be one single goal, or many smaller goals that make up the final solution. Either way, you have now defined the upper edge of your Learning Gap.

## How do I get there?

Once you have now identified your Learning Gap, the question of “How can I get there?” can be answered by splitting your task into “bite-size chunks”. This is a good way to plan effectively without losing sight of your overall aim, and will motivate you to continue as you achieve small successes on your way to completing the final goal.



The best way to organise your work into manageable chunks is to set **short**, **medium** and **long-term objectives**. Always remember, short, medium and long are all relative terms and will mean different things to different people. Some plans may only last over a 1-year period, others may last up to 6 years, and it all depends on you and your own circumstances.

It is also important to remember that the short, medium and long term objectives are flexible and must be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they remain relevant. If your plan changes, it isn't a problem, just follow the basic principles outlined here, and continually ask yourself the 3 main questions. Your plan will then remain an effective tool to support your personal development.

Regardless of the length of your goals and objectives, the LSE *Organisational Learning offer* has a broad range of learning support available to you as you action your plan. Also, don't forget the career development microlearning pathway on the MyStaffDevelopment platform.



## Personal Development Plan Template

Outcomes			
Actions			
When			
How do I get there?			
Where do I want to be?			
Where am I now?			
Key areas			

**Personal Development Plan Summary Objectives**

Time scale	Start date	End date	Comments
SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES			
MEDIUM-TERM OBJECTIVES			
LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES			

## Personal and Professional Development Learning Log

Name	
Learning activity	
Date	
Why am I doing this activity?	
What did I learn from this activity?	
How can I apply this learning?	

**[info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Human-Resources](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Human-Resources)**

Tel: +44 (0)20 7955 6659

Email: [humanresources@lse.ac.uk](mailto:humanresources@lse.ac.uk)

**Management and Leadership Development**

**Organisational Learning, LSE Human Resources**

The London School of Economics and Political Science

Lionel Robbins Building (5th Floor), Houghton Street, London, WC2A 2HD

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