



# Employability Toolkit

Your complete guide to support you through every step of your recruitment journey with us.

A graphic featuring a smiling woman in a white lab coat over a red top, partially visible in the top left corner. The background is a dark blue gradient with large, stylized white letters spelling 'feel good' in a cursive font. To the left of this, the words 'MORE WAYS TO' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. At the bottom left, the word 'Welcome' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font.

# Welcome

**At Boots, we offer a wide range of amazing Early Careers opportunities across the UK, from work experience, apprenticeships, internships to graduate positions.**

This toolkit will provide you with some practical tips to help you apply for jobs, work experience, and other careers opportunities.

From identifying your skills to creating a strong application and preparing you for an interview, we'll guide you through everything you need to take that first step in your chosen career.

## Why Boots?

Boots is the UK's leading health and beauty retailer, and has been blazing a trail when it comes to caring for customers, patients, and colleagues for over 175 years.

To find out more information on Early Careers Programmes and job opportunities before we get started, check out our careers website: [www.Boots.jobs](https://www.Boots.jobs).

With over 1,800 stores across the UK, ranging from small community pharmacies to large destination health and beauty stores, our customers and patients are never far away from expert advice and support with their healthcare needs, no matter what stage of their lives they are at. Here at Boots, we truly are: With you. For life.

## Our promise to our colleagues

Here at Boots, our colleagues are at the heart of everything we do. Because of this,

**We are committed to working every day to create a Brilliant Boots for our people so that we can make sure that everyone we meet will be better for it.**

**#BeBrilliantWithBoots**

For more information on what it's like to work for us, scan the QR code.





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# Boots

Since 1849

## Part 1

Your Journey  
Starts Here

# Keeping Your Options Open

**Deciding where to start when thinking about kickstarting your career can be really difficult, so it's important to take your time and explore all of your options.**

There may be jobs and career pathways you haven't yet considered, so do plenty of research. Think about what you enjoy, where your strengths lie, and what motivates you. Why not create a list of potential careers that interest you and start exploring them? Gathering this information will help you make a more well-informed decision about your future.

**Remember** - there's more than one path to your dream career. By keeping your options open, you can build your career with greater flexibility. To understand more about your options:

- Look out for university/college/employer open days.
- Listen to podcasts or TED talks.
- Attend careers events.
- Explore the internet.
- Take a look at our work experience programme at Boots by scanning the QR code to the right.



## What to do next

There are many things that you can do to help you take steps towards your future career. You may want to continue in education, such as by going to university or starting another qualification. Alternatively, you may decide that you want to go straight into employment, for example by going into an apprenticeship, T Level, or career-entry role.

Here at Boots, we offer some great Early Career options, just check out [www.boots.jobs](https://www.boots.jobs) to find out more.

**To find out more about apprenticeships and T Levels, why not visit the following websites:**

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels>

# Identifying Your Skills

**This section will help you identify your skills by reflecting on your past experiences and activities.**

Skills are the things you are good at that you develop through learning and experience. Everyone has a unique mix of interests, strengths, personal qualities, and technical abilities. Building new skills enhances your knowledge, confidence, and career potential.

## What types of skills are there?

**Basic skills:** These are core abilities needed for everyday life, such as literacy, numeracy, and basic digital skills.

**Essential Skills:** These are the transferable or employability skills that are needed in almost any job, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving etc.

## Technical Skills

Technical skills are job-specific abilities that demonstrate practical knowledge in areas like IT, science, or data analysis.

Here are some examples of technical skills:

- Programming.
- Operating manufacturing systems.
- Technical writing.
- Data analysis.

To strengthen your technical skills, why not consider developing your digital skills. You could do this by taking an online digital course or increasing your use of email or Microsoft Teams more effectively.

### Essential Skills: Examples

**Listening:**

The ability to listen and understand information.

**Presentation:**

The oral transmission of information or ideas.

**Problem Solving:**

The ability to find a solution to a complex situation/challenge.

**Creativity:**

The use of imagination/ generation of new ideas.

**Adapting:**

Overcoming setbacks and achieving personal goals.

**Planning:**

Setting goals and designing routes to achieve them.

**Leadership:**

Supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal.

**Teamwork:**

Working co-operatively with others towards a shared goal.

## Transferrable Skills

When starting out in your career, employers are looking for potential and evidence that you would succeed in the job.

Transferable skills are those you can apply in different settings, for example playing in a sports team shows that you have skills such as teamwork and collaboration. Knowing your transferrable skills will really help you when applying for a job - if you have some of the core skills required for the job, employers can teach you the technical ones later.

### Now it's time for you to identify some of your transferable skills.

Use the table below to capture your notes and thoughts.

Think about any activities you have done or roles you have had and the skills you used or developed during this experience.

We have created an example to help you get started.

Position	Key tasks involved	Skill demonstrated
Member of my school netball team.	Practicing and competing as part of the team representing my school.	Teamwork

To further understand and develop your transferable skills, visit the **Skills Builder** at: <https://www.skillsbuilder.org/>.





# Building Your Network

**Networking is the process of interacting with other like-minded individuals in a social or professional context to gather information that can support your ongoing development or career aspirations.**

## What are the benefits of networking?

Networking gives you the opportunity to:

- Improve current skills and learn new skills.
- Learn about a position or career of interest.
- Connections lead to more connections.
- Access more resources and opportunities.
- Build great relationships.

## Where can I find networking opportunities?

Networking opportunities can present themselves in many different settings and can be formal or informal.

**Informal networking** can also be referred to as day to day networking.

We can do this anytime, anywhere, for example by reaching out to people/ companies on social media, joining online forums or groups, or just building stronger relationships with existing contacts. These can include friends, family, colleagues, tutors or peers.

**Formal networking** takes a more proactive approach to networking.

In this style of networking, you are actively seeking opportunities and attending events to grow your network.

Examples include attending clubs or societies, volunteering, doing work experience, or attending face-to-face industry open days/events.





## Top Tips

Starting conversations with people you do not know can be scary.

Effective networking takes time and commitment, so it is essential that you approach it in the right way. Here are some top tips to help you:



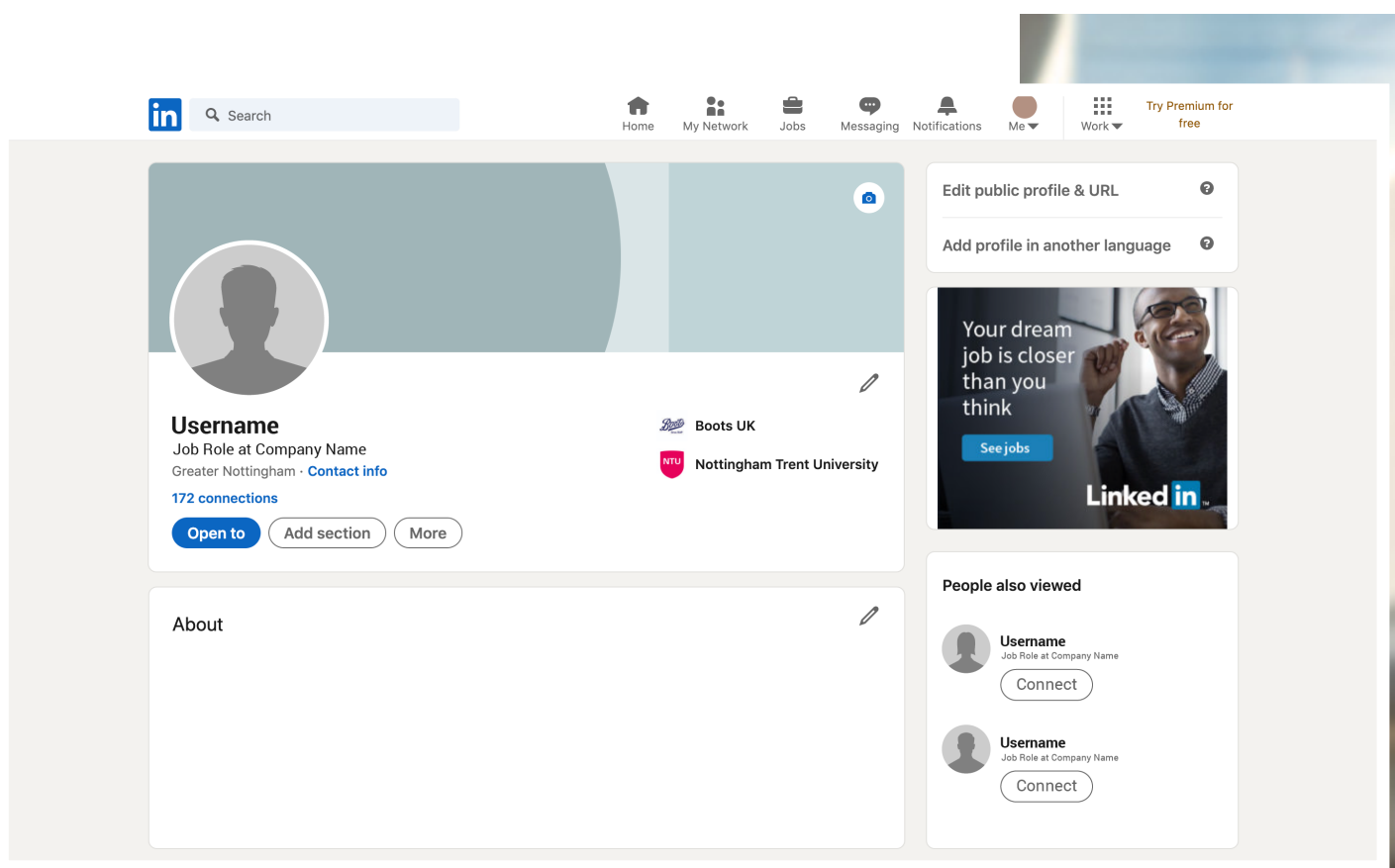
- **Invest your time** - Prepare for networking opportunities or for conversations with your connections to ensure that you are asking the right questions and getting the most out of the opportunity.
- **Respect the relationship** - Ensure you show respect to those you meet, especially if someone offers to give up their time to help you.
- **Be clear** - If there is a particular purpose you wish to achieve through networking then be clear and open about these expectations or aims so that the right person can be identified to support you.
- **Share something back** - The relationships you build should be mutually beneficial, so also ensure that you share any information or insights back to your network when you are able to do so.



- **Continue the relationships** - It is impossible to effectively maintain relationships with a large network.

Identify those individuals or groups that are mutually beneficial and can help you to achieve your goals, then continue to build those relationships on an ongoing basis.

- **Review** - Over time, your goals or aims will change. When this happens, review your network to establish whether you need to branch out in a new direction.
- **Keep track of your connections** - Keeping a record of everyone you have reached out to in one document can help you keep track of your network.



# Building Your Network: How to LinkedIn

## What is LinkedIn and why should I use it?

LinkedIn is a professional networking site that you can use to build your professional reputation and online presence. It provides you with:

- The opportunity to network and connect with colleagues and industry peers.
- A place to share positive company news, achievements, and regular updates about industry news.

## How to create a LinkedIn account

To set up an account on LinkedIn, all you need is your first name, surname, and email address.

When you are setting up your profile, make sure to reference your CV, as sections such as experience, education and your profile can be drawn from there.

## Profile checklist

To help you strengthen your profile, we have created a checklist that you can use to make sure you have covered all areas that employers look for.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	<input type="checkbox"/>	Company
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location & Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	Profile Picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Experience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Title	<input type="checkbox"/>	Connect

Once you have set up your LinkedIn account, keep your profile up-to-date with any job changes as you progress in your career.

**Please note:** You need to be at least 16 years old to create an account.

## Grow your network

LinkedIn is a really useful tool that you can use to grow your network. Here are our top tips for growing your professional network online:

- **Increase your connections** - Connect with employers and people you are interested in working for and connect with those in roles that maybe of interest.
- **Be active** - Like, share, comment, and post to demonstrate your likes and interests. Through posting sharing your achievements or re-sharing articles/posts it keeps you visible to your connections.
- **Keep your profile up-to-date** - When you further your education, employment or volunteering make sure you update your profile to share this with all the people/employers you are connected with.



# Making the Most of Social Media

**Social media is a great tool and, when used effectively, will help you with your job search and build your professional network.**

When using social media effectively:







- Think about the companies that you are interested in working for and find out which social media platforms they are on.
- 'Like' or 'follow' their pages to receive updates on your news feeds.
- Begin to interact with them or their employees by liking, sharing or commenting on their content.

## Types of Social Media

With so many different social media platforms, it can be hard to know where to start - especially when each platform tends to have a particular feel or purpose.

Below are some example platforms and how companies like to use them.



- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  <b>Facebook</b><br>Tends to host content that is a mix between the more formal approach of LinkedIn and the casual feel of Instagram.             |  <b>Ploy</b><br>A social-first video platform for Early Career talent that allows employers to create, manage, and distribute employee-led content. |
|  <b>Youtube</b><br>Hosts video content. This can include promotional material and more in-depth content about the company.                         |  <b>TikTok</b><br>A platform that encourages spontaneity and creativity, allowing companies to showcase their culture in engaging, relatable ways.  |
|  <b>Instagram</b><br>A platform for companies to showcase their products, services, employees and can give a real-life snapshot into company life. |  <b>Glassdoor</b><br>A place where current and past employees can write anonymous reviews about companies and positions within them.                |



## Our Profiles

Here at Boots, we have a number of social media channels. Scan the QR codes below and follow us.



## Protecting Yourself Online

Whilst social media can be a valuable tool for boosting your employability, it is important that you make sure you are protecting yourself when you are online. <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/social-media-guides> provide a range of resources that are designed to help you keep yourself safe online. As well as this, you can:

- **Check your privacy settings** - Ensure you set your profile to 'private' so that you are in control of who can see your posts, pictures etc.
- **Only accept friend requests from people you know** and that you are sure are from accounts that are genuine. If in doubt, do not accept.
- **Be careful when checking into places or sharing your location** - Remember you are essentially sharing your whereabouts with everyone who has access to what you are posting.
- **Protect your personal details** – do not share your personal details, such as your contact details, address or password online. Make sure you protect your account details by always creating a strong password that is unique.
- **Always think before you post** - Remember, anything you post could be shared or reviewed at a later date. If you're not sure about posting something, don't post it.
- **ALWAYS report people** and any inappropriate conversations they may have had with you. Tell your parent, carer, guardian or teacher.
- **Look out for suspicious messages and phishing scams.**

# Part 2

## The Application Process

**The recruitment experience you have with Boots may differ slightly, depending on which of our roles you apply for.**

For example, some roles may require you to complete an online assessment, whereas some may just want a copy of your CV. If you are applying for a role offered through our Early Careers Programmes, you may be invited to an assessment centre.

Regardless of which direction your application journey takes, our Recruitment Teams will guide you through this process and will be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

This section provides guidance on all these areas to make sure that you are fully informed and fully prepared for each stage of the application process and help you be the best you can be.







# Creating a CV

**Your CV is your chance to make a great first and lasting impression, so it's worth investing time and effort on content and presentation to make sure it shares all the right information in an engaging way.**

As employers, we see hundreds of CVs on a daily basis, and we only get the chance to briefly scan a CV before deciding if it's a keeper. Therefore, it has to grab our attention straight away.

Creating your CV might seem like a challenge, but don't worry.

Even if you are applying for your very first job, you are likely to have more relevant experience and transferable skills to bring to the role than you may think.

Note: Not all roles will need a CV, however it is good practice

to take time to create one to capture your experiences, skills and job history.

## The power of examples

The trick is to bring these skills to life by providing examples of when you have learnt or demonstrated them.

To do this, you could ask yourself - is there a project, assignment or coursework that was particularly challenging or that you were proud of? This may be the perfect example of a time that you demonstrated creativity, problem solving, presentation skills and more.

When writing your CV, sharing the details of any societies, clubs or volunteering that you have been involved in is a **must** as these extra curricular activities can demonstrate a number of different skills.

## Tools to support you

Across the next two pages, we have created some practical tools that can really help you when you are creating your CV.

## CV Template Guide

### Contact Details:

- Your name, phone number and email address.

### Personal Profile:

- Introduce yourself: briefly summarise who you are, what you have achieved to date, your career aspirations and why you are interested in the role.
- What are your key strengths and skills?

### Employment History: (Paid and unpaid/volunteering work)

- Where have you worked? (Include duration of the work and job title)
- What are the roles and responsibilities? Any key achievements?

### Education:

- What qualifications do you have?
- What skills did you demonstrate during your studying which would be relevant to the job you are applying for?

Tip: Include subjects and grades. Order it with the most recent studies first.

### Key Skills:

- What skills have you gained through your life experience which could be transferred into the role you are applying for? Include examples to evidence these skills.

### Achievements:

- Any key achievements that will make you stand out?

### Interests/Hobbies:






- What are your hobbies or interests? Any skills that can be drawn and transferred from these?

### References:

- Think about who could write you a good reference. Remember to ask your referee if they are happy to give you a reference in advance.

# CV Top Tip Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you have considered all of our top tips when writing your CV. If you need any extra support (or inspiration), there are plenty of template resources online to help you create the CV that best represents you.

Top Tip		Complete
	<p>Use a template that is simple and well presented.</p> <p>Always make sure you use a professional font and make use of bullet points and bold headings to make it easy for the hiring manager to recognise your skills and suitability for the job.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Ideally your CV should be around two sides of A4, so be concise and to the point. Be selective on what you include, selecting your career highlights with the most relevant and up to date information and experience.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Relate your experiences to skills that will be valuable to the role you are applying for.</p> <p>Draw from past experiences, e.g. volunteering, hobbies and achievements outside work/ education which will show your personality too.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>When reading a job description, look for any key skills or qualities they are looking for, as well as researching the company and their values etc.</p> <p>Draw on specific skills and experiences that show why you would be a perfect fit for <b>that</b> role.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Check your spelling and grammar before submitting your CV. You could even ask someone to check it for you.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Writing your Cover Letter

A cover letter is a document that sits alongside your CV. It gives you an opportunity to sell your application and let the employer know why you are a perfect fit for the company and vice versa.

## What is a cover letter?

Cover letters are not the same as the personal statement section in your CV, the cover letter should complement your CV but not duplicate it.

For each job you apply for, you will need to write a new cover letter. Tailoring your cover letter allows you to really demonstrate your interest in the company and the job description. This will allow you to create a cover letter that clearly shows the employer how you share the key skills and responsibilities of the role you are applying for.

## How to write a cover letter

This step-by-step guide will walk you through how to create a clear, concise cover letter:

1. Before you start writing your cover letter, make sure it has the same style and font size as your CV to ensure they are consistent. Keep in mind that cover letters are usually one side of A4 long, and are made up of 3-5 short paragraphs. Use this to help you plan what you are going to say to make the most of that space.
2. Date your cover letter at the top and put your name and contact information.
3. Address a cover letter directly to the person who will be reading it, if known. If there isn't a name/contact, you can use a generic greeting such as "Dear Sir/Madam".
4. **Opening paragraph** - introduce what you are applying for and why.
5. **Second paragraph** - This is an opportunity for you to highlight relevant skills and requirements from the job description and relate this to any key experiences where you have demonstrated this.
6. **Third paragraph** - This is your opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of the company. Summarise why you want to work for them in particular, why you would be a good fit for them, and the traits and skills that will benefit the company.
7. **Last paragraph** - reiterate your interest in the role and summarise the letter.
8. Close formally. If you have a named contact, sign off "Yours Sincerely". If you used a general greeting, close with "Yours Faithfully".

By following these steps, you should end up with something like this...

18th February 2026

First & last name  
Job role/department  
First line of address  
City/Town  
Postcode

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the position of Customer Service Assistant at RetailCo, as advertised. Having recently completed my GCSEs/A-Levels (or equivalent), I am keen to begin my career in a customer-facing role where I can use my strong communication skills and enthusiasm for helping others.

During school, I developed key skills that I believe would make me a strong fit for this role. As a prefect and member of the student council, I regularly worked with others to organise events, resolve issues, and support fellow students—experiences that helped me become confident, approachable, and calm under pressure. I also completed a two-week work experience placement at a local shop, where I gained insight into retail operations and enjoyed assisting customers on the shop floor. This showed me how much I enjoy working in a team environment and helping people have a positive experience.

I'm particularly drawn to RetailCo because of your reputation for excellent customer service and the supportive development opportunities you offer young employees. I admire your focus on teamwork, respect, and continuous learning—values I share and have practised during school and voluntary roles. I believe my positive attitude, willingness to learn, and strong work ethic would allow me to contribute positively to your team and grow with the company.

Thank you for considering my application. I am very interested in starting my career with RetailCo and would welcome the opportunity to prove myself as a dedicated and reliable member of your team. I look forward to the possibility of discussing the role further.

Yours faithfully,

First & last name

# Acing Online Assessments

**Some job applications may require you to complete an online assessment or carry out an exercise.**

Online assessments are also known as psychometric tests. These tests are designed to identify your skills, knowledge and personality. They're objective, convenient and a strong indicator of job performance - which makes them very popular with employers.

The majority of psychometric testing is completed online. Most tests are timed, but some can be completed in multiple sittings.

There are two main types of psychometric tests: **aptitude tests** and **personality tests**.

**Aptitude tests** assess your reasoning or cognitive ability. Common tests include:

- **Diagrammatic reasoning:** This test asks you to analyse a sequence and identify the rules that apply to the sequence.
- **Error checking:** Here, you demonstrate your ability to identify any mistakes, irregularities and inconsistencies within datasets or text.
- **Numerical reasoning:** These are tests that target your maths skills, such as your understanding of data, proportions, and currencies.
- **Verbal reasoning:** In these tests, you are usually presented with a passage of text which you then answer questions about.
- **Spatial reasoning:** These tests are used to assess your capacity to spot patterns between shapes and visualise movements and changes in those shapes.

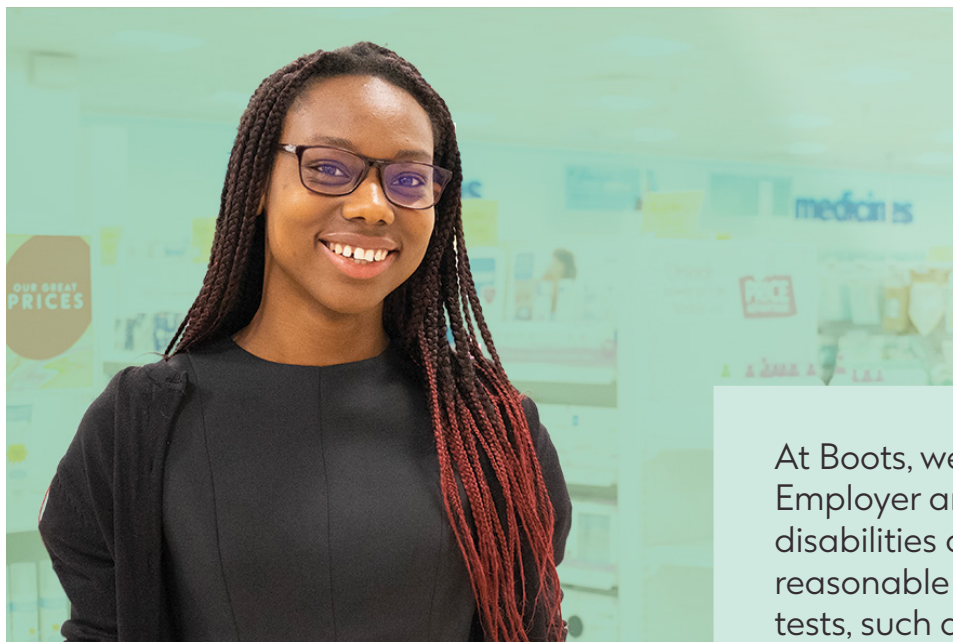
**Personality tests** explore your interests, values, motivations and analyse how your character fits with the role and company.

There are lots of different personality tests employers can use, such as the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator, the Occupational Personality Questionnaire and Strengthscope.

**When taking a personality test, make sure you:**

- Take the test in a familiar, quiet environment.
- Read the questions carefully.
- Answer honestly and be consistent in your responses.
- Trust your initial reaction- answering at pace accurately can help you achieve this.





At Boots, we are Disability Confident Employer and we understand that not all disabilities are visible. If you require any reasonable adjustments during these tests, such as extra time, please reach out to our Recruitment Team.

## Top Tips

Here are our top tips to help you ace your online assessments.

- **Do lots of practice** - Some companies will give you a practice test before the actual test begins so you know what to expect. If not, take a look on the internet - there are lots of practice tests out there.
- **Have the right equipment** - Think: pens, paper, calculator, ruler, watch, dictionary.
- **Read the instructions** - Before starting the test, read the instructions carefully and identify what you are being asked to and how long you've got to do it.
- **Watch your emails** – Watch out as sometimes an employer will send you a link with a test to complete within a short amount of time. Don't forget to check your Junk email incase the link to the test has landed in there.
- **Keep an eye on the time** - If you can't answer a question, move on to the next and come back to it if possible. It's better to use your time effectively answering questions you can/could answer rather than pondering over ones you don't immediately know the answer.
- **Keep calm** - Keep calm and try your best.





# Interviews

In this section, you will learn how to prepare for an interview.

## Types of Interviews

Before we go into the preparation, let's look at the different types of interviews:

- **Telephone:** This kind of interview is often used by employers in the early stages of the recruitment process and usually lasts between 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- **Video/Virtual:** Video interviews can be either live or pre-recorded and tend to last 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- **Face-to-Face:** Face-to-face interviews usually last between 45 minutes to 2 hours. Questions may be strength-based, skills-based or competency-based.
- **Assessment Centre:** These can be either virtual or in person and can include multiple tasks, such as presentations, team exercises, psychometric tests and a one-on-one interview.

## STAR Technique for Interviews

Preparation is key for a successful interview. Ahead of the interview, pick out key skills and behaviours you think they may ask you about alongside questions about the organisation and why you would be a good fit.

For competency-based questions, the STAR technique can help you plan your answers and provide a structured way that makes it easy for the hiring manager to identify your skills and evidence of these.

Let's look at the STAR technique in more detail:



### Situation

Describe the situation you were in or the task you needed to accomplish.



### Task

Describe the challenges and expectations. What needed to be done? Why?



### Action

Elaborate on your specific action. What exactly did you do and how did you do it?



### Result

Explain the result, including your accomplishments, recognition and the outcome.



Ahead of an interview, we recommend that you prepare 5-8 STAR examples to take into an interview with you.

This will help you to identify the key experiences that you would like to discuss with your interviewers. You can then tailor the details that you share depending on the skill you have been asked to demonstrate.

Here is an example of how you can prepare an answer based on the STAR technique to use when answering competency questions in interview. This can be a useful format to use when planning your own answers.

<b>Situation</b>	During a group science project at college, our team was struggling to stay organised and meet deadlines.
<b>Task</b>	I took the lead in helping the team plan our work and made sure everyone knew what they needed to do.
<b>Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Created a simple schedule.</li><li>• Divided tasks based on each person’s strengths.</li><li>• Set up daily check-ins to track the progress of the project.</li></ul>
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We finished the project on time and got some great positive feedback from our lecturer for our teamwork.</li><li>• I also received thanks for taking the lead on this from some of my team.</li><li>• Our team received an a great grade for the overall project.</li></ul>

As a Disability Confident Employer, we have updated our processes to make it easier for individuals with disabilities to apply for our roles.

If you require any reasonable adjustments or additional needs, please notify the Recruitment Team or the Hiring Manager beforehand to give yourself the best opportunity in the interview.



# Assessment Centres

**Assessment centres involve a combination of tasks and activities that test your suitability for the job, and can either be in person or online. They are often the final stage of the selection process for our Early Careers Programmes.**

In an assessment centre, you'll usually be joined by a number of other candidates, and you will work both individually and as part of a group on a variety of exercises.

Let's take a closer look at the activities that could come up in an assessment centre:

## Individual Activities

The most common individual activities include:

- **Interview** - This will be a competency interview.
- **Presentation** - Presentation briefs may be given in advance, or you may be set a brief on the day under a time constraint. Always make sure that your content has a clear structure and remember to engage with the assessor as you present.
- **Analysis/case study** - This will normally involve reading through various pieces of information and drawing conclusions or recommendations to present back.
- **Role play exercise** - Here, you will be given a character profile that you need to discuss. Make sure you are clear on who your "character" is, and on the role that the assessor is playing during the activity so that you present your response in the right way.
- **In-tray exercises** - This will test your ability to prioritise and respond to tasks in order of importance and urgency.
- **Aptitude tests** - These may be an extension of tests you have already completed during the application process. See pages 22-23 for more details.





## Group Activities

Group activities will require you to undertake different tasks and will be carried out in different formats. Ultimately, any group assessment is trying to establish how you work with others, as most companies require a degree of collaboration and team work.

There are a number of different behaviours that the assessors will want to see, so think about how you can demonstrate these within the task you have been set. Here are some things to consider that can help you stand out during a group activity:

- Strike the right balance between speaking too much and not speaking enough; share your ideas and opinions whilst also letting others get involved with the conversations.
- Don't talk over people. Instead, allow them to make their point but then find the opportunity to speak up as soon as you can.
- Ensure you speak clearly. If the assessor cannot hear what you are saying, they cannot give you credit for your contribution.
- Don't be afraid to debate your point and challenge others, but always be considerate and respectful. If your idea or opinion is not accepted, know when to back down and don't take it personally.
- Bring others in to the conversation. If you notice someone has not spoken for a while, ask them directly for their thoughts to get them involved.
- Keep engaged with the conversation and always show active listening skills.
- Keep track of the time and help the group to structure the task so that you complete the task by the end of the timed activity.
- If you feel comfortable, offer to note take. If you do this, make sure you do not let this get in the way of contributing to the discussion.

**Always let us know in advance if you require any adjustments or additional support to give you the best opportunity on the day, for example if you require extra time.**

# Preparation Checklist

Check	Complete
Read through your invitation to the assessment centre carefully; it may give you some insight as to what to expect on the day to help you prepare. Use this to check if you need to bring anything with you, e.g. ID, certificates etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research the company and any key literature available.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reflect on your first interview, if you had one, and take in any feedback received. Go through the key skills of the job and re-visit your examples to evidence these.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Note what kind of exercises and activities you will be doing and if you have to prepare anything in advance, such as a presentation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check what equipment will be available for certain exercises, e.g. presentations. If your assessment centre is online, check your technology, ensure you are in a quiet space and ensure your laptop is fully charged.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review your CV to make sure all the information you provided is fresh in your mind. The assessment centre will include an interview, and it is likely your interviewer may use your CV as a starting point.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan your journey, aiming to arrive at least ten minutes early. Completing a 'dry run' (if possible) could also help you combat nerves.	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Top Tips

Once you have arrived at your assessment centre, here are some top tips to help you make sure you get the most out of the day.

- Aim to arrive at least 10-15 minutes early.
- Be assertive and engaged throughout the whole day.
- Keep your phone out of sight and on silent, even during breaks.
- Don't dwell on any mistakes, instead concentrate on performing well in the next task.
- Don't worry about the other candidates or compare yourself. Focus on doing your best.
- Ensure that you understand the requirements of each task and take the opportunity to ask questions if you are unsure. Always revisit the brief once you have read the whole task to check back on what you have been asked to do.
- Join in with discussions, even during "informal" break times.
- Maintain a friendly and polite manner with everyone you meet.
- Take the opportunity to and learn about the business.
- Relax and let your personality shine through.

# Feedback

**If you're not successful at interview or an assessment, don't be discouraged.**

With the right mindset, you can turn the experience into a career development opportunity, and here's how.



## Asking for detailed feedback

During the recruitment process, you can ask for feedback. This feedback can help you improve your interview technique and strengthen your performance in future assessment centres you may do.

Here are some tip tips for receiving feedback effectively:

- **Be an active listener.**
- **Review and reflect** - Reflect on your experience. Ask yourself: What went well? What could I have done differently? Could I have answered any questions better?
- **Ask questions** - If any part of the feedback feels a bit generic and unspecific, don't be afraid to ask for more detail.
- **Identify key learning and build a personal development plan** - From your reflection, identify what your development priorities should be. Make a note of them and focus on them next time you are preparing for interview.
- **Be philosophical** - Feedback can help you recognise that sometimes rejection is out of your hands and can even ultimately be in your interest. The key to moving forwards is to focus on things that you can realistically change/work on.
- **Refine your search** - Sometimes the interview and/or feedback process can make you realise that the role isn't quite the right fit for you. Use your experience to help you refine your future job searches.
- **Build your resilience** - By taking rejection/feedback in a constructive manner, you are demonstrating you can overcome obstacles on your career path. Getting turned down from a job happens to everyone, the most important thing is that you learn from the experience.



# Stepping into the World of Work

**When it's finally time to enter the world of work, it's really important that you continue to make a good impression to your colleagues, clients and customers.**

Although some ways of working can vary across businesses and from country to country, some principles have stood the test of time.

Here are some examples:

## **Arrive on time**

as being punctual will show your respect for others.

## **Build good relationships**

Be respectful, friendly and supportive.

## **Stay organised**

Keep track of tasks to manage your time effectively.

## **Show a positive attitude**

Enthusiasm and willingness to help goes a long way with your team.

## **Dress appropriately for business/office environments**

Dress codes should be stated in an employee hand-book, but if unsure check with your manager/point of contact.

## **Meetings**

Arrive on time, be prepared and ready to take notes or present. Stay engaged during the meeting and avoid going on your devices for non-work-related activities.

## **Be open to learning**

You won't know everything straight away and that's OK. Listen and ask questions.

## **Communicate clearly**

Be polite, ask for clarification when unsure and keep your manager updated on your work.

## **Show your initiative**

Look for ways to contribute and suggest new ideas that can help the team.

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