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Issue 5:

Your Guide to Enhancing your Employability



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Unlock Your Potential

Hello and welcome to Issue Five of *The Edit*; a magazine written by **Arts, Humanities and Social Science (AHSS)** students. Following on from last year's successful editions, as a team, we will endeavour to help you turn the subject you love into a career you love!

The Edit team are currently undertaking a variety of AHSS degrees; from Sociology to English, and from Drama to Politics. We understand the anxiety that can overwhelm students both pre and post-graduation, who are unaware of the career opportunities available to them. **"I've started first year...now what?" "I've started second year...now what?" "I've graduated...now what?"** However, we are here to help, so that after graduation your dream career can become a reality.

Predominantly, *The Edit* will focus on how AHSS degrees can unlock future careers in a variety of job sectors. We have been in touch with Queen's graduates to find out how they made the transition from being a student to creating a successful career. We shall highlight the endless opportunities open to you throughout your degree path.



This year, **'create,'** will be one of *The Edit's* key themes. We aim to provide you with relevant information and useful advice, so that you can **create prospects, create skills and, most importantly, create your own future.**

From careers fairs to work experience, *The Edit* team has you covered!

(MQL)

The New AHSS Development Officers in Town



We welcome Cathy Wilson (left) and Aileen Carson (right) as the new AHSS Development Officers. They're here to help you get the most out of the university careers service, signpost you to relevant events, and create and tailor new programmes that will help improve your employability. If you have any questions, feedback, need assistance or support to develop your employability skills, they are your gals. Employability clinics will be held in each school throughout the year if you want to come along and join in. Keep an eye on your Schools and Careers social media for dates. (it might change your life).

Email: ahssdevoffice@qub.ac.uk

Who Let the Underdogs Out?

Defending AHSS Students

The commercial mind-set of the twenty-first century in general does not place much value on arts degrees beyond that of them being a freeloader route into tertiary education. There is a defensiveness that must come with being an AHSS student; a perceived inferiority when compared with STEM students. However, **there is a bravery in studying a subject you are passionate about** when all the propaganda of the day was ushering you towards the STEM buildings.

Whilst not everyone is a fan of metaphysical poetry, the marketisation of the arts and their widespread availability in cinema, music and literature proves them an access point for the common man. In this way, they are also communicators of the sciences. Where science focuses on the physical, the arts focus more on hypothetical ideas and in **expanding creativity and imagination**; two skills which are valuable no matter what you study.

With this in mind, I, for one, am fundamentally averse to the whole 'arts vs science argument'. These two schools of thought are not separate but different perspectives of the same picture; both asking the questions; **"who?"**, **"what?"** **"when?"** **"why?"** **"how?"** They are united by a thirst to understand the world around us.

The "graduate premium" on the job market is steadily growing narrower (31% of graduates are not doing high-skilled, graduate-level jobs) and although earnings are slightly higher within science based vocations, employment rates in mechanical engineering are the same as those of social work or human service degrees.

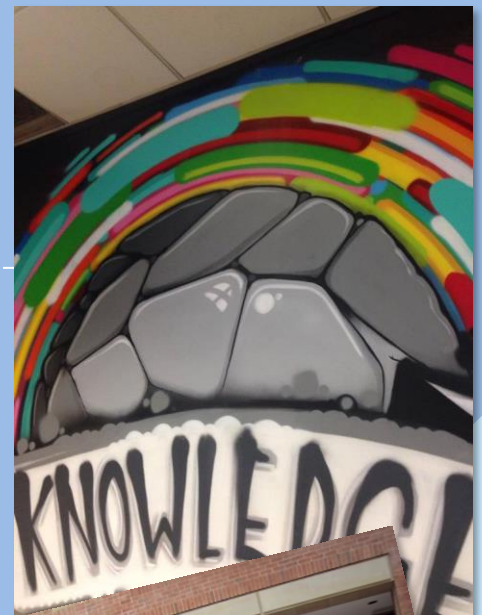
It is a fact that for many employers it is not necessarily about the degree you study, but about your employability: it is the skills which you develop during your degree which will get you the job. AHSS degrees allow the development of written and oral communication skills, critical thinking, independent research, analysis and editorial skills – which are incredibly sought after.

"It is not necessarily about the degree you study, but about your employability"

But, like I said before, there is no war of science against arts and we do not need to bash non-relative subjects against each other (indeed, many famous artists were also scientists, re: Da Vinci, Frida Kahlo, Beatrix Potter). The truth is while we sit in academic high chairs arguing about which of the two foundations of our society is more important, we miss the point; that we need policymakers who understand both the science and the history of climate change, we need medical professionals who can communicate clearly and sensitively with their public.

Here's an analogy: we listen to music through headphones and it is thanks to science and technology that we are able to hear the music through the earbud. But, the reason we need the headphones is because we desire to hear the music; we crave the art, **it enriches our lives and gives us a culture and an identity**. Robin Williams taught us that "medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits necessary to sustain life; but poetry, beauty, romance, love- these are what we stay alive for."

(HRG)



Freshers' Fair – Not Just for Freebies!

The Freshers' Fair has stall upon stall, and each one will try to entice you with freebies. Last year, I remember getting mashed potato, pizza and ping pong balls, so who knows what you will find this year? However, freebies aren't the most important part of the fair - it also gives you a fantastic insight into the numerous societies running throughout Queen's.



This year's fair is from 27th – 28th September and will be in the Student's Union. A warning – it will be chaotic but don't let this put you off. Each of the 200 plus societies at Queen's will have a stall at the fair and this is your best opportunity to get information about the societies that interest you.

It's vital to have more on your CV than just your degree. Extra-curricular activities set you apart from the rest of the field and that's why the Freshers' Fair is the best way to discover more about the societies that will make you the top graduate you can be!

As well as finding the societies that interest you, *The Edit*

team will be in full force at the fair. You can find out all about our social media channels which will keep you up to date with relevant information.

The Edit is the career resource that you, the AHSS student, needs. If you don't catch us in the chaos, we'll have a video charting the exciting activities at the fair which you'll be able to see on our social media.

So, make sure you're there at the Freshers' Fair to get those freebies, but more importantly, broaden your career and see the people behind the scenes of *The Edit*.

(PM)

MyFuture and You: A Success Story

MyFuture (a career focused website) is one of Queen's best creations, but also one that seems to be very underused by AHSS students. While it may seem at first click to be focused on STEM pathways, and that Rolls Royce summer marketing internship actually excluded NI citizens, it has **fantastic opportunities for all career disciplines**. As we don't all want to be teachers, it is vital that humanities students use this service to help them create a career plan. If you are a Queen's student you are automatically registered on *MyFuture*, so no excuses!

You will have the opportunity to create a profile within *MyFuture*; think of this section as your practise run before you make your *LinkedIn* page. Test out what creates an eye-catching personal statement and look for what your employable skills really

are (excellent Microsoft Word skills won't get you your dream job!)

You can keep your profile updated on any projects you take part in during your course and this is a brilliant way to keep track of the most important skills your degree will have taught you for future job applications.

Furthermore, **the Student Guidance Centre is always advertising workshops, alumni presentations and employer events** throughout the year on *MyFuture* so if you are stuck on what you want to do with your AHSS degree you can easily book your spot in the audience within minutes.

So, don't just take my word for it when it comes to the positives of using *MyFuture* – the beginning of your exciting career is just at your fingertips.

(HG)

Looking for information on which companies will be at the career fairs in 2017/18?

Wanting a job within the university?

Needing ideas for possible Degree Plus pathways?

You guessed it, all this helpful information is available on *MyFuture*!

The website makes it easy for you to search between on-campus jobs, international work and career prospects in the USA; there can be some real gems of internships and jobs available, if you are willing to take the time to look.

Interview with a Sky Sports Presenter

Arron Armstrong graduated from Queen's in 1998 with a Degree in Politics and is now a regular presenter on Sky Sports News.

Why did you choose to study Politics and how has your degree enhanced your career?

I chose Politics because it was my favourite subject at A-Level and it seemed like an interesting degree, especially at Queen's during the mid-90s. A degree in politics doesn't qualify you for anything in particular but provides you with **lots of options**.

How did you get involved in media and how can Arts, Humanities and Social Science students gain more experience of the sector?

Following my time at Queen's I did a post grad in broadcast journalism at London College of Communication. This gave me the chance to get lots of unpaid **work experience** before getting jobs at TV3, BBC, IMG, Eurosport and Sky in a variety of freelance and staff roles. Work experience (or placements) is the best way to get involved in media and the more you get, the better.



What is your advice to AHSS students who are unsure of what career to follow?

My advice is to try out as many things as possible and get plenty of work experience, ideally while you are still at Queen's. **Be proactive** when on work experience, be someone who provides solutions, who can add value and then a placement could lead to a permanent job. You're not owed a living so don't expect a career to materialise for you if you haven't worked for it. The penny only dropped for me when I was 25 and still hadn't done anything worthwhile. I was playing catch up after that.

Find the full interview at <http://blogs.qub.ac.uk/theedit>

(MM)

Benefits of Joining a Club/Society

"Get involved" and "Join a club" are two phrases students are sick of hearing by the end of Freshers' Week. However, they are clichés for a reason. **Clubs and societies are a fantastic way to meet new friends** and get further involved in university life. However, people often forget how joining a club can enhance your future employability.

Many clubs run workshops which can give you practical skills, for example, Queen's Radio offers invaluable experience for future careers in the media industry. You can learn how to present your own radio show or even how to use studio recording equipment. Talk about making your CV stand out!

Other clubs offer opportunities to develop many interchangeable

skills such as the *Literific* debating society. Here you get a chance to hone your public speaking skills and learn how to structure a compelling argument. Also, with intervarsity competitions across Ireland, *Literific* also offers **fantastic networking opportunities** that are invaluable.

No matter what club or society you join, there will also be chances to take on a leadership role on the committee. Taking this extra step will impress future employers by showing you aren't afraid to get involved and highlights your initiative. Also, this could mean you are **eligible for Route B of Degree Plus** – the cherry on top of your degree!

It's no secret that a lot of AHSS courses have few contact hours



or class time, so why not devote a few hours of free time to a club of your choice. **Clubs are an easy way to make yourself stand out from other graduates** and show employers you gained more than just your degree whilst at Queen's.

(SM)



Create Your Own University Experience

Freshers didn't turn out the way you thought it would? All is not lost. This is how you can create your own university experience.

There's a lot of buzz and excitement around campus when starting university. Everyone seems to be having a good time - going out, joining clubs, meeting new friends. However, there is another side to Freshers, particularly for first years, which isn't spoken about. Odds are you'll have a lot of expectations for Uni, with all the information you're bombarded with by prospectuses, other students, posts and pictures online. But like most information communicated over social media, this may not be a realistic portrayal. **University is not a one-size-fits-all experience.** Especially for Arts, Humanities and Social Science Students.

Meeting with the team behind *The Edit* and discussing Freshers, a common theme regarding university finally reared its head. With a lack of contact hours, big classes

and most work being independent, there can feel like a lack of community on AHSS degrees, **making it very easy to feel isolated.** And none of us expected that.

One of the characteristics of our school is that AHSS students are **passionate** about their subjects. We anticipated meeting *our* kind of people when we started. Instead we were met with an overwhelming room of faces, for a few hours every week.

There is a positive note to this article. Ironically, such isolation unites students struggling with the realities of university life as from it we can form a community. Here at *The Edit*, our focus for the year is on the ability you have to '*Create your own Career*'.

You've chosen to be here, you pay to be here and so you should never feel like university is something that is just happening to you. **You are able to create and change your university experience.**

Work Experience - The typical experience you're told you should do to make yourself more employable. Writing for an employability magazine, we can confirm it will. University life is about more than a course and should be for your enjoyment as well as your employability.

Help is Here - The Student Guidance Centre does what it says on the tin. You don't need to know what you're looking for when you go in, a simple chat with someone might make that clear. Peer Mentors benefit from training for their role, but being a student means they understand your point of view.

Considering all this, university is something to be excited about. Allow yourself creative freedom in both your degree and in your university experience. This will make you into a unique, confident and employable, as well as a much happier, student.

(NK)



INNOVATE her

EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH BUSINESS



Calling all ambitious, savvy, entrepreneurial women at Queen's - the *Innovateher* programme is for you!

If you want to get a sneak peek into the world of work or even think that starting a business might be for you, but you need some inspiration, know-how and support, then this programme will suit you.

Innovateher is an entrepreneurial programme that runs over 12 workshops giving you the opportunity to develop valuable and practical experience in business and entrepreneurship.

On the *Innovateher* Programme you will:

- Develop vital business skills
- Become business savvy

- Meet ambitious female entrepreneurs
- Gain vital commercial insight
- Network with a range of individuals
- Master the boardroom pitch

For more information and to download an application form please visit the website at www.qubsu.org/EnterpriseSU

Completed applications should be returned to enterprisesu@qub.ac.uk by 5pm, Monday 16 October 2017.



If I Could Turn Back Time – Memoirs of a 3rd Year

The cliché would be to tell you that “**Freshers was an amazing experience.**” In reality, Freshers can be a very anxious and unnerving time. You are entering a new, unfamiliar environment without the security of your friends. You don’t know your way around the place and you don’t know what university life holds in store for you. Simply, Freshers can be frightening, with the build-up pressure being immense.

If I could go back in time, I **would tell myself not to worry**, or at least tell myself to worry less, about the somewhat intimidating nature of Freshers week. This is because, when entering university, it feels like you must attend every event, go to every information meeting, every icebreaker, or else you feel left out.

Apart from compulsory attendance at a few events held throughout Freshers week, you decide what you want to attend. **Don’t feel pressurised to attend events you’re not comfortable with**, as not everyone likes to go out partying. The university hosts a variety of activities which allow students to be introduced to each other through different means, including quiz nights and live comedy shows held at the Students Union.

However, it’s important not to become too worried about making friends immediately. Of course, everybody wants to make friends, but don’t be worried if you haven’t especially connected with anyone, or found your own group of friends.

That takes time. It can take a few weeks, even months, before you feel comfortable in your surroundings. Besides, although making friends is important, don’t lose sight of why you are at university. **Don’t let the appeal of partying become a distraction** preventing you from obtaining your ultimate objective - your degree.

So, don’t be disappointed if after Freshers week you don’t feel any more at ease in your surroundings, or haven’t made any friends: just focus on your studies and the rest will fall in line before you know it.

(CR)

Watch This Space

The Edit wants to keep you in the loop - I mean, that’s our job right? So this year, prepare yourself for a full back-stage pass to Freshers with videos coming out the wazoo to help you make the most of your time at Queens!

Freshers is obviously a time for you to settle into Uni life - a life of fun, friends and a buzzing social life, but it’s also a time where you’ll find yourself with a lot of free time. This free time seems like a lovely break, but don’t be fooled. This is a time for you to be **super career savvy** and get ahead of the game!

Have fun, meet new people, live the university life, but don’t forget about getting in touch with employers or updating that dreaded CV. This is where *The Edit* comes in. **Let us help you make the most of your free time!** Throughout autumn, keep up to date with *The Edit’s* social media where we’ll be fuelling the twitter-verse with updates on the amazing opportunities happening around town.

For example, there are a number of

Broaden your horizons
Achieve your potential

upcoming careers events throughout the autumn which will really set you apart from the crowd, such as the *Royal Television Society Futures Careers Event* happening in November. Also, look out for **Development Weeks May 14 – 01 June** next year. You’ll have free space over three weeks to engage in inspiring and fun activities going on across the University, with many linked to Degree Plus. You can apply for funding to deliver activities and compete for prizes in the Development Weeks Challenge. Enjoy your free time, live it up, make us proud, but ultimately don’t lose focus on what YOU want to get out of university, that is why you’re here after all.

Follow *The Edit* on Twitter **@theeditqub**
Or keep an eye on our blog
<http://blogs.qub.ac.uk/theedit>

If you have any burning questions, or ideas for future issues, drop us a message at **theedit@qub.ac.uk**, we’d love to hear from you!

(EHW)



KEY DATES

Graduate Recruitment and Placement Fair

17th/18th/19th October (Whitla Hall)

Go Global Week

23rd October – 28th October (Various)

Skills for Success

October/November (Various)

Creative and Digital Careers Fair

14th November (Various)

Degree Plus Workshop

October/November (SGC Hub)

Check MyFuture regularly at <https://qub-csm.symplicity.com> to stay updated on which employers will be offering placement and graduate opportunities for you.

Follow *The Edit* on Facebook and Twitter for weekly AHSS event updates.

THE EDITORS

Issue 5 of *The Edit* has been edited by our 3rd year English students: Chloe Ross (left), Hannah Gregg (right) and Niamh Kelly (middle). Let's get to know more about them!

Q. What scares you the most about finding a job after you graduate?

Hannah: I'm scared that I either won't be able to get a job at all or that I'll never get to use the skills that I've been taught over the past 3 years of my English degree! I want a job that will be fulfilling and creative, but I also know from attending many careers events that I'll need to work hard to get an edge within the job market.

Q. Do you think your degree will lead you on the right career path?

Chloe: Being a humanities student, I have no defined career path, there isn't a 'correct' path to follow. This is both a curse and a blessing. On graduating, I will enter the unknown. There is no perfect job designed to cater to a Joint Honours English and History student. Yet, my degree gives me versatility, allows me to apply for jobs which may appear exclusive at first glance. The job market is not solely made for law, science, business and computer students, but welcomes AHSS degrees; it's just a little harder for us to find these opportunities.

Q. What aspect of your AHSS degree do you think makes you most appealing to employers?

Niamh: Creativity. The ability to come up with ideas, and also adapt and develop them is vital, especially in the job market of the future, as it holds careers that we can't even dream of yet. That's why it's the theme of *The Edit* this year and is an empowering part of AHSS degrees, enabling students to create opportunities for themselves and for others.

(LS)

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