UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Insight into Higher Education

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Today's Webinar

- What you might expect from a role in Higher Education
- Overview of my current role
- What you might not expect!
- Advice for your applications to H.E. jobs

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What you might expect from a role in Higher Education

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CN CAREERS NETWORK
Quick Guide To
WRITING A
PERSONAL STATEMENT
(FOR MASTERS-LEVEL COURSES)
The personal statement is an important part of the postgraduate application process, and it's essential that you get it right. This is your opportunity to show off your skills, motivation and aptitude for studying a particular course.
Differences from personal statements for a first degree:
The word limit is higher so you are expected to provide more detail
It is advisable to provide evidence of critical thinking and research skills since these are more significant components in Masters courses
RESEARCH
Research the course, the institution and its links to careers
Think of some reasons why you want to do this particular course
Read through the entry requirements and course description very carefully identify the keywords and phrases and think about how you can provide evidence of these skills
Contact the university's postgraduate admissions office to ask about the application process
Connect with the university's alumni on LinkedIn to ask about their experiences of the course
WRITING (THE FOUR Ps)
PASSION FOR YOUR SUBJECT – Demonstrate your academic interests, eg. further reading, favourite modules, related events like exhibitions, conferences and workshops.
PERSON – Why you? Give evidence of your previous experiences, motivations, career goals.
PREPARATION – Apply your skills to the skills listed in the entry requirements and course description. Always give evidence to prove you have these skills. These skills could be from academic work, research placements, internships, societies or other roles.
PLACE – Why there? Tailor the personal statement to the particular course and institution; you can apply to more than one Masters course but each personal statement should be slightly different so that it is relevant to the individual course. Demonstrate that you have researched the course and the university. What do you like about it: staff interests, modules, resources, the postgraduate community?
PRESENTATION
Make sure you:
Check your spelling and grammar. A personal statement demonstrates your ability in written communication.
Use a clear structure. Break up your points into paragraphs that deal with different areas. Be wary of chronology and 'story-telling' examples.
Are relevant. Go into as much detail as possible but be concise and focused.
Summarise your commitment to the course as concisely and truthfully as possible. The first and last paragraphs are most important.
End your statement on a positive note, highlighting what you hope to achieve by the end of the course.
THINGS TO REMEMBER
Be positive and sell yourself
Do not repeat information such as academic qualifications (include this elsewhere in the application)
Your aim is to convince the admissions later that you and the course are perfect for each other
FURTHER HELP
Find out more about events, support and resources: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/furthersteps
Take part in our drop Apply Focused workshops: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/workshops
To ensure you have tailored your personal statement to the course you are applying for, send your personal statement to careersenquiries@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Sell your skills and Cover Letters: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/sell-furthersteps

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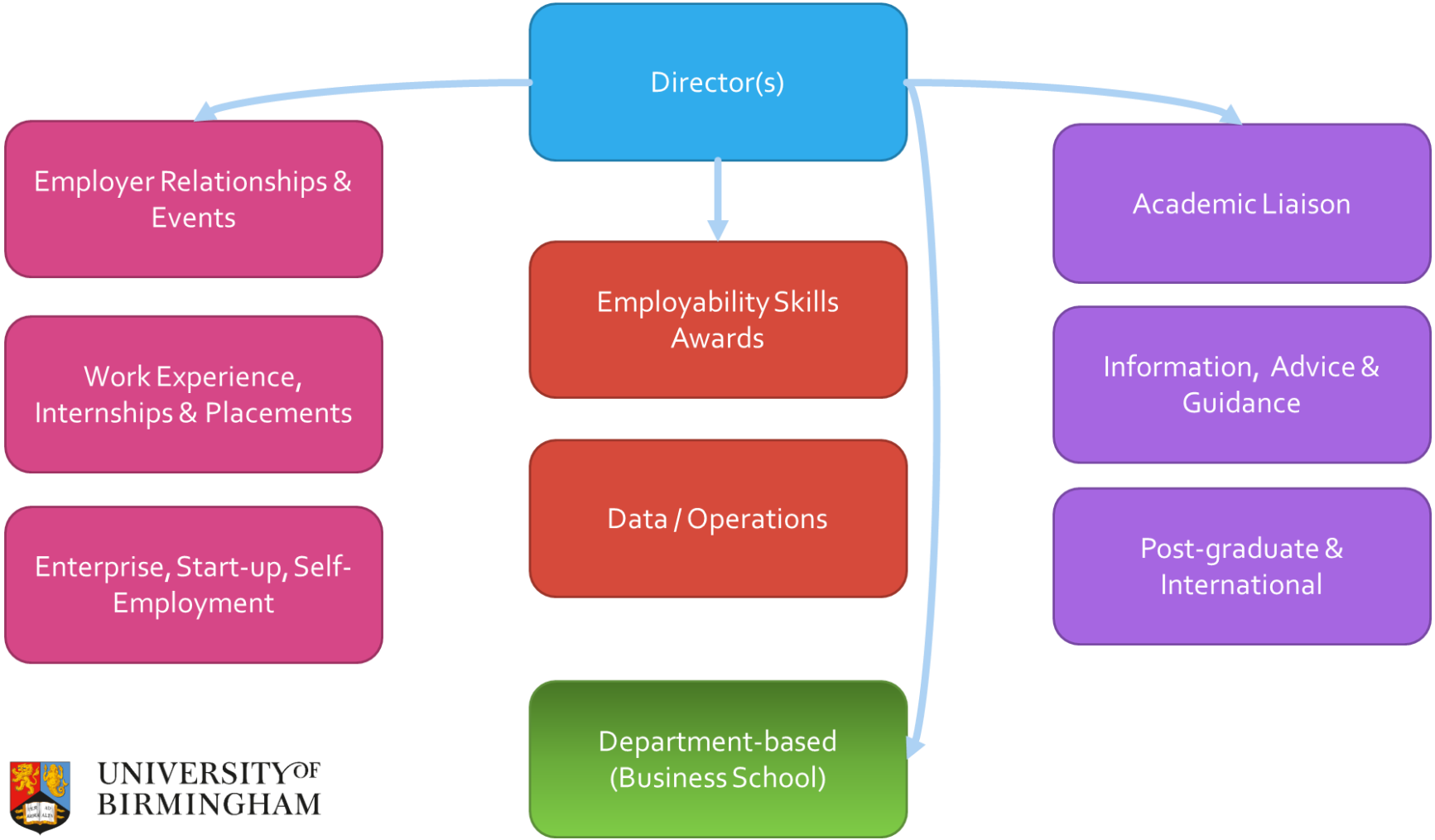
CN CAREERS NETWORK
Quick Guide To
PREPARING AN
APPLICATION
RESEARCH THE ROLE
Find out what tasks you would be undertaking.
What personal skills and attributes would you need to fulfil these?
What does careers progression look like for this industry?
Give yourself three reasons why this type of work interests you.
Research the company using their website and social media.
Find out information for example, what the employer does, how many employees, competitors, news, and users.
IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS
Identify the skills/qualities/experiences they are looking for
Gather your examples and choose those which have the potential to add value to their organisation
Examples could come from your education, training, work experience, voluntary experience, extracurricular activities, awards, achievements, and interests
Use your examples to demonstrate impact and achievement
Use headings and bullet points where possible and double-check your spelling and grammar!
ANALYSE THE QUESTIONS
COMPETENCY QUESTIONS – answer these using examples of your past experience which best showcase the skills or competencies they are asking for in the person specification such as teamwork and leadership, eg. Describe an example when you have shown initiative.
PERSONAL STATEMENTS – employers are looking for evidence that you can write clearly and concisely, choosing information most relevant to the role and your ability to do the job. Pay careful attention to the person specification and make sure you provide evidence for each point. Keep to the word limit and use headings if possible.
MOTIVATION QUESTIONS – eg. 'What motivates you?' 'Which tasks do you get the most satisfaction from?' 'How would your manager motivate you?'
Use positive/strong language in your responses.
FURTHER HELP
Attend one of our Top Tips workshops to get advice on what to include: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/workshops
If you would like more help with starting your application, attend a bright stop in session in the Student Hub: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/workshops
To ensure you have tailored your application to the role you are applying for, send in the job description with the application to careersenquiries@contacts.bham.ac.uk for feedback.
Access further information on applications and the recruitment process: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/applications



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A little bit about me…

My Career Journey

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

BA: Culture, Society & Communication (Europe) 2.1

enterprise rent-a-car

Management Trainee

gradcentral

Account Manager

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

Careers Officer

Careers Consultant

Project Officer (Employer Relationships)

Project Manager: Finalists

Coventry University

PGDip: Career Guidance

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Careers Consultant (Life & Environmental Sciences)

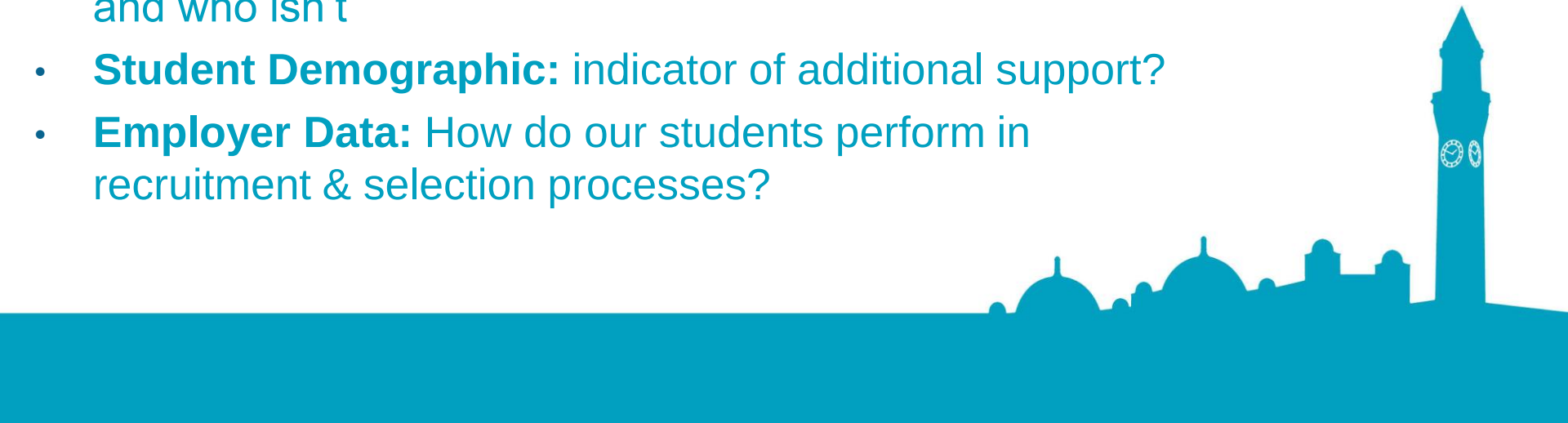
My current role

- Developing and implementing an employability strategy for the College of Life & Environmental Sciences (Geography, Environmental & Earth Sciences; Psychology; Sports, Exercise & Rehabilitation Exercises; BioSciences)
- Consultation with: designated ‘careers leads’; department heads; lead academics to implement a tailored careers & employability provision for each school
- Lead a small team of 3 (2 x Careers Advisors; Internships officer)
- Report directly into Assistant Director for Guidance & Employability
- Project Lead: Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games
- University Adviser: UoB Enactus Group
- AGCAS Community Committee Member
- Also spent 9 months as ‘Interim Advice & Guidance Manager’

What you might not expect from a role in Higher Education

Long live the new Data king…

- **Career Registration Data:** implemented at many institutions
- **Graduate Outcomes:** how successful are our students?
- **Student and Graduate Engagement:** who is attending and who isn’t‘
- **Student Demographic:** indicator of additional support?
- **Employer Data:** How do our students perform in recruitment & selection processes?



Data indicates that certain students need more support

Locally domiciled

BAME

Disability

Gender

Social Mobility

How can we support all students sufficiently, and target certain groups effectively?

Complete University Guide

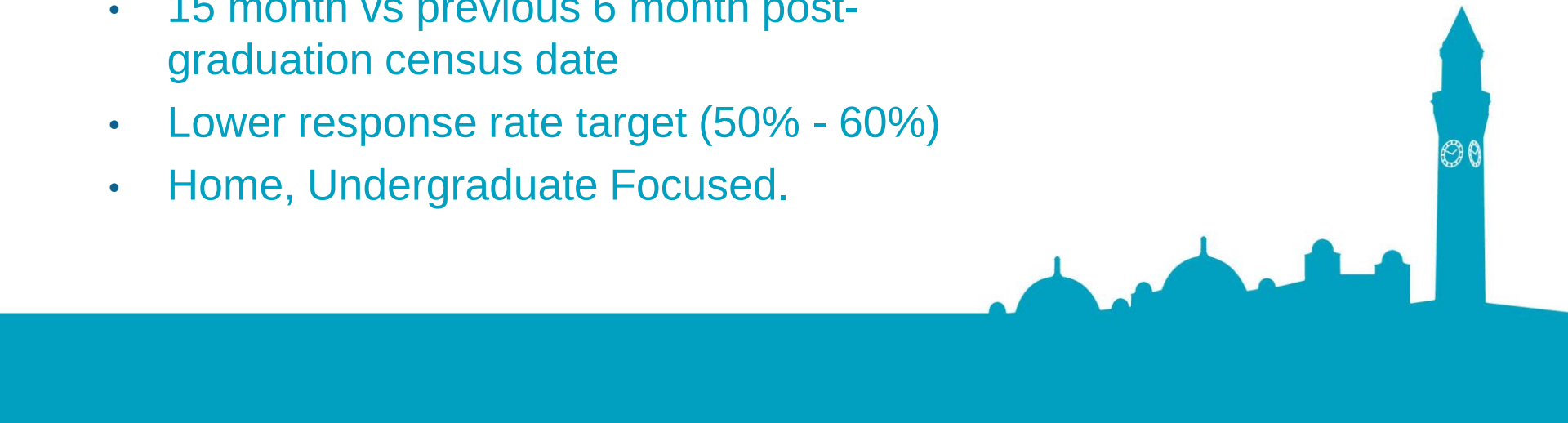
2023	2022	Institution	Guardian score/100	Satisfied with course	Satisfied with teaching	Satisfied with feedback	Student to staff ratio	Spend per student/10	Average entry tariff	Value added score/10	Career after 15 months	Contin-uation
1	3	St Andrews	100	91.6	91.6	77.8	11.8	7	200	6.6	88	98.5
2	1	Oxford	99.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	10.5	10	199	5.8	92	99
3	2	Cambridge	98.1	n/a	n/a	n/a	11.6	9.9	207	5.6	92	99.3
4	4	London School of Economics	95.2	78.8	82	67.2	13.4	8.7	189	7.4	92	98
5	7	Imperial College	89.3	83.1	85.8	60.6	11.7	9	198	5.1	95	98.2
6	5	Durham	87	80.7	83.9	65.6	13.7	6.5	185	6	88	98.5
7	8	Bath	85.8	86.1	84.6	61.1	15.4	6.2	177	5.4	90	97.5
8	6	Warwick	84.2	82.9	84.6	69.8	14.2	7.1	173	4.7	88	97.6
9	9	UCL	83.5	76.6	81.2	61.1	11.1	7.8	179	6.4	88	97.2
10	10	Loughborough	82.6	84.6	82.9	64.8	13.8	5.2	156	4.4	85	97.5
11	11	Glasgow	82.1	81.5	84	61.6	13.7	5.8	206	6.2	82	96.3
12	12	Edinburgh	81.8	72	80.6	52.4	11.5	8.9	191	6.6	85	97.7
13	20	Aberdeen	81.2	85.2	85.3	67.4	15	4.7	187	7.8	82	96.4
14	13	Lancaster	80	83.1	84.1	66	14.8	7.6	150	5.3	84	97.8
15	15	Exeter	76.3	79.6	82.3	62.8	16.2	3.5	161	5.7	83	96.7

QUICK VIEW | FULL TABLE

University ranking	University name	Overall score	Entry standards	Student satisfaction	Research quality	Graduate prospects
1	University of Oxford VIEW COURSES →	100%	96%	n/a	87%	88%
2	University of Cambridge VIEW COURSES →	99%	99%	n/a	88%	88%
3	London School of Economics and Poli... VIEW COURSES →	96%	92%	77%	88%	90%
4	University of St Andrews VIEW COURSES →	93%	100%	85%	83%	79%
5	Imperial College London VIEW COURSES →	91%	95%	81%	91%	92%
6	Durham University VIEW COURSES →	90%	90%	78%	83%	83%
7	Loughborough University VIEW COURSES →	88%	74%	81%	83%	79%
8 ▲ 2	University of Bath VIEW COURSES →	87%	85%	80%	83%	86%
9 ▼ 1	UCL (University College London) VIEW COURSES →	86%	90%	77%	87%	85%
10 ▼ 1	University of Warwick VIEW COURSES →	84%	80%	80%	86%	83%
11	Lancaster University VIEW COURSES →	84%	72%	79%	84%	76%

GRADUATE OUTCOMES

- Introduced five years ago
- Centralised Administration (HESA)
- 15 month vs previous 6 month post-graduation census date
- Lower response rate target (50% - 60%)
- Home, Undergraduate Focused.



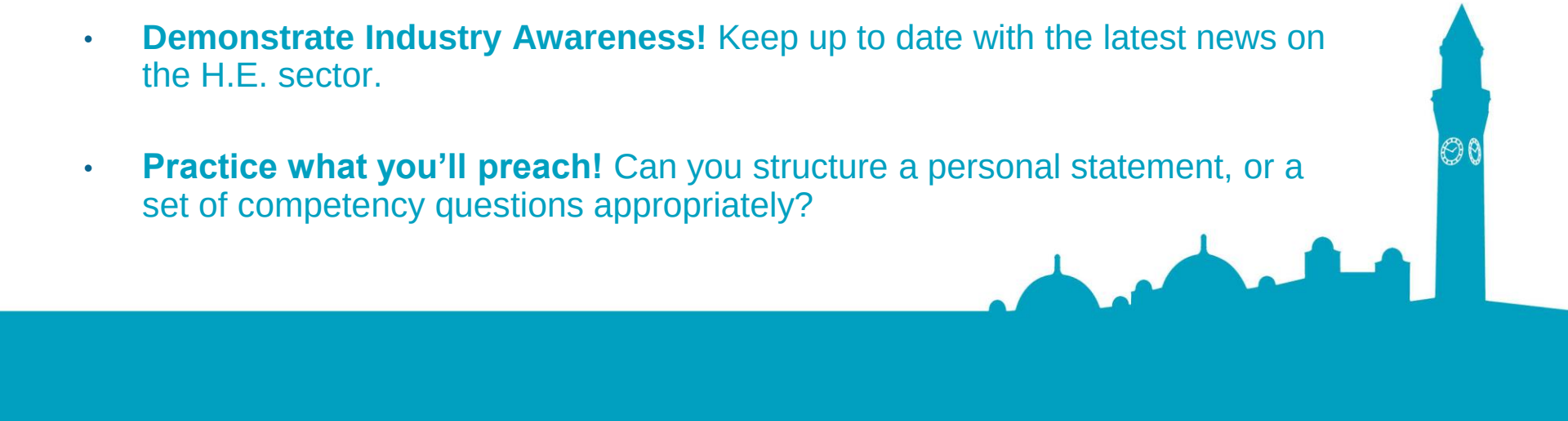
But it’s not just about Graduate Outcomes…

NSS

National Student Survey

Finally…
Some advice for your applications

- **Do your research!** Use LinkedIn & informal enquiry channels to find out more about the context of the role, the service, and the institution.
- **Be specific!** Phrases such as “I want to join XXX because you are a well renowned University” won’t cut it.
- **Analyse & Provide Evidence.** Demonstrate how your experience & qualifications link to the role, and provide specific evidence. “Non-Careers experience” can be very valuable!
- **Demonstrate Industry Awareness!** Keep up to date with the latest news on the H.E. sector.
- **Practice what you’ll preach!** Can you structure a personal statement, or a set of competency questions appropriately?



Thank you for listening

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