



THE
CAREERS
SERVICE



What to do with a Degree in **HUMANITIES**



- ▶ Faculty of Classics
- ▶ Faculty of English Language and Literature
- ▶ Faculty of History
- ▶ Faculty of Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics
- ▶ Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages
- ▶ Faculty of Music
- ▶ Faculty of Oriental Studies
- ▶ Faculty of Philosophy
- ▶ Faculty of Theology and Religion
- ▶ Ruskin School of Art

EACH YEAR, OXFORD
WELCOMES THOUSANDS
OF STUDENTS TO STUDY
FOR ONE OF THE
30 UNDERGRADUATE
DEGREES IN HUMANITIES
SUBJECTS OFFERED BY
THE UNIVERSITY.

So, what can you do with a
HUMANITIES DEGREE?

LAW

JAMES NEWTON

Trainee Solicitor, Clyde & Co



Modern History,
2014

WHAT: Clyde & Co is the leading international law firm when it comes to all things 'international trade'. It originated as a shipping firm and has rapidly expanded in recent history to cover aviation, energy, trade and commodities, infrastructure, and insurance. We now have over 50 offices and 1,500 lawyers globally.

I am a second seat London trainee in Speciality, International Risk and Reinsurance. Previously, I had been with the Aviation liability team. In my current seat I am involved in a regulatory investigation into our insured client, a financial advice firm. In my previous seat, I worked on a large commercial court dispute between a major European airline and an aircraft leasing company, two ICC arbitrations, a coverage dispute out of Afghanistan, and a number of fatal crashes.

WHY: Facing the usual existential crisis of all art-subject undergraduates in their final year, I panickingly began to research professions other than that of a history teacher. Law struck me as a natural fit. It balances intellectual rigour with real world commerciality. As I had tailored my degree in History towards

the Middle East (as well as studying Arabic at the Oxford Language Centre), I sought out a firm that was genuinely international. Thankfully, being a centre for legal excellence in the world, London was rife with such places. I was drawn to Clyde & Co due to their unique practice areas and though my various positive experiences with members of the firm.

ADVICE: Get out and meet the firms in which you are interested. Make yourself stand out from the thousands of other applicants by being known personally to recruiters and lawyers at your chosen firm. However, be careful when choosing where to apply. Law is renowned for being an intense and demanding career – and often for good reason!

ALICE JONES

Account Executive,
Tamarindo Communications



English and German,
2017

WHAT: I am on the graduate scheme at Tamarindo Communications, a specialist B2B Public Relations and Communications agency based

ADVERTISING, MARKETING + PR

in Oxford. Our clients, ranging from engineering companies to insurance firms and maritime organisations, all operate within the renewable energy space. Meanwhile, we support them in marketing and content creation, and by securing media opportunities – eg in the form of contributed articles or interviews – with trade media publications and even the national papers.

WHY: Having always enjoyed writing, in more recent years I became interested in environmental issues and renewable energy. This role offers the opportunity to pursue both avenues of interest, as my job involves reading, talking, and writing about renewable energy – both market developments, and our clients' work – on a daily basis. Working with the media, no two days are the same.

EARLY CAREER: Studying literature – and writing a lot of essays! – helped me to develop my writing skills, as did creating a blog on my year abroad. I also served as my college Environment & Ethics representative for a year as an

undergraduate – and did some freelance work for a 'sustainable business' advisory.

ADVICE: Get experience. If you're interested in writing, then freelance work, blogging and contributing to magazines can be easily arranged around your studies. Also try to expose yourself to other areas of interest – for me, that included environmental issues. Work experience is a great way to bulk out your CV and 'test run' different careers.

TOP TIPS: Try to go along to careers and networking events. I met the Tamarindo team at a drinks event one evening – I was writing my dissertation and had a lot on my plate, but I went along anyway. Had I not, I wouldn't have this job today.

JIMENA NOWACK

Analyst (Retail, Consumer & Leisure), Lazard



History of Art,
2016

My background in the Arts is certainly not the most conventional route to a career in investment banking, however I have never felt any impediment during the selection

BANKING + INVESTMENT

process, in my day-to-day job or with my future career progression at Lazard.

During my second year I started to consider what I wanted to pursue. In my mind, I was destined for a career in the art world, because it made the most sense with my choice of degree. I applied for a summer internship at an auction house and realised I wanted a far more challenging day-to-day role with a steeper learning curve, and one that was in steady pace with what was happening around the world.

During my final year of university, I applied to investment banking graduate roles. I decided not to apply to bulge-bracket firms as I prefer a smaller, more collegiate environment. One where I could exercise a bit more creativity and where everyone is known by their name and their ideas. The huge advantage to working in small teams at Lazard is that you are in direct contact with MDs and Directors – and this is something that does not happen at other/bulge bracket banks.

Undoubtedly, there is a financial element to the role (the so called “number

crunching”) but there is also so much more than this. As a Humanities student I have been pleasantly surprised by the amount of creative thinking required – in finding a creative and compelling, often unexpected, solution to a problem, or coming up with an original idea.

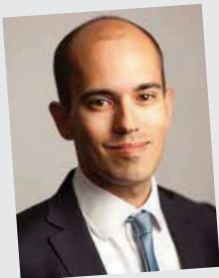
On the whole, I have quickly realised that Investment Banking is a lot more about people, personality and ideas – more than what it is usually given credit for.

ADVICE: I always advise students to try and get a holistic insight into the industry and the company before making any decisions. Anyone who likes being challenged and working hard should consider Financial Advisory.

Don't assume you cannot successfully transfer to other fields of work. In my team of eight, there are colleagues who studied Linguistics, History, Economic and Classics and they are now all enjoying a successful career at Lazard.

ANTHONY CHARLTON

Commercial Director,
Gartner



Modern Languages
(French and German),
2005

BUSINESS + MANAGEMENT

I joined Gartner (formally CEB) straight out of University as a graduate. I left Oxford not knowing exactly what I wanted to do as a career but I knew I wanted to move to London and work in business. I was drawn to the company on the promise of being able to work with big companies and travel – something that I was keen to do with my languages. Gartner is a research and advisory firm providing technology related insight for IT and other business leaders located across the world. My first role didn't disappoint and while at times it felt like I had been thrown in at the deep end I was amazed that as a 22-year old I was working with the most senior executives at the world's largest companies and that they wanted to talk to me! For the first few years of my career I worked in our finance practice with Chief Financial Officers and other finance executives and learned so much about the world of business that it felt like I had done an MBA. In the years that have followed I've traveled the world with my job, worked with some amazing people and made many of my best friends.

In my current role as a Commercial Director I manage a team of around 20 people within our EMEA business with overall responsibility for serving our existing clients and growing our market share year on year. What I enjoy most about my role are the people I get to work with on a daily basis, the variety of activities in each day, and traveling around the world meeting clients. One of the most challenging aspects of my role is balancing conflicting demands on my time and being able to prioritise on the go. When I left University I would never have thought that I would have ended up in a role like this and if I could give my 22-year-old self a piece of advice it would be to not worry so much about a career as such but to think more in terms of experiences that you want. That way, you end up focusing on the things you enjoy and are good at and the career takes care of itself.

ARTS

JOSHUA BALDWIN

Creative Director at
Coldwood Interactive



Classical Archaeology and
Ancient History, 2013

HOW YOUR DEGREE HELPED:

While my first job was researching and writing for a company that made historical games, my ‘pure’ historical skills have been less important to my career than other things I picked up during my degree. So much of working in a creative industry is about your ability to work with and communicate ideas, and CAAH is about tracing ideas from their smallest manifestations in artifacts to their broad, social and anthropological sources. One you understand this process, you can do the same thing in modern culture and make your own contributions.

ADVICE FOR THOSE THINKING OF STUDYING HUMANITIES ON HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE DEGREE FROM A CAREERS PERSPECTIVE: Many career paths have a very linear entry route, but most creative industries don't. Use this flexibility to work out where your skills and passions can have an impact – and don't be afraid to start free or small. Grassroots creativity isn't glamorous or well paid, but it gives you a platform to actually produce something. Everyone has ideas, the ability to execute on an idea, no matter how small, is what will get you a job.



ARTS

YASMIN HEMMINGS

Learning and Participation
Producer at the
Philharmonia Orchestra

Music, 2014

HOW YOUR DEGREE HELPED:

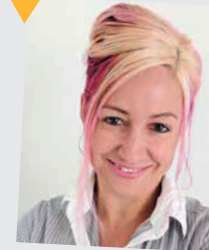
I work in the music industry so my job is quite closely linked to my degree. Having a broad knowledge and appreciation of various genres of music can help in the planning process of projects, during which I often work with partner organisations and/or workshop leaders to develop participatory and/or educational music projects for a broad range of participants. More generally, however, my degree gave me critical and analytical skills which are useful when it comes to evaluating and reporting on projects, an ability to manage multiple deadlines, and strong written and verbal communication skills which were developed through essay writing and the tutorial system.

ADVICE FOR THOSE THINKING OF STUDYING HUMANITIES ON HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE DEGREE FROM A CAREERS PERSPECTIVE: As there are such a broad range of career paths that a humanities student can take, I think it's important to try and discover during your degree what career path might appeal to you most. Get involved with societies, volunteer, find work during the vacation if you can – by doing this you'll get a better sense of what you enjoy and what you are most suited to. Also think about the elements of your degree that you enjoy the most, and see if there are ways that you might be able to incorporate these into your career.

ACADEMIA + HIGHER EDUCATION

EMILY TROSCIANKO

Researcher, writer, public
speaker, and entrepreneur



Modern Languages
(French & German),
2000–2004

WHAT: I'm a researcher, writer, public speaker, and entrepreneur. I research the links between fiction-reading and mental health, am co-author of a textbook on consciousness, run a recovery coaching business and a Psychology Today blog called 'A Hunger Artist', give talks on literature and design events on mental health, and am creating an app to support recovery from anorexia.

CAREER PATH: After my BA and Masters, my doctorate moved gradually into cognitive literary studies, investigating the psychological effects of reading Kafka. During a JRF at St John's I grew interested in the clinical relevance of reading, which led to a Knowledge Exchange Fellowship collaborating with the charity Beat. Part-time roles at the Humanities Division and the Careers Service followed, where I developed skills in supporting personal and professional development which now also feed nicely into my coaching and events-design work.

WHY: Sometime after my DPhil I realised I wasn't interested in lectureships in my 'home' field, and that my blog was the most important and enjoyable professional thing I did. I also reminded myself that having been ill with anorexia

throughout my student years, I'd had a resolution to make academia work for me on my terms or leave. My current 'portfolio' of roles has space for what I really care about, and for me.

MAIN CHALLENGES: At the moment, earning enough money! It's hard (but interesting) working out how much time different roles and tasks require and deserve, when to prioritise immediately paid work over longer-term prospects, and what 'enough' money really means to me.

TOP TIPS: If you want neatness and security, a portfolio career probably isn't for you. This way of working (for me anyway) demands repeated self-questioning about what you want life to be – but also permits the answer to that question to change. To keep the academic strand alive, you have to keep publishing, strategically. To expand into other territories, you need to invest a lot of time and energy early on, and be prepared to feel, a lot of the time, that you have no idea where it's all going. That's OK, though: everything makes sense in retrospect!

MICHAEL THORNE

Graduate Trainee,
CharityWorks



BPhil Philosophy,
2017

WHAT: I am a Graduate in Development at Network Homes, one of the largest housing associations in the South East. I am on a one-year rotational programme, moving between four different teams who work to develop new housing. This includes teams who source new opportunities for housebuilding; teams who work with builders to deliver new housing; and teams who manage recently completed homes. My day to day work is very varied, and includes writing reports and bids, financial modelling, data capture, and some marketing. I am also a trainee on the Charityworks graduate scheme. This means that alongside my job I take part in a professional development programme – involving conferences, mentoring, and research projects – designed for graduates who want to build a career in the non-profit sector.

WHY: After initially intending to pursue an academic career, I decided I wanted to use the skills I had acquired in studying

to work on projects with a positive social impact. I especially wanted a job where working hard would translate into greater social benefit, not merely increased profits for shareholders. This led me to the Charityworks programme, which offers a way into, and a strong grounding in, the non-profit sector.

TOP TIPS: Make the most of the work experience opportunities you have at university. It's easy to devote all your time to studying, but even a couple of weeks of work in a few holidays will make a big difference. Not only will it open doors to further opportunities; it will help you to learn what you like and what you don't. The best way to go about this is to secure an internship offered by the Careers Service or the Oxford Hub – but speculative requests to organisations you're interested in are also worth doing!

CHARITY + SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Why employers love our graduates

You have broad horizons and multi-disciplinary skills which means you can master novel situations more easily than most and bring fresh perspectives to the work.

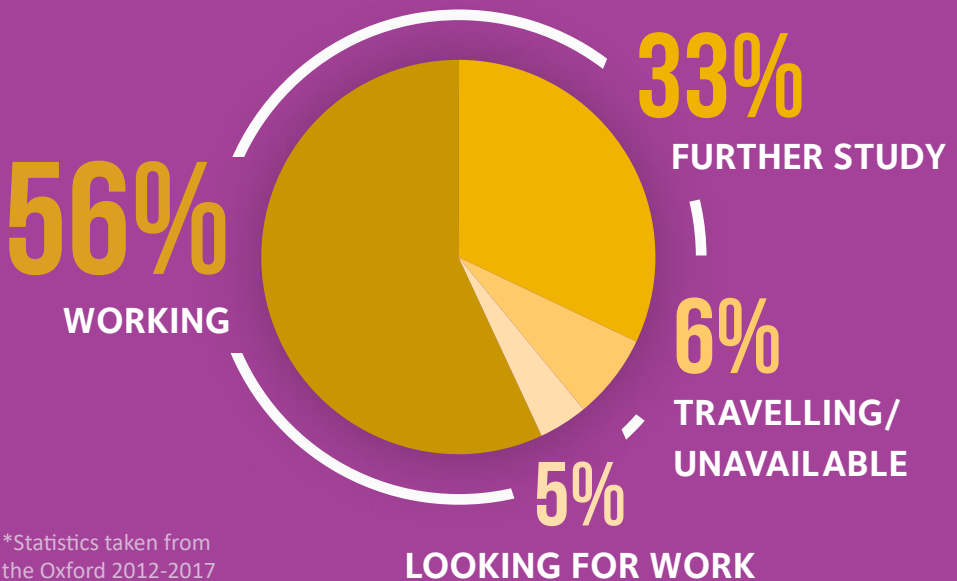
RICHARD SMITH

PARTNER, SLAUGHTER AND MAY, LAW FIRM

HISTORY, 1996

What our Humanities students were doing

6 MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION*



*Statistics taken from the Oxford 2012-2017 DLHE data.