

Robert—
—Walters



Tips to kick off your career







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Make your first chapter amazing

Can't wait to start a career in finance? Or would rather like to discover the fascinating world of HR? Maybe you're more into sales? Robert Walters is here to help you get that first job in Accounting & Tax, Finance, Banking & Financial Services, Engineering & Supply Chain, Human Resources, Marketing & Sales and Business Support.

52% of young professionals are open to temporary contracts.

Your story has only just begun.

Visit www.robertwalters.be/graduate for tips and advice to launch your career, see jobs for graduates and learn more about salaries and trends on the Belgian labour market.





“Keep in mind that you don’t need to comply with all requirements that are listed in the job advert. The perfect candidate simply doesn’t exist.”

7 tips to kick off your career

Do you want to quickly climb the career ladder? As a student, you can already take some steps to ensure your career will swiftly take off.

The key is to be proactive, using your interests and network.

Here are a few tips.

1. Start now

There are ample ways to improve your chances of getting a job after graduation, and the key is to start whilst you are a student. Start by orienting yourself before graduating, so you'll get ahead of others who haven't taken any steps yet. Knowing what different organisations do and have to offer, will help you make a choice once you've graduated.

Making yourself visible will give you more chances. Organisations are always on the lookout for fresh talent, and so it's important to get yourself seen by the right people.

Make use of your existing network, student union and career fairs, where you will be able to build your network and possibly even get involved in some activities to improve your organisation skills.

2. Use social media in a professional way

Organisations use social media regularly in order to see how people present themselves. So think about what you share on social media. Unprofessional texts and pictures could cause an employer to reject you. Add an appropriate profile picture and adjust your profile settings to private.

In addition, start working on a complete LinkedIn profile. Even during your studies your LinkedIn profile can be useful to display some relevant information like qualifications, student jobs, sports performances and projects you worked on during your studies.

This kind of information gives employers an idea of your knowledge and ambitions.

3. Display your interests

No idea yet which sector or company you want to work in? Sorting out your own interests can help. What is important to you? Which subjects really move you? By asking yourself these questions, you will find out which company values and standards suit you best. Check which aspects of your studies and internships are the most appealing to you. During the first interview, you can emphasize your interests in order to see if there is a fit with the organisation you apply with.

4. Network, network, network

The majority of jobs are found and filled through people's own network. This means that building a network can create a lot of opportunities. It will amaze you how easy this can be. Join some networking events by contacting student associations, or visit the website and social media pages of companies to keep yourself informed about their organised drinks, seminars or open house days. If you feel a bit shy about visiting such an event, don't hesitate to bring along a fellow student.

Remember to not only network with active professionals. By connecting with fellow students, you'll also build a strong network. Send a LinkedIn invite to the people you met that day in order to stay in contact with each other.



60%

of employers review the LinkedIn profile of candidates applying for a job in their organisation



47%

of young professionals secured
a job before graduating

5. Keep learning

To develop your career quickly, it's important to be constantly aware of what is going on. Immerse yourself in the industry that interests you and keep track of the latest trends and legislation. In addition, it's always useful to improve your written and verbal communication skills in Dutch, French and English.

6. Ask for help

Ask for help when you don't know yet what you're interested in or what is happening in the labour market. Take the opportunity to approach people in your network as they often enjoy giving advice to graduates. They can help you to identify your ambitions, skills and opportunities you might have as a professional starter.

7. Think carefully about your first job and internship

Graduates often choose an organisation with a strong reputation or great brand. That's OK but when taking a wider look, you'll see there are more organisations who have a lot to offer. There are many factors affecting the work you will be doing. Is the focus on administrative tasks or is the role quite versatile? Are you part of a large team? Or will you start in a job with a lot of responsibility? For example, an accountant's job content in a large organisation will be different from what an accountant in a smaller organisation does on a daily basis.

Figure out what suits you and don't go for the easiest or most obvious option. An internship is not only the ideal time to get to know the business, for many students it is also the step into their first job. So, keep in mind that the company you're doing your internship with, might be your first employer as well. Start searching in time and take a well-considered decision.

Salaries for graduates in business support roles

Gross salary/month (EUR)	
Administration	
Student Job	1,800 - 2,500
Receptionist/Office Assistant	2,200 - 2,800
Administrative Assistant	2,300 - 3,000
Management Assistant	2,500 - 3,000
Legal Assistant/Secretary	2,500 - 3,000
Sales, Marketing and Customer Service	
Student Job	1,800 - 2,500
Sales Assistant	2,300 - 3,000
Inside Sales	2,300 - 3,000
Account Manager	2,300 - 3,000
Marketing Assistant	2,300 - 2,800
Marketing & Communications Coordinator	2,500 - 3,000
Digital Marketeer	2,300 - 2,800
Customer Service Representative	2,300 - 2,900
Supply Chain	
Student Job	1,800 - 2,500
Logistics Assistant	2,400 - 3,000
Supply Chain Officer	2,500 - 3,100
Import & Export Coordinator	2,500 - 3,100
Purchase Coordinator/Buyer	2,500 - 3,000
HR & Payroll	
Student Job	1,800 - 2,500
HR Assistant	2,500 - 3,000
HR Officer/Generalist	2,600 - 3,200
Payroll Officer	2,700 - 3,200

Salaries for graduates in finance roles

Gross salary/month (EUR)	
Accounting	
Student Job	1,800 - 2,500
Junior Accountant	2,100 - 2,800
Assistant Accountant (AP/AR)	2,100 - 2,800
General Ledger Accountant	2,150 - 3,000
Credit Collector	2,200 - 2,900
Finance	
Student Job	1,800 - 2,500
Credit Analyst	2,500 - 3,600
External/Internal Auditor	2,400 - 3,700
Treasury Specialist	2,600 - 3,500
Business/Financial Analyst	2,500 - 3,700
Business/Financial Controller	2,500 - 3,800
Banking & Insurance	
Student Job	1,800 - 2,500
KYC/AML Officer	2,800 - 3,800
Back Office Employee	2,700 - 3,100
Middle Office Employee	2,800 - 3,300
Financial Advisor	2,800 - 3,100
Insurance Claims Handler	2,500 - 2,900
Insurance Underwriter	2,500 - 3,000
Compliance Officer	2,800 - 3,500

Working in recruitment: the perfect jump-start for your career

Have you ever considered working as a recruitment consultant? It's an ideal way to learn a lot in a short time about the labour market and doing business. Recruitment is a combination of sales and HR.

Gitte Peeraer, talent acquisition business partner, gives three reasons why recruitment is a perfect jump-start for your career.

1. You learn to deal with complex processes under great time pressure

Within recruitment, you will need to understand complex business processes. Most of the time, companies want to find the right candidate as soon as possible, so acting quickly and efficiently is a must. 'Finding the perfect candidate for the job is like a puzzle. You've got to perfectly understand what your client wants and that is a huge process', says Gitte.

Together with the organisation, you determine their desires: what are the hard requirements that the candidates must meet, are these candidates hard to find and what is the common salary for this kind of candidate? Usually, organisations modify their perception of the ideal candidate after having these conversations with us. It might turn out that the job requirements or the desired level of experience are different than initially said. Afterwards, we manage the entire recruitment process for both clients and candidates.

'As a recruitment consultant, you have to think one step ahead during the whole process', says Gitte. 'Professional knowledge is required as your clients are often highly educated and specialists in their field.'

Clear communication towards candidates is equally important as they see you as their confidant. 'You assist candidates by honestly managing their expectations, by preparing the interview with them and by encouraging them when things aren't working out as hoped for.' A new career step is an important moment in a candidate's life, and you, as a recruitment consultant, are closely involved in this process.

Gitte: 'Resigning from your current employer can be nerve wrecking. That's why we call the candidates the morning of their interview to wish them good luck. This personal approach makes the job rewarding for me.'

In short, recruitment involves much more than simply searching for candidates that meet the job requirements.

Gitte: 'Sometimes we're only seen as headhunters and this is not the case. As a recruiter, you're a process manager, a sound board, a confidant, a recruitment specialist and labour market expert all in one.'

“You assist candidates by giving them clear and honest expectations, by preparing the interview with them and by encouraging them when things aren’t going as desired.”

2. You can progress quickly

Robert Walters offers great career opportunities, both nationally and internationally. Since you’ll intensively work with senior recruitment consultants and managers, you will learn quickly. At Robert Walters, you’re not only trained to become a specialist in recruitment, but also in a certain field giving you access to interesting opportunities outside the world of recruitment. These can be nationally and internationally, in roles requiring a certain expertise, or in management positions. Recruitment is a demanding job, for fast thinkers and survivors. This is well-known in the business, making it a valuable experience to have on your cv.

3. You build a network for life

In your career as a recruitment consultant, you’ll build a strong network. Your network will grow quickly because of the daily appointments you have with clients and candidates. Gitte: ‘Every day, our recruitment consultants are in contact with hiring managers and line managers of leading companies.’ ‘Client relationships are very different from one another. It can be strictly business and focused on the end result, but you can also develop some true business friendships.’ As a recruitment consultant you build a longterm relationship with your clients and candidates and that’s valuable. ‘If this field suits you, you can get your career going very quickly by helping others develop their own career. Isn’t this fantastic?’

Interested to know more?

Learn more about the job and the milestones of a recruitment consultant and read the success stories of our people.

Read more: www.robertwalters.be/careers



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How do you create an effective career plan?

Who am I?

To create a solid career plan, start with self-reflection. Identify your personality, values, and norms. Create a personal wish list by considering your personality and lifestyle, what motivates you, your strengths and weaknesses according to your surroundings, and what you expect from a job.

What skills do I have?

Evaluate your current skills and experience to determine your next career goal. Consider your qualities, what you have achieved so far, which specific skills you can apply in new challenges, and in which areas you still want to grow.

Which direction do I want to go?

Determine the direction of your career by thinking about which sectors and positions appeal to you and whether they match your personal preferences. This helps you map out a clear and goal-oriented route for your future career.

When do I want to achieve this?

Set realistic timeframes for your goals. Consider what you want to achieve, whether you need additional training, how long it will take, whether you need to expand your network, and how you can develop the necessary skills within a certain time frame.

65%

of young professionals say they expect to receive a promotion within 2 years of joining an organisation

How is my trajectory progressing?

Regularly evaluate your progress and adjust your career plan as needed. This helps you remain flexible and increase your chances of success by adapting to changing personal or economic circumstances.



CV advice

No experience? Here's how to impress with your CV

When you lack relevant work experience, creating an impressive CV may seem challenging. However, there are ways to make your CV attractive to potential employers. It's important to highlight your education, courses, and personal skills. For instance, if you've pursued higher education, don't just mention the degree title, but also include your achievements and relevant thesis topics. The same applies to courses and workshops relevant to the position you're applying for.

Should you express your ambitions on your CV?

Defining your ambitions can improve job satisfaction and career progression. To articulate your ambitions on your CV, align them with your strengths and set realistic goals. Create a clear career plan and seek feedback from others if needed. Mention specific, tangible ambitions on your CV and cover letter, avoiding clichés. Ensure your ambitions are prominently placed in a dedicated section on your CV.

How do you create an effective LinkedIn profile as a graduate?

Creating an effective LinkedIn profile as a graduate is crucial for getting noticed by recruiters and employers. Start with a professional profile picture to increase your visibility. Write a clear summary that showcases your achievements and career ambitions, ending with a call to action. Include supporting media and documents like presentations or images of your work, ensuring you have permission to share them. Update your profile with your current experience, certifications, courses, and volunteer work, and add your education history for alumni networking. Expand your network by adding contacts and joining relevant groups to open new opportunities.





Interview advice

Nervous for your first job interview?

Everyone experiences nerves before a job interview, but how do you deal with those nerves? Recognize that nerves are normal and identify what specifically is making you nervous. Focus on the fact that you've already made a good impression with your CV and cover letter. Prepare thoroughly by researching the organization and the interviewer, planning your route and ensuring your clothes are ready. How do you relax? Arrive on time, relax your shoulders, and breathe calmly to lower your heart rate. Hold a pen to avoid fidgeting and make eye contact with the interviewer.

Applying for jobs before graduating?

Many students need to retake exams or finish their theses after graduating. Can you start applying without your diploma? Yes, it's advisable to start applying early, even without your diploma. To discuss this with potential employers, be transparent about your situation and highlight what you've learned and accomplished during internships. Discuss options like part-time work or including a clause in your contract for exam retakes.

Spontaneous application: do or don't?

Sending a spontaneous application can set you apart from other candidates. Why apply spontaneously? If you can't find a suitable vacancy, expressing interest through a spontaneous application can be flattering and effective. How do you prepare for a spontaneous application? Update your CV, research the right contact person, and personalize your message. If you don't get a response, try again later or leverage your network to increase your chances.



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