

jobs.ac.uk

Great jobs for bright people



The Ultimate Guide to Online Recruitment Advertising

Essential best practice and top tips for recruiters

As one of the industry's longest-established jobs boards, [jobs.ac.uk](#) has helped thousands of employers worldwide to recruit the brightest talent for over 15 years.

Naturally we believe advertising your jobs online is the first step to ensuring you have access to the widest and most targeted pool of talented jobseekers – and at less cost!

But how can you guarantee you're reaching the right audience? How can you engage the best talent on jobs boards? How can you ensure you get the very best response to your job advert every time?

To help, we've put together some handy tips and techniques to improve the success of your online recruitment advertising.

This ebook will cover:

- [The benefits of online recruitment](#)
- [Choosing the right jobs board](#)
- [How to write an effective job advert](#)
- [How to maximise your campaign](#)
- [Measuring success](#)

Happy recruiting!

Whether you want to post a single vacancy or an entire campaign, there are many advantages to posting your vacancies online.

Online recruitment tools, such as jobs boards, use the power of the internet to match people to jobs and employers - making the process of finding the right candidates quicker, cheaper and more efficient.

Here are some benefits of online recruitment:

Low cost

Online recruitment is very inexpensive, especially when compared to traditional hiring methods such as print advertising. From targeting specific jobseekers to employer branding, jobs boards also offer a variety of extra tools and support to ensure you get a lot more for your money.

Reach a wider audience

With over 2.4 billion internet users worldwide¹, the sheer scale of online means that recruiters can reach significantly more jobseekers. For example, jobs boards, such as [jobs.ac.uk](#) are visited daily by thousands of jobseekers worldwide, providing recruiters with the opportunity to reach a large global market. With the increased adoption of smartphones and tablets, getting your vacancy in front of the right candidate has also never been easier.

Speed

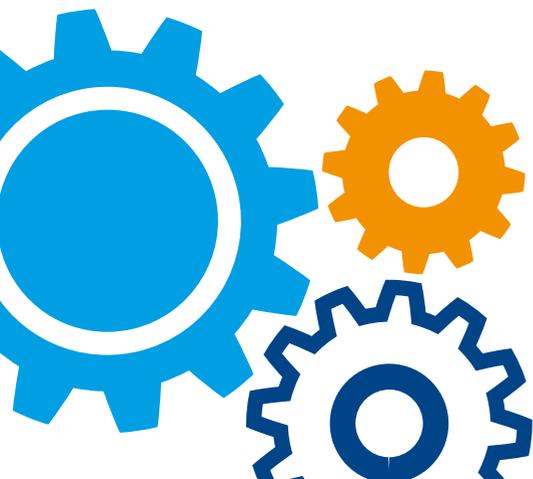
Online recruitment can significantly reduce the time it takes to hire the right people. For example, jobs posted online can go live very quickly with recruiters immediately receiving applications.

Measurability

Online recruitment can give a recruiter greater control over the recruitment process and makes it easy to measure the return on investment. For example, most job boards are able to provide information on the number of times a job advert has been viewed.

Ease of use

Posting a job online is straightforward. A lot of jobs boards offer user-friendly self-submit options or will have a dedicated account management team to help answer any queries and support all aspects of a recruitment advertising campaign.



3 Choosing the Right Job Board

Jobs boards are one of the most essential tools for online recruitment. Therefore, choosing the right jobs board for your vacancy is crucial to the success of your online recruitment campaign. If your job advert is on the wrong job board, you could be wasting valuable time and money.

This section provides you with the key questions you need to ask when choosing a jobs board.

a Who is their target audience?

Does it deliver the right candidates for your job? There is little point advertising on a jobs board whose audience are primarily Sales & Marketing when you are looking for Biology Lecturers.

b Generalist vs. niche job boards

There are two different types of job boards – generalist and niche. A generalist job board (e.g. Total Jobs or Monster) will cover a majority of industry sectors and provide access to a broad spectrum of jobseekers. Whereas, niche job boards, such as jobs.ac.uk, will cater for a specific industry sector and provide recruiters with a more targeted audience of jobseekers.

There are several benefits to using a niche jobs board for recruitment:

- Attract jobseekers with a specific skill set or background
- More relevant, targeted applications
- Reduced competition from other employers
- Industry-specific resources such as salary checkers, blogs and career information - helping to attract passive jobseekers
- The account management team will often have a more in-depth understanding of your sector and the candidates you are looking to attract



c Are there similar vacancies on the site?

If the jobs board doesn't carry jobs like yours then it will not attract people looking for jobs like yours. Also look to see who advertises on the site. Are any of them your competitors?

d How many people use the site?

How many unique users per month does the jobs board have? Is this figure independently audited? What are the audience numbers for your specific discipline?

e What is the demographic of the audience?

How much experience does the audience have? What is their highest qualification? Where are they located? Researching the demographics will help you to determine how suitable the site is for advertising your vacancies.

f How much does it cost?

How does the cost to advertise a job compare with similar job boards? Is it more or less expensive? Also beware of jobs boards which offer free advertising which offer little back in terms of audience size or quality assurance.

g What other services do they offer?

Advertising jobs is just the start. Look out for button advertising, email alerts, recruitment microsites and CV database access; all which can help to increase your chances of online recruitment success. Be sure to ask about what else is available.

h Is there account management?

Many job boards offer the option to post a job yourself, but this isn't always the best option. Most recruiters aren't experts in online recruitment or choosing the right keywords/categories to make their adverts work on a jobs board. Therefore, an Account Manager can be a great source of advice and assistance to ensure your recruitment campaign is categorised correctly and is successful.

i Get independent advice

Look for independent figures to back up job board statistics. For example, NORAS, the world's largest online recruitment research survey, provides free independent data to help you assess and compare the audiences of different job boards. Visit www.noras.co.uk for details.

How to assess a job board checklist

- ✓ How many jobs are on the site?
- ✓ How many jobs are similar to the one you are recruiting?
- ✓ For senior or specialist roles, what jobseeker targeting options are available?
- ✓ How long can your advert be displayed for? 1 month? 2 months?
- ✓ How many competitors use the site? (Identify similar roles, compare pay etc)
- ✓ How large is the jobseeker audience? Unique users? Jobs by email subscribers?
- ✓ How qualified is the jobseeker audience?
- ✓ Where are the jobseekers located?
- ✓ Do they have a CV database?
- ✓ How does the site attract jobseekers?
- ✓ When searching for the job title on search engines, does the website show on page one of the listings?

4 How to Write Effective Online Adverts

Writing an effective job advert to attract the best talent is a very important part of using any jobs board. After all, get it wrong and you could find yourself sifting through multitudes of irrelevant applications or worse, no applications at all!

A well-constructed online job advert acts like a funnel which can:

- Attract better candidates
- Discourage weaker candidates
- Reduce applications that waste your time
- Reduce total processing time
- Increase recruitment efficiency
- Promote your brand and reputation

Here are our top tips to help you write powerful online job adverts:

a Who are you targeting?

What you say depends on who you are talking to so make sure your advert connects with your audience through language, expression and motivation. Try putting yourself in the shoes of your ideal candidate. What will they be looking for? Try searching for similar jobs to the ones you want to advertise. Also ask someone who is already doing the same job about what would make them apply.

Remember: make it hard for the right jobseekers to say no!

TOP TIP 

The person specification is the best place to start defining your audience! Use it to determine:

- The three most important essential requirements
- The three most important desirable requirements that might differentiate a candidate

The attributes also need to be meaningful that you can measure. For example, "a Prince 2 qualification" or "PhD in Biology" will be better than using "flexible" or "professional".

b Optimise the use of keywords

Is your advert 'searchable' online? Jobs boards work on a keyword relevancy basis when matching job vacancies with jobseeker searches, so make sure relevant keywords that jobseekers would search on (e.g. specific skills or job titles), appear in your job advert.

TOP TIP

Jobs boards place more "weight" on keywords in the job title to help make the best match possible with jobseekers' search terms. Therefore, avoid vague or general sounding job titles that could be completely missed by jobseekers. For example, "PhD Research Studentship in Chemical Engineering" is more likely to attract better targeted jobseekers than just "Research Studentship".

Also try inserting skills and keywords or repeating the job title in the body of the advert text to increase the "ranking" of your advert.

c Avoid internal or ambiguous job titles

Is the job title meaningful outside your organisation? Don't alienate or confuse your target audience with internal jargon that makes little sense to jobseekers outside of your own organisation and sector.

d Think about your opening paragraph

Make sure your opening paragraph is short, punchy and informative - this is often the first thing a jobseeker will read after the job title. Some jobs boards also show the first few lines of the advert in their search results so don't waste this opportunity with generic or less important information.

e Location, location, location

A key element of how people search for a job is location so it's essential that you include the town/city, region, country or even campus where the position will be based.

f Include salary information where possible

Jobseekers are far less likely to apply to a job with no salary. If a precise salary is unknown or negotiable, try using a salary band so that the advert will still show in job searches made by salary.

g Be clear, be concise!

Attention span is short online so you need to get to the point. Fast! Here are some tips to make your job advert sharper!

- Avoid buzz words, acronyms or technical jargon
- Break text up and avoid words that add 'padding'
- Use short paragraphs and bulleted lists for easy reading
- Use sub headings to separate introduction, job duties and candidate specifications etc.
- Highlight important points in bold
- Don't just copy and paste job descriptions!

h Is it legal?

As a recruiter it is your role to ensure that your job advert is free of any form of discrimination. Being familiar with the legislation in the country you are advertising in can help you avoid the pitfalls.

In the UK, the [Equality Act 2010](#) legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The Act protects people from being treated less favourably because they have a protected characteristic.

The relevant protected characteristics in employment which should be considered when writing your job advert are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

i Clear & simple call to action

Make it as easy as possible for jobseekers to apply. Always direct them straight to the relevant job on your careers site. Alternatively use an email address where they can attach their CV. Try not to have more than one call to action as the applicant could get lost in the process or find it too lengthy.

TOP TIP

Where possible, do not use job titles which have a distinctly male or female connotation, as well as referring to the job holder as “he” or “she”. Instead, where possible, use job titles that have a gender-neutral connotation.

Be aware that inferences can be drawn as to age from words such as “graduates”. Make it clear that it is skills and qualifications that are of interest and not the age of the applicant.

Statements encouraging applicants from particular racial groups should not be used, unless the job in question meets the limited conditions for taking positive action.

Driving licence requirements may disproportionately exclude disabled persons and should not be cited in job adverts unless they are genuinely essential for the performance of the job and where no reasonable alternative method of performing the travelling duties is available.

Advert Checklist

A good advert will include:

- ✓ Descriptive job title
- ✓ Short ‘punchy’ introduction to your organisation
- ✓ The job role - the opportunity!
- ✓ The job requirements - profile of the ideal candidate
- ✓ Salary and benefits
- ✓ Clear, simple call to action

A bad advert will include:

- ✗ Too much technical detail about the role
- ✗ Too much technical jargon
- ✗ Too many ‘unnecessary’ words
- ✗ Uninspiring descriptions of the role
- ✗ Too much emphasis on the job
- ✗ Not enough emphasis on the ideal candidate

Example of a good advert

Lecturer in Sustainable Horticulture

The University of Life, a leading international green knowledge institution located in a beautiful campus in Holland, is looking to recruit a Lecturer in Sustainable Horticulture.

To help strengthen the Bachelor's Study Programme and the Professional Master's Study Programme, we are looking for a Lecturer who can actively contribute to the further development and implementation of the curriculum in the field of Sustainable Horticulture in an international setting and who has a background and network in horticulture.

Position responsibilities:

- Teaching in a competence-based environment
- Contributing to education reform in relation to Sustainable Horticulture
- Supervising internships, graduation assignments and projects
- Supervising students
- Maintaining contacts with the working field of horticulture, specifically the international industry and research institutes.

Position requirements:

- University degree in the field or a Higher Professional Education degree with additional/appropriate work experience in the field of horticulture and/or biology
- Affinity with the international horticulture working field
- Pedagogic-didactic certificate or the willingness to acquire it through further schooling;
- Attention for the wishes and needs of students

1: Descriptive job title

2: Short introduction

3: Concise job role

4: Job requirements

- Proficient in both spoken and written English
- Good communication skills and capable of working well in a team
- Geared toward innovation.

We offer:

In return we offer an attractive salary and benefits which include working from a beautiful campus, relocation assistance, gym and childcare facilities and attractive rates for private health insurance.

To apply:

To apply for this Lecturer in Sustainable Horticulture vacancy online, please click on the 'Apply' button below.

However, for further information about this vacancy, please contact Professor Van Damme at the University of Life by telephone +316 22233344.

5: Benefits

6: Call to action



Example of a bad advert

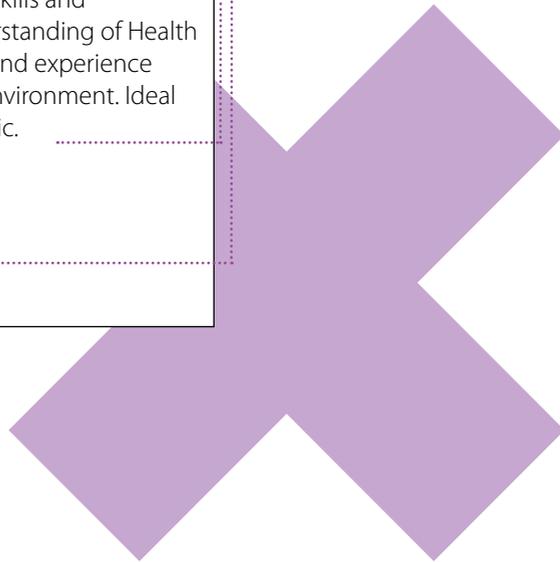
Laboratory Technician

An opportunity has become available for a Laboratory Technician to join our department. The role will involve providing technical support for undergraduate and postgraduate practical teaching and research. Applications are invited from candidates with a degree in a scientific subject together with previous suitable skills and experience. You must also have an understanding of Health and Safety regulations and procedures, and experience of implementing these in a laboratory environment. Ideal candidates will be young and enthusiastic.

Job Ref: A-5896

Application deadline: 20th December

- 1: No Salary information
- 2: No introduction to institution or department
- 3: Minimal information about the job
- 4: Job requirements not clear
- 5: Discriminatory text
- 6: No call to action



5 How to Maximise Your Campaign

With often thousands of jobs live on a jobs board at any one time, making your job advert stand out and helping to emphasise your organisation's brand is important.

In addition to standard job adverts, jobs boards offer a vast array of enhanced features to ensure your recruitment campaign is as successful as possible:

a Enhanced job adverts

Whereas a standard job advert on a jobs board will typically be text based, an enhanced job listing will often include employer branding and also appear more visible in the search results to help improve the number of responses.

For example, An [Enhanced Advert](#) on jobs.ac.uk is a fully branded job advert which is highlighted blue in the search results to make it more visible to jobseekers – increasing the number of views and applications.

b Sponsored email alerts

On a typical jobs board, jobseekers can create email profiles and preferences so that they automatically receive newly posted and relevant jobs direct to their inboxes (often called 'Jobs by Email'). Often recruiters can sponsor these email alerts to help target jobseekers with specific skills and experience e.g. jobseekers subscribed to biological sciences. The benefit? You can reach both active and passive jobseekers and drive only relevant applicants to your advert.

c Banners and buttons

Many jobs board offer banners, buttons or MPU's (Mid Placed Units) which are images that usually appear at the top of a high-traffic web page. Buttons and banners can be used to prominently highlight a specific job vacancy to help channel more jobseekers to your job advert. They can be also be used to promote your employer brand to a large, worldwide audience.

d Multiple-advert campaigns

Looking to promote a group of vacancies together? Some jobs boards offer solutions to advertise multiple vacancies. For example, a Linking Page on jobs.ac.uk is a branded web page which can display multiple job adverts together to help promote large recruitment campaigns.

jobs.ac.uk also offer [Campaign Sites](#) which are small, purpose-built recruitment websites which are fully branded and can be used to promote multiple jobs, departments or even an entire organisation.

e CV database

Many jobs boards also offer the ability to search from thousands of CVs uploaded by jobseekers. Advanced filters within the CV database enable recruiters to search for CVs by specialism, location, education and more to instantly find the best CVs and fill vacancies more quickly.

[Visit here](#) to find out more about jobs.ac.uk's enhanced products

6 Measuring Success

You've chosen the media and written a killer job advert. But how effective was your recruitment advertising campaign? Did you shortlist or appoint any candidates? Do you need to adjust your recruitment strategy?

Determining how successful a campaign has been will make it far easier to justify your recruitment spend to colleagues or managers.

Here are our top tips to help you measure campaign success and manage your recruitment advertising more strategically:

a Collect and monitor your recruitment data

Recording and monitoring the recruitment data from each media source is critical for determining effectiveness. An Applicant Tracking System (ATS) – which efficiently and electronically manages your recruitment process – can easily automate source tracking. Also ensure that your application form lists individual media sources. In the absence of an ATS, try assigning unique reference numbers to job adverts (e.g. JAC123 for jobs.ac.uk).

b Identify top performing recruitment sources

Analyse your recruitment data to determine the top performing recruiting sources. This data will help you to identify what's working and where changes need to be made to attract the best quality jobseekers. Metrics include number of applications, interviews and appointments per source as well as the cost per applicant and cost per hire.

c Allocate your recruitment budget appropriately

Once you have identified the top performing sources, adjust your budget accordingly. The budget allocated to each recruitment source should be dependent on the number of applications, interviews and hires that the source provides.





Great jobs for bright people

From teaching and research to managerial and administration, instantly search 1000s of great jobs worldwide!

- 1,508,322 unique users per month (ABC audited 2015)
- 91% of our jobseekers have a degree, masters or doctorate
- 21,000+ job searches per day from UK, USA, Europe, Middle East & Asia Pacific
- 108,000+ jobseekers subscribe to Jobs by Email alerts
- Over ten times more effective than other UK media for academic and research posts

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