Summer Job Search Tips

Summer is a great time to build skills, experience and professional networks — all while making some money! However, it’s also important to search for practical opportunities to learn career-ready skills for future positions.

Identify your goals

Are your goals to...

- Build career-ready skills and/or experience?
- Earn money?
- Develop your interests and/or explore something new?

Create a plan

- Start early! Some positions are posted as early as fall, even though the typical recruiting period for summer positions is January–March.
- Think creatively about the different ways you can meet your summer goals. For example, LinkedIn Learning is great for developing skills. And doing informational interviews can help you explore your career field. If your main goal is to make money, think broadly about the available opportunities.
- Incorporate your job search into your daily or weekly routine. Create a job search schedule.

Use effective techniques

- Connect with us for a resume critique to ensure you’re showcasing your skills and experience in a way that will appeal to your audience. Book an appointment on OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Appointments > Careers) or attend our virtual career drop-ins.
- Attend webinar sessions to learn more tips and get answers to your questions. Topics include resumes, LinkedIn, networking, interviews and job searching. Register on OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Events).
- Talk to people. You never know who can lead you to your next opportunity. Telling your friends, family, professors, teaching assistants and peers what you’re searching for may lead to ideas and referrals.

Use many methods

- Check job posting websites. (But don’t stop there!)
- Research company websites for postings and do your research. Tailor your application before you apply.
- Use social media platforms to connect with organizations, people and opportunities.
- LinkedIn can be a powerful professional tool — search McMaster University alumni to find out what they do now.
Check the Alumni and Partner Advisor Network to connect with the other “world wide web” — people!

Final tips

- Cast your job search net as widely as possible. Don’t just apply for your ideal job and hope you get it. Have a back-up plan.
- Apply, apply, apply! It can take up to (or more than) 50 applications to secure an interview!
- Remember, you can build skills, experience and professional networks in any job. It’s what you make of your experience, not what your experience makes you.

Where to search on campus

McMaster Work Program

- This program offers on-campus opportunities for currently registered students who demonstrate financial need.
- Part-time jobs are posted in early August and sporadically throughout the school year; summer jobs are posted in early March.
- International students, please check International Student Work Opportunity (ISWO) eligibility.

McMaster Students Union (MSU)

- Find paid and volunteer positions.

David Braley Athletic Centre (DBAC)*

- Typically, you can find opportunities for service desk, business office, the Pulse, strength and conditioning and intramural support.

McMaster Hospitality*

- Typically, you can find opportunities to work at food service stations and catering services.

*Pending COVID-19 restrictions.

Where to search in the community

OSCARplus and other job posting websites

- OSCARplus: Check the job postings regularly — we post local, national and international opportunities daily.
- Indeed
- Government of Canada Job Bank
- Charity Village
- TalentEgg
- Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP)
- Ontario Public Service Summer Employment Opportunities (SEO)
Virtual and remote work

Here are some websites that are dedicated to virtual work opportunities.

- FlexJobs
- Remote
- We Work Remotely

Note: You can usually filter by “remote” on typical job websites like Indeed.

Self-employment and freelance work

- Start a summer company: This is a Government of Ontario program for students aged 15–20 that provides business training, mentoring and financial support with rewards up to $3,000.
- Hamilton Business Enterprise Centre: This organization provides information, tools and resources to help entrepreneurs to grow their business.
- Fiverr

Hamilton community*

- Retail positions: Check stores in Westdale, Dundurn Plaza, University Plaza, Jackson Square, Ancaster Meadowlands and Limeridge Mall.
- Check company websites for job postings (especially department stores or chains).

*If you’re not currently in Hamilton, consider similar options in your area.