



What are business careers?

Business careers are about how organisations work day-to-day. Business skills are needed wherever people plan work, manage money, organise staff, solve problems, or make decisions. **Business roles exist in almost every organisation and sector of the economy.**

Where could I work?

People with business skills work across:

- ▶ **Private companies** – from small start-ups to large firms
- ▶ **Public sector organisations** – councils, health trusts, the Northern Ireland Civil Service
- ▶ **Third-sector organisations** – charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises

Types of business roles

Examples of business careers include roles in **administration; finance and accounting; human resources (HR); import/export and international trade; marketing and digital marketing; operations and management; procurement and supply chains; and sales and business development.**



You can read more about these careers in the DfE Careers Service Business careers bulletin and on the [Careers A-Z](#)

Future trends in business careers





Business careers are changing as the world of work changes. Many jobs now use **digital technology** and **data** in everyday tasks. Businesses are also paying more attention to **protecting the environment** and making **fair and responsible decisions**.

As artificial intelligence (AI) takes over more routine tasks, employers are placing more value on **transferable skills**, such as **communication, teamwork, creativity, problem-solving, digital confidence** and **leadership**.

These skills can be developed through **clubs, volunteering, part-time work**, activities such as **Young Enterprise**, and **work experience**.

Myth-busting business careers

Quick myth-busters

-  **Myth: You need to be a maths genius.**
-  **Reality:** Numbers help, but communication, teamwork and decision-making are just as important.
-  **Myth: Business careers are only for extroverts.**
-  **Reality:** Business careers need a wide mix of strengths, personalities and experiences.

How can I get started?

There is **no single route into a business career**. Options include **GCSEs, A levels and vocational courses; apprenticeships; further education college courses; university degrees; and entry-level jobs with training**. Many business roles offer clear career progression over time.



Choosing subjects for a business career

There is **no single “right” set of subjects**. It’s a good idea to choose subjects that you enjoy and feel motivated by, and which keep your options open.

Some business-related higher education courses, such as Economics or Finance, may require specific subjects, for example Maths at GCSE/A level. There may also be minimum grade requirements.

Start researching any careers or courses you’re interested in early, so you can check whether you need particular subjects or qualifications, before deciding what to study next.

GCSEs/equivalent qualifications - useful subjects

Subjects that can help you to build relevant skills and knowledge include:



Business Studies - introduces how organisations work, including marketing, finance and decision-making



Maths - supports problem-solving, budgeting and data skills



English - builds communication skills needed in almost all business roles



ICT or Digital subjects - useful as business increasingly uses digital tools and technology



Geography, History or RE - develop research, analysis and understanding of real-world issues



Modern Languages - especially useful for international business, import and export roles.

Post-16 - useful subjects

Keeping options open is still important. Subjects that often link well to business careers include:



Business Studies - explores management, finance, marketing and enterprise



Economics - looks at how markets, governments and businesses interact



Maths - valuable for finance, data, planning and analysis



Accounting - useful for finance, procurement and management roles



ICT / Digital Technology - supports careers in digital business and innovation



Geography, Politics, Sociology or Psychology - help develop analytical, research and people-focused skills

Subject-choice checklist



Am I choosing subjects I enjoy and feel motivated by?



Am I keeping my options open for different pathways (college, apprenticeships, university)?



Have I spoken to a careers adviser about my choices?

Summary

Business careers are flexible, varied and open to many different strengths and interests. By building skills and exploring options over time, you can prepare for a wide range of business careers in Northern Ireland.

Want to find out more?

This factsheet is based on the [Careers Service Business Careers Bulletin](#).



The [DfE Careers Service](#) provides free, professional and impartial careers advice to help you explore your options and plan next steps.