

What is upReach's Rise Excel Programme?

upReach's Rise Excel Programme is typically a 2-3 year programme of personalised careers support, designed for eligible university students at upReach's partner universities. The programme supports students (we call them "upReach Associates") to achieve their career ambitions with support applying for work experience, internships and graduate opportunities at any employer in any career sector.

The aims of the programme are to help you explore your career options, develop key skills to enhance your employability, improve your confidence, widen your professional network, and - ultimately - to secure top opportunities that suit you and your career interests.

Am I eligible for this programme?

upReach is a social mobility charity, and our objective is to support students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. To become an upReach Associate on the Rise Excel programme, you must:

- Have a household income **below £42,620**
- Have attended UK state schools only (or have completed your GCSEs in the UK if educated abroad before then)
- **University:** You must currently be an undergraduate that is in full-time study. This programme is open to students at Bournemouth University, De Montfort University and Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Degree subject:** We encourage students from any degree background to sign up. However, we are not able to support students whose degree is eligible for NHS Bursary, NHS Learning Support Fund (LSF), Social Work Bursary or Teacher training funding
- **For the Rise Excel Programme there are no GCSE or A Level grade requirements**

What does it involve?

When joining the programme, you'll be matched with a dedicated upReach Programme Coordinator, who will get to know you and be on-hand to provide ongoing 1-to-1 support throughout your time on the upReach programme.

They'll be able to give you extensive support at each stage of the job application process, including:

- Reviewing your CV and offering feedback
- Reviewing your applications and cover letters for any application you make to any employer opportunity
- Mock job interviews
- Assessment centre preparation

As well as support from your upReach Programme Coordinator, you'll also have access to:

- Exclusive work experience opportunities with our [partner employers](#)
- Exclusive employer events, like Insight Days to help you learn more about different organisations
- Extensive online resources, including guides to different employers, practise online tests, and career courses to help you explore your sectors of interest in more depth
- Weekly 'Video Forums' (webinars) to help you build your employability skills
- Skills Workshops designed to develop your employability skills, which will take place on your university campus
- Opportunity to be matched with a professional mentor in your sector of interest
- A place on upReach's exclusive Residential Employability Academy



As a result of the 2024 Rise Excel Employability Academy,

- 100% of attendees report greater self-confidence in recognising transferable skills
- 75% of attendees report greater self-confidence in engaging with professionals
- 81% of attendees report greater understanding of their career goals

Associates' Experience

"Being an upReach Associate this year has been incredibly beneficial for the growth of my confidence in professional settings. Fully funded employability academies have allowed me to fine tune my communication skills with employers and start to build my professional network, an opportunity I wouldn't have without upReach! I can't wait to see what the next year as an upReach Associate brings!"

- Katlyn, graduating from Bournemouth University in 2025

"I am thrilled to express my gratitude for the invaluable support I received from upReach, in securing [my] internship. The guidance provided on interviews significantly enhanced my performance and confidence. Through [...] personalised [support from my Programme Coordinator] and tailored resources, I gained crucial skills and insights that undoubtedly contributed to my success."

- Tanya, graduating from De Montfort University in 2025

"upReach's support has been crucial to my personal growth and professional development. I have benefited from application masterclasses, skill workshops and networking events. I would highly recommend upReach to any student interested as they are an organisation who is truly committed to helping Associates achieve professional success."

- Sarrinah, graduating from Manchester Metropolitan University in 2026