

# Virtual CAREER FAIRS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

### WHAT IS A VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR?

A virtual career fair is an online event that connects employers and job seekers virtually. Like an in-person career fair, it takes place on a certain date and for a certain length of time.

Job seekers typically register for the event in advance through the platform. Employers will have an online presence at the fair and may be represented by virtual “booths” that job seekers can visit.

Virtual career fairs are often hosted using software platforms. For example, Co-op, Career and Experiential Education at Brock University uses a virtual platform called CareerEco.

During a virtual career fair, employers and job seekers can converse with each other using phone, email, video, or chat, and employers may offer online sessions to share information about their companies and job opportunities. Job seekers may be given the opportunity to share their resume with employers in advance of or during the fair. In some cases, job seekers are also able to complete an online questionnaire that will help “match” them with employers and/or opportunities at the fair.

Like in-person career fairs, virtual career fairs can have a general focus and involve a wide variety of employers and opportunities or they can be more targeted and feature specific types of employers and opportunities.

### HOW IS A VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR DIFFERENT FROM AN IN-PERSON CAREER FAIR?

Virtual career fairs are more convenient than in-person fairs because you can log into the fair from anywhere, eliminating the need for travel. Virtual fairs can also connect you to employers you would not normally be able to connect with in person due to geographic distance.

In addition, a virtual career fair requires you to use different skills than an in-person career fair. Some of these skills include using computer software and hardware, communicating virtually rather than face-to-face, and practicing appropriate online etiquette.

### HOW CAN I SUCCESSFULLY PREPARE FOR A VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR?

Just as you would for an in-person career fair, you can prepare for a virtual career fair in advance by:

- 1) Researching the companies who will be attending. Their names will be listed on the platform prior to the event. Take the time to research the kind of work they do, the opportunities they typically have to offer, or the opportunities they are currently recruiting for.
- 2) Preparing to introduce yourself. Practice your elevator speech or personal sales pitch before the event so you are ready to start the conversation with employers. Need help? Take a look at [Developing Your Personal Sales Pitch](#) and practice using InterviewStream.
- 3) Preparing your cover letters and resume. Create, update and/or refine your resume to ensure it is employer ready and write cover letters tailored to job opportunities the employers are advertising. For help with this, refer to our [Cover Letter & Resume](#) resources.

## HOW CAN I SUCCESSFULLY PREPARE FOR A VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR? (CONTINUED)

4) Reviewing your online presence. Google yourself to see what employers will see if they look you up online. Take a close look at your personal and professional social media accounts. If you do not already have a LinkedIn profile, consider creating one prior to the event (see Social Media & Branding).

5) Preparing questions to ask the employers. After researching the companies and their job opportunities, prepare thoughtful questions for those you plan to engage with. This will help you start a conversation with them and convey genuine interest. Refrain from starting with generic questions like "what positions are you hiring for?" or "do you hire people with my background?" You should also avoid asking questions that could be easily answered by visiting their website.

6) Anticipating interview questions on the spot. Some employers will take the opportunity to conduct impromptu interviews with career fair attendees. Anticipate questions you may be asked based on your company research and the advertised opportunities. Practice your virtual interview skills in advance using InterviewStream.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO ON THE DAY OF AND DURING THE EVENT TO ENSURE I MAKE A GREAT IMPRESSION?

1) Dress professionally. Be ready to be on camera and make a great impression because employers may want to chat with you using video. For tips on what to wear, see Dress for Success.

2) Be a professional. Appropriate online etiquette is essential. Always test your technology before logging in, communicate clearly and confidently, give people and presentations your full attention, eliminate any potential distractions, be mindful of your body language, and maintaining eye contact with your webcam. Professionalism also includes what you say. Whether you are speaking through audio/video or in the chat function, avoid slang, abbreviations, and common text language such as: hey, what's up, lol, brb, b4, ppl, and so on. Some additional tips include:

- Consider using headphones to avoid outside noise
- Ensure the lighting in the room allows people to see you clearly
- Avoid a messy background

3) Take notes and record contact information for follow up. Be prepared to take written or typed notes to capture important information you may want to refer to after the event, like names and contact information for people you connect with. If they do not offer their contact information, be sure to politely ask for it.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER THE EVENT?

1) Reflect on the conversations you had with individuals at the event and use LinkedIn to connect with those you had a good conversation with and/or you have more questions for. It is recommended that you do this on a desktop device (rather than mobile) so you can write a personalized message when you request to connect with these individuals via LinkedIn.

2) Send personalized thank you messages to the individuals you connected with either via LinkedIn or email. In your message, remind them about your conversation and what piqued your interest in their company. If you would like to follow up with the employer, you should also include this request in your thank you message.

3) Prepare and submit applications for any opportunities of interest according to the employer's application instructions. In addition, be sure to mention that you connected with the employer at the virtual career fair and why this piqued your interest in your cover letter.

## WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL HELP WITH MY PREPARATION FOR A VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR?

Please connect with your Career Education team if you would like further assistance with preparing for a virtual career fair. You can connect with the Campus Career team at [career@brocku.ca](mailto:career@brocku.ca) or the Goodman Career team (if you are a Goodman School of Business student) at [portal.bus.brocku.ca](http://portal.bus.brocku.ca). You can also book an appointment via [careerzone.brocku.ca](http://careerzone.brocku.ca). Career Education can offer you 1:1 support, helpful strategies, and additional resources.

