**Top Tips for Professional Networking (Delivered by Turner & Townsend)**

**What is networking?**

Professional networking is establishing and maintaining meaningful connections with individuals or groups within industry and fields of interest to you. It can provide opportunities for career advice and advancement, business growth, and aid job hunting.

**Where can networking take place?**

* Careers Fairs
* Conferences
* Seminars and workshops
* Industry events
* Online networking (Bright Network and LinkedIn)
* Alumni networks at UoB.

**How can you use Postgraduate - specific skills to network?**

* Specialised knowledge - Discuss taught modules and research skills with employers.
* Critical thinking and adaptability – convey how the skills you possess can be transferred to working in their field.
* Continuous learning – demonstrate your passion to develop in your field.
* If using qualitative research methods, network to select and obtain candidates for interview.

**Hints and Tips for networking**

* Set clear goals – what do you want from the connection? An insight into the industry? A career change? Advice on entering the field?
* Introduce yourself and be authentic during the conversation.
* Actively listen – ask open ended questions and remain gratuitous throughout the conversation.
* Maintain the connection after your first conversation (follow up)
* Don’t overshare personal information or ask personal questions.
* Diversify your network – seek connections with employers from different backgrounds and experiences.

**Optimising LinkedIn as a Postgraduate**

LinkedIn is a great tool to grow your network in sectors you are interested in without having to dedicate time to attending an event. To gain the most out of LinkedIn:

* Update your profile with a photo, personal summary, education history, adding an industry, and adding skills. This contributes to profile views and results in your profile appearing higher in recruiter searches.
* Ask to connect with UoB alumni and employers in your field of interest. In your connecting message, explain who you are, what you have in common (industry interest or education history) and why you would like to connect.
* Once you have connected, consider reaching out to gain further insights. Would the employer be willing to have a phone call about entering their industry? Would they consider allowing you to shadow them?