

Careers Fair – 11th to 13th November 2025

Tuesday 10:00- 10:45 Professor Jacco Thijssen, University of York: Career in Academia

Academic Careers in OR: some (personal) reflections

In this session Professor Thijssen will discuss the joys and trepidations of an academic career in OR. By necessity his reflections will be informed by his experiences in Economics, Management, and Mathematics departments across several universities. Jacco will focus particularly on the interdisciplinary nature of OR and the opportunities (and costs) that this brings in the academic job market. He hopes that his reflections will provide the start of an interactive discussion with participants about their own experiences.

Tuesday 11:00-11:45- Dave Williams, Dave Williams coaching: Present like an Expert

How to build your public speaking skills and grow your confidence in the sector, and remain professional

In Dave's presentation, he will be sharing the skills on how to present like a professional, in any situation

You will learn how to prepare yourself so you are ready to deliver your best self and how to deliver your information powerfully and authentically and influence your audience, engage with your audience, how to speak in a way that resonates and how movement can be your secret weapon.

This is for you if you are looking to sell yourself and influence others by getting your message across, whether that be 1:1 or a room full of people.

Tuesday 12:00 – 12:30 Disa Ray, Decision Lab, from Student to Consultant: How I Landed the Job and What I'm Learning Now

Join Disa Ray, a Consultant at Decision Lab, for a session on making the leap from university to an OR related career. Disa will share first-hand advice on how to build a standout application and succeed in interviews. She will also offer an honest look at the first 12 months in a consultancy role, from the challenges and learning curve to the essential on-the-job skills needed for success. This session is ideal for students seeking a clear, relatable guide to launching their career.

Tuesday 12:30- 13:00 – Katherine Stafford, Capgemini: Consultant on their experience in the graduate scheme and a standout project they delivered at DESNZ

Graduate Scheme Experience: Katherine will talk about his structured learning journey through Capgemini Invent’s Accelerate Programme, networking and mentorship opportunities, and exposure to high-impact projects.

Project Overview – DESNZ project - building a government website to support the journey towards Net Zero. Helping people to heat their homes by providing advice and helping them apply for government funded schemes.

Tuesday 13:00-14:00, Christa Swain and Jake Carrington, Eden Smith Recruitment: Looking for Your Next Role? Learn How to Stand Out in a Competitive Market

Join Jake Carrington, Head of Practice at Green Talent Solutions, and Christa Swain, Marketing & Operations Director at Eden Smith Group, for an insight-rich, practical session designed to help you Position Yourself for a Successful Hire.

As part of the OR Society’s Careers Week, this one-hour webinar brings together recruitment and personal branding expertise to give you real-world strategies that make an impact. Whether you’re actively job hunting or planning your next career move, this double feature is packed with actionable advice - plus a live Q&A to get your burning questions answered.

✔ **Key Takeaways:**

- How to **position yourself effectively** to catch a hiring manager’s eye
- Tips to **optimise your CV and LinkedIn profile**
- Personal branding strategies that reflect your **authentic self**
- **Job search techniques** that actually work

Tuesday 14:00- 14:45 Ciaran Fitzsimons, National Audit Office: Early career journey in Data Analytics as a Data Science Intern and later a Data Analyst at the National Audit Office

This talk will share Ciaran’s early career journey in Data Analytics as a Data Science Intern and later a Data Analyst at the National Audit Office (NAO). Ciaran will discuss how he built a portfolio of technical skills from a beginner’s starting point, working on projects ranging from exploratory analysis to predictive modelling. Along the way, Ciaran will highlight key challenges I encountered and the problem-solving approaches he developed—many of which still guide him through work today.

Wednesday 10:00-10:45 – Mithu Norri, GORS: A career in GORS, an introduction to the Government Operational Research Services, and how you can grow your career in the civil service!

The Government Operational Research Service (GORS) supports and champions Operational Research across central government. GORS currently supports policymaking, strategy and operations in over 30 different government departments and agencies across the UK and has over 1,400 analysts ranging from sandwich students through to members of the Senior Civil Service. This session will outline the various routes open to graduates wishing to join GORS, give you a flavour of what it's like working as an OR analyst in government and there will be some time for Q&A. We look forward to meeting you.

Wednesday 11:00-11:45 – Matthew Bunn, Catalyze Consulting: A flavour of what it's like working as an analyst in and for government in both the public and private sectors.

Matt Bunn is an Operational Research professional with approaching 20 years' experience working in the Defence sector.

Wednesday 12:00- 12:30 -Paul Syms, DSTL: How to progress your career in DSTL-36 years in defence OR

As an overview, Paul joined what's now Dstl in 1989, and has done a variety of projects and roles, which he'll outline in his talk. Ten years or so ago, he moved into historical analysis, which is the branch of defence OR where they analyse trends in past conflicts, and which is what Paul now does. Paul will outline some of the aspects of his work, what he thinks are important, and how his formal qualifications are still relevant today.

Wednesday 12.30 – 13:00 Michael Mortenson, Warwick Business School: AI and the Data Professions: Building a career in the age of automation

Dr Michael Mortenson is the incoming Course Director for the MSc in Business Analytics at Warwick Business School and a lead academic at the Gillmore Centre for Financial Technology. He holds a PhD in Analytics and an MSc in eBusiness. His specialisms include natural language processing, computer vision, Bayesian methods and data engineering. Alongside his academic work he has significant practical experience working on data science, AI and digital transformation projects for companies such as Amazon Web Services, Vodafone and Newcastle Airport.

Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT are creating significant uncertainty for new graduates in the data professions, simultaneously suppressing the entry-level job market in the short term while also creating new long-term opportunities. This talk will provide a practical analysis of how Generative AI is fundamentally re-engineering the analytics lifecycle - automating routine technical tasks in data preparation, modelling and implementation. While this shift poses a direct challenge to traditional entry-level roles, it creates a powerful new opening for professionals who are deeply skilled in both their core discipline and the effective use of these tools. The conclusion is that graduates who can act as 'AI-collaborators', focusing on problem formulation, model validation and verification, and strategic interpretation, will be positioned to make a significant impact in industry.

Wednesday 13:00- 13:30 – Mohammad Mesgarpour, Microlise: Transferrable skills you can take from University into the Workplace! - How do you turn years of academic skills into a successful career?

Mohammad, with a PhD in Operational Research and extensive industry experience in Operational Research, Data Science, Artificial Intelligence and Analytics, shares his personal journey and insights on translating academic skills into practical solutions that create real impact.

Packed with examples, lessons learned and career tips, this talk is designed to guide you from university to a successful professional path.

Wednesday 13:30-14:00 – Prateep Aitha, Anyvan: Shaping the Future: Becoming a Successful OR Practitioner in the LLM Era

Large Language Models (LLMs) are beginning to influence how Operations Research (OR) problems are framed, explored, and communicated. To thrive in this new era, students must shift their mindset from purely technical execution to combining analytical rigor with creative problem formulation, critical thinking, and deep domain insight. This talk will highlight how LLMs can complement optimization, simulation, and decision-support tools, while also pointing out their limitations. We'll explore the irreplaceable skills for the next few years—such as mathematical modelling, abstraction, judgment under uncertainty, and architecting solutions for ambiguous situations—that remain central to OR practice. By the end, students will understand how to leverage LLMs as accelerators, while focusing on building the skills that make them indispensable as future OR professionals.

Thursday 11:00-11:45 – Gilbert Owusu, Consultant and former President of the OR Society: Finding your career in industry, in Data Science, OR and Analytics.

This will be an open Q & A discussion with Gilbert, providing key advice on careers.

Thursday 12:00 – 12:30 Huw James, AtkinsRealis: Early careers at AtkinsRéalis, through its structured graduate programmes

This presentation introduces OR students to the early career opportunities available at AtkinsRéalis through its structured graduate programmes. It outlines the sectors where the company operates—such as transportation, defence, energy, and infrastructure—and showcases how operations research contributes to high-impact projects.

Attendees will gain insight into the graduate programme structure, including training modules, mentoring, and professional development support. The talk also covers application steps, benefits, and the company’s inclusive culture, aiming to equip attendees with a clear understanding of how to begin their careers in a global consulting environment.

Thursday 12:30-13:00 Ideja Bajra, Edvance AI: Scaling a Business After Graduation: Lessons from Building Edvance AI

In this session, Ideja Bajra, Founder of Edvance AI, will share her journey of growing a company from its roots at university into an AI consultancy working with leading organisations. Drawing on first-hand experience of launching a business during her degree and transitioning it into the professional world, she will outline the key challenges and opportunities of scaling post-graduation.

Attendees will gain practical insights into making the leap from student founder to professional entrepreneur, building credibility and trust with clients as a recent graduate, structuring operations and partnerships for sustainable growth and leveraging university networks and experiences to accelerate scale.

This 30-minute talk will provide students, graduates, and early-career professionals with actionable strategies to approach entrepreneurship beyond academia, while highlighting the realities of balancing ambition with execution.

Thursday 13:00- 13:30 Matthew Gilbert, AtkinsRealis: Working in a worldwide business

This presentation introduces AtkinsRéalis as a global consulting firm and explores how OR graduates can build impactful careers within it. It highlights the company’s international reach, core values, and the role of OR in solving complex problems like investment assessment and schedule optimisation.

Attendees will learn about career progression through structured development stages—Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced—and how global projects and professional schemes support growth. The aim is to allow attendees to consider how a career in industry might look by showing how their skills can drive real-world change.

Thursday 13:30 – 14:00 Samantha Bremner, Aegon: Driving Social Inclusion Through Aegon’s Summer Internship Programme

This session highlights how Aegon’s Summer Internship programme is being used as a strategic tool to promote social inclusion and create pathways into financial services for individuals who may face structural or socioeconomic barriers to employment

Thursday 14:00-14:30, Stefano Cipolla, University of Southampton: Maximising Impact: Industry-Academic Collaboration from MSc to Consultancy

Overview TBC

Thursday 14:30- 15:15 – Dave Williams of Dave Williams Coaching, Stefano Cipolla of Southampton University, Sathujan Manmatharajah of National Audit Office, Mithu Norris from GORS

We will be running a final panel session with four of our presenters to provide their final tips for growing your career and standing out in the market. We will cover angles across academia, industry and the government – don’t miss this last session and the key takeaways.