What Can I Do With My BSc?

This document was created by the Centre for Career Development. For further support, go to CareerHub or book an online or in person appointment to talk with a Career Advisor. It is designed to help you reflect on your skills and values, explore career paths, learn about the labour market and take your next step forward.

Step 1: What does 'career' mean?

Reflection: Take a moment to reflect on what you think you can do with your BSc? What do you want to be? Write any careers or job titles that come to mind. Use the space below to write as needed.

Step 2: What do I find purposeful?

Shift your thinking from *"What job title do I want?"* to *"What problems do I want to help solve?"* Your degree can open doors to many different careers. Instead of starting with a job title, think about the issues, challenges, or changes you would find meaningful to work on.

Activity: Using the space below write down ideas of what problems you want to solve.

Need ideas? Use SparkPath (code: SparkChallenge799) to explore different challenges or see examples below:

- Improving access to healthcare & mental health support
- Protecting the environment & addressing climate change
- Making scientific discoveries that improve people's lives
- Tackling food insecurity & improving food systems
- Making technology safer, more accessible, & more ethical
- Reducing health inequalities & improving community well-being
- Helping people understand & use scientific information
- Developing solutions to problems we haven't solved yet

***Note**: These are just starting points. You don't have to solve a scientific problem directly to make a difference. Your science background can help you tackle challenges in business, policy, education, technology, and many other areas.*

Step 3: What do I enjoy? What is important to me?

Understanding what you enjoy and what matters to you can help you identify work that feels meaningful and motivating. Think beyond your degree and consider what naturally interests you, how you like to spend your time, and what you value.

Activity: Mind mapping. Using the space below write down some things you enjoy and what is important to you.

Reflection prompts:

- What activities do you choose to engage in?
- How do you choose to spend your time, money, and energy?
- What are some of your favourite courses, and what did you enjoy about them?
- What topics do you find yourself curious about?

Examples: Organizing things, video games, animal biology, talking with people, work/life balance, being outside, variety

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Step 4: What are my skills?

Think about the skills you've developed through your BSc and other experiences like coursework, labs, paid work, volunteering, extracurricular activities, or other life experiences. Think about both technical skills and transferable skills. You likely have more skills than you realize, and many of them can be applied across different careers and industries.

Activity: Using the space below, jot down as many answers as possible to the question: What skills do I have?

Areas Skills can Come from	What You Did	Skills Demonstrated
Your degree	*Skills developed throughout your BSc, including through related degrees, minors, or specializations*	*Critical thinking and problem-solving, research and experimental design, laboratory techniques and procedures, data analysis and interpretation, time management and organization, scientific writing and communication, modelling and interpreting scientific results*
Specific course or project work example	*Biol 354: Used micropipettes, prepared serial dilutions, followed lab protocols*	*Attention to detail, technical lab skills, following protocols, data accuracy, time management*

Step 5: What career options exist?

Careers are rarely linear! Your first job doesn't have to determine your entire career, and your BSc can open doors to many different fields. The skills you develop through your degree and other experiences can transfer across industries, creating opportunities you may not have considered.

Activity for after this session: Spend some time exploring career paths that are possible with a BSc. Look beyond familiar job titles and discover how people with science degrees have built their careers.

Tips for exploring career pathways:

- Explore LinkedIn: Use the LinkedIn Alumni Search tool to discover what graduates from your program are doing.
- Talk to people: Ask friends, family, and upper-year students about their career journeys and experiences.
- Ask questions: Talk to your TAs and course instructors about their career paths and the opportunities available in your field.
- Connect with a career advisor: Book an appointment through University of Waterloo Career Development to explore your options.

Step 6: Where can I find more information?

The Occupational and Skills Information System (OaSIS) is fantastic tool to find detailed descriptions of various career options based on Canadian labour market data.

Remember*: This list is non-exhaustive. If you have trouble finding a job title, try using a synonym or using a core word to describe the work you're interested in. For example, instead of searching for "mental health support specialist", try searching "mental health support". Since OaSIS pulls information from Canadian labour market data, careers are grouped into more general categories.

Activity: Choose a job title/knowledge type and search for it on OASIS. Review the following sections: Overview, Work Characteristics, and Employment Requirements. Write down your answers to the following:

- How does the description (e.g. work activities/main duties/work context) align (or not align) with my values and interests? What do I notice about the schooling required?

Step 7: What's my next step?

Activity: Consider the possible next steps that we've listed or come up with one of your own! Use the space below to write down the answer to this question: What is one **small step** I can take to learn more about what I can/want to do with my BSc?