

Careers Factsheet

Starting your own business

Issues to consider

Are you prepared to take the required risks to get these potential benefits?

	Benefits	Risks
Potential to be in control of your income.	Instead of having a fixed monthly wage, your income is dependent on the performance of your business. So the more successful it is, the more you could earn.	Competition, economic fluctuations, changing tastes and personal illness all impact on the income you may receive from your business. When you start out, you may not be earning anything at all for a while. In order to pay your day-to-day living expenses, you might need to support yourself another way until your business starts generating income.
Freedom to be your own boss.	Choosing your own projects, doing it your way and doing what you are passionate about can be hugely rewarding and offer great job satisfaction.	Running your own business can be very stressful if there are unforeseen expenses and problems. You are ultimately responsible for your success.
Choosing your hours and place of work.	You are more in control of your working hours and the environment you choose to work in.	The hours you work will often be dictated by customer demand and at busy times they may increase dramatically. Working for yourself means being responsible for the day-to-day running of your business, including tasks you may not enjoy.
Receiving tax benefits.	Expenses incurred in setting up and running your own business are tax deductible.	To get tax benefits, you usually need to pay out money first - and pay an accountant. You'll also have to make your own pension and health insurance arrangements.

Getting started

The checklist below is designed to remind you of the key points and actions you need to consider *before* becoming self-employed.

The Business

- What are your reasons for becoming self-employed?
- How feasible is your idea and why?
- What is the unique selling point of your business?
- What knowledge, skills and qualifications are needed in your chosen sector?
- How will you keep your knowledge, skills and qualifications up to date?
- How do you intend to grow the business?

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Your research

- Which areas of research will you need to tackle first?
- Where, specifically, will you find the information? (**Button 3 for research links**)
- Desk research only goes so far, who should you talk to and network with?
- Who will you need to help you - inside and outside the business?
- Which professional organisations and associations should you register with?

Funding

- How much money will you need to start the business?
- What resources and equipment will be required?
- What IT facilities will be necessary?
- Where will you be based and what will this cost?
- Which sources of funding will you target first?
- How will you support yourself while starting up the business?

Marketing

- Look closely at two competitors. What can you learn from them?
- Where can you network?
- List five outlets for your product or service.
- What's a competitive price for your product or service?
- Which three promotional methods will best suit your business?

Practicalities

- What type of business will you run, e.g. sole trader?
- What is your company name and how will you protect this and your idea?
- What mandatory regulations must you follow?
- Have you found out how to pay income tax and National Insurance?
- Have you found out about pensions and healthcare?
- What about IT and the potential of e-commerce?

How Cranfield can help

Bettany Centre for Entrepreneurship

The Bettany Centre was established in 2003 building on an existing track record of the [Business Growth and Development Programme \(BGP\)](#) which was first established in 1988. The BGP has an amazing list of alumni who have benefitted from the particular ecosystem and approach to business and management at Cranfield, bringing academic insights with practitioner action. The Centre has an enviable track record of research and will build on this to:

- Continue with research insights in entrepreneurship
- Develop opportunities for new venture creation by students and staff
- Support the commercialisation of research at Cranfield
- Provide thought leadership and insights to policy makers
- Expand the provision of the Business Growth and Development Programme suite of courses and provide innovation in entrepreneurship education through its role on Graduate Programmes at Cranfield.

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Find out more about [The Bettany Centre here](#).

Cranfield University Business Incubation Centre (CUBIC)

Our business incubation centre, CUBIC, encourages and supports hi-tech and knowledge based pre-start and early start companies during the formative stages of their development.

To take advantage of what CUBIC has to offer, all we ask is that your company:

- Has not yet achieved an annual turnover in excess of £50,000.
- Has an innovative concept which is knowledge and/or technology-based.
- Promises high-growth potential.

By choosing CUBIC you will be rent-free for the first six months. You will also be entitled to a range of other benefits including business advice and guidance from the CUBIC Advisory Board, access to funding and advice on preparing bids, continued access to Cranfield's academic staff, networking opportunities and events; and an introduction to the local Chamber of Commerce.

(Please note that if you are an international student wishing to set up a business in the UK, you can apply for a [Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneurial Visa](#).)

MIRC (Building 111) and Kings Norton Library (B55)

Whilst you are still a student at the University, you can use the MIRC and Kings Norton Library to find out about the possible market for your potential product. Have a look at market reports on our **Mintel** and **Marketline** databases, **IBISWorld** and **BMI Research**. You can also use **FAME** and **Thomson One** to get background information on existing companies and their financials. *A full list of resources and links can be found on the careers intranet hub: Job Hunting button, Subscription resources tab.*

[Bookboon](#) is a freely available site that enables you to download copies of books free of charge. It covers books in the areas of careers and business that you might find useful such as [Making the Business Case](#) and [Essentials of Marketing](#).

Useful Links

Government help

[Business and self-employed](#)

Provided by gov.uk, this site provides detailed advice about how to set up a business and register for self-assessment. It also helps you to find government-backed support and finance tailored for your new business including grants and funding.

[Starting a business](#)

Part of the HM Revenue and Customs website, this page offers step by step guidance on what you need to do for tax and National Insurance purposes when you start up a business as a self-employed person, a partnership or a limited company. You will also find links to additional help and support HMRC offer new businesses.

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[Business support helplines](#)

Telephone numbers for a range of government helplines that can answer questions about starting and running a business, such as how to write a business plan.

[Start-up loans](#)

Find funding for starting up a business. This is the Government's site and is backed by James Caan (from The Dragon's Den TV series).

[Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme](#)

If you are an international student wishing to set up a business in the UK, you can apply for a Tier 1 Entrepreneur Visa.

Other useful links

[Start-ups: 10 steps to starting a business](#)

This site provides a wealth of information to get you started and covers every aspect of setting up your own business. It also offers profiles of success stories and how to grow your company once it has become established.

[The Open University careers site](#)

The site offers clear information on self-employment, types of businesses, social enterprise and consultancy.

[The Prince's Trust](#)

The Trust provides grants as well as help and advice to budding entrepreneurs between 18 and 30 years of age.

[Bplans.co.uk](#)

Free sample UK business plans, advice and interactive tools.