

# Don't finish your career before it starts

Lying on a job application can have serious consequences for your future!



## You've worked hard

You've taken out thousands of pounds in student loans to invest in your future. You've worked incredibly hard for years: writing essays, preparing presentations and revising for exams. You've sacrificed nights out and lie-ins to get your results. Now you're holding your degree, and a bright future awaits you.

## Don't ruin it now

Your dream job asks for a 2:1, but you've got a 2:2 – so you just make a little change on your CV. You're worried you don't have enough work experience – so you pretend your summer of trekking through Nepal was actually spent working at a local solicitor's firm. After all, no one really checks, right? It's just a little white lie, right?

## Wrong!

If employers are one of hundreds of members of Cifas - The UK's Fraud Prevention Service, then they are able to record details of those who provide false applications to the Cifas Enhanced Internal Fraud Database.

This database is available to all other employers and organisations that are Cifas members. That means that if you get caught making a false job application (regardless of whether you are offered the job or not) your details are on the system for six years. During this time, any job application you make could be searched against the database and potential employers will know that you lied on a previous job application.

*A former substitute teacher was jailed for 12 weeks for lying about his qualifications for the job. He had been hired by a school as a full-time temporary supply teacher after submitting an application that said he held a Master's degree with a certificate and academic transcript. The university confirmed that it had never issued him with such a certificate and then the teacher turned himself in at the police station 11 days later, admitting he had bought it online.*



## Think you won't get caught? Think again

- Your application contains your personal details, so employers can easily check your background.
- It's easy to check with educational institutions that your qualifications, dates of attendance and grades received are accurate - or that the institution even exists.
- All employers have a legal responsibility to ensure their employees are eligible to work in the UK, and face heavy fines if they don't - so they take this responsibility seriously.
- If you lie about any pending court cases or existing convictions, these are revealed through a criminal records check.
- Increased media attention around employment fraud means that pre-employment checks are high on employers' agendas.

## There are serious consequences

- You may destroy your chances of gaining an interview for this or any other job for a long time.
- You're demonstrating that you're dishonest to a potential employer.
- Even if you succeed in getting the job, you are at constant risk of being found out and dismissed at any time.
- If you commit fraud, there is a real risk that you will be prosecuted.
- If you are prosecuted and your case hits the headlines, it will be public knowledge and be revealed every time someone searches your name.
- If you are not a UK national, you may risk being denied, or have taken away, your permission to stay in the country as a result of criminal proceedings.

*A young woman was jailed for six months for lying on her CV. She wrongly claimed to have two A-levels and made up false references. Suspicions had been raised about her performance and, when challenged by her bosses, she admitted she had lied. She began embellishing her CV after she applied for several jobs but was unsuccessful in gaining employment. She claimed that she had no idea that this type of misrepresentation could lead to imprisonment.*



## Think you don't have a chance at getting a job? Think again

- Read the application form carefully. For example, minor offences or 'spent' convictions may not have to be disclosed.
- Sticking to the truth increases your chances of a long-term successful career.
- Maintaining a lie is very hard work - harder than telling the truth - and you can find yourself caught in a spiral of further lies as you try to cover your back.
- You can focus on the relevant skills and experience that you do have, which might be exactly what a potential employer is looking for.
- If you lie about having a particular skill, no one will think to give you training for it - and you'll never get to learn it!
- If you do feel that your CV needs something extra, it's not just about paid work. Many graduates learn valuable employment skills through voluntary work or skills gained through their studies, such as project management and research.
- By being truthful, you'll keep your integrity and start your new job with confidence - which is essential for career success.

*Background checks are a crucial part of the recruitment process and could prove the difference between getting that dream job and not.*

*This could be Cifas checks, reference verification, CV validation and even what you're posting on social media.*

*Employers are looking for candidates with the right attitude so it's important that you always present a true version of yourself.*

***Dr Nikki Grieve-Top,  
Cifas Advisory Board  
Member***

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