

Student Career Clarity Reset

A 20-minute exercise to help you figure out
your direction.

FOR STUDENTS, INTERNS, AND EARLY-CAREER
PROFESSIONALS

BASED ON THE METHODOLOGY FROM OWN YOUR
CAREER INSIDE
OUT

By Janine Hugo, Accredited Executive Coach



This is your starting point.

You do not need to have everything figured out. You just need a clearer next step.

Whether you are a student trying to choose a direction, an intern wondering if this field is right for you, or a graduate stepping into the world of work — clarity is your most important first move.

Not certainty. Clarity.

Your True North is not a fixed destination. It is a direction you can recalibrate as you grow, learn, and evolve. This guide helps you start finding it.

This is a simple way to make sense of where you are. In the next 20 minutes, you will:

- Identify what genuinely energises and engages you
- Name what is draining you or pulling you off course
- Spot patterns in your strengths, values, and interests
- Define what matters most to you right now
- Choose one clear next step

This is the first stage of the Clarity → Positioning → Action framework from *Own Your Career Inside Out* by Janine Hugo.

Your True North is the direction that connects what you are good at, what matters to you, and where you want to go.

01 What Makes You Come Alive?

Start with what feels most natural, energising, and true to you.

Think about your studies, projects, assignments, internships, volunteering, sport, societies, or any experience where you felt fully engaged. Notice what drew you in, what held your attention, and what felt most like you.

- What subjects, topics, or types of work make you genuinely curious?
- When do you lose track of time because you are fully engaged?
- What problems do you love thinking about?
- What kind of day would make you leap out of bed in the morning?
- When have you felt most like yourself in a work or study environment?
- Who or what energises you?

Your notes (capture what stands out):

02 What Is Not Working?

Name what drains you, without judgment.

This is not about being negative. It is about honest awareness. When you can name what depletes you, you stop investing energy in directions that do not fit.

- What tasks or environments leave you feeling drained or flat?
- What have you done out of obligation rather than interest?
- Where are you performing well but feeling disconnected?
- What subjects, placements, or roles have felt misaligned?
- Are there expectations from others, parents, peers, or society, pulling you away from your own direction?

Your notes (capture what stands out):

03 Patterns to Notice

Look for the patterns that reveal where your True North may already be pointing.

Patterns are signals. They show you what keeps returning across your experiences, what others notice in you, and what you naturally move toward.

- What do people most often ask you to help with or notice about you?
- What feedback have you received that keeps repeating?
- What skills show up across very different situations, in study, projects, sport, or conversation?
- What do you naturally gravitate towards, even without external pressure?
- Looking at Steps 1 and 2 together, what patterns do you notice?

Your notes (capture what stands out):

Patterns are your data. They are not random. The strengths that show up across many different situations are often the ones most worth building on.

04 What Matters Now?

Focus on what feels aligned for you now and in the near future.

This step is about present alignment. Instead of choosing based on pressure or assumptions, choose based on what feels more honest, sustainable, and true for this season.

- What do you want your work to feel like now and in the near future?
- What kind of environment do you want to work in, fast-paced, collaborative, creative, structured, independent, global, or local?
- What kind of contribution matters to you, and what impact do you want your work to have?
- What are you no longer willing to compromise on?
- Does the direction you are currently heading still feel true?

Your notes (capture what stands out):

Clarity at this stage is not about having all the answers. It is about knowing enough to take the next right step with intention.

05 One Clear Action

Look for what keeps showing up — it is trying to tell you something.

Clarity grows through action. Small steps create momentum.

- Book an informational conversation with someone in a direction you are curious about
- Update your CV or LinkedIn with the strengths and experiences you identified
- Write three things you want from your next role, internship, or opportunity
- Reach out to a mentor, coach, or career advisor for a single focused conversation
- Research one or two organisations whose values align with what emerged in Step 3
- Write a short sentence describing the direction you want to move towards

"Clarity is not a destination. It is a practice. You have already started."

My one clear action is:

I will do this by (date): _____

Ready to Go Deeper?

You now have clarity. The next step is turning that into real opportunities.

The Clarity → Positioning → Action framework from **Own Your Career Inside Out** continues beyond this worksheet.

- **Clarity:** helps you reconnect with what matters, what you are good at, and what you want.
- **Positioning:** translates that clarity into a consistent story across your CV, LinkedIn, applications, and conversations.
- **Action:** means applying, networking, interviewing, and making decisions with intention.

Use Janine AI to work through this step by step and apply it to your situation.

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Author of **Own Your Career Inside Out**
Supporting professionals and early-career
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