



The student
& graduate

TEMP CHECK

2023

Careerpass
Network

graduatejobs.com

 GRADTOUCH

kaampus

AN INTRO -DUCTION

Having launched the 1st annual temperature check in 2022, we were always excited to survey students and graduates this year to understand the changes and consistencies in the opinions and experiences year on year.

With a number of societal shifts impacting students such as the pandemic and their studies, the cost of living, and changes to the world of work, it's reassuring that initial career confidence has seen a large 30% uplift in candidates believing that they will secure their dream job. The trade-off however is that students are expecting a higher starting salary from last year with the median expectation rising from £20k-£25k to £25k-£30k.

Other initial clear trends are a large downward shift in candidates considering employment outside of the UK, the rise in candidates accepting multiple job offers (and subsequently turning them down) and a huge rise in the fear that their skills will hold them back when they enter the workplace.

Please read on for more ways to better understand the thoughts and feelings of the current University cohort.

Chris May
Managing Director of the
Careerpass Network

Methodology

Throughout April 2023, we surveyed over 1,000 UK university students and graduates to learn about their experiences with assessment centres, their preferences when it comes to engaging with employers, and how employers can update their practices to better suit the next generation of talent.

Note: Percentages are rounded and may not always equal 100. 'When compared to last year' indicates results compared to our 2022 Temperature Check.

1,003

students and
graduates surveyed

148
UK universities
represented

35%
in the class of 2023

59%
identified as female

20%
attend Russell
Group universities

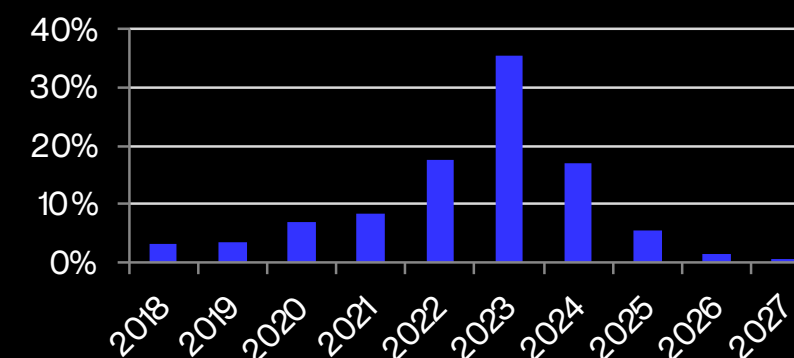
64%
are still studying

31%
are studying a
STEM degree

39%
identified as male

2%
identified as non-binay

Graduation year



CONTENTS

1.

Career confidence in students and graduates

- a. What skills you can expect from graduates
- b. What they're worried will hold them back
- c. How confidence is on the rise
- d. Their work experience

2.

The job search

- e. Where they want to work
- f. What sectors they want to work in
- g. How are they searching
- h. Rethink how you advertise your roles

3.

What do students and graduates want from employers?

- i. What they want to see whilst at university
- j. What they want to see when searching for roles
- k. The benefits they want to see
- l. The death of the £20k starting salary
- m. Employer turn-ons
- n. Employer turn-offs
- o. What 2023 students are prioritising

4.

Final thoughts

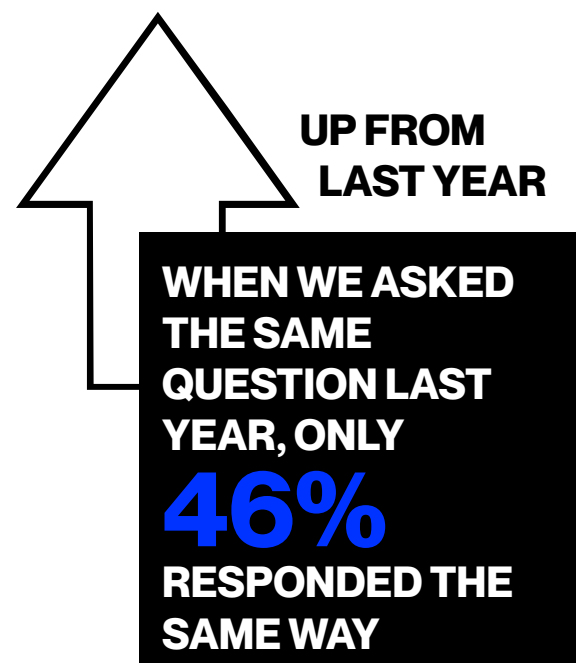
1.

CAREER CONFIDENCE IN STUDENTS & GRADUATES

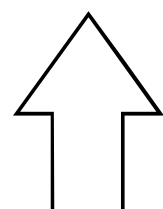
A look at how confident students and graduates feel about entering the graduate jobs market, beginning their job search, and the experience they have.

60%

of students & graduates feel confident about securing their dream job



Confidence is on the UP



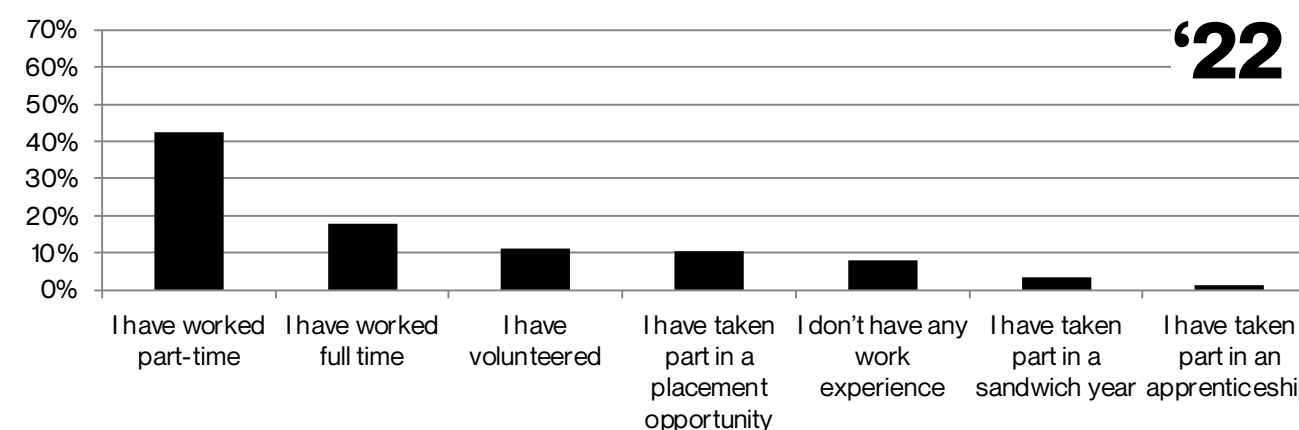
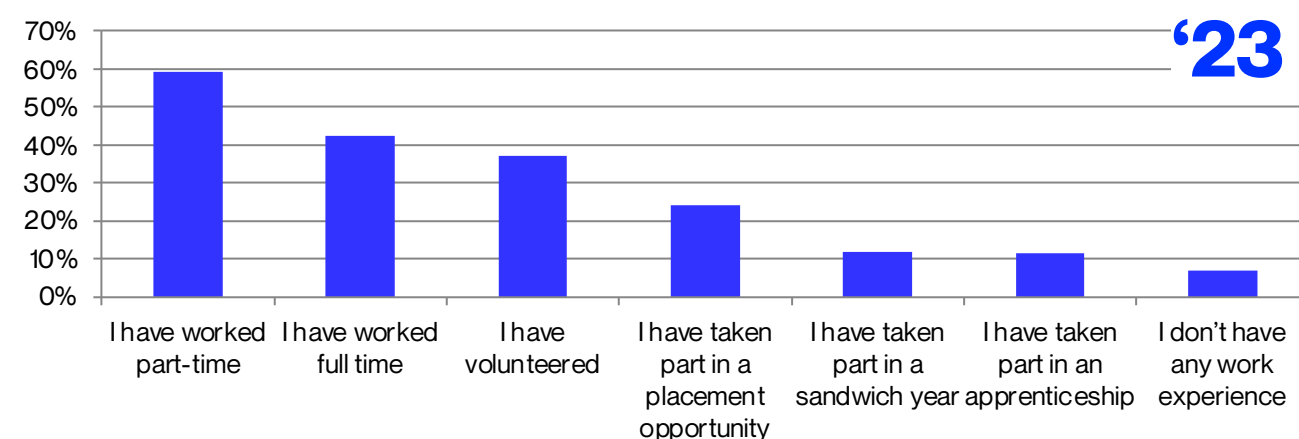
Only 1 in 10 2023 graduates are worried that their lack of confidence will hold them back when trying to secure a graduate job. This is compared to a result of 5 in 10 last year.

68% of students and graduates feel confident about entering the workplace in general, compared to 59% in last year's results.

CAREER CONFIDENCE INCREASE BY GENDER

	2022	2023
Men	45%	68%
Women	48%	51%

The work experience they already have



This year's respondents have significantly more experience than those surveyed last year.

This could explain the increased confidence in entering the graduate jobs market, with 60% of students & graduates surveyed feeling confident in securing their dream job, compared to just 46% of respondents last year.

59% have worked part-time vs 43% in 2022

43% have worked full-time vs 18% in 2022

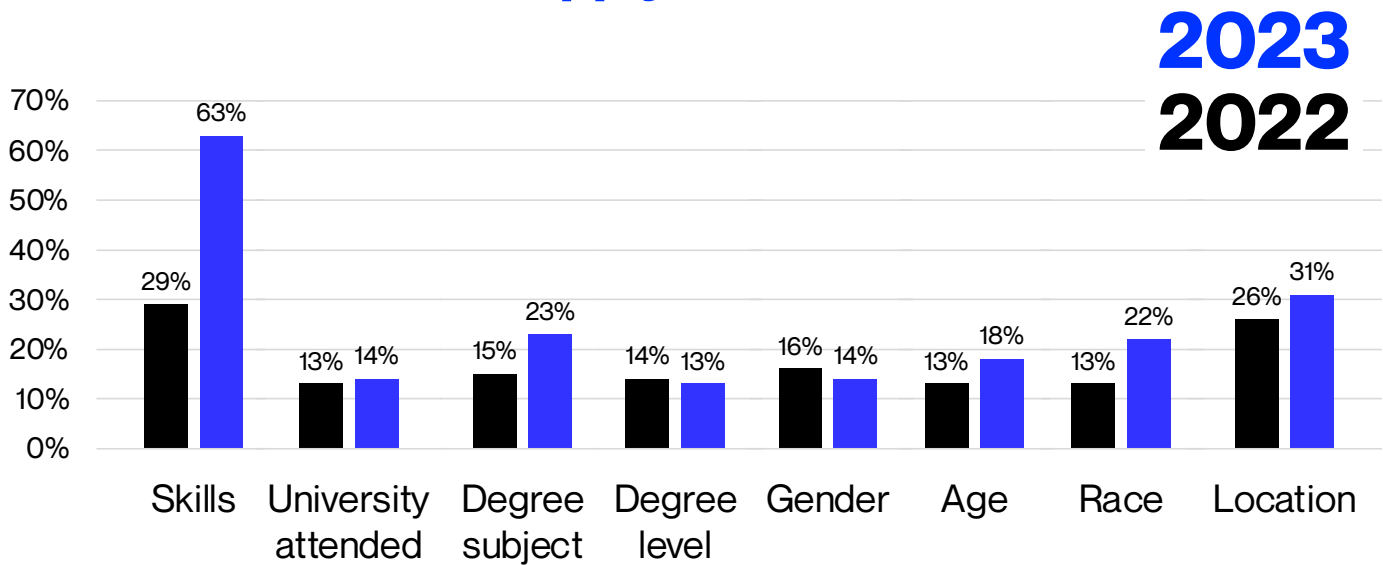
37% have volunteered vs 11% in 2022

What they're worried will hold them back

2023's students & graduates have a much lower opinion of their skillset than class of 2022, with more (63% vs 29%) worried that their skills will hold them back during the graduate job hunt.

Other clear disparities include degree subject and race, where the number of students & graduates worried this would hold them back has almost doubled from 2022 to 2023 (13% to 22%).

We asked: Do you think any of the below may hold you back during your graduate job hunt?
Please select all that apply



During a previous survey to understand the digital footprint of students, we found that 33% of students looked for diversity & inclusion in a potential employer's socials.

This could be a sign that while many employers are striving to increase diversity when hiring for roles, there is still not enough being done.

What skills to expect from graduates

Students rated their communication as their weakest soft skill (32% of respondents ranked it 1/10), and emotional intelligence as their strongest skill (34% of respondents ranked it 10/10).

We asked: Please rate your following soft skills from strongest to weakest.

1 = highest

10 = lowest.

Skill	2022 Ranking	2023 Ranking
Emotional intelligence	2	1
Analytical	1	2
Resilience	3	3
Negotiation	5	4
Continual learning	4	5
Flexibility / adaptability	6	6
Leadership	7	7
Problem solving	8	8
Teamwork	9	9
Communication	10	10



2.

THE JOB SEARCH

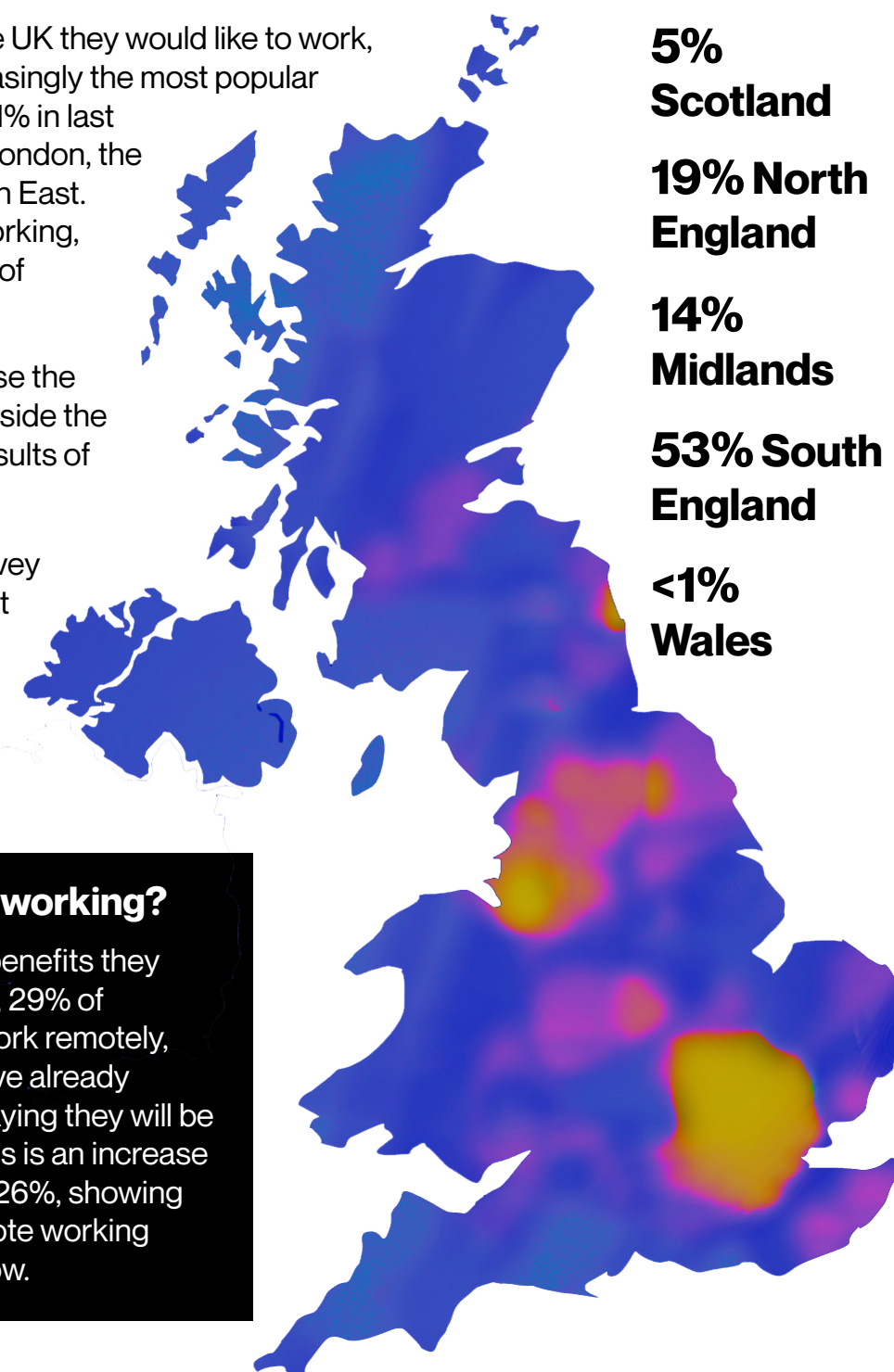
We asked students and graduates what platforms they're using for their graduate job search, what sectors appeal most, and where they want to work.

Where they're looking to work

When asked where within the UK they would like to work, working in the South is increasingly the most popular option, at 53% and up from 41% in last year's survey. This includes London, the South, South West, and South East. Despite the rise of remote working, the pull to move to the South of England is ever-increasing.

Only 8% of respondents chose the option of wanting to work outside the UK, a drop from last year's results of 18%.

During our Cost of Living survey earlier this year, we found that 77% of student and graduate respondents agreed that the location they want to work in has been impacted by the rising cost of living.



What about remote working?

When asked about what benefits they want from a graduate role, 29% of respondents wanted to work remotely, with 31% of those who have already secured a graduate job saying they will be working fully remotely. This is an increase from last year's results of 26%, showing that the popularity of remote working positions continues to grow.

Career certainty

46% of students & graduates say they already know what career they are going to apply for.

Over 50% of students & graduates stated they are open to options when it comes to finding graduate roles.

This year, the average number of jobs applied for before securing a graduate role is 32, almost double last year's result of 19.

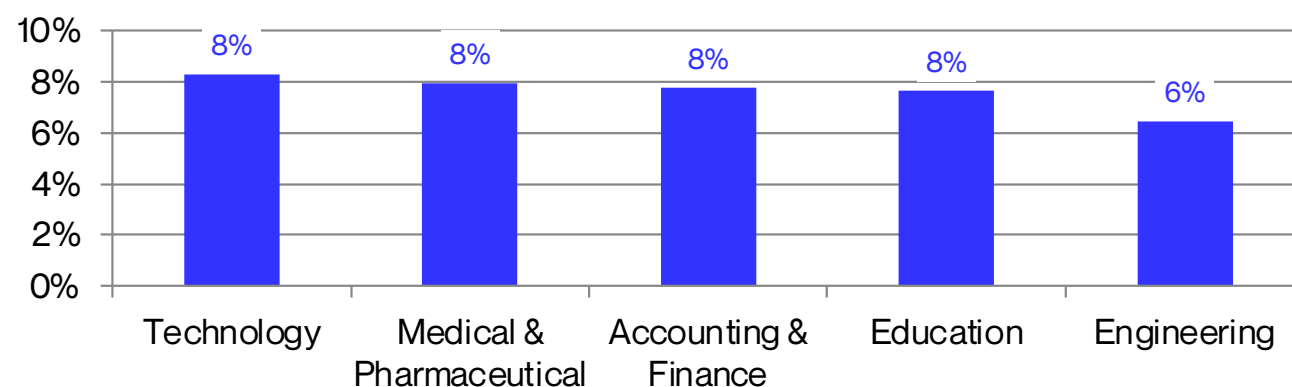
Our Cost of Living research found that 63% of students and graduates surveyed agreed that they have changed which sector they wish to work in with them saying:

36% - "there aren't many opportunities to work in the sector I originally desired"

45% - "salaries are too low in the sector I hoped to work in"

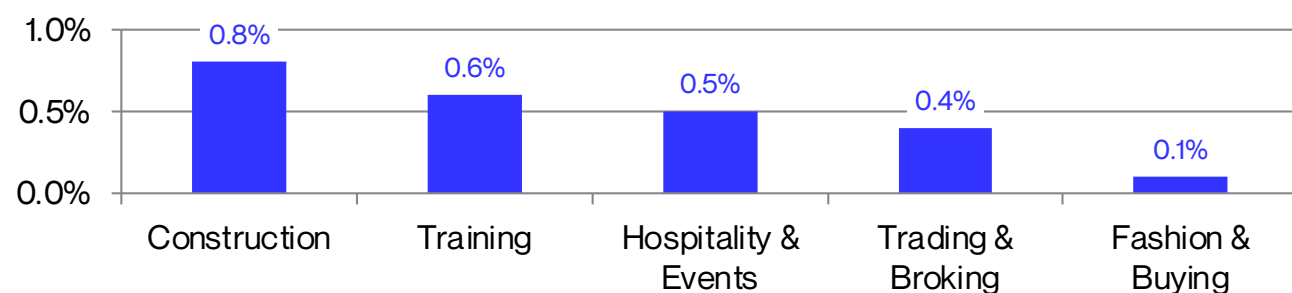
Top 5

The most popular 5 sectors students & graduates want to work in.



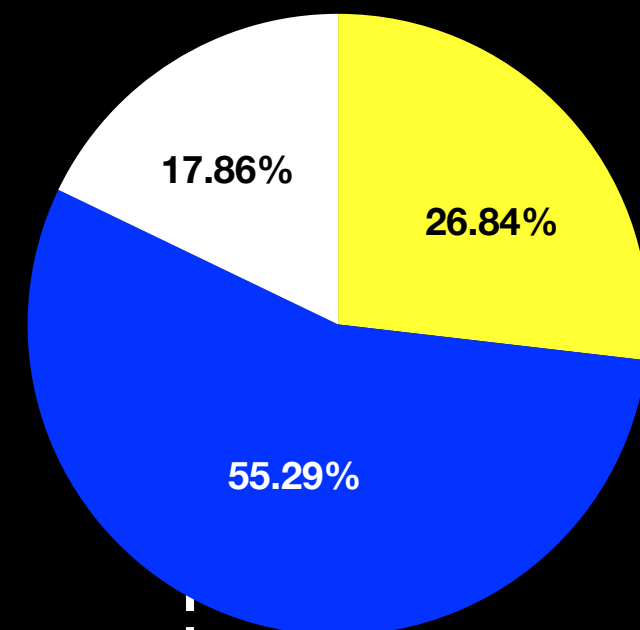
Bottom 5

The least popular 5 sectors students & graduates want to work in.



They're on the ball this year

- **15% of 2023 graduates have already secured a graduate role**
- **63% of 2023 graduates have started searching for graduate jobs**
- **This time last year, 42% of 2022 graduates still hadn't started looking or applying for graduate roles**
- **18% of women haven't started looking for graduate roles yet, compared to 14% of men**
- **Of those graduating this year (2023), 12% of men have secured a graduate job compared to 17% of women**



■ Yes, I have secured a graduate job

■ Yes, I have started searching for a graduate job

■ No, I have not started looking yet



84% use graduate-specific job boards, with 68% saying they find them useful

This is an increase on last year’s results, when 75% of students and graduates were using such boards, with 57% saying they found them useful.

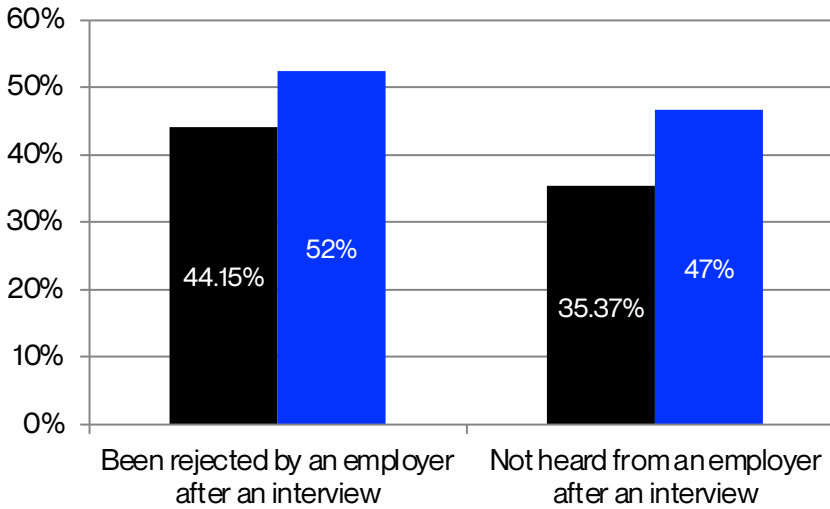
When it comes to more generic methods to search for roles, more students and graduates are using them in 2023 than in 2022, however they are finding them less useful:

Method	2022 Results		2023 Results	
	% use	% found useful	% use	% found useful
LinkedIn	78%	72%	85%	67%
More general jobs boards e.g. Indeed	83%	72%	88%	64%
Friends / family	56%	70%	63%	58%



The steps they’ve taken so far

We asked: Have you experienced any of the following through your graduate job search? Please select all that apply



We asked those who have already secured a graduate job: do you agree or disagree with the following statements...	% agree	
	2022 Results	2023 Results
It's the job I was initially looking for	67%	67%
It's in the sector I was looking to work in	80%	69%
It's in the location I was looking to work in	80%	76%
It's a fully remote position	24%	31%
I turned down other offers for this role	43%	50%
I previously accepted another offer, however turned it down due to accepting a different role	22%	32%

Key points:

- More students & graduates have turned down more offers when accepting roles in 2023 than 2022.
- More students & graduates have secured fully remote positions this year.
- Fewer students & graduates have secured a role in the sector they were looking to work in.
- Research suggests that almost 1 in 3 candidates are renegeing roles.

WHAT DO STUDENTS & GRADUATES

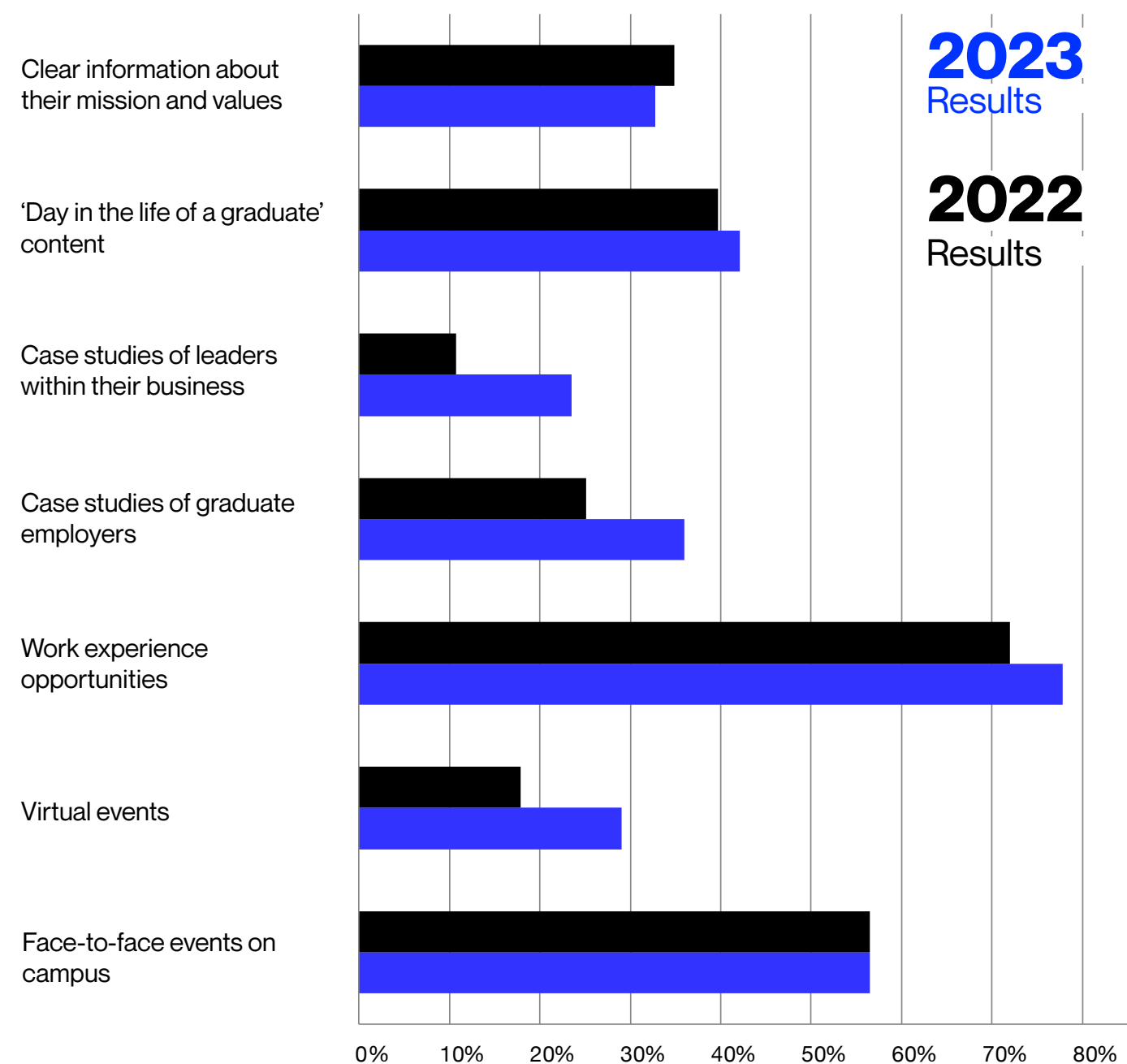
WANT FROM EMPLOYERS?

Insights on what benefits offered by employers students and graduates value most, what they look for when searching for roles, and what difference the salary plays in the graduate job hunt.

3.

What they want to see from employers while searching for roles

We asked: What more would you like to see from employers that would help to attract you to their company? Please select your top three.



What benefits do they want from their future career?

Overall, not a lot has changed when it comes to the benefits students & graduates look for from a role.

Health cover took this year's 3rd place position, which last year was mental health support, chosen by 39% of respondents. This year, the number of respondents who highly valued mental health support dropped to 30%.

This generation could be seen as taking a more holistic approach to their health, considering mental health as something that falls into general health cover, rather than a separate entity.

Flexible working and paid training opportunities still hold their first and second place position, showing that students are still keen to develop skills and prove their adaptability, and continue the trend of remote roles.

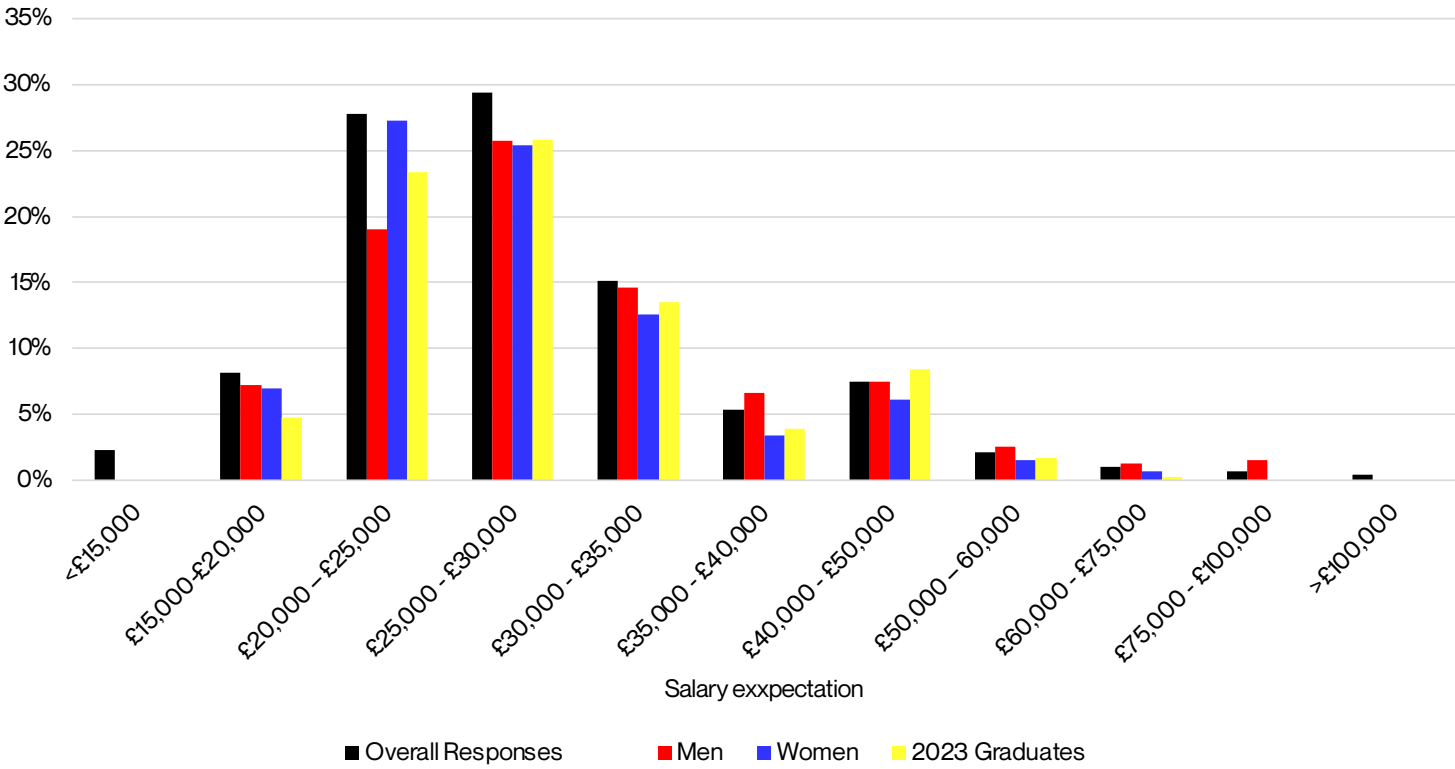
We asked respondents to rank the top three benefits they want from an employer.

Benefit	2022 Ranking	2023 Ranking
Flexible working	1	1
Paid training opportunities	2	2
Health cover	4	3
Mental health support	3	4
Remote working	5	5
Social events	6	6
Life insurance	8	7
Dental cover	10	8
Subsidised gym membership	9	9
Free food / drink	7	10

The death of the £20k starting salary

What they want to be paid

We asked: What are your salary expectations for your first graduate job?



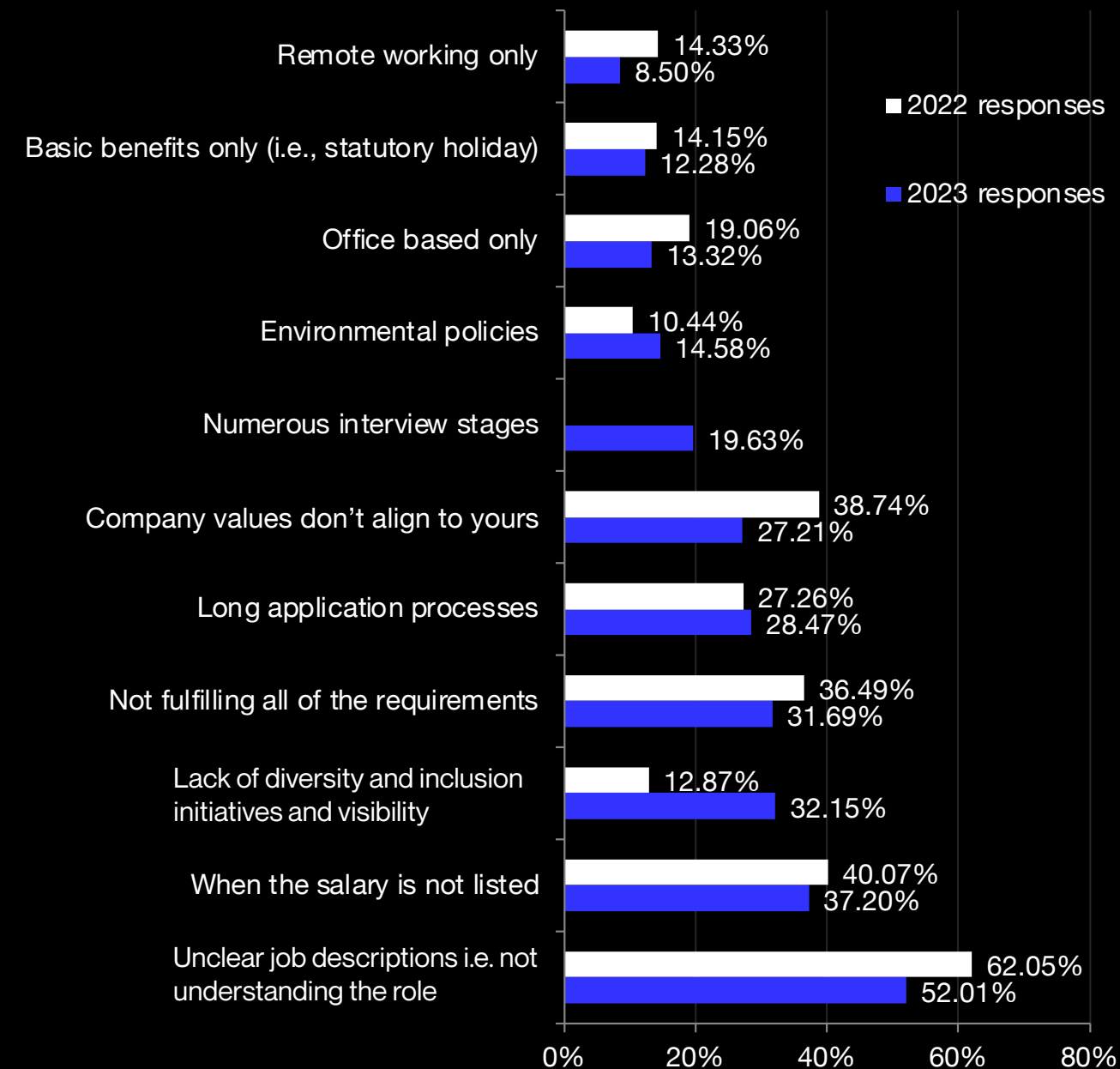
With over 62% of 2023 graduates saying they are drawn to an employer by salary offered, employers should expect to offer salaries of £25-to-£30k as the majority (26%) of 2023 grads are expecting to earn this.

This is an increase from 2022's results, when most students and graduates (34%) expected to earn £20-to-£25k when starting a role.

This is in line with our Cost of Living research, which found that 88% of students and graduates are concerned their future careers are going to be impacted by the cost of living, and 51% expecting to earn over £25,000 upon graduation.

What turns them away from an employer

We asked: Please select up to three of the following that would put you off applying for a job.

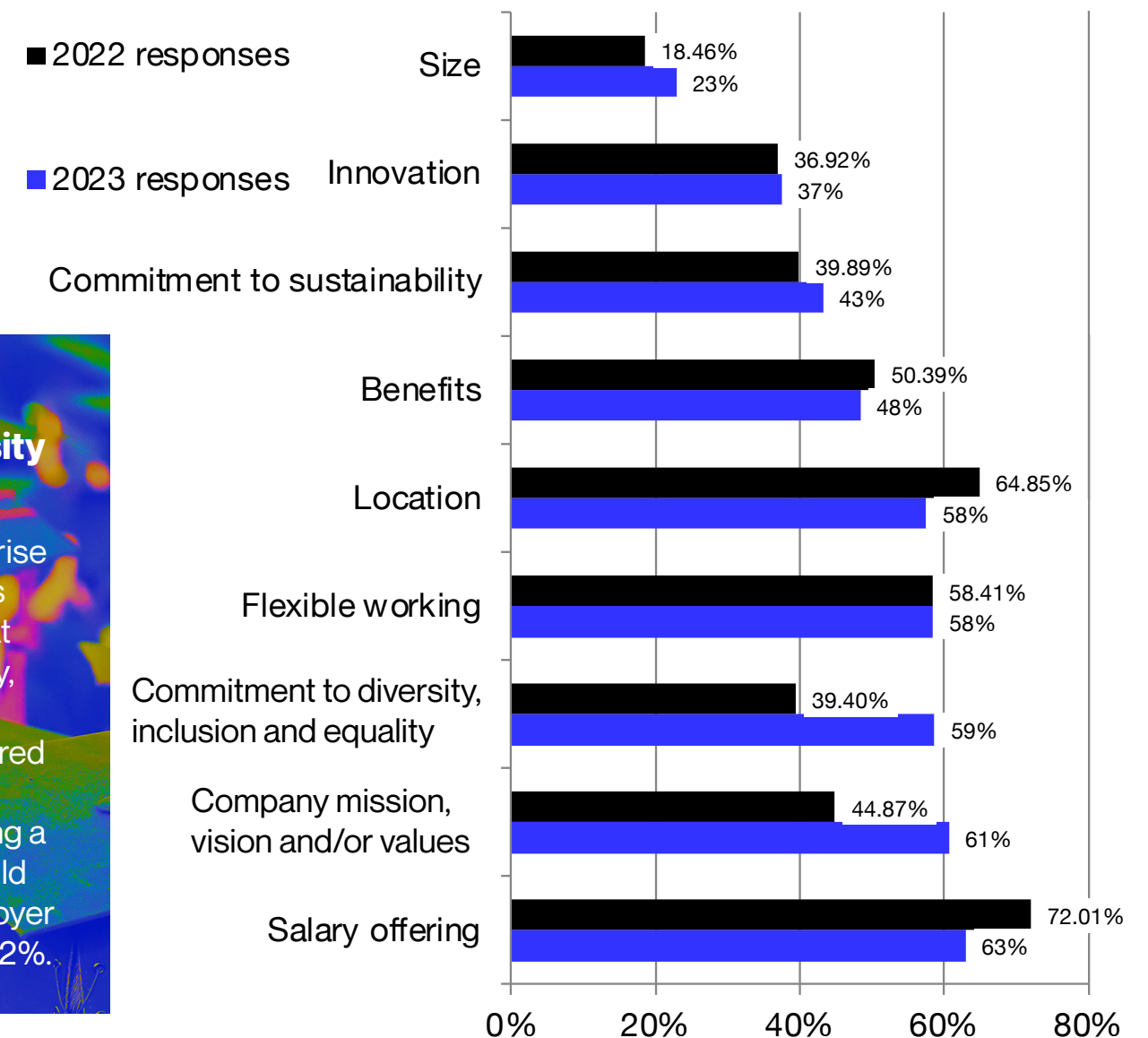


The increasing importance of diversity & inclusion

We can see a significant rise in the number of students and graduates saying that a commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion is attractive to them compared to last year's responses. Equally, the number saying a lack of D&I initiatives would deter them from an employer has risen from 12.8% to 32%.

What attracts them to an employer

We asked: What attracts you to an employer / company? Please select all that apply.



FINAL THOUGHTS

4.

I spoke last year of an increased optimism entering the market and from this report it's clear that there is a lot to indicate a return of confidence that was impacted so much by the events of the past couple of years. There is however still a lot to suggest this more agile and resilient cohort is aware of the speed that things can change.

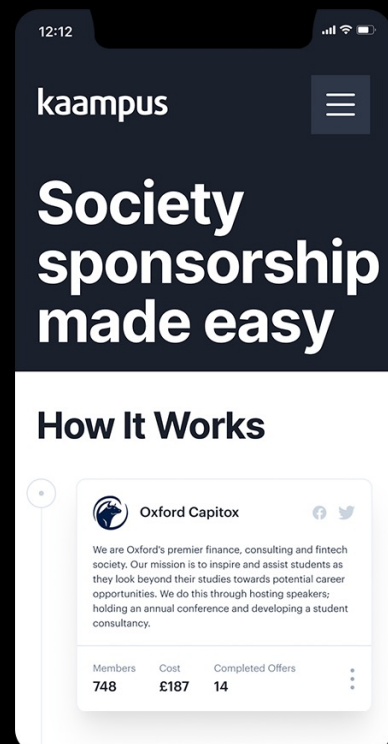
As much as company missions and culture forms a large part of future decisions they are still acutely aware of the importance of a salary and other benefits that help them to fully commit to a role and industry. It's important then that employers are aware of how to present opportunities in a way that offers as broad a spectrum of future opportunity and immediate need.

Chris May
**Managing Director of
the Careerpass Network**

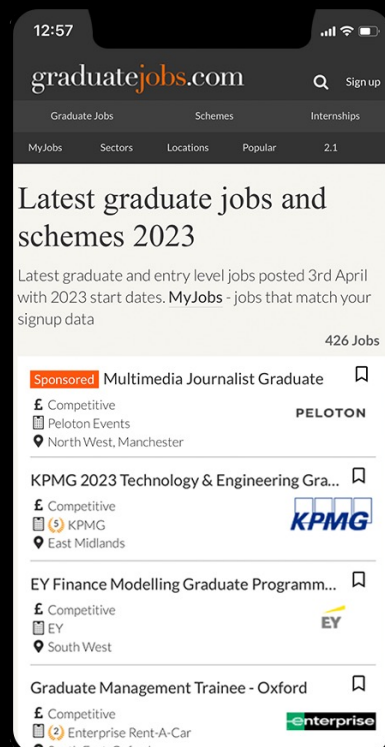
About us

Three platforms, one objective... Connecting you to the right talent.

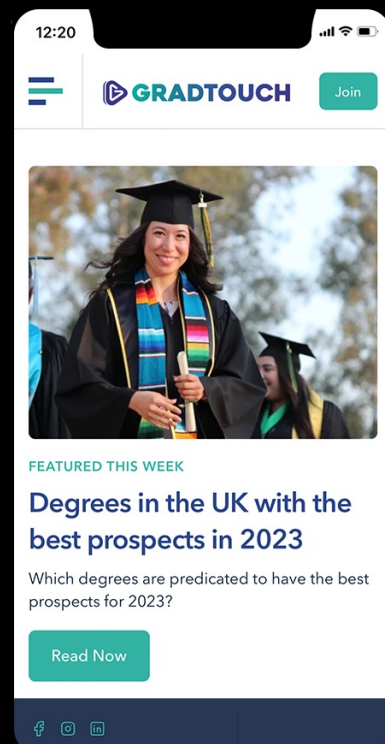
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graduatejobs.com



GRADTOUCH



Careerpass
Network

g

The go-to destination for millions of graduate job-seekers in the UK

Reach a wide audience when you need them

With roles across all sectors and locations, students and grads know where to find the best opportunities

b

Careers content experts and a specialist employer branding platform

Get creative

As a content-led platform, We communicate employer messaging, helping employers to share what makes them unique

k

A society sponsorship tool that connects employers with hard-to-reach audiences

Reach a thriving community of diverse students

Expand the audience you're connecting with and connect with diverse networks

Drive high levels of response

Through our engaged candidate audience, we see a strong level of applications and interest in roles

A strong reputation

Graduatejobs.com has been running for over 20 years and ranks number one on Google for 'graduate jobs'

Dive deeper and engage throughout the year

By providing insightful content throughout the year, employers can their brand and gain trust from an engaged audience

Educate & Convert

Showcase the graduate experience and tell candidates what to expect

Understand your audience

Identify key society networks and establish relationships through digital partnerships

Boost your employer brand

Showcase your employer messages in a unique way and improve your respect and reliability

Careerpass Network

If you'd like to discuss any of our findings further, or want to know more about the Careerpass Network's graduate attraction platforms, get in touch with Chris below.

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