

HE Employability Digest

A regular update on policy developments, reports and opportunities to influence decision-making in HE employability from The Careers Group, University of London

Number 1 — October 2016

Updates

TEF ‘highly skilled employment’ metric to be benchmarked by WP factors

DoE (2016) Teaching Excellence Framework: analysis of highly skilled employment outcomes Research report September 2016
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557107/Teaching-Excellence-Framework-highly-skilled-employment..pdf

Table 1: Factors found to be statistically associated with highly skilled employment and further study

Factors used in employment UKPI	Proxies for reputation	Other factors
Gender	REF score	Region of domicile
Age	Era of institution	POLAR quintile
Ethnicity		Degree type obtained
Entry tariff		Disability
Subject of study		

- The research identifies a strong correlation between the likelihood of graduates finding highly-skilled employment, the age of the institution, and the institution’s REF score. However, these reputational factors may be independent of teaching quality and may or may not be within the control of providers.
- Factors used in the benchmarking for the UKPIs of employment: gender, age, ethnicity, entry tariff (a proxy for prior attainment) and subject of study, were all statistically associated with highly skilled employment and further study
- Region of domicile, social disadvantage (as measured by POLAR), disability and type of degree obtained were statistically significant factors.

“... when developing a benchmarking methodology for the Teaching Excellence Framework metric of highly skilled employment and further study, other considerations need to be taken into account. In particular, consideration needs to be taken of whether factors are likely to be correlated with teaching quality and whether they can be seen to be **within the control of providers or not.**”

More information

- Teaching Excellence Framework - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/teaching-excellence-framework>
- Wonkhe’s visual guide to the TEF diagram - <http://wonkhe.com/blogs/the-incredible-machine-mark-iii-our-visual-guide-to-the-tef/>

Graduate vacancies down 8%, apprenticeships up 18%

The AGR 2016 Annual Survey - <https://www.agr.org.uk/AGR-Annual-Survey-2016-launch>

- The Association of Graduate Recruiters' annual survey is the largest survey of the student recruitment market in the UK.
- The organisations which responded to the survey represent more than 3 million staff or 10% of the UK workforce.

Key highlights

- The combined market for graduate and apprentice vacancies has shrunk by an estimated 3% this year.
- Graduate vacancies are down by 8%, but a 13% increase in apprenticeships makes up some of the shortfall.
- The average number of applications per graduate vacancy has also risen to 68, up from 65 last year.
- The top challenges expected by employers in the year ahead reflect market uncertainty and are Brexit (Britain's exit from the European Union), the UK apprenticeship levy, and attracting candidates in light of increasing competition.
- Median starting salaries for graduates rose by 2% to £27,500. Intern salaries rose by 4% to £330 a week, placement salaries rose by 3% to £337 a week, and apprentices are typically paid more than double the minimum wage.
- 55% of employers currently recruit apprenticeships, and 12% of employers say that the apprentice levy will lead them to repackage graduate schemes as degree apprenticeships.
- 95% of employers engaged with universities and the most common method of engagement are careers fairs (91%) and 54% engaged with departments.
- Three key transformative trends are expected to shape student recruitment in the years ahead. These trends are: efforts to close skills gaps, changing methods of identifying the best talent, and building talent pipelines earlier.
- Skills gaps: 71% of employers are tailoring their recruitment processes to find candidates with commercial awareness and 72% of employers are engaged in some form of employability workshop or seminar with universities.
- Talent identification: The share of employers considering all UCAS points has risen by 12%, the share of employers using a 2:1 degree has dropped by 3%, and the share of employers who do not require specific degree subjects has risen by 3%.
- Talent pipelines: 36% of graduate intakes are now comprised of previous interns, up from 31% in 2015. One in ten employers converted more than 83% of their interns into graduate hires and recruitment methods.

Changes to the National Student Survey for 2017

HEFCE (2016) September – A New National Student Survey http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2016/CL_302016/

- HEFCE has revealed the new version of the National Student Survey (NSS) which will be longer with 27 questions and include new sections on learning opportunities, learning community, and student voice.
- The personal development section on previous versions has been scrapped.
- New 'engagement' questions have been included to reflect the North American Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and to encourage universities to be more open and transparent with students.
- The key headline satisfaction question remains now as the final question.

The gap in employment outcomes for disabled graduates has decreased

AGCAS (2016) What Happens Next? A report on the first destinations of 2014 disabled graduates -

http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/17-What-Happens-Next-A-Report-on-the-First-Destinations-of-Disabled-Graduates

- The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) has produced its annual *What Happens Next?* report which compares the employment outcomes of disabled and non-disabled university leavers six months after graduation and draws upon the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey.
- The report refers to 2013/14 DLHE survey data from the 341,760 graduates from first degree, higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research) qualifications. Of this total number of graduates, 11.3% (38,770) identified themselves as having either a disability or learning difficulty during their period of study.
- The report (which has been produced annually for 14 years) explores the destinations of disabled graduates, how students found out about their jobs, the reasons they had for taking them, and how well they felt their university experience prepared them for employment, further study or self-employment.

Key findings:

- At all qualification levels, non-disabled graduates were more likely to be in full-time employment than disabled graduates; disabled graduates were also more likely to be unemployed.
- However, when figures for first degree graduates were compared with the previous year's figures, this 'gap' in full-time employment had decreased.
- There was an increase in the proportion of graduates with different disabilities entering part-time or full-time employment with a postgraduate degree (taught) and, more markedly, postgraduate degree (research).
- Graduates at all qualification levels with a social or Autistic Spectrum Disorder condition were least likely to have come across the vacancy via a source from their university or college, which suggests university and college careers and employability services need to consider how to more effectively engage with this cohort of students.

Consultations and feedback

UUK Review of skills – feedback wanted

UUK Review of Skills - <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/Pages/review-of-skills.aspx>

- Universities UK are currently conducting a *Review of Skills*, and are eager to hear from employers, students, graduates, HE providers and other interested stakeholders.
- The questions relate to skills needs and skills gaps, skills and employability strategies, and effective employers and university collaboration.
- It is hoped the review will provide a national insight into how employers, universities and policy makers can work together to offer the best opportunities for graduates and their future employment.
- The deadline for responses is **Monday 31st October 2016**.

Commons Education Select Committee – Impact of Brexit on HE consultation

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/education-committee/news-parliament-2015/brexi-impact-higher-education-launch-16-17/>

- The Commons Education Select Committee has called for evidence on the impact of Brexit on universities.
- Submissions are open until **Friday 11th November 2016**