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Stephen Isherwood
Chief Executive, ISE

Welcome

Paper application forms, voicemail, a 2:1 degree – lots of things are central to our professional life until, well, they aren't. The 2018/19 recruitment season is proving to be a tipping point where technology solutions arguably deliver the majority of the recruitment cycle. Many large employers now don't even interview a candidate in the traditional sense until the final assessment centre. In this issue we hear how algorithms and AI are disrupting recruiting practices.

Political change is also high on our agenda. Brexit will be the single biggest change to our nation's governance since we entered the European Economic Community (the EU as it then was) in 1973. But many of the issues that face government also impact our student recruitment and development industry and us.

Much on the education policy front is driven by the need to improve the UK's productivity. Philip Auger should shortly publish his interim findings on post-18 education, including recommendations on student finance, and both the apprentice levy and TEF are up for review later this year. Our lead feature explores what policy decisions could affect our sector in both the short and long-term.

Regional recruitment, development and retention have long been an issue for employers and policy makers. Attracting the right talent to less urban locations can be a challenge. We have insights into this often misunderstood area of the labour market from the ISE's chief research officer, Tristram Hooley, and Charlie Ball, head of higher education intelligence at Prospects.

Their article explores the reality of student migration – not every graduate wants to work in London and the South East – as well as the impact this has on diversity.

With the Office for Students recently announcing its plans to focus on outcomes for students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and the Social Mobility Commission now fully reconstituted, we hear how the University of Roehampton is tackling the issue. Inside this issue you will also find advice on employing autistic students from Dr Jonathan Vincent, a senior lecturer at York St John University and a director of PRO Autism. And with wellbeing a growing priority for organisations, we have some new data to share on mental health.

Many ISE members also operate globally, which is why your organisation maintains strong links with our international partners. Daniel Black, an ex-president of NACE and EY's global recruiting lead based in New York, gives us some great insights into the US graduate recruitment market.

I trust you will enjoy the diverse content we have brought you inside this issue. Please continue to give us your feedback on the topics that are important to you and let us know if you would like to contribute to the next edition.

Tell us what you think

Response, ovation, objection or fresh ideas for The Student Employer – we want to hear from you!

The Spring issue of The Student Employer will be published in April 2019.

We are looking for content ideas now.

If you have an idea, piece of research or case study to share get in touch. We are also on the look out for content for our regular slots, so if you'd like to tell us about your hobby, review a book, share views or expert tips from your sector or abroad we want to hear from you.

Tell us what you think or pitch an idea:

clare@ise.org.uk
@IoSEorg

The Student Employer.

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Editor
Clare Tregaskis
clare@ise.org.uk

Advertising enquiries
Email Vivienne Wootten at
Vivienne@ise.org.uk for more
information on advertising.

Institute of Student Employers
6 Bath Place, Rivington Street
London EC2A 3JE
Telephone 020 7033 2460
info@ise.org.uk @IoSEorg
ise.org.uk

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The Student Employer.



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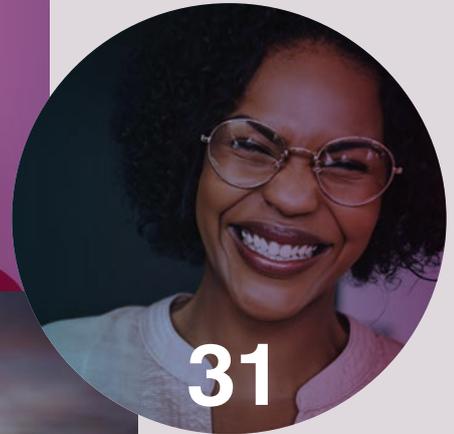
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A world of opportunity



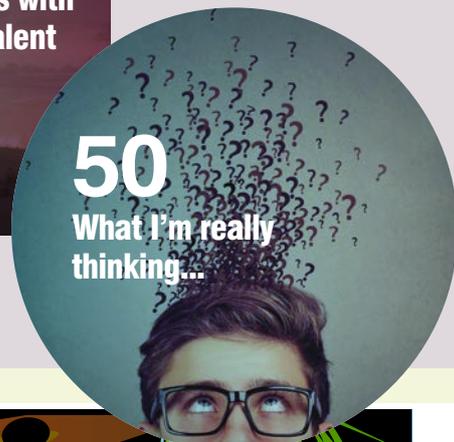
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New year, new policy

Don't let Brexit blind you to
education policy reforms





Stephen Isherwood
Chief Executive, ISE

“...Our industry, the successful transition of students through education and into meaningful work, is central to the success of UK PLC.

Brexit continues to dominate the government’s agenda, but plenty of policy developments are going to impact student recruitment and development in 2019. Decisions are being made that directly affect our industry right across the spectrum: new T-levels are in the final stages of development, student finance and university funding could be remodelled, and the apprentice levy is up for review.

Brexit has increased the need to urgently address ills that have long affected the UK economy: poor productivity, low skills, disenfranchised communities. Despite the OECD publishing a recalculation paper in December, the UK is 16% less productive than the US, 11% behind France and 14% behind Germany. Our industry, the successful transition of students through education and into meaningful work, is central to the success of UK PLC.

That ‘too many people go to university’ is in danger of becoming an uncontested fact here in the UK. Roughly 40% of 18 and 19-year olds go to university. But that means 60% don’t.

Half of young people in the UK go nowhere near higher education, 37% of young people don’t even get a level three qualification in the UK when over 80% achieve this in Germany.

The latest labour market analysis from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reports vacancies at 848,000 for September to November 2018, a year-on-year increase of 40,000. Talent and skills shortages are a reality.

The apprentice levy is here to stay and T-Levels are coming

Just before Christmas the Secretary of State for Education, Damien Hinds, made an important speech. He said, “Last year more sixth form and college leavers went to Oxbridge than went on to do a higher level, that is to say a Level 4 or 5, apprenticeship”. In his view many graduate-level jobs (level 6)

are really level 4 or 5 jobs. Vocational routes into work are going to remain a key focus at the Department for Education.

Employers may be frustrated with the apprentice levy, but it is here to stay. The policy has cross-party support and the treasury isn’t going to restart funding what employers now pay for. But alongside the funding changes that Philip Hammond announced in the autumn budget, he signalled there would be a review of how the apprentice levy will operate from 2020 onwards. We can expect a call for evidence at some point this year – a critical opportunity for employers to voice their concerns and suggest reforms.

The IFA is to be renamed the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education and has had T-levels added to its remit. T-levels go live in 2020, with one T-level equivalent to three A-levels, providing an additional education and training route into many industries, particularly in digital, construction and engineering. Government has a big ask of employers: to provide around 180,000 45-60-day placements per year. The government knows this is going to be difficult to deliver, so expect an increased search for solutions to deliver the numbers and pressure on employer provision to increase.

There is still a significant issue to overcome that educators, policy makers and employers must address: parity of esteem for vocational and non-vocational routes. To quote Damien Hinds, “Government can’t endow esteem on technical education, you can’t legislate for parity in this way...it’s our job to make it high quality, then employers and young people themselves will genuinely value it. Quality has to come first. Get that right and esteem will follow.”

Expecting the upcoming apprentice review to facilitate funding flexibility that may be abused is highly unlikely. Could levy funds be spent on harder to police aspects such as marketing or careers? I doubt it, particularly as pressure on the public purse will increase as employers increase their levy spend.

We have already seen proposed reductions in the caps on digital and chartered manager apprenticeships. Will there be a further assault on the ‘more expensive’ provisions? Degree apprenticeships are still a small part of the overall market but if funding becomes more of a challenge, universities and employers may be dissuaded from developing them.

This would be a missed opportunity. As delivery models become

“...That ‘too many people go to university’ is in danger of becoming an uncontested fact

widely understood, innovation could drive degree apprentice programmes into markets not yet focused on. Digital, construction and engineering sectors have been able to move quickly as they already had established programmes with universities that were adaptable to the new model. Surely, increased degree apprenticeship routes will help provide the parity of esteem Damien Hinds desires.

Higher education under regulatory and funding pressure

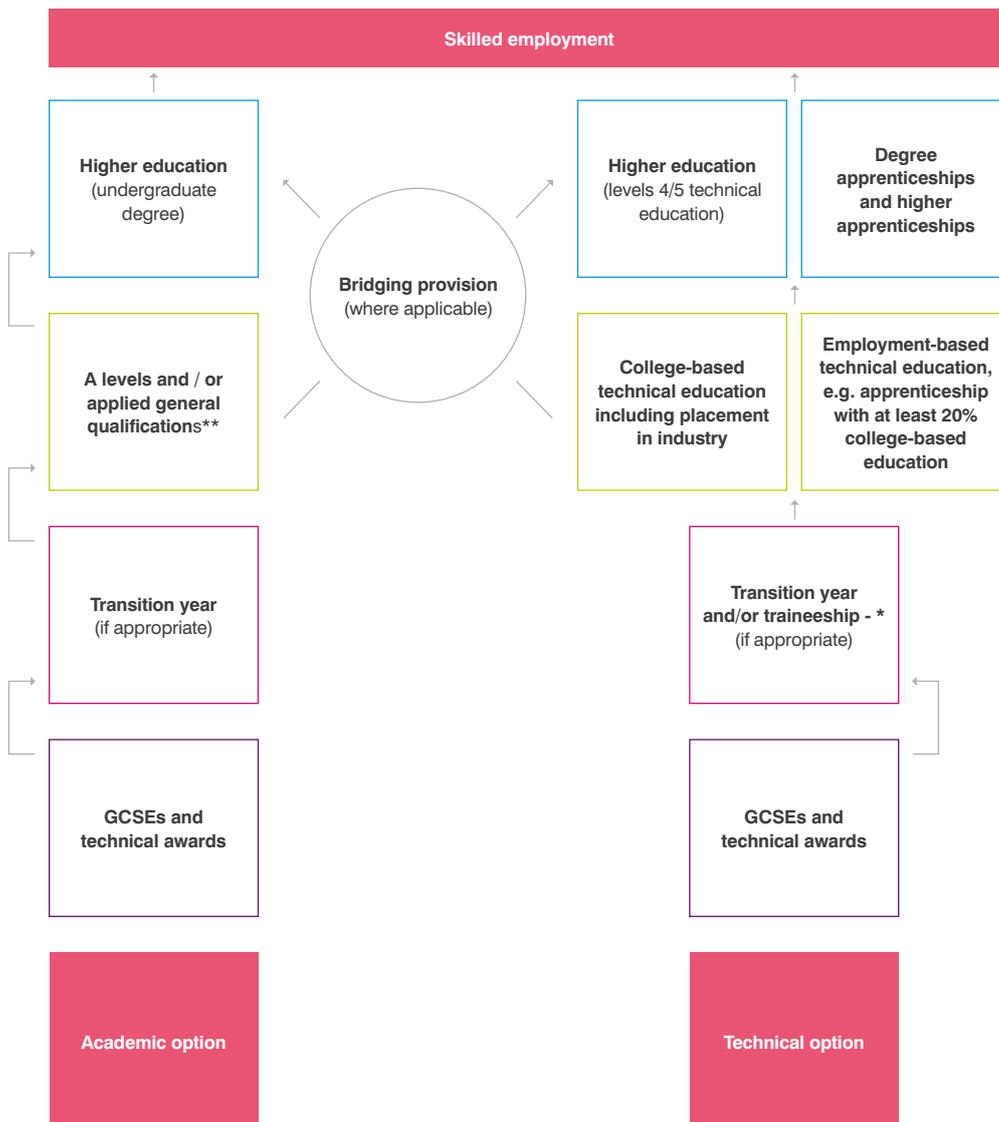
The new Universities and Science minister, Chris Skidmore, has certainly inherited a full agenda. Tuition fees are heavily politicised, the Office for Students is still in its infancy, and unforeseen issues

frequently hit the headlines (vice-chancellors' pay, grade inflation, freedom of speech were all on the front pages in 2018).

When the Auger review into post-18 education publishes its interim findings in February (assuming Brexit doesn't derail publication), student debt and university funding models will return to the spotlight. If fees are reduced, universities could come under increased financial pressures if the treasury then reduces the flow of funds to institutions. Lower fees are now more attractive to the government as they will reduce government spending because of the decision by the ONS that unpaid student debt must be accounted for up front.

Lowered or variable fees could also alter the decisions potential undergraduates make. There is a danger that lower fees could boost the appeal of university at the same time the government is seeking to promote vocational education routes.

Post-16 Skills Plan: Main features of the proposed new system



* Where a student does both, the traineeship will follow the transition year. Students doing both the transition year and a traineeship may progress directly to employment.

** Some students will move directly from A levels and/or applied general qualifications to degree and higher apprenticeships.



“...There is a danger that lower fees could boost the appeal of university at the same time the government is seeking to promote vocational education routes.



The government has long sought to provide ‘consumer choice’ information to students. The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) ratings launched in 2017 were designed in part to make the market in higher education more efficient. Quality teaching would be recognised and students guided to gold-rated institutions and courses. As employment outcomes are considered in TEF ratings, the needs of employers, business, industry and the professions should also be better met. The TEF is now under review, another opportunity for employers, careers professionals and suppliers to influence government.

Universities are all too aware of both the political and regulatory pressures bearing down on them. But if you are an employer or supplier reading this, the viability of some institutions and courses, the choices students make, the data available to stakeholders, will impact your talent supply chain.

The year(s) ahead

Regardless of Brexit outcomes, the policy decisions that will be made through 2019 and beyond represent fundamental shifts to the early talent labour market. If the government achieves its objectives, students and employers will have a meaningful range of education and employment routes to choose from. In ten years’ time will we have a more European labour market where a liberal arts graduate cannot realistically train to be a lawyer or accountant on graduation? To quote Bill Gates, “We always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten. Don’t let yourself be lulled into inaction.”

Tuition fees: Student debt or a national debt?

Tuition fees have posed a political problem for politicians ever since they were introduced in 1998. The fees funded expansion in higher education – all those extra students going to university had to be paid for. It is an unknown concept to today’s generation of students that before 1998 the government paid student fees and many received a maintenance grant.

The £9,000 cap for UK students was introduced in 2012 (increased to £9,250 in 2017). Some universities charge lower fees, but not many. The government’s hope that a market would be created didn’t materialise as no university wanted to be perceived as offering a cheaper product.

Labour’s promise at the last election to abolish fees prompted the government to announce a review of post-18 education, which will consider how higher education is funded (known as the Augar review).

A few ideas have already been discussed in the press: fees fall to £6.5k and STEM subject fees increase to £13.5k (although many hate this idea as it could devalue arts subjects and starve them of funds).

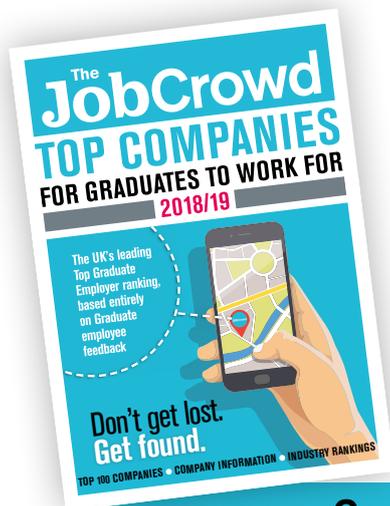
Leaving aside that students should really view the fee system as a tax rather than debt, the accounting process behind tuition fees has always been a little dubious. One of the last news items of 2018 was that the amount in fee loans that government expects it won’t recover has to be accounted for up front – this would add an estimated £12bn to government spending in 2019.

As an aside, if you like the idea of a progressive tax system (the better off pay more) then there is a positive argument for higher fees. Only those students who earn the most pay off their fees, those who don’t earn enough have their fees written off 30 years after graduation. As Martin Lewis says, university is “financially at least, a ‘no win, no fee’ education”.

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Raising aspirations

Universities fortunate to have a diverse student body are often challenged with finding career enhancing opportunities. Claire Shapland gives insight to this dilemma, explaining how employers can help raise aspirations early and better engage the disadvantaged.



Claire Shapland
Head of Placements
& Work Experience,
University of
Roehampton

The question I regularly get asked by our students at the University of Roehampton is 'Why would [insert organisation name here] hire me over someone from [insert other University name here]'. My response is almost always 'Why wouldn't they?'

Significant changes in recent years have fundamentally affected access to higher education - student funding arrangements have altered, entry requirements are ever changing and with this, as are demographics of students. The University of Roehampton is, like many others, blessed with an incredibly diverse range of students. We are proud to have a long and established track record of supporting all students to succeed in higher education and have been providing higher education for women longer than any other institution in the country. In 2016 we began celebrating 175 years of empowering women through education.

Looking at our students of today, 59% are first in their family to go to university, 96% are from state schooled education and 55% of our new UG entrants are BAME.

We utilise the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) to identify our students from deprived backgrounds, based on 37 indicators related to income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services and the living environment. A fifth (21%) of our students come from the country's most deprived 20% of areas (1st quintile). This diversity is both one of our strengths and major challenges as an institution.

Our students from the more deprived areas often come to us with much more life experience. Many are, or have been, carers. Many have had to support themselves, and often their families, for some time before attending university. This makes for rich discussion, knowledge and debate in the academic environment as everyone has a different story to tell and outlook on life.

However, we also know that generally people from lower income backgrounds are less likely to have access to networks of advice, information and experiences of work from previous education or family networks. It is very hard, nigh impossible, to aim for opportunities that you do not know exist, so a major part of my role as Head of Placements and Work Experience is to raise awareness of opportunities available and, in turn, raise aspirations.

As with many other higher education providers, Roehampton has been involved in the 'Addressing Barriers to Student Success (ABSS)' programme. The focus of most ABSS projects is addressing gaps in educational and employment outcomes of BAME students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds. The 'Re-imagining Attainment for All 2' (RAFA 2) project is led by the University of Roehampton, with partners Queen Mary University of London and Carshalton College. It aims to eliminate the attainment gap between BAME and white students, as well as focusing on attainment issues affecting Muslim women students.

The main outputs to date of the RAFA2 programme have been around the production of specific support materials and events including student led masterclasses. There have been a number of learning points from the project, in particular around collaborations with industry partners. RAFA2 has proven that students are keen to engage with employer initiatives on and off campus. Running events with key industry speakers such as the BAME & Women's Leadership Conferences and Employability events has proved highly successful.

So, how do we continue to raise awareness and aspirations for underrepresented groups, particularly when we are often being asked to do more with less time and resource?

“...This diversity is both one of our strengths and major challenges as an institution.

“...In our country today, where you start still all too often determines where you finish. Talent is spread evenly across the country, opportunity is not. Everyone deserves a fair shot in life and a chance to go as far as their hard work and talent can take them.

Rt Hon Justine Greening



Alongside the traditional placement schemes that many offer, I would really encourage all employers to look at the broader spectrum of opportunities or engagement points that could be provided to institutions at minimal time and resource. Those that provide key 'touch points' with multiple students. These could include:

- **Providing real life problem solving tasks or projects as part of an academic module** – working with an industry partner on a 'live' group or individual project can often be the first real professional experience one of our students has had. While low cost and resource to an organisation, it is extremely high value to a group of students with limited professional experience.
- **Early careers mentoring** – The move from education to employment should not be a blind leap but a guided journey, with the support of both education and employers, so just as employees are often given a mentor or 'buddy' on commencing a new role, could you utilise your graduates to be a buddy/mentor to a final year undergraduate student? Roehampton, like many Universities, has an online and flexible mentoring scheme for our students and alumni to easily connect with industry mentors.

“... Our students from the more deprived areas often come to us with much more life experience. Many are, or have been, carers.

The task of unlocking talent and fulfilling potential is certainly not complete when a student enters the workforce. To make a real difference, higher education providers and industry partners must continue to align work to address key skills gaps and ensure opportunities are open for all. The increasing use of contextualised recruitment methods and many organisations amending their initial graduate scheme entry requirements goes a long way towards inclusive practice. I hope this is a trend we see continue so that more students from less traditional backgrounds are given opportunities to reach their full potential and inspire the next generation.



Tristram Hooley
Chief Research Officer,
ISE

Know your mean from your median

Tristram Hooley took over the helm for ISE research last year. Here he delves into our annual student recruitment survey to explore the number of applications per hire and how it should be interpreted.



One of the questions that I'm asked by students is what their chance of finding a job is. If they apply for a graduate job, how many other graduates will they have to elbow out of the way in order to get to the front of the queue?

Employers ask the same question, but the other way round. If they advertise a job, what is the likely size of the pool that they will be able to choose from?

This is why the Institute of Student Employers asks employers about both how many people they hired and how many applications they had. From these two figures we can look at how many applications employers receive for each hire that they make.

The number of applications per hire figure makes interesting reading every year because employers are able to look at it and think about whether they are above or below the average. Are we more popular or less popular than we thought?

Because we've been collecting this number for a long while, this means that we can also look at how this has changed over time. Figure 1 shows that between 2000 and 2008 things were pretty steady with between 30 and 42 applications every year. In 2009, after the economic crash, things started to get a bit more competitive and since this point they've been bouncing around between 48 and 118.

What this tells us

This suggests that the general trend is upwards and that the recession had a big impact on the graduate labour market. This is probably true, but many employers may find that they aren't getting anything like the 118 applications that we found at the high point in 2014.

The average reported in these figures is the mean. The mean simply adds up all the responses provided by employers and divides them by the number of responses. The problem with using the mean is that it can give undue prominence to wild outliers. For example, perhaps one legal firm appeared in a documentary in one particularly year and every law student in the world applied to that organisation. This kind of thing could skew the average pretty easily.

To try and avoid the impact of wild outliers we switched this year to reporting the

median rather than the mean. The median lines up all of the responses that we received and picks the value in the middle of the line as the average. This is probably a better way to represent the average as it describes the experience that is more typical.

In Figure 2 I've reanalysed the data from the last five years (as this is all of the detailed data that I have available) to show how the median has changed.

Summary

In summary, the last few years have been fairly stable with a slow decline from the high point in 2014. In 2014 the mean suggested that there was a huge spike in applications, the median tells us that while it was a highpoint in recent years, the more typical organisation would be receiving slightly more rather than radically more applications.

It would be easy to conclude from this article that as Mark Twain and Benjamin Disraeli said, "there are lies, damned lies and statistics". I hope that you don't conclude that: both the mean and the median tell us something important about what has been happening in the graduate labour market. But, if you want to benchmark your organisation you are probably better to compare yourself to the mean, not the median.





Making mental health matter

Employers are concerned about the mental wellbeing of student hires. In this year's ISE Annual Student Recruitment survey, 85% said that they view this issue as a priority. We share two new pieces of research from the graduate perspective. While Poppy Jaman OBE looks at the views of 18 to 26-year-olds seeking jobs in the financial and professional services, Dasha Karzunina takes a wider perspective on wellbeing, comparing different sectors and employment types.



Poppy Jaman OBE
CEO, City Mental
Health Alliance



Dasha Karzunina
Head of Research,
Trendence research
UK & Ireland

Poppy Jaman

Whilst poor mental health can affect any one of us, at any given time, we know stressful situations can make existing problems worse or trigger new conditions altogether. Entering the workplace for the first time and making that life-changing transition from student to full time employment can be one of those moments.

There is little doubt that the start of a career can be an exciting prospect, but it can also be a hugely daunting one too, bringing with it rapid change and new pressures. There are few times in life that a person will undergo so many unfamiliar pressures and experiences for the first time and all at the same time. It may mean moving house, changing location or leaving friends and family behind.

To get a better idea of the impact of this transition, the City Mental Health Alliance (CMHA) surveyed over 500 18 to 26-year-olds seeking jobs in the financial and professional services. The results showed almost 7 in 10 (69%) of students and graduate job seekers had experienced some form of mental ill health with the most prominent being anxiety (58%), depression (48%) and panic attacks (33%).

The research also revealed nearly three quarters (74%) said they were worried about meeting the expectations of their new employer. Not surprisingly, concerns over the cost of living (78%) and moving to a new city (48%) were also high on their agenda. What was particularly troubling, however, was that nearly two-thirds (62%) were worried about how the transition could affect their mental health.

While public campaigns and media awareness around mental health have done a brilliant job at putting the issue firmly in the spotlight, these figures suggest there is still much more to be done to support those early in their careers.

“...It is crucial for employers to take a leading role in ensuring everyone can talk about mental health without fear.



Banish the stigma

Businesses have an important role to play in helping new joiners feel safe, comfortable and supported at a huge turning point in their lives. The issue of mental health needs to be addressed right from the early recruitment stages if businesses want to attract, retain and grow their talent pool.

Sadly, one of the biggest barriers we face as a society is the stigma around mental health. Over three fifths (64%) of those surveyed believed that telling a prospective employer about past or current mental health issues would hinder their chances of securing a role. Only 8% said they would feel comfortable mentioning a mental health issue on a job application, and just 12% said they would do so during the interview stage.

It is crucial for employers to take a leading role in ensuring everyone can talk about mental health without fear. Businesses are built on people and workplaces need to be supportive environments where everyone can thrive. A job has the power to give a young person a sense of purpose and direction which can boost their self-esteem and confidence. How employers manage the mental health of their workforce, how they talk about it and the support they offer employees experiencing issues can have a huge and lasting impact. Not just upon their own workforce, but the wider population and the way society views mental health.

Champion positive mental health

Leadership is crucial to bringing about this change in the workplace. We need senior managers to speak out about mental health and show it should be treated the same as physical health. Sharing personal stories and experience, for example, can help break down the stigma, normalise the conversation and, most importantly, encourage those who need help to seek help.

Our survey showed just one in five (19%) graduates and students would go to their manager if they developed a mental health issue. Not being able to have these open conversations is bad for staff morale, the wider business and leaves the culture of silence woefully unchallenged.

Regular communication is therefore key, and managers should be equipped with the right tools and training not only to spot the early warning signs of ill mental health, but also to offer the right support and guidance to help people manage their conditions. We know that early intervention is vital in helping people recover from mental health issues. If businesses don't put any effort into taking care of their staff, they risk lower productivity, higher turnover rates and a loss of talent.

Further simple measures management teams can get behind to boost staff wellbeing include encouraging employees to work sensible hours, take lunch breaks and book regular holidays. Initiatives such as flexible hours, support with managing workloads, counselling and offering employees the option to work from home are also great ways of supporting staff.

Nearly two fifths (39%) of those we surveyed said they would value staff mental health networks, while 38% would like to see a dedicated wellness, health or nutrition programme in place. Almost a third (31%) would support onsite classes such as yoga or meditation workshops. However, the greatest contribution a business can make in supporting its employees is a change in culture, with 56% noting that an open culture, where teams and senior leaders raise the subject freely, would support positive mental health.

“...Those seeking work showed poor mental and physical health outcomes, however part-time workers and temporary workers appeared to have the worst results

Growing expectations

The narrative is changing and our survey highlights that there is both a growing emphasis and expectation among graduates and school leavers around how employers deal with mental health.

More than half (52%) of those considering applying for early career roles said a prospective employer's approach to mental wellbeing was important. However, despite a desire for employers to show dedicated policies, just a fifth (19%) of respondents said they had found information about the relevant support offered.

The message to businesses is clear: they need to prioritise staff wellbeing and put mental health on the agenda right from the early recruitment stage or risk losing out on talent. Companies should review their approach to graduate recruitment and ensure prospective employees are given information on the mental health support available and the policies they have in place to contribute to employee wellbeing.

Let's not forget that those entering the workplace today will be the business leaders of tomorrow. Making mental health matter will not only make early job seekers feel more comfortable opening up, but it will also help them build the right skills, so they can be mental health literate leaders going forward. If they experience an open culture from the outset of their career, employee wellbeing and good practice will be embedded in the organisational culture in the future.

Smart employers know it makes good business sense, with healthy staff more motivated, engaged and productive. But more importantly, improving wellbeing in the workplace is about building working environments and a society that cares and takes responsibility for one another.

Dasha Karzunina

Trendence research and 10x Psychology researched graduate views on workplace experiences and wellbeing, and how these relate to employment type and employee engagement. The research focused on this population given the benefit for the future of workforce health, and to highlight opportunities for employers, individuals and universities to improve outcomes.

Participants were 1,927 UK university graduates with a mean age of 25. They were 74% female, 28% seeking employment, 17% pursuing further study, and 55% currently employed. Results are given by the percentage that agreed with each question based on a five-point agreement scale.

Wellbeing by employment type

On average, 71% of participants claimed very good physical health, but only 56% claimed good mental health. Furthermore, in the last month, 72% felt stressed, 75% felt tired, and 63% felt sad or down.

Those seeking work showed poor mental and physical health outcomes; however, part-time workers and temporary workers appeared to have the worst results



“...the greatest contribution a business can make in supporting its employees is a change in culture, with 56% noting that an open culture, where teams and senior leaders raise the subject freely, would support positive mental health.”

with around 80% having felt tired and 71% feeling sad. Worryingly, only 50% of part-time workers claimed to have good mental health. Those employing part-time and temporary staff should be aware of their elevated risks.

Job seekers have low levels of stress and tiredness, but poor mental and physical health, suggesting that while being in work leads to being more stressed and tired, it is beneficial for health. Self-employed people have the best outcomes with low scores for feeling sad, perhaps due to high levels of job control.

Continuing students have poor results for physical and mental health and highest indications for stress, showing that student life has challenges for many. Improving mental health in universities is an increasing priority.

Wellbeing by sector

Media and research, professional services, and public and third sectors all scored moderately for mental and physical wellbeing.

Engineering/industry and healthcare/pharmaceuticals scored best on mental health and stress, with healthcare scoring positively on sadness/tiredness. However physical health was lowest of all in healthcare/pharmaceuticals.

Correlations between work factors and physical wellbeing indicate that, in order of strength, coping with workload (76% agree), being treated fairly (72%), effective time

management (82%), employer-supporting health and wellbeing (54%) and collaboration (69%) strongly associate with physical health and are priority action areas.

Employers should discuss these with staff and collaborate on ways to make improvements.

Stress and tiredness were highest in education, and retail had the poorest scores for mental health and feeling sad/down. Due to potential long-term consequences of these (e.g. burnout), taking action is important.

Correlations indicate that meaningful work (64%), support at work from others (75%), being able to use skills and abilities (60%), feeling valued (59%), and fair treatment (72%) are all important for improving mental health.

Employee engagement

We looked at the positive behaviours and feelings that employees have towards work, measured by: Pride in role; Recommending job to others; Desire to stay in role; Wanting to do their best.

Professional services (64%), education (63%), media and research (62%), and healthcare/pharma (60%) were the most engaged. However, only 37% of retail workers were engaged. Engagement in public/third sector and engineering/industry were 55% and 51% respectively. For employment type, those who were self-employed were the most engaged (65%), followed by full-time (59%), temporary (45%) and part-time (43%) workers.

Results should be a concern for retail employers; however, however findings are likely to be influenced by employment type, as temporary and part-time workers may be less likely to be engaged (e.g. for intention to stay in the same role long term) and may be more likely to work in retail.

“...Job seekers have low levels of stress and tiredness, but poor mental and physical health, suggesting that while being in work leads to being more stressed and tired, it is beneficial for health.

“...Stress and tiredness were highest in education, and retail had the poorest scores for mental health and feeling sad/down.



Correlations show that feeling valued and recognised at work is the strongest driver (59%), then work being interesting and challenging (56%), employer providing support for wellbeing (54%), meaningful work (64%) and being able to use skills and abilities (60%). Employers and managers should address these in jobs to maximise engagement.

Wellbeing initiatives

When asked “how important is wellbeing at work to you”, all industries scored

between 80% and 84% (agree) excluding public/third sector at 90%, indicating this is of particular importance in this sector.

For the organisation taking wellbeing seriously, the engineering/industry scored highest at 70%, and surprisingly, healthcare/pharmaceuticals was lowest at 50%. Retail/FMCG was second lowest at 56% with media and research at 57%. Education, professional services and public/third sector all scored between 62-64%.

For having a wellbeing strategy, retail/FMCG was by far the lowest at 31% followed by media and research (38%). All other industries scored mid-40s, except public/third sector at 52%.

Results show that people really care about wellbeing, but are much less likely to think their organisations do anything positive about it.

Comparing views on wellbeing initiatives between those with and without a health condition shows that wellbeing at work is slightly more important to the former (86% vs 83%). Furthermore, those with a health condition are much more negative about wellbeing being taken seriously at work (50% vs 62%), the organisation having a wellbeing strategy (36% vs 42%), and claiming that wellbeing was part of onboarding (20% vs 30%). Finally, those with a condition were much more likely to be willing to stay longer if the organisation had a better wellbeing strategy (32% vs 22%).

This shows the importance of ensuring that wellbeing programmes are visible, well communicated and resourced, so that those with conditions feel properly supported.

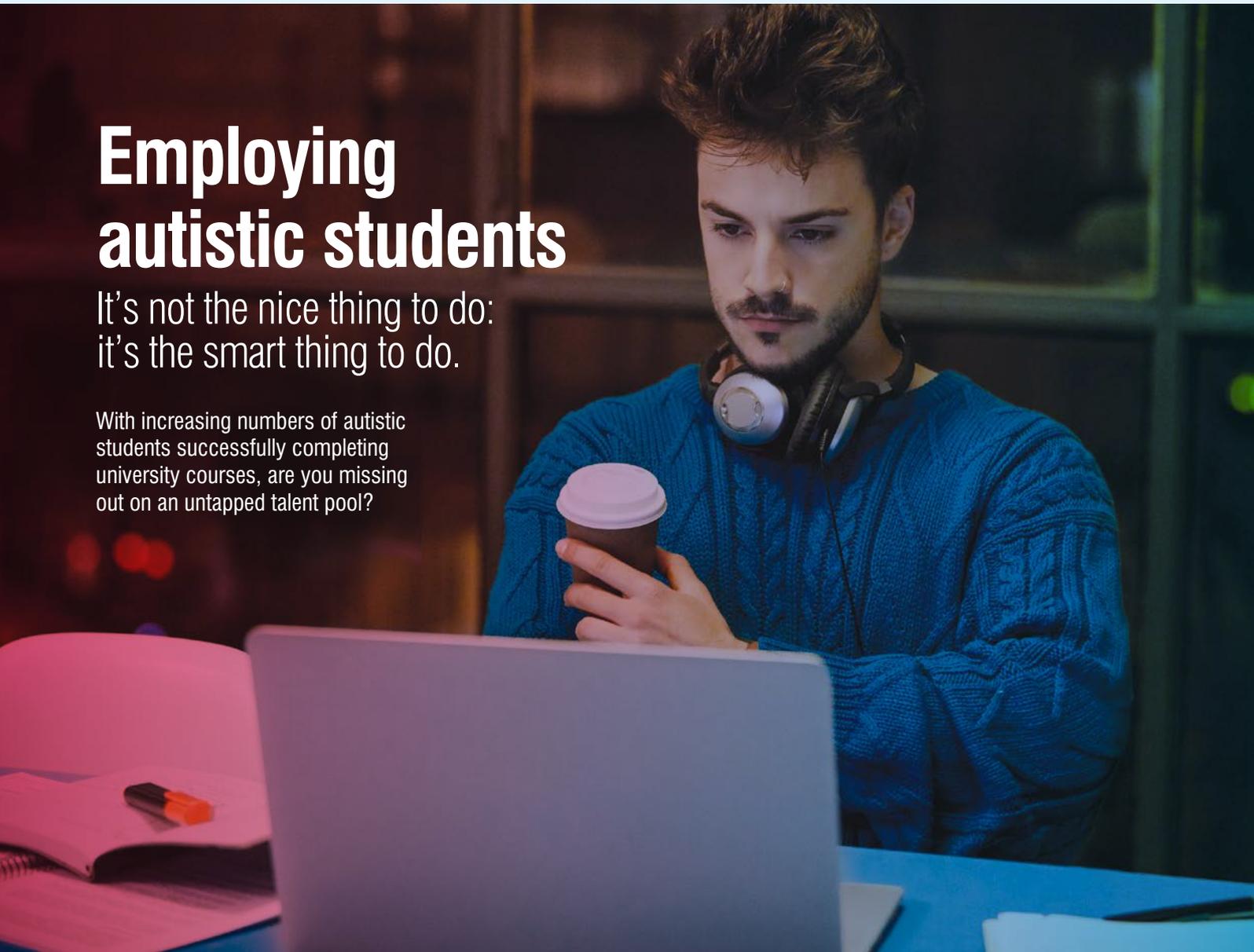
Results show that recent graduates are not immune to the impacts of poor mental health that we are seeing in the general population, with high levels of stress, tiredness, and feeling sad or down, as well as decent levels of physical health, but concerning levels of mental health. While some groups are potentially more at risk, including part-time and temporary workers, there are several areas that can be improved, particularly through identifying wellbeing focus areas for each hire during selection and onboarding. Continuing students are at risk of negative outcomes, and more research is needed to find out how universities can better support their wellbeing..

“...For the organisation taking wellbeing seriously, the engineering/industry scored highest at 70%, and surprisingly, healthcare/pharmaceuticals was lowest at 50%.

Employing autistic students

It's not the nice thing to do:
it's the smart thing to do.

With increasing numbers of autistic students successfully completing university courses, are you missing out on an untapped talent pool?



Autistic young people are increasingly engaging in higher education. Research from the US suggests that nearly a quarter of a million autistic young people will be expected to enrol in a university, college, or technical/vocational school in the coming years (Jackson, Hart and Volkmar, 2018) and similar trends are also present in the UK. As these young people successfully complete their courses they are naturally considering their various employment options; however, for many their chances of success are much more limited than their 'neurotypical' peers.

Autism (which now includes Asperger's Syndrome) is a lifelong developmental condition that affects how an individual communicates and relates to others, processes information, and makes 'sense of the world' (NAS, 2018). Whilst these diagnostic descriptions are useful it is worth heeding the words of autistic academic Professor Steve Shore, "if you have met one autistic person, you have met one autistic person", which speaks to the diversity of the autistic community and reminds us of the danger of stereotyping. That Rain Man image you have in your head right now is probably not that accurate. In fact although there is robust evidence of autistic people having

exceptional skills and talents, including 'a strong memory, focus precision, dedication, analytical skills, and remarkable powers of observation' (Van Hees 2014:1684) the autistic community is a lot more varied. Those with diagnoses include actors like Sir Anthony Hopkins, Dan Aykroyd or Daryl Hannah, TV presenters such as Guy Martin or Chris Packham and musicians like Susan Boyle and Gary Numan. So you can see that the idea of spectrum really makes sense.

However, despite the manifold skills, talents and creativity that autistic university students and graduates might have, the AGCAS (2018) report What Happens Next based on Destination of Leavers from Higher Education data tells us that six months after graduation, those who disclosed an autistic spectrum condition were the least likely to be in full-time employment and most likely to be unemployed. Unemployment figures were actually worse for this group with



Dr Jonathan Vincent
Senior Lecturer in
School of Education,
York St John University

“...making a workplace more autism-inclusive is typically neither that disruptive nor expensive

“...Everybody wants to recruit the best talent available but at the moment employers are missing out simply because their processes are not fit for purpose.”

postgraduate qualifications. Unfortunately, these figures resonate with the wider picture that shows that only 16% of autistic adults in the UK are in full-time employment. So why is this?

I conducted semi-structured interviews with 21 autistic students and recent graduates and sixteen focus groups with 58 community stakeholders, including parents, supported employment providers, and some employers to find out more about autistic journeys from education to employment. Here are few of the key findings:

Greater understanding would make a difference

We know from the ISE 2018 Recruitment Survey that diversity is a significant priority for nearly all employers and that often managers and directors want to see cultural change in their companies and organisations.

However, this can only happen when the issue is on the agenda. Whilst some companies know about the benefits of employing autistic people and are actively recruiting (GCHQ, JP Morgan, SAP or Microsoft to name a few), according to autistic students and graduates many “just didn’t know – they had no knowledge of autism”. This tends to lead to anxiety around disclosure, as one autistic student stated, “obviously I was a little bit concerned whether they would actually take someone who is autistic, so I didn’t put anything in the CV about it”.

Doing some training with your teams and making it clear on job adverts that you welcome applications from candidates with neurodiverse conditions could make all the difference.

Make the recruitment processes more inclusive

Everybody wants to recruit the best talent available but at the moment employers are missing out simply because their processes are not fit for purpose. This point was made clearly by Stephen Isherwood, Chief Executive of the ISE, who argued that to access the top students and graduates from more diverse backgrounds “means changing the nature of recruitment and selection processes”. To be clear, this does not require lowering standards but rather rethinking about how job adverts, application forms, interviews and assessment procedures

can work to include those who perceive the world differently. This is particularly important for autistic candidates who might have above average visuo-spatial or intellectual capacities but struggle with non-verbal or figurative language, thus making jargon used in job adverts or ‘reading the room’ in an interview much more difficult. As one participant explained, “I think some of the interview processes can be far more stressful than the actual job that you’re being interviewed for because you’ve come to an unfamiliar environment to meet unfamiliar people for a very short amount of time, so you’ve got no time to get used to it.”

By making minor adjustments like using straightforward language, allowing a candidate to visit prior to the interview, or restructuring interviews so that autistic candidates can demonstrate their capacity to do a job rather than simply talk about it could open up untapped talent streams that you have been missing for years.

Consider the sensory environment of your workplace

Overwhelming sensory environments can be difficult for autistic students and employees. This can include hyper-reactivity to stimuli across all five sensory modalities and according to Harrison and Hare (2004) bright lights, loud noises, and strong odours can lead to increased levels of emotional discomfort and even physical pain for some.

That said, making a workplace more autism-inclusive is typically neither that disruptive nor expensive, in fact simple accommodations like moving a desk nearer a window to avoid strip lighting, providing warnings if there will be loud noises such as alarms, or allowing the option of wearing noise-cancelling headphones whilst working individually are usually effective – and welcomed by all staff. Evidence suggests that when this sort of planning and support is put in place at the initial stages, autistic staff can thrive for many years.

It’s not the nice thing to do, it’s the smart thing to do

Given the poor employment outcomes for autistic students and graduates it might be tempting to view inclusive recruitment as just a nice thing to do, but evidence suggests that autistic employees can be among the most productive, reliable and dedicated members of staff with fewer days off and better outputs, thus it is more a matter of it being the smart thing to do.

Talking of his autistic employee, Head of Software Development at Deichmann SE states, “Peter absolutely delivered the added value we wanted. His extremely precise approach coupled with his very high quality standards in testing were worth their weight in gold.”

If you are interested in drawing on this untapped pool, organisations like Care Trade, Auticon, MyPlus, Specialisterne and Evenbreak have extensive experience in supporting companies in recruiting autistic students and graduates.

Regional recruitment

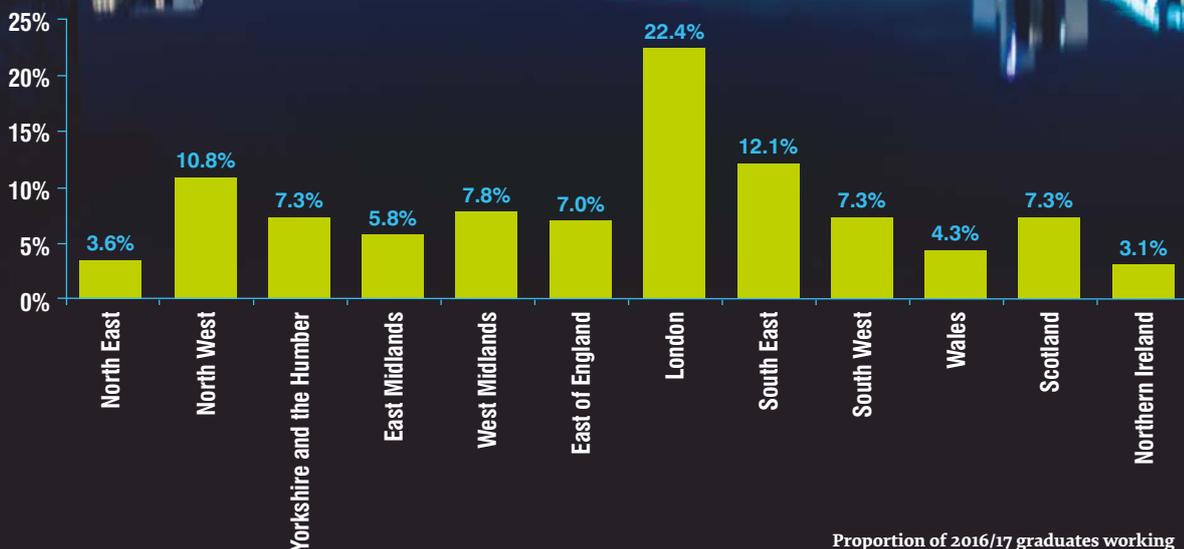
Charlie: Town and country - where do graduates work?

A great many commentators speak about the 'UK graduate labour market' as if it were an individual entity with university leavers moving freely around the country in search of work and careers.

There is not really a single UK graduate labour market as such, but rather a set of discrete, sometimes (but not always) local and regional labour markets that usually influence the markets around them. Of

course, it also sits within a global market that influences what opportunities are available to graduates.

This is because graduates are not as mobile as many people believe. Last year 58% of UK graduates started their career in an area local to their graduating institution, and 69% in an area local to their original domicile. And that's because 45% of graduates didn't



Proportion of 2016/17 graduates working in different regions of the UK



Charlie Ball
Head of Higher
Education Intelligence,
Prospects



Tristram Hooley
Chief Research Officer,
ISE

move. They went to a local university and then got a job close to home. This is actually now the usual way graduates get jobs. Only 18% of graduates undertook what is usually considered the 'typical' experience of going away to university and then moving to find work – and nearly half then moved to London.

Last year 41,290 graduates are known to have started their career in London. This is a substantial number, 22.4% of the whole new graduate workforce, and nearly 10 times the number starting in any other city. But most graduates don't work in the capital – and likely never will.

This has a number of important consequences for employers. No matter where you advertise your job, the likelihood is that most graduates will not initially consider it, even if (and for many, especially if) your job is in London. And it's not enough to imagine that all the 'best' or 'most ambitious' graduates will move for you. The bigger cities have strong and diverse enough labour markets to keep their high achievers - 4,670 graduates started their careers in

Birmingham last year, 4,420 in Manchester, 3,625 in Leeds and 3,370 in Glasgow.

These are large, strong, significant jobs markets for skilled workers, with their own characteristics, strengths – and shortages. Manchester is a particularly competitive market for IT talent right now, for example, which means it makes sense for good coders to look for work there.

If a region is short of particular skills or occupations, it's not easy to address that quickly. Graduates are reluctant to move to places they do not already know so that in our

smaller towns there are difficulties attracting graduates. If you're in a town with a shortage of engineers, and you want an engineer, you need to learn to market your location as much as your company. Why would someone move across the country to join you? These are the new terms of engagement for smart employers.

As our relationship with the EU – and our access to skilled labour – changes, these questions are going to become more important and the wise employer is already taking these factors into consideration when they recruit.

Tristram: Spatial justice – the final frontier for diversity and inclusion?

If you are recruiting graduates you are likely to end up with someone who either grew up near where you are based or someone who went to university near where you are based. Charlie talks about what some of the recruitment issues associated with this might be, but I wanted to look at this issue from a diversity and inclusion perspective.

In our Student Recruitment Survey 2018 we found that employers were deeply concerned with the diversity of their workforce. The majority (96%) of our members told us that they were prioritising one or more diversity issue, with gender, ethnicity, social mobility, disability and sexual orientation all areas of concern. While there is

“...if you're in a town with a shortage of engineers, and you want an engineer, you need to learn to market your location as much as your company

a lot more to do on all of these issues, the case has clearly been made for the business benefits of diversity and the importance of business contributing to a socially just world.

However, it is becoming increasingly apparent that in the UK, geography has an important role to play in structuring people's access to opportunities. The Office for National Statistics shows that the average disposable income in London and the Thames Valley is almost twice as much as it is in the Black Country or Tees Valley. Other research from The Sutton Trust finds that the area in which you grow up affects both your chance of going to university and whether you are likely to be able to move to attend the best university for what you'd like to study. What is more these inequalities, as is often the case, are piled on top of other inequalities. So rich people find it easier to move to access opportunities than poorer people.

This kind of research has led some people to start to talk about 'spatial justice'. This is the idea that we need to think about how geography structures access to opportunities and the chance of building a good life. We are rightly uncomfortable to be living in a society where women are typically paid less or where black and ethnic minorities are discriminated against. Given this, it can't be fair that being born in London gives you considerable life advantages over being born in Blackpool or Doncaster.

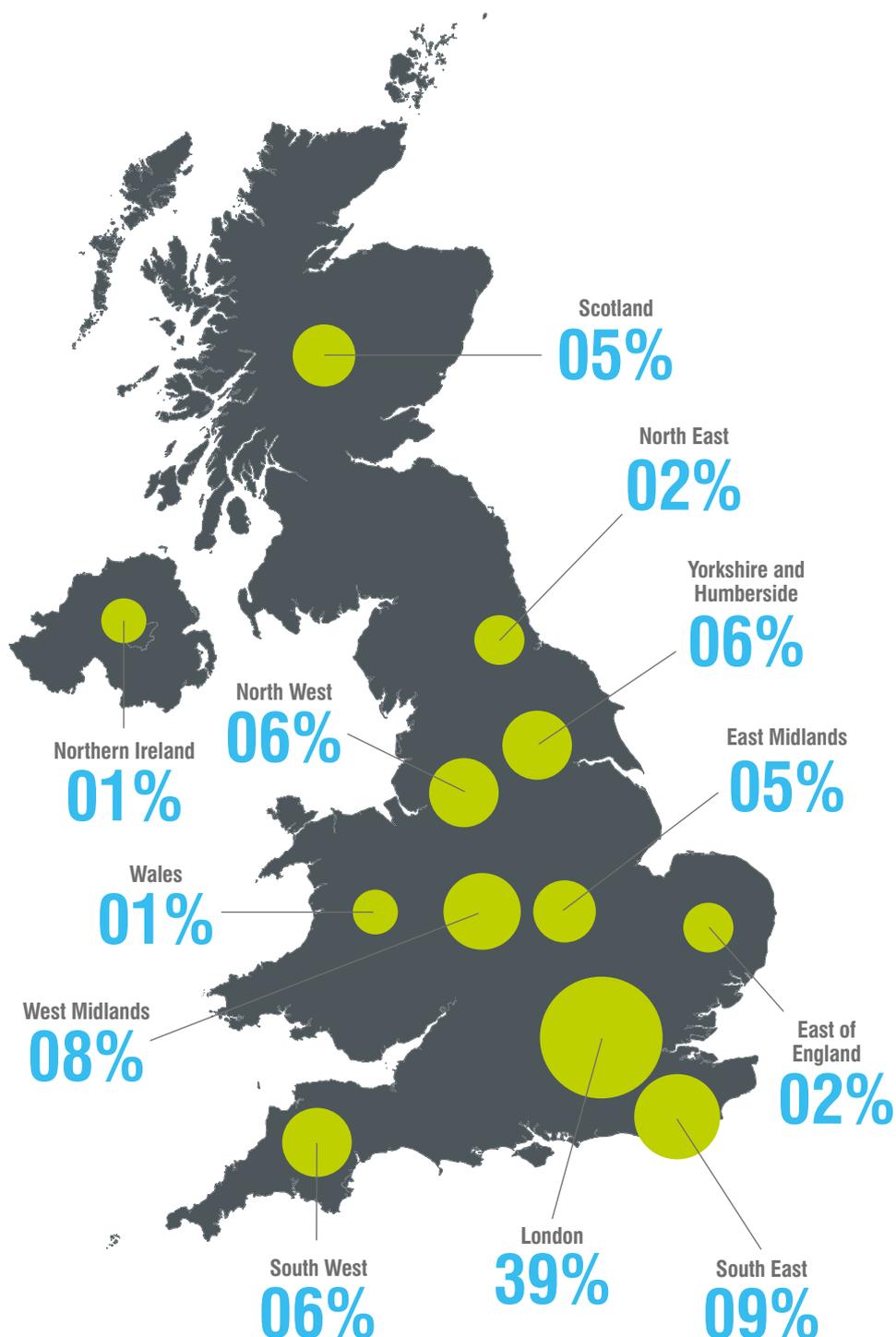
Traditionally student recruitment hasn't had a great record in contributing to spatial

“...it's not enough to imagine that all the 'best' or 'most ambitious' graduates will move for you

justice. If we look at the map of where employers told us that they were recruiting in our annual survey we can see that graduate recruitment is still sucking almost half of graduates to London and the South East.

This way in which graduate recruitment is acting to pull all graduates to London raises a number of spatial justice issues. It is likely to reduce the breadth of your hiring pool and lead to less diverse organisations. As most business problems usually have a spatial dimension as well it can be useful to have people in your team who grew up in the North West or by the sea or on a farm. The approach that is currently being taken in conventional graduate recruitment tends to militate against this kind of diversity and result in a workforce that is more southern, urban and more likely to be raised and educated near where your business is sited.

Addressing spatial justice presents challenges. Our recent survey showed that a third of employers are now offering graduates the opportunity to claim for travel and accommodation costs. This can really help to open up your opportunities to a geographically wider pool. Others are also recruiting from universities that are further afield. The growth of apprenticeships also raises some issues around spatial justice as apprentices are even more likely to be rooted in the communities where they grew up.



“...it can't be fair that being born in London gives you considerable life advantages over being born in Blackpool or Doncaster

What can you do?

We suspect that most employers have never looked at this issue. A good first step would be to do an audit and find out more about the geographical diversity of your employees. Going further is likely to raise some even bigger issues for businesses. Does your organisation need to be so London centric? Can you open up more opportunities for flexible and home working? How does where people come from interact with retention? Have you considered your recruiters' unconscious bias about regional accents?

Spatial justice isn't an easy issue to deal with. But, geography is an important way in which opportunities are structured. If we want to have truly diverse and representative organisations we need to start thinking more about where our employees come from.



“...it is the board’s responsibility to ensure a business is sustainable and delivers value to its shareholders

Boardroom reality



Sarah Hathaway
Chief operating officer,
ISE

Corporate governance is not usually where all the action happens in a business. It’s usually more of a quiet Sunday evening ‘I really should pay more attention to it, but I don’t have the time’ chore. Until something goes wrong of course, and then whoever is responsible for governance is suddenly in the spotlight.

At ISE, that person is me.

Thankfully I haven’t had to see ISE through any constitutional crises, but it’s my job, and that of the Governance Committee (made up of Directors and Fellows), to make sure that we are meeting all our obligations on behalf of our members. To do that, I have been in every board meeting and interviewed every new director that has come on to the board since I joined – there have been 25 directors in total since 2015, and we’re about to welcome another four.

What is the point of a board? “If you’re not a part of the solution, you’re a part of the problem.”

We all know what happens when boards don’t execute their responsibilities correctly. High profile failures have resulted from a failure to manage the supply chain, a lack of response to market forces or questionable financial practices. Fundamentally, it is the board’s responsibility to ensure a business is sustainable and delivers value to its shareholders – in ISE, those shareholders are our members. Getting the balance right between value and sustainability is what takes up much of a board’s time.

While the ISE isn’t Carillion or Kodak, examples of decisions the board has made include extending the categories of directors to include universities and suppliers and so become more representative, and changing the membership structure to abolish affiliates and slim down the number of categories, to make it easier and cheaper for members.

What does a typical board meeting look like? “Come to the coast, we’ll get together, have a few laughs...”

There is always a business update from Stephen and a financial update from Craig Smith (Treasurer) and myself. Directors with responsibilities for specific strategic objectives provide an update, and key decision points are discussed. And at certain times of year there are additional items, such as the AGM, conferences, and the signing off of the accounts.

At times there is a healthy level of disagreement about the right way forward. The benefit of having a strong and balanced board is that, after all views are heard, a consensus is usually reached.

Despite a heavy agenda, and five or so hours of discussion, there’s always time for hilarity and the occasional ‘off on a tangent’ moment. We even have a ‘rabbit hole’ monitor at every meeting!

How to become a director? “Welcome to the party, pal!”

At any one time, there are a maximum of 14 serving directors - the board is actually bigger than the ISE team. Gone are the days where if you knew the CEO and had some spare time, there was a seat for you at the board table. Directors have to be both experts in their field, so that they can guide the organisational strategy, and guardians of the legal and financial responsibilities of the business.

“Yippee-ki-yay!”

We’ll be welcoming a new Chair in 2019. Alison has steered the good ship ISE for five years now, and we are all grateful for her expertise and oversight – thank you Alison!

Quotes from Die Hard: not just for Christmas!

Employability matters: a university perspective

As an employer within the University of Edinburgh, the Information Services Group shares its unique experience of employing students within a university environment.



Laura Richardson
Employment Officer,
University of
Edinburgh



Lucy Everett
Employer Engagement
Manager, University of
Edinburgh



“...Providing work experience and supporting employability empowers our students while building a healthy pipeline of talent”

Top tips for employers

Be targeted: writing tailored communications for different audiences is time-consuming, but really effective.

Be distinctive: with so many opportunities out there, be clear about what makes your organisation different.

Get face-to-face: digital works but students really value chatting to employers on campus.

First impressions count: students are sensitive to image and want to work for organisations that wear their ‘inclusivity-heart’ on their sleeve, so your reps on campus should reflect this.

Students listen to students: peer word of mouth is a powerful tool, pay your student ambassadors to tell their friends!

At the Information Services Group (ISG) student employability is part of our strategic ambitions. The University as a whole is measured on its success in this area, and students are increasingly considering employability an important factor in their student experience.

ISG is responsible for the University’s physical and digital services across libraries, IT, learning technologies and study spaces, so we are in a fantastic position to offer employment – with over 300 students working with us in the last year. Students are also the main consumers of our services: by employing them to work on projects that affect them we benefit from a rich source of productivity and innovation to help shape these services.

How we engage our students

As an employer within a university we are afforded unique opportunities to engage our student body, including delivering learning technologies used in curriculum, improving their study spaces and access to research. However, in a city filled with tech employers, we might not always be an obvious choice for students wanting to work in the IT sector, so we continuously look for interesting ways to reach them.

We find that careers fairs and informal ‘brown bag’ lunchtime career talks are effective. We also encourage our current student employees to engage their peers through promotional videos and blogging about their work experience.

We take advantage of the insights our Careers Service provides (see our ‘top tips’) and the student engagement activities it facilitates - both on campus and digitally.

How we support a positive employment experience

We want each student to get the most out of their work experience with us, so we collaborated with our Careers Service and HR colleagues to create a ‘digital student guidebook’ and professional development resources to support students balancing employment alongside their studies. Students can also complete an ‘Edinburgh Award’ - a wrap-around reflective learning framework that helps students to articulate their work experience and is recognised by the University on their HEAR.

Providing work experience and supporting employability empowers our students while building a healthy pipeline of talent, which ISG, the University and the wider workforce can benefit from.

The human side of business

To attract and retain the best talent, employers must focus on the human side of business. **Personal growth rules.**



Saj Jetha
Founder, The Smarty Train



Just over half of students are considering setting up their own business. As a business founder myself, I can certainly understand the appeal – but what's interesting is that an increasing number don't seem to want to be an employee before they become an employer.

Why aren't graduates enticed by the employment opportunities in front of them? Well, perhaps they have reason to be wary when you consider that 71% of millennials say that they are either not engaged or are actively disengaged at work according to a recent Gallup poll.

There's a gulf between what employers are offering, and what those entering the job market want and expect.

This is not a call for dogs in the office, pool tables in the kitchen and free beer on tap – though these things may help. It is a call for getting back to the little things that make a big difference in people's relationship with work.

“...In a world where students can set up a business from their bedroom, companies need to work hard to compete not only with each other for talent, but also with the draw of being self-employed.

In a world where students can set up a business from their bedroom, companies need to work hard to compete not only with each other for talent, but also with the draw of being self-employed.

What graduates want

Graduates want to have autonomy, to make an impact, to feel valued and to be creative. Importantly, they want to have opportunities for personal growth – which according to numerous studies is on par with salary in the decision to join and stay.

With information transmitted at the speed of light, they also want to cut through the complexity and get straight to experiencing results. I call this hacking – and I believe there has never been a better time to fuse opportunities for personal growth with a hacking mindset.

Most recruitment processes don't account for any of this – instead relying on old-fashioned giveaways

and tick-box assessment centres, in rather one-way relationships. Then there's the onboarding experience, induction, the graduate training programme and beyond.

Impressing the best talent

Businesses should be looking for a chance to impress the best talent – as well as to find it – by showing them how they are going to grow, learn and develop at their organisations in every stage of the relationship. Show rather than tell.

I've been humbled to work with leading employers rethinking the assessment centre to make them two-way and immersive. Learning now happens on both sides and the experience is unforgettable. Inductions are being transformed into productions and powerful learning experiences. A candidate summarised, “Imagine a child going to Disneyworld on Christmas Day, times that by 1000 and you're still nowhere near how excited I am [to start]”.

The constant theme is: if you're growing, you're not going. It can be the difference between an employer whose workforce is demotivated and disengaged, and one that is able to unlock the talent of everyone in the business, whether they're on a graduate scheme or in the C-suite.

The industry has been busy building recruitment and development functions thinking traditional economics is still in play. It saw humans as akin to Spock from Star Trek – highly logical, data-driven and completely rational – but in practice, this isn't the case. Spock probably wouldn't take the risk of starting a business, but over half of students are considering it because they're looking for something else, logical or otherwise, that they don't feel they can get from what's already out there.

Companies need to make sure that they are able to match these new expectations for the world of work – and they can do so if they focus on the human side of business. Humans always want to be growing.

Nudge in the right direction

A trial on engaging students with jobs information online is proving successful in more ways than one.



Jon Arundel
Director, U-Explore

A student will make many choices on their journey to employment. As a parent of an 11-year-old daughter starting out in secondary school, I can see that even she is beginning to encounter these choices and how quickly she moves from being ignorant to overwhelmed.

There's no shortage of information available to help students make their career choices, particularly online: the trouble is that it often lacks any kind of architecture. The process of navigating this information also focuses far too much on what the user already knows (limited at 11 years old) or what they're interested in. They only ever see half of the story.

Choice architecture

I regularly hear that employers struggle to compete for talent for important jobs that they're perhaps less well known for. Equally, there are many more concerned about communicating the jobs they'll need in the next few years, let alone the roles they have available today.

The process of using tiny prompts to alter behaviour – or “nudge” theory – is well practised in areas such as health promotion. For example, tactics to steer people's food choices towards healthier options are accepted as being in the interests of the individual, wider society and the economy. If, therefore, we see it as a good thing to get more students in to high-skilled high-paid jobs, or pursuing roles that will keep our businesses competitive, why don't we apply more of this thinking when it comes to online careers information?

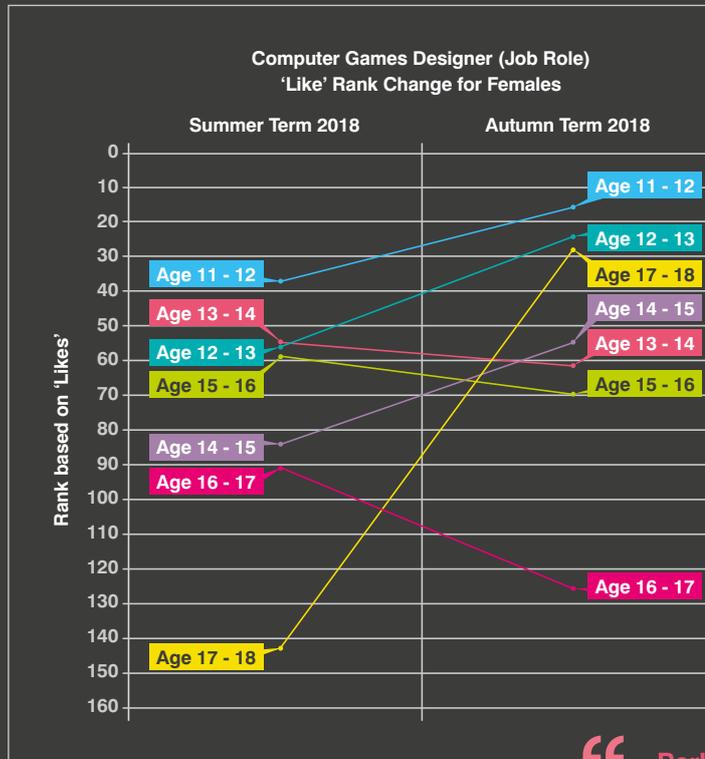
What's required for this approach to be effective?

The Careers & Enterprise Company said in a report (The Evidence Base for Careers Websites, 2017) that the usefulness of online careers information was “limited both by poor design and by a fragmented market”. Good design is absolutely key to the success of this approach but we shouldn't be fooled in to creating the ‘Instagram of careers’ – that will never work.

Being online offers scale and we need a method that reaches as many students as possible; and since almost every young person attends a school or college, they have to be central to the solution. Limiting the number of places we send students for information and starting early will also be key.

Do we know what works?

I've been observing a trial with students across c3,500 schools and colleges using startprofile.com. It involves positioning certain growth jobs at key places on the



“...Perhaps even more encouraging is that the approach seems to be raising the profile of job roles that would normally have a gender bias.”

homepage (at eye-level so to speak) but amongst the range of other jobs students can explore. Since introducing this we found that the median rank of these jobs (based on number of student ‘likes’) rose 32 places compared to the previous term, despite dislikes also rising.

Perhaps even more encouraging is that the approach seems to be raising the profile of job roles that would normally have a gender bias. For example, we're seeing increased levels of interest in almost every female year group for games designer roles (see chart). Students are being exposed to jobs they would not typically find if searching based on interest or other more conventional methods.

What opportunities could this open up?

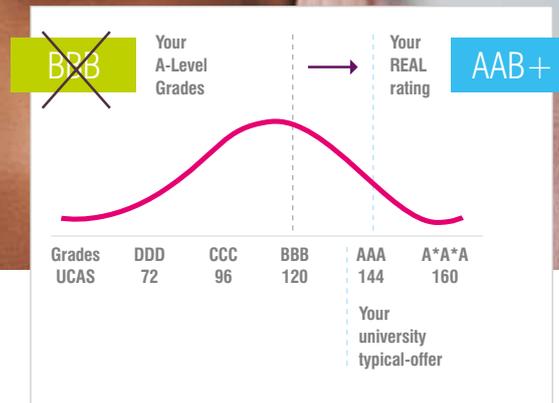
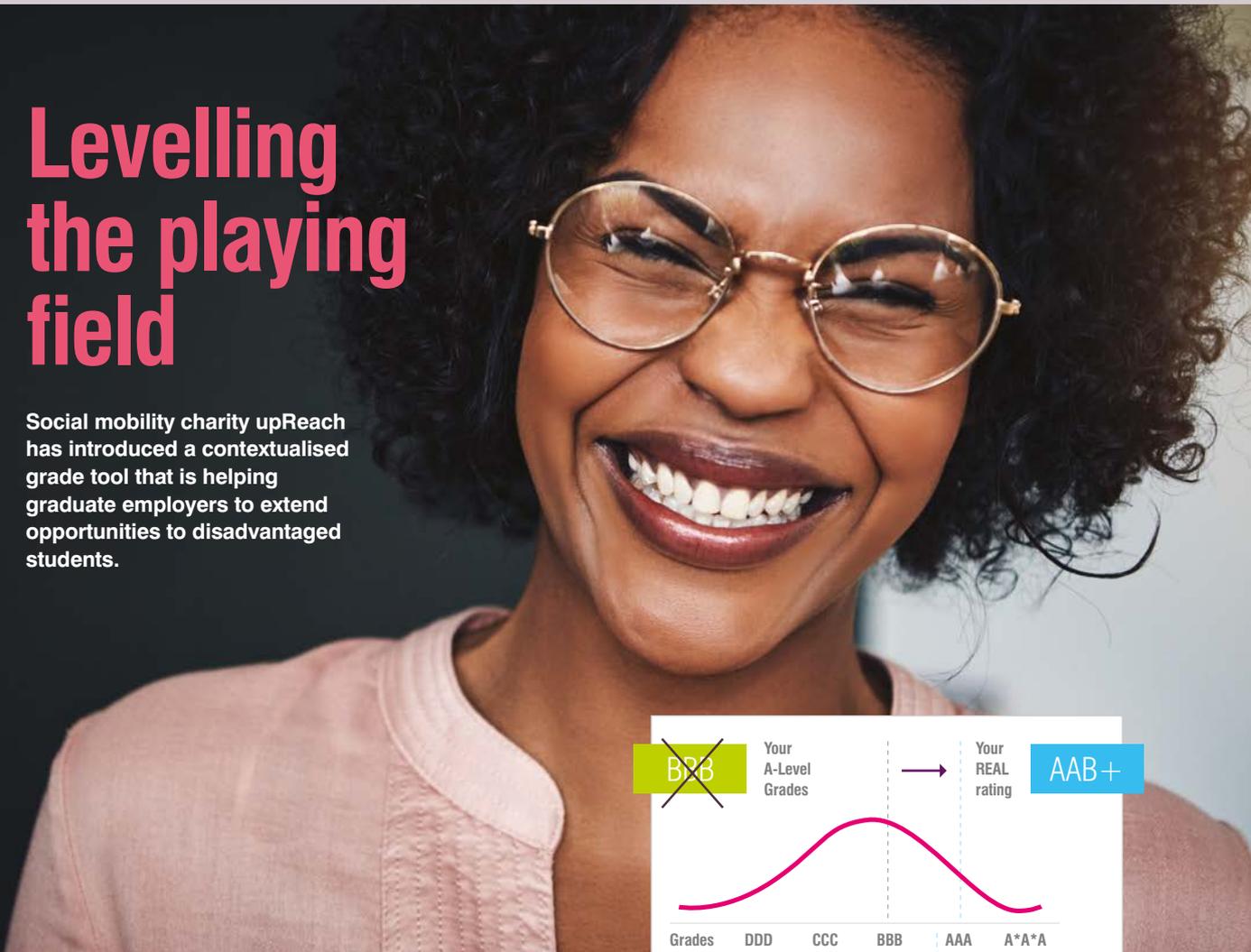
Whilst there is more work to do, this trial shows that applying some simple nudge tactics could help in areas such as:

- helping industries and sectors to nurture interest and change perceptions
- helping employers to recruit to specific roles e.g. hard to fill or future ‘hot jobs’
- targeting engagement with certain groups of students

While taking care not to negatively affect a student or their future career, employers should consider the ‘architecture’ of their online careers information as it has potential to transform early talent attraction activities.

Levelling the playing field

Social mobility charity upReach has introduced a contextualised grade tool that is helping graduate employers to extend opportunities to disadvantaged students.



Eugene Malthouse
Employer Partnerships
Manager, upReach

“...the tool makes contextualised grades available to all employers, regardless of their size and budget.”

REAL (Relative Education Attainment Level) is a free research and evidence-based contextual recruitment tool that adjusts students’ grades by taking into account fourteen indicators of disadvantage such as school performance decile, free school meal eligibility and postcode data. This means that A-level grades of applicants who attended weak state schools are raised by up to three grades, putting them ahead of many privately educated candidates.

Designed to have maximum impact on social mobility, the tool makes contextualised grades available to all employers, regardless of their size and budget.

Identify hidden talent

Recruiters are using the tool so they can identify a candidate’s actual A-level results and their contextualised grades as well as indicators of disadvantage that have been flagged by an applicant. It is helping them to find talent that would previously have been hidden.

One talented student, who wished to remain anonymous, had been held back on account of his A-Level grades despite ranking in the top 5% on his course in his first year at Exeter University, where he received a contextualised offer of ABB rather than AAA:

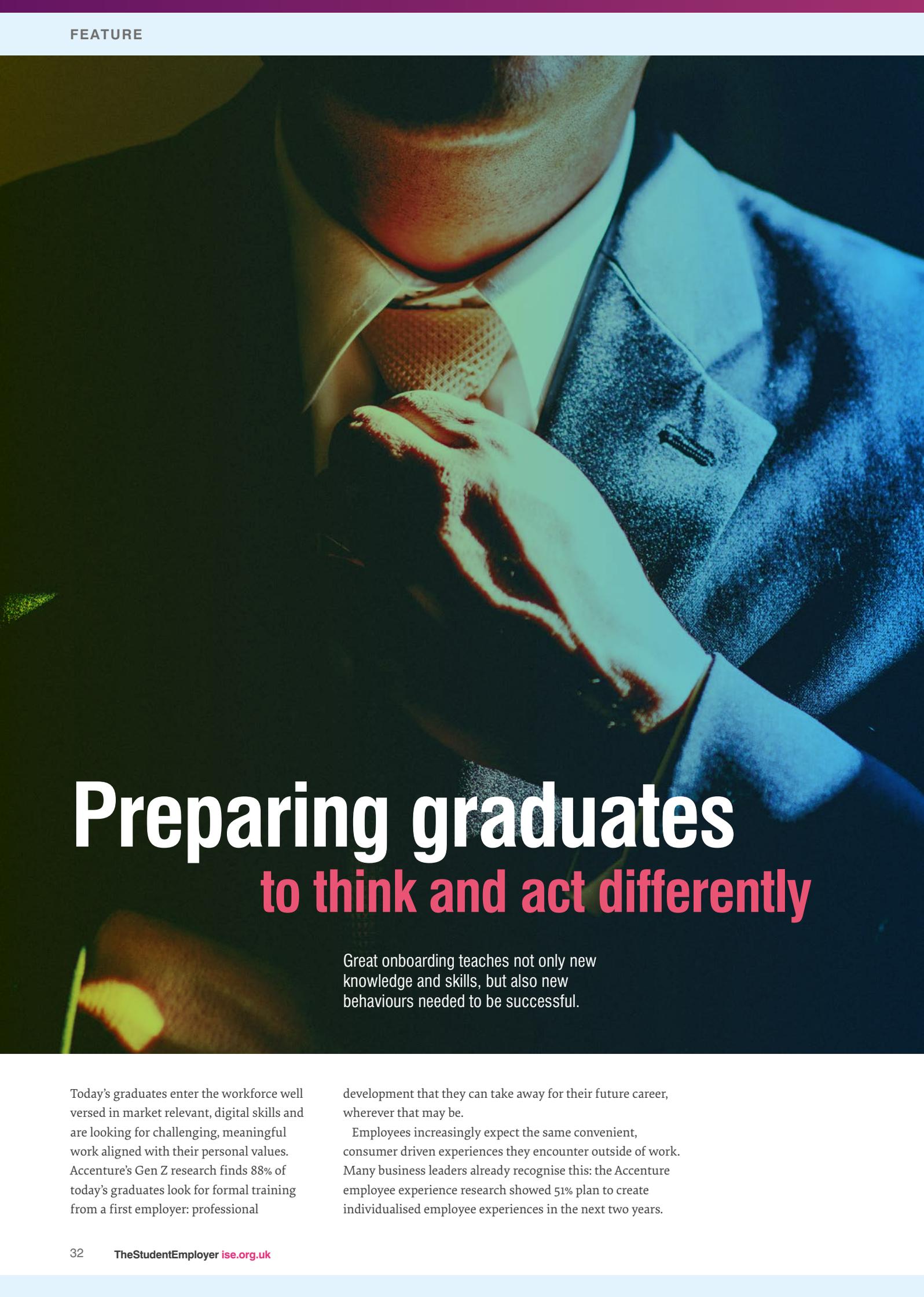
“I was part of the ‘Realising Opportunities’ programme. I’m a first generation immigrant - having been born in Afghanistan and part of the first generation within my family to attend university”, he said. “However, when I

applied for an internship with a large investment bank last year, I got turned down because I didn’t meet their A-level grade requirements - they would have accepted others on my course even if they’d got worse results than me in their first year. I did manage to secure an internship at Close Brothers, who offer exclusive internships for upReach Associates based on potential, rather than A-Level grades from over two years ago.”

Create a level playing field

REAL has so far been tested and implemented by three leading consultancies, 2020 Delivery, North Highland and JMAN Group. While 2020 Delivery and North Highland direct applicants to a branded form using a unique link during the application process, JMAN Group fully integrated REAL into their Applicant Tracking System.

“We want to create a level playing field at JMAN to ensure that we attract and celebrate talent, regardless of social background”, says Anush Newman, Co-Founder and Managing Partner. “REAL allows us to identify students who have achieved against the odds, and gives us an important advantage against other management consultancies who miss hidden talent because they don’t contextualise academic performance.”



Preparing graduates to think and act differently

Great onboarding teaches not only new knowledge and skills, but also new behaviours needed to be successful.

Today's graduates enter the workforce well versed in market relevant, digital skills and are looking for challenging, meaningful work aligned with their personal values. Accenture's Gen Z research finds 88% of today's graduates look for formal training from a first employer: professional

development that they can take away for their future career, wherever that may be.

Employees increasingly expect the same convenient, consumer driven experiences they encounter outside of work. Many business leaders already recognise this: the Accenture employee experience research showed 51% plan to create individualised employee experiences in the next two years.



Milan Vrucinic
Consultant, Accenture



Antonia Cobb
Senior Manager,
Accenture

Exceptional Employee Experience (EX) is about more than giving employees unlimited choices or promoting onsite climbing walls and artisan coffee. It's about providing employees with a set of focused options that not only drive engagement but also help them achieve their full potential and therefore drive business value.

Work itself is changing with digital automation of many basic tasks making entry level roles more and more demanding. This aligns with what graduates want, but makes their learning curve steeper than ever.

This isn't just something we tell our clients. Accenture achieved 5% productivity uplift with just one EX-driven behavioural initiative. It was designed, built and launched for our UK consulting graduate joiners in a six-week sprint. This was measured in terms of time spent on client work and delivered via our approach to EX, which takes three fundamental insights from the consumer world:

1) Identify pockets of value

Start with the business outcomes you want to achieve. As a talent-led business, our people are everything and time-to-productivity is a significant value lever. In the UK, 300-500 consulting graduates join us every year. They are smart and ambitious, but Accenture is a complex organisation with lots of moving parts to become familiar with. Employee Experience is more than simply being engaged, it's about driving productivity for competitive advantage.

2) Moments matter: just maybe not the ones you think

Don't make assumptions about the types of experiences your workforce wants. Analytics, ethnography and social listening uncover the professional and personal moments that matter for different groups. Armed with this understanding, you can design hyper personalised experiences more likely to impact productivity goals. We identified six different personas within our UK consulting graduate group alone, including how to hit the ground running on a first client project as well as how to hold difficult conversations they had not experienced before. Building knowledge and confidence in these areas became a priority to address.

3) Co-create to design the experience

Engage with employees to co-create the most relevant and valuable experiences. User-centred design workshops allowed us to craft personalised experiences targeting the moments that matter in ways that resonated most with our own people. This resulted in the following initiatives:

- A Digital Onboarding challenge with daily micro-actions to practise new behaviours over the first 30 days – including learning to learn for yourself and learning to look after yourself (Case study “Accenture UK New Hire Onboarding” available on www.accenture.com).
- Bespoke Learning Boards for user-generated content for 27 common graduate roles – which went viral and got over 12,000 hits in the first year.
- Digital Coaching to provide a safe space to practise and reflect on difficult conversations, generating better conversations and outcomes in the real world, based on ‘moments that matter’ for our six graduate personas.

Immersing the graduates themselves in these design sprints and co-creating made the outputs relevant to their real challenges experienced day-to-day. #ByGraduatesForGraduates was an important guiding principle.

What does this mean for our business?

Digital technology provides real-time analytics which helps us to continually iterate, learn, and improve. Our award-winning onboarding challenge unlocked a material increase in productivity and dramatically increased organisational networking, with 1,100 plus new connections made by each cohort on our social collaboration platform.

A good EX attracts talent and boosts workforce engagement and retention. A stellar EX can directly improve productivity and business performance, with new people hitting the ground running, feeling welcomed, valued and prepared with the right combination of skills, knowledge and behaviours.

“...Exceptional Employee Experience (EX) is about more than giving employees unlimited choices or promoting onsite climbing walls and artisan coffee.”

AI can transform recruitment if algorithms are tuned correctly



Charles Hipps
CEO, Oleo

Reports suggest that an algorithm that was being tested as a recruitment tool by Amazon was sexist and had to be scrapped. This raises a number of questions about how artificial intelligence or machine learning should be applied to talent acquisition in a way that will not pick up the unconscious bias of humans.

Top employers continue to receive huge numbers of applications for each open position and ultimately, the majority of applicants – upwards of 95 percent – are turned down. With AI, employers should have an even greater ability to quickly flag candidates that have certain key indicators of success to streamline the selection process and nurture this talent ahead of competitors.

It is important though that a tool never does this based on historical data alone. Efforts must be made to constantly improve the robustness of any tool to help leading employers benefit from the best possible early evaluation of applicants based on responses given within online application forms. This can be achieved by collecting enormous amounts of structured and unstructured data, processing that data using the best from thousands of machine-learning algorithms to most accurately predict outcomes, and refining that process as it learns.

Constant machine learning will work to reduce unconscious biases and enhance diversity by uncovering strong candidates who may have gone unnoticed in a non-intelligent or manual process. In turn, recruiters gain insight and reasoning into which characteristics score the strongest.

Oleo commissioned the Department of Computer Science at University College London to look into how algorithms can ensure that they do not inadvertently fall into gender bias, as Amazon appears to have done.

It revealed that removing any wording or phrases that could unconsciously predict the gender of a candidate would enable algorithms to make any gender prediction to be no better than random with no direct impact from the loss of information in the transformation and de-biasing steps.

In fact, more consistent disparate impact scores of close to 1.0 (i.e. no disparate impact observed) are recorded in hiring predictions undertaken in this way providing better hired prediction performance. It is also shown to have consistent negligible disparate impact across a range of hiring values, providing room for adjustment in recruitment screening thresholds without increasing disparate impact.

Working in this way allows employers to foster diversity and accelerate candidate selection, promising no adverse selection in compliance with established selection rate guidelines around the four-fifths guidelines. Customised algorithms can elegantly handle high-volume automation and deliver at-a-glance qualified, quality candidate recommendations critical to recruiting success in large-scale hiring events.

Increasingly, companies want to do the right thing when it comes to fostering diversity from the start of the recruiting process. In terms of compliance, however, we've seen companies don't have standard processes in place to ensure they are meeting set standards. Correctly tuned algorithms can help companies shift from being reactive to proactive in balancing the need to accurately and quickly identify high-quality candidates while simultaneously ensuring compliance.

This can lead to a greater democratisation of recruitment by:

- Recommending candidates who unequivocally perform better
- Better record keeping / reproducible decision making
- Removing the economic bias to exclude
- Enabling employers to better understand what drives performance
- Moving away from the familiar "tried & tested"!

“...Constant machine learning will work to reduce unconscious biases and enhance diversity by uncovering strong candidates who may have gone unnoticed



Why moments matter

It's time to create more memorable brand experiences that better support young people in making the right career choices.



Steve Keith
Chief Behavioural
Officer and Founder,
The Branding Man

“...we should make more time to create memorable brand experiences that better support young people in making the right choices while strengthening recall and affinity for the employer brand”

Sleepovers in motorway lay-bys with my dad working as a haulage contractor. Camping holidays in France with my grandmother. Winning my first award for the ‘most organised’ pupil in Year 6 at primary school. The last day at secondary school. Moving to Durham to study Geography at university. The year my grandmother died. Graduating (twice). Crying in front of my pupils on my last day as a teacher. Telling my parents that I was gay. Celebrating my promotion to assistant director at EY in Amsterdam. The day I founded my own business.

We all have defining moments in our lives – meaningful experiences and milestones that stand out in our memory. Many are the result of accident or luck, but it wasn't until I read ‘The Power of Moments’ by brothers Chip and Heath Dan last year that I started to think about how many opportunities we miss in the world of student recruitment to better connect with, engage and inspire candidates that we meet by making the moments we have with them more memorable.

Why moments matter

Customer experience researchers at Forrester, a leading research and advisory firm, conduct an annual survey of more than 120,000 customers about their most recent experience of companies from a wide range of industries, using a scale of 1 to 7 (where 1 is very unhappy, and 7 very happy). They consistently find that the happiest customers spend more, and that there are more of them on the scale from 4 to 7. However, businesses tend to focus their customer experience efforts on the scale 1 to 3, placing 80% of their efforts in eliminating the negatives, when 9 times the value is the reward for focusing on elevating the positives.

It's this shift to ‘build peaks, not potholes’ where I can see an opportunity for more employers. In today's

competitive and uncertain market we should make more time to create memorable brand experiences that better support young people in making the right choices while strengthening recall and affinity for the employer brand. Win. Win. They may not be buying a product, but the experience offered is just as, if not more, important.

Thinking in moments

Easier said than done? Perhaps not. Taking principles outlined in the book, it's not difficult to find moments where the candidate experience can be elevated, provide personal insight, create a sense of pride, or better connect students to what life in the working world would be like. Those moments that matter the most for me in school leaver recruitment in particular are those which:

- Support young people's career choices in the key moments of inspiration and choice already inherently part of a young person's experience in the classroom and;
- Focus on the crucial moments of communication during face-to-face interactions that offer an opportunity to answer key questions asked around what it's like to work somewhere, the best pathway to start a career and whether the skills they have match the ones being advertised for.

Final thoughts

- Focus on the positive candidate experience, it's 9 times as valuable!
- Memories can create powerful ‘moments’ that can be used as part of a powerful attraction strategy.
- Think in ‘moments’ to build the elusive ‘best-in-class’ candidate experience.
- Start by taking the time to understand the journey candidates are on before, during and after they meet you.

A world of opportunity

Reggie landed an internship at BlackRock after knocking on the doors of London's wealthiest business people and is now chair of ACCA's new Talent Advisory Group. Here, he talks about social mobility and ACCA'S focus on working to break down barriers, opening up opportunities for quality work experience within local communities and how students are getting involved.

Growing up on a council estate in east London where my household financial income was low, positive role models were scarce and opportunities slim. So I'm all too aware of how hard it is to want to do well but not have the resources available to do it.

Championing social mobility for me is about showing students - and people in general - that whatever they want to do, they can, regardless of how competitive what they want to do is.



Reggie Nelson
Chair, Emerging Talent
Advisory Group,
ACCA

My way to beat the “mobility system” was football. I played at youth professional and youth semi-professional level, sacrificing education up until the age of 17. At 16, I signed a two year contract, but at 17, I decided that I didn’t want to play football anymore. Not knowing what my career prospects were or where my academic strengths lay, I decided to knock on the doors of the wealthy to find out what I could do for a career, meeting my mentor Quintin Price in the process.

I’m here today because I had the right guidance and stewardship and it only took one person to gear that for me. Someone just to show me: how to apply for internships, what finance is like, what books to read. This is what I want to do for others through the ACCA Talent programme - help students that have untapped potential realise how good they are, develop their skill sets and help them to excel upon leaving university. I personally think this is incumbent upon all of us, regardless of socio-economic background.

Social mobility can be complex and it needs to be hit at so many angles: improving educational attainment, tackling poverty, even improving health outcomes for those from underserved communities. All of these culminate in people who don’t have access to institutions who feel they have a social mobility deficit. I’m glad to be tackling it at an institutional level.

Social mobility in the headlines

Social mobility is in the news headlines yet again and rightly so. From access to Oxbridge and red brick universities, to the type of work secured once we graduate, the issue of social mobility has never really gone away.

At the time of writing, it was announced that the Social Mobility Commission would be re-launched with a £2 million research budget to promote social mobility in the UK.

Alongside this news, the Commission published its first Social Mobility Barometer. It makes for sobering reading, revealing that young people are the most pessimistic about their chances of moving up in society with just one in seven thinking their generation has the most opportunity to do so.

The survey reveals a deep unease in Britain about the gap between the rich and the poor. It shows that people think the government,

employers and schools are doing too little to help the less advantaged get a fair chance in life.

And there lies the problem, and one I’ve experienced. Getting a fair chance in life can be down to luck rather than design, and in my experience, it’s also about the networks in which you move.

Connections can break down social mobility barriers. Creating a strong network is vital to do this, but some people may lack the confidence to ask for advice and guidance. Groups like ACCA’s Emerging Talent Advisory Group are a great way to build connections, to talk about how we can create more social mobility and break down barriers.

The world of finance and accountancy has often been seen as a club – a group of like-minded, similarly educated people from similar backgrounds.

What’s impressed me about ACCA is its commitment to opportunity. ACCA was established in 1904 to open up access to the profession. It was the first body to have a woman as a member way back in 1908 – Ethel Purdie - and so has always held opportunity as a core value. For example, you don’t need a degree to study with ACCA.

Emerging Talent Advisory Group

Our Emerging Talent Advisory programme is designed to create a level playing field for students who are from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, helping them through shaping and informing development and employability initiatives with a view of creating a pipeline of talent for future employers. We have selected 20 enthusiastic undergraduate students from various academic institutions to become ambassadors for ACCA not only for their universities, but to represent students all across the UK.

We had our first Emerging Talent meeting in December 2018 and it was a great success. Students gathered to engage in thoughtful and strategic discussions. They planned how they were going to inform their universities about what ACCA offers, the challenges they may face in doing so, and also provided ideas on how to improve the future talent website. It was great seeing such diversity in the room, from academic institutions to gender and race.

Being in a position where I can inform innovative strategies to help students break down barriers to entry, help them to develop tangible transferable skills and gain industry knowledge and techniques to succeed, drives me to want to make a difference. I’m excited what will unfold in the New Year.

“...Getting a fair chance in life can be down to luck rather than design, and in my experience, it’s also about the networks in which you move.

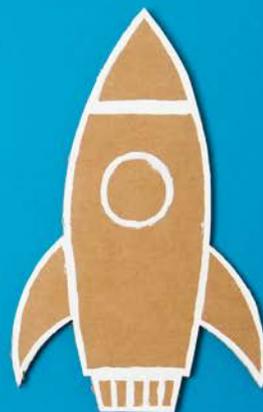
“...young people are the most pessimistic about their chances of moving up in society with just one in seven thinking their generation has the most opportunity to do so.



Edward Walker
Principal Consultant,
Talent & Potential

Evidenced-based development

An evidence-based approach helps early talent at Mott MacDonald maximise their chances of career success.



Challenge

For a number of years Talent & Potential has been working with the Early Careers Team at Mott MacDonald to help their graduates better understand how they can drive their own career development.

This is a challenge as young people receive conflicting advice from parents, educators, recruiters and the media, which can leave them feeling confused about what they need to do to build a successful career.

Solution

Our approach is centred around careers workshops that provide those attending with trustworthy evidence and advice, based on research into the careers of successful people. To maximise the likelihood that the content delegates receive is relevant to them, we are always careful to provide evidence from a range of different sources.

The findings of studies that summarise several years of academic research underpin our work. Workshop delegates can use this information to either challenge or support their existing thinking about careers. We also draw upon our extensive experience as careers practitioners. For example, our research, which is based on interviews with over 1600 successful individuals, has allowed us to identify a number of tactics commonly used by organisational high-fliers. Delegates are given the opportunity to think how they can apply these tactics to their own career.

Data from the client organisation and the views of their own internal stakeholders are also taken into account. Prior to attending the workshop, every delegate conducts a career interview with someone they regard as having a successful career. During the workshop, delegates are given opportunities to compare their findings with one another; they can also hear from and question directors.

This organisational data helps them better understand the wider research on career success and assess its relevance in the context of their own organisation. This is particularly important for companies such as Mott MacDonald, whose partnership management structure sets them apart from most organisations.

Success

Measuring the workshop's impact across a delegate's whole career is impractical given the timescales involved, so instead we collect more readily available evidence from different sources. While 'happy sheets' do have their limitations, delegate feedback immediately following the workshops has always been positive with 100% rating their usefulness either 'excellent' or 'good'. We also use set questions at every workshop to measure the delegates' level of careers knowledge. This helps us understand whether learning has taken place. Stakeholder feedback provides a final source of valuable evidence, helping us to understand how the workshops are perceived by those not directly participating.

When these different sources of evidence each indicate a positive outcome, this gives us confidence that the workshops are increasing the likelihood that the delegates will make informed careers decisions and go on to enjoy successful careers.

"By working through real life examples of successful individuals, validated further through the views of both our internal stakeholders and the facilitation of Talent & Potential, graduates can contextualise and relate to what is being taught. In short, they are given practical advice and tools to apply back in the workplace, at a time when they are starting to take full ownership of their career."

Paul Dilley, Mott MacDonald

“...
Prior to attending the workshop, every delegate conducts a career interview with someone they regard as having a successful career.”

Assessment centre simulation

Smart Resourcing Solutions collaborated with the University of Leeds to support widening participation students.



Louise Grimes
University Partnerships
Manager, Smart
Resourcing Solutions

Challenge

The University of Leeds sought to target support for widening participation students who had expressed a lack of confidence in applying for placement and/or graduate positions and who felt anxious about attending an assessment centre.

It was hoped that by providing additional support to students, by offering an assessment centre simulation in a safe, learning environment, that confidence levels would increase, and aspirations would be raised to encourage more applications to employers from this group of students.

Solution

Based on our successful assessment centre simulation format, we ran two events on campus, scheduled for 30 widening participation students. The assessment centres consisted of three exercises: group exercise, case study presentation and a one-to-one interview. They also featured some key enhancements.

Following completion of the half-day event, students each received one-to-one coaching and verbal feedback on the day. This was further supported by written feedback on their performance, which included strengths demonstrated and any key development areas identified.

Smart Resourcing Solutions' team of experienced industry assessors supported the assessment and coaching sessions.

The assessors enjoyed providing invaluable feedback highlighting desirable behaviours expected at an assessment centre and any areas of development for the future.

Upon completion of the event and reflection of their learning, the students were eligible to receive a Level 3 AQA accreditation in Employability Skills, an excellent CV enhancer!

Success

Both events were well attended with students engaged and prepared for the tasks ahead.

Student Adam Toeg told us, "I have an assessment centre in two weeks at Rolls Royce. I came here to practise ahead of my assessment. It has been so valuable."

The Student Survey report revealed an increase in confidence levels across all three elements of the assessment centre since attending the simulation, highlighted by a 32% increase in students feeling more confident to participate in a group exercise.

Jane Campbell, Head of Student Careers, stated: "University of Leeds Student Careers has a strategic commitment to support students who would benefit from targeted interventions to enhance their employability skills. This year our widening participation students fed back that they were worried about attending assessment centres and asked for additional support. We were delighted to be able to work with Smart Resourcing Solutions to provide the opportunity for students to experience an assessment centre experience first-hand, in a familiar and accessible environment."

Karen Shaw, Mentoring and Widening Participation Manager added, "for me, one of the key aspects of this activity was the dedicated time given to each student to receive their individual feedback and coaching on the day."

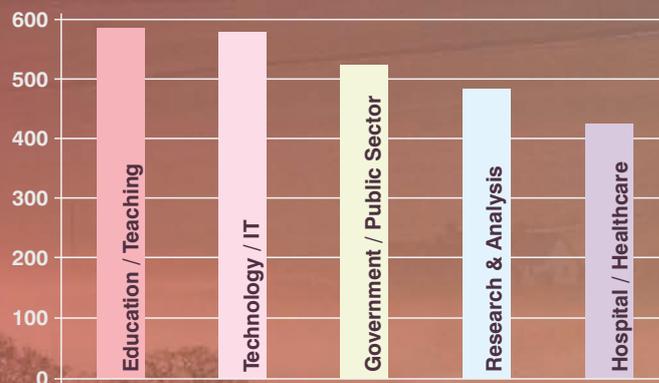
Aspirations have clearly been raised as the report revealed a 27% increase in students feeling 'very confident' about applying for graduate jobs.

“...
The Student Survey report revealed an increase in confidence levels across all three elements of the assessment centre since attending the simulation

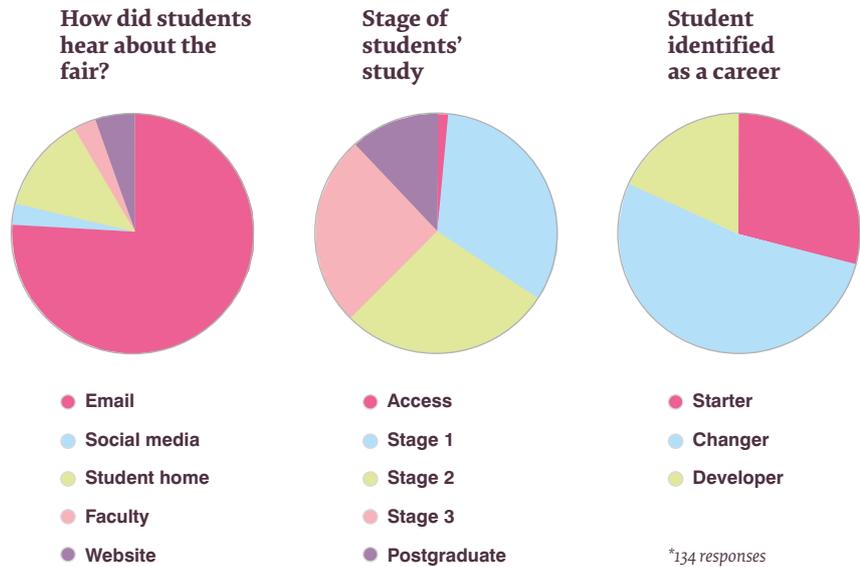
Connecting employers with diverse talent

The Open University's Employer Engagement team has been busy innovating to help employers in the UK and beyond mine its diverse and rich seam of experienced graduate talent.

Top 5 sectors of interest



OU Online TalentConnect



Georgina Phillips
Employer Engagement
Manager, The Open
University

Challenge

OU candidates have a unique combination of strengths from work and life experience as well as their qualification. A diverse talent pool of thousands of students and recent graduates, they are ready to fill various graduate roles from entry level to senior. Although 75% are in full- or part-time employment, most of our students aim for a career change or progress on their current path, with a growing number just starting out as the average age decreases (currently 28).

Connecting resource-stretched employers with thousands of students and recent graduates based from Inverness to St Ives, from Cardiff to County Antrim, clearly presents us with a challenge. The OU's 50 years' experience in distance education helped us devise new tools for employers to mine this rich seam of experienced graduate talent.

Solution

OU's recently restructured Careers and Employability Services held the first of a series of online careers events, OU Online TalentConnect, in November 2018. The event and expansion of the careers service are part of a wider OU strategic programme called Enhanced Employability and Career Progression, which supports such initiatives across the whole of the OU, the largest university in the UK.

"Virtual" careers fairs (we prefer the term "online" as they are real events) are not an entirely new concept but not commonly found across the higher education landscape. Students could access OU Online TalentConnect via any digital device in the same way they access OU study. Features included online employer exhibitor booths, peer-to-peer live chat, a networking zone, polls, discussion topics, webcasts and on-demand careers guidance from the OU's Careers and Employability Services.

Other benefits included:

- Free for exhibitors – maximum reach with minimum resource
- 24-hour accessibility for flexible participation over five days
- Participation enabled for a diverse student body regardless of location, demographic, time constraints, study deadlines, disability, and financial means

Success

"It gave me a good overview of just how many employers value a degree from The Open University," said one participating student.

With 5,500 registered and 3,500 participating (of which 500 continued to view exhibitors afterwards), the results exceeded all our expectations. This revealed a huge demand for OU students to connect with employers.

Exhibiting employers at OU Online TalentConnect were as diverse as the OU student and graduate body, including IBM, Teach First, Network Rail, Citizens Advice, Tulip, the Environment Agency and HMRC. The majority (90%) gave the event the thumbs up, rating it between seven and ten out of ten.

The encouraging response from employers and students is driving us to hone and improve these events; following the first fair, 90% of participating exhibitors would recommend OU events to other employers. We are planning future OU Online TalentConnect events in the coming year, featuring different themes and formats. For more information contact careers-service-employers@open.ac.uk



Vicky Pryce
Board member, Centre
for Economics and
Business Research

Economic update: Fourth quarter 2018

The markets are currently gripped by Brexit concerns as politics and economics are once again intricately intertwined. There is renewed uncertainty over whether Parliament will be able to agree on an acceptable withdrawal deal with the EU - or whether we will leave the EU with no-deal or have a referendum and possibly even not leave at all.

Reflecting all this, business investment remains in the doldrums and manufacturing, which recovered in early summer after suffering a technical recession in the first half of the year, fell back by 0.9% in October. Although latest PMIs show some improvement since, export demand is falling and confidence in the sector fell in November to the lowest in 27 years. The slowdown in Europe, which is the main destination of UK exports, cannot have helped and the feared escalation of trade wars has had a negative impact on sentiment around the world.

The British Chambers of Commerce's survey of business conditions found that in the third quarter recruitment intentions of the private sector service were the weakest

they had been in 25 years. Since then, growth in the all-important services sector has continued its marked slowdown. Retail sales have been depressed as the consumer is reining in their expenses worried about over-indebtedness at a time of rising interest rates and stagnant or even falling house prices.

Where does one go from here?

Politics will continue to dominate. The current impasse on Brexit is likely to exert more downward influence on sentiment.

The late October budget in the UK at least offered some giveaways such as an improved capital allowances regime and higher personal allowances and tax thresholds. Wages are also finally rising faster than inflation, which has been helped by heavy retail price discounts and falling oil prices.

Consumer spending should in theory be boosted and the Office for Budget Responsibility upped its forecast for growth for 2019 to 1.6% to reflect this after expansion of just 1.3% in 2018.

The government also hopes for some investment to come in 2019 as a 'Brexit dividend' if a deal with a long enough transition period and which reduces uncertainty materialises.

Whatever the short term impact, the Treasury scenarios that were published in the autumn found that under even the most benign EU exit scenarios, GDP in the economy would be anywhere between 1.5% and 9% below where it otherwise would have been in 15 years' time with the no-deal scenario causing the biggest economic dislocation by far.

As the Chancellor of the Exchequer outlined: "If you look at this purely from an economic point of view, yes there will be a cost to leaving the European Union because there will be impediments to our trade."

Interestingly the tighter the assumptions for net migration from the EU the worse the outcomes become.

At the time of writing all bets are off making forecasting even more difficult than ever. But I can at least predict that we are in for a very bumpy year.

“...the tighter the assumptions for net migration from the EU the worse the outcomes become.”





Employers urged to check degree certificates

Urgent background checks have been ordered on 3,000 foreign doctors following an investigation into Zholia Alemi whose medical degree from the University of Auckland was not properly verified when she was appointed an NHS psychiatrist in 1995. Zholia's fake medical qualification was only discovered when she was convicted of fraud and theft after taking advantage of a vulnerable patient.

If you are recruiting graduates and don't have a process in place for verifying their degrees, then Zholia's story should act as a wake-up call.

While a fake fact on a CV might be an employee's only crime and their contribution to your workforce may be exemplary, it's a risky business to put your faith and your company's reputation and finances in the hands of a stranger without the proper checks. The consequences of inadequate checks can be serious, long-term and irreversible.

Risk Advisory Group analysed 5,000 CVs to find that more than half contained lies about academic background. To put their analysis into real terms, they found that if you receive 200 CV applications for a job, 40 of them will contain lies about degree qualifications.

Meanwhile research by Prospects, which runs Hedd, UK higher education's official degree verification and university authentication service, found that just a fifth of employers verify qualifications with the awarding body. Instead they put their trust in CVs or certificates and transcripts.

The need to make checks has never been greater and Prospects is urging employers not to take degree certificates at face value.

Jayne Rowley, chief executive of Prospects, explains: "There are some common traits to fake certificates such as dated terminology, but proper checks with the awarding bodies are essential. This is the only way to ensure the people we recruit are telling the truth about their credentials."

Prospects' 5 top tips for employers

#1

Notify applicants that you verify qualifications – if they refuse it could be a signal that something is off-kilter

#2

Only accept original – not photocopied – certificates

#3

Check certificates with the issuing university or via hedd.ac.uk

#4

Don't be duped by official-looking stamps – they are easy to buy online

#5

Check the legitimacy of a university on hedd.ac.uk – if it's not listed it's likely to be fake

Prospects has produced a free toolkit for employers 'Advice and Guidance on Degree Fraud' to help protect businesses from degree fraud. It also offers a free online service to check if a UK university or college is a recognised degree-awarding body. Both can be found at hedd.ac.uk



Dan Black
Global Recruiting
Leader, Ernst & Young

A LETTER FROM... America

Although I've been EY's Global Recruitment Leader for roughly a year and a half, I'm still asked about 'the state of hiring' in the US, where I call home.

I can now say with confidence that the needs and expectations of students are more consistent around the world than perhaps at any point in the past. This is due, in large part, to the seamless connectivity that this cohort enjoys online, on social, and via ever-growing opportunities to experience people and cultures in all corners of the globe.

Increasingly, therefore, what 'works' in one country often has broader applicability in other parts of the world, and vice-versa. I've noticed at EY and other leading organisations an increased willingness to leverage best practices across borders, largely due to a mindset change among thought leaders around how to attract and retain top talent.

In the US, I've noted a few shifts that have been especially powerful in providing a strategic advantage in talent attraction and acquisition:

- Forward-thinking leaders have made a concerted effort to put a stop to the negative stereotyping around student hires, instead focusing on the wide array of emerging skills they can bring to their teams, clients and communities. Student hires tend to be globally aware, tech savvy, and comfortable with the speed of change, having experienced it for most of their lives. These are all skills that are highly coveted in this Transformative Age.

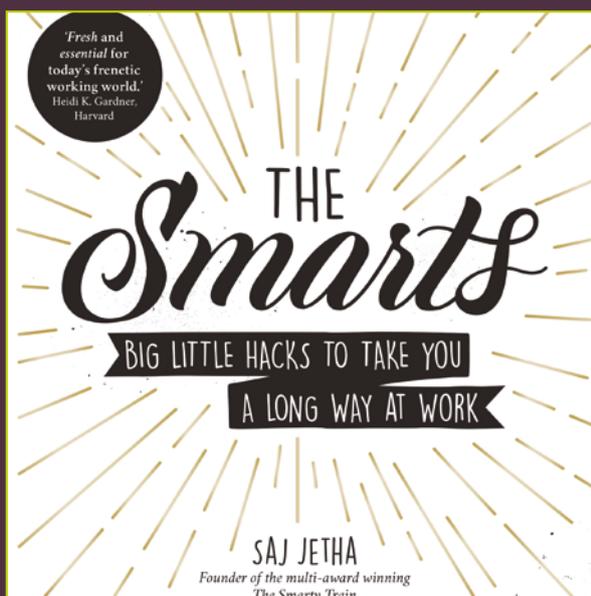
- Quite a few organisations have moved away from the “my way or the highway” approach to student hires, instead finding ways to meet them in the middle on at least some elements of the employee value proposition. What EY clients are asking of us requires not only different kinds of workers, but also different kinds of working. “Gig” work is a prime example: a flexible option that talent is increasingly seeking and the reason why we launched our GigNow platform in the US and now in 15 other countries. We have nearly 30,000 candidates in our EY ecosystem.
- To truly make progress, organisations have begun to champion behaviours more commonly associated with Gen Y/Gen Z within their offerings and approaches. Adopting agile approaches that allow for more customisation, quicker rollouts, and “failing fast” to get to the best ultimate solution are all tactics that I’ve seen proliferate among leading employers of all sizes. Changes to everything from benefits, to employer value propositions, to career paths are reflecting student preferences in ways they never have before. For example, EY Badges is a series of learning modules on transformational skills that people can opt for AND take with them if they decide to leave.



- This cohort of talent has grown up in a curated world. From newsfeeds and shopping recommendations to trip options and playlists, students organise knowledge and information to create meaning and deep personal relevance. Moreover, like most consumers who rely on product reviews when making a purchase decision, students evaluating employers tend to trust the word of their peers. I’ve noticed more organisations reworking their talent attraction strategies to focus on delivering more customisation and authenticity not only in how and where they communicate with students but in what they communicate. And that’s a win for employers and the students they seek to hire.

Without question, the willingness to understand and adopt a wide array of diverse ideas in an inclusive setting has been the key driver of success in the last two decades. Then again, isn’t it always?

BOOK REVIEW



The Smarts - Big little hacks to take you a long way at work
 Author: Saj Jetha

I once worked with a recruiter famous for a brilliant memory. He’d meet someone in a lift he’d hired years before and recall not only their name but often where and what they studied. This gift we all envied wasn’t bestowed, he worked at it, continually. He examined his little black book on the train to events, noting who would be there and key points to remember. And people remembered that he’d remembered.

Reading Saj Jetha’s tips on recalling names reminded me that we can all learn these skills. Repeat the name of a new contact back to yourself an hour after meeting them and you commit it to your long-term memory. The Smarts has 100 pages of such work hacks.

Easy to read, with strong visuals, the book makes light of the weight of behavioural science that underpins Saj’s thinking. Training managers and employability practitioners will find the book a useful resource for building programme content, as will line managers needing material to coach new hires. Although primarily aimed at those starting out, the book will also teach experienced hands new hacks or refresh forgotten skills.

I read the book over the New Year break, an apposite time. My tip is to read the book with a post-it pad on hand to mark out what resonates for you – it doesn’t have a full index.

I’ve resolved to diarise ploughing days to deal with the mounds of actions that just need digging through. And to stop using poor memory as an excuse for forgetting a name.

Review by Stephen Isherwood, chief executive, ISE

“...What would you like to get out of your membership? At Expedia Group we would like to attend more ISE events in 2019 and become more involved in relevant groups. *Heather Elvin*”



NEW FACES



Heather Elvin

is Expedia Group’s Talent Advisor for Global Early Talent.

Explain your role in one sentence:

I’m part of the Expedia EMEA Early Talent team, managing UK apprenticeships, MBA recruitment and non-tech intern/ placement hiring across several Expedia brands and locations.

How long have you worked in the industry? Since 2003.

Describe yourself in a single sentence to other members?

Enthusiastic and passionate about all things early talent, also a busy mum of two still trying to achieve a good work-life balance!

What are your interests? Apprenticeships, diversity and marketing/attraction (particularly digital). Also, something I have always been interested in from working in both career services and as a recruiter - candidate experience.

Why did you decide to become a member? It is really important to think outside of your own organisation, keep up to date with external trends in student recruitment, share knowledge and network with others in the same sector.

What would you like to get out of your membership? At Expedia Group we would like to attend more ISE events in 2019 and become more involved in relevant groups. I’m personally excited to attend the apprenticeships conference in February.

What would you say to others to entice them to join the ISE? ISE is an invaluable resource for anyone working in student recruitment with relevant events, useful data and the opportunity to stay up-to-date with what’s happening in the sector.



Sarahjane Potter

is Mastercard’s Talent Acquisition Manager - Campus Lead for Europe

Explain your role in one sentence:

To implement a strategic approach to the attraction and selection of individuals to a set of campus programmes in line with our global minimum standards.

How long have you worked in the industry? Nine years.

Describe yourself in a single sentence to other members?

A hugely enthusiastic and passionate early careers recruiter!

What are your interests? Everything technology and digital related.

Why did you decide to become a member? Getting access to the insights and research was essential. Also developing relationships with like-minded individuals to share knowledge and build innovative solutions as a community.

What would you like to get out of your membership? Networking and information sharing.

What would you say to others to entice them to join the ISE? The ISE offers a great way to access insights and research. You can also find and collaborate on solutions within the community and it’s a safe place to share your thoughts and opinions.

You can connect with other members in our online community by logging into ise.org.uk.

Tip: to reach members outside your connections, post within a group.



60 SECONDS WITH...

“...There is always so much going on in student recruitment – multi tasking is absolutely key! Write notes, always remember to close the loop and keep your stakeholders updated - they will always appreciate it.



KAREN LUCKLY-TANG

Job title: Deputy Head of Student Recruitment
Organisation: Deloitte

Describe your role in one sentence: I am responsible for driving strategic and operational excellence through all aspects of the recruitment of our 1,800 student population whilst leading the teams (internal and RPO) responsible for candidate management and response handling, and all assessment and selection activities.

Why did you want to work in student recruitment/development? I wanted to travel. To also be able to work closely with, and learn from, business leaders. Student recruitment has enabled me to do this time and time again.

Why do you continue to do what you do now? I think it is absolutely of key importance to continue to help educate students on all of the options available to them and to create a level playing field for all, regardless of background.

What one thing would you like to see change? I would like to see apprenticeships being perceived by influencers as a genuine mainstream option for students with an equal weighting to university.

What’s the best thing about your job? Being instrumental in hiring the future leaders of Deloitte whilst being able to work flexibly.

What’s the worst thing about your job? The huge amounts of meetings that I need to attend due to the breadth of my role.

What was your proudest achievement at work? Actively contributing to Deloitte’s Social Mobility agenda to help achieve 5th position in the Social Mobility Index in 2018 and therefore making Deloitte more accessible to a greater range of students.

What motivates you? Seeing the success of past summer interns - many of them are now directors or even MDs - and knowing that I had a part to play in it.

How do you relax? I have two small children so I rarely have a chance to really relax! However, lying on a beach with a book would be my first choice.

What advice would you give to someone starting out? There is always so much going on in student recruitment – multi tasking is absolutely key! Write notes, always remember to close the loop and keep your stakeholders updated - they will always appreciate it.

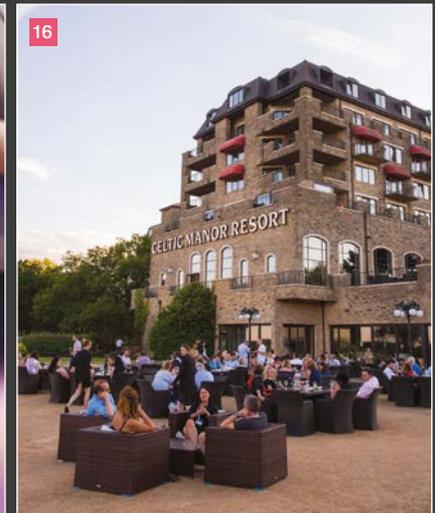
To take our ‘60 seconds with...’ Q&A email clare@ise.org.uk

ise. ISE: A year in pictures



Development Conference - 1 & 3: Chris Barez-Brown engages delegates at his opening session on creativity. **2:** Development Award winners, Lauran Anderson and Claire Stretch from HSBC. **4:** Rebecca Fielding, Gradconsult. **Global Conference - 5:** Jessica Grundy, Johnson & Johnson. Joe Voelcker, GSK. Bob Athwal, DGC - Disruptive Graduate Consulting. **6:** Meryl Folb, Consultant, ISE. **7:** Anna Champion, The Talent Lighthouse. **8:** Mark Davies, UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School. **9:** Ade McCormack, Auridian Consulting. **10:** A full house for our panel discussion. **11:** Saj Jetha, The Smarty Train.

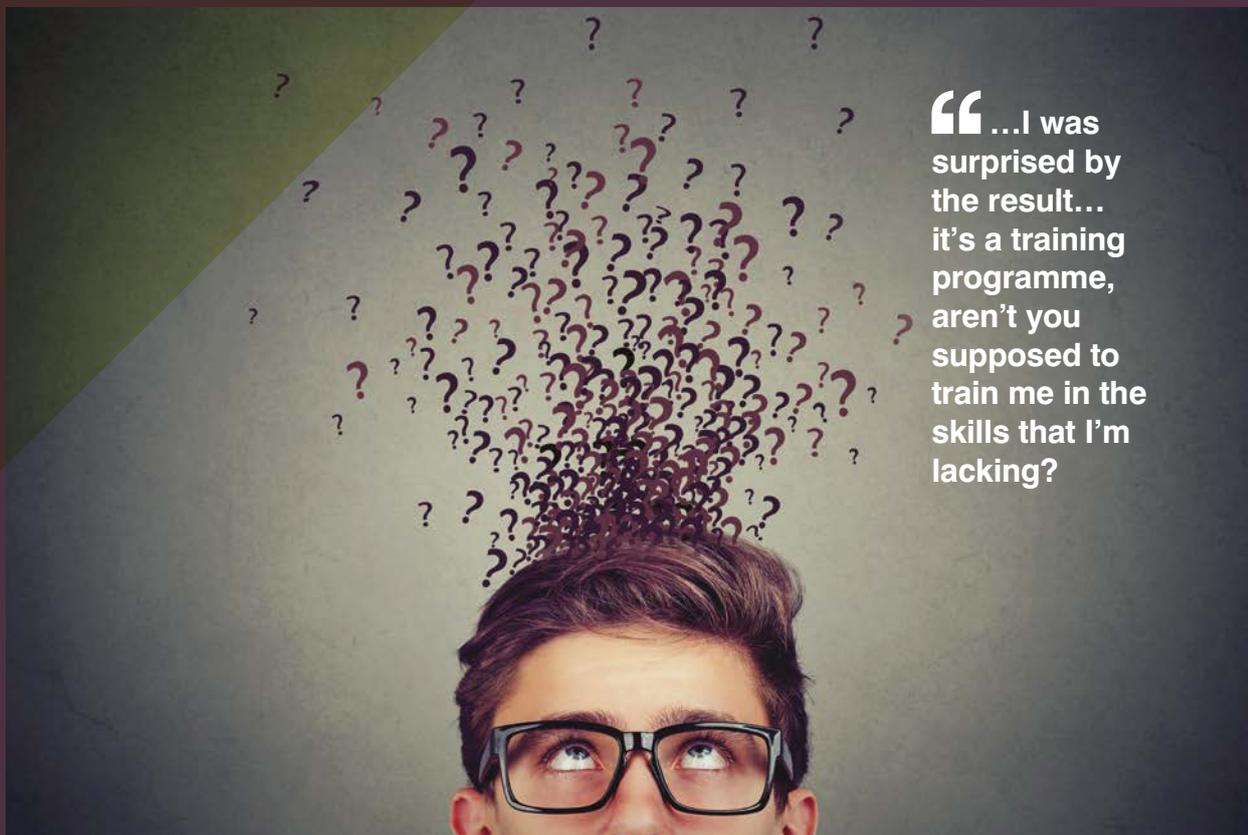




Annual Conference - 12: A chance to network. 13: Our host, BBC's Steph McGovern glitters in gold. 14: Priscilla Baffour, ITN. 15: Questions flowed thick and fast. 16: Delegates took advantage of the warm weather. 17: Packed-out sessions throughout the two-day event. 18: Stephen Isherwood, ISE. 19: Plenary session looked at our industry's past, present and future. **Miscellaneous** - 20: Members hear about inclusion at our special diversity session. 21: Careers advisors hear what employers want at ISE Sector Insights. 22: ISE Sector Insights event L-R: Kate Croucher, FDM Group; Mark Blythe, Group GTI; Andrew Wright, King's College London. 23: ISE's new researcher Tristram Hooley.



WHAT I'M REALLY THINKING... The Feedback Provider



“...I was surprised by the result... it’s a training programme, aren’t you supposed to train me in the skills that I’m lacking?”

The prep

Time to engage my friendly, diplomatic but ‘firm if I need to be’ persona. As I often repeat, it’s not what you say, but how you say it. Let’s have a quick review of the candidate notes before picking up the phone and hope that the assessors remember to provide some meaningful narrative alongside completing the ratings so I’ve got something concrete to go on. Good, it’s all been done. Now, did the candidate ensure that their phone number is up to date/accurate on the system? Ok, dial the number – will they pick up the first time? Surprisingly few do, even though they’ve been sent times and dates for the call. Many will have forgotten, and yes, there’s a strong correlation between those candidates who gain low scores at assessment day in their organisational abilities and those who are not available or tell me “I’d totally forgotten it was today.” I love it when a recruitment process is validated.

The call

Ok, I’m talking to the candidate so we’ve made a start. They may well be feeling negatively about the business I represent as they’ve been rejected. Let’s disarm them with a friendly approach and thank them for their input. Now I need to find out from them how they think they did in the process. Many have taken the time to reflect since the day and are able to give an accurate overview of both their strengths and development areas. We’re halfway there already and it’s a more positive

confirmation to re-affirm their feelings and give them a few pointers to apply for the next time they find themselves in a similar situation. Many want to reapply and are genuine in their appreciation of the support the business offers in providing structured feedback.

Others lack the self-awareness, however (“I thought I did really well...I was surprised by the result...it’s a training programme, aren’t you supposed to train me in the skills that I’m lacking?”). Others simply are not willing to self-reflect – an abrupt “You tell me the feedback, that’s what I’ve asked for” highlights that this is going to be a more challenging conversation. Often I have to point out fundamental no-nos – “Were you aware that you were chewing gum throughout your presentation... I wouldn’t advise using such casual language in a professional environment... you were comfortable offering your opinions in the group task, but do you know how many times you interrupted or talked over others in order to do so? On that subject, are you aware of how many times you’ve interrupted me on this call?”

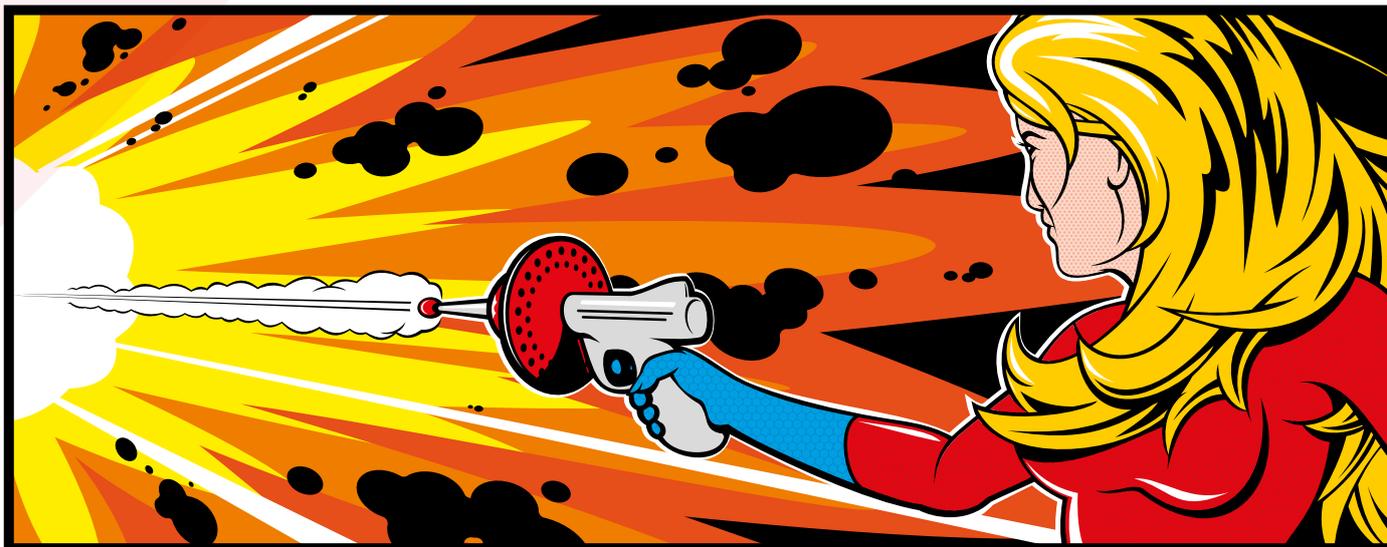
The aftermath

I take comfort in the fact that the assessors’ decision is validated, but sometimes I need to draw a deep breath after those candidates who have really struggled to take the feedback positively. Some simply decide to hang up on the call. They may have asked for the feedback, but they clearly were not that interested in hearing it.



Dr Paul Redmond
 Director of Student
 Experience and
 Enhancement,
 University of Liverpool

LIFE AS WE KNOW IT Living on thin air



Every now and again, the old and new worlds of work collide – often with spectacular consequences. It happened again earlier this year, and all it took were four words.

On 11 April, Mark Zuckerberg, founder and CEO of Facebook, was summoned to Capitol Hill to be questioned by a panel of US senators. The Cambridge Analytica leak, in which it was claimed millions of people had had their personal data shared without permission, had led to concerns about the social media giant’s security policies. Then there was the issue of Facebook itself.

What sort of Lex Luther-like powers was it packing? What secret strings was it pulling? And with its global reach and soft power, who was calling the shots - Facebook or the Fed? There was only one way to find out. Bring out The Zuck!

So there he was, in a hearing room at the Hart Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill, Mark Zuckerberg, suited and booted and looking like an undergraduate on a work placement. Around him were assembled the world’s media – all waiting for the moment that the questions would begin. And who better to kick things off than the longest serving public servant in United States history. Step forward 84-year old Utah senator, Orrin G. Hatch. At last, the moment when a politician would exert authority and show who was boss.

And boy, did he fluff his lines.

“So, how do you sustain a business model in which users don’t pay for your service?”

For half a second, silence. Zuckerberg blinked, seemed confused. It was like he’d just been asked what kind of bees produced milk. When he recovered, his answer was devastating:

“Senator, we run ads.”

“...It was like he’d just been asked what kind of bees produced milk. When he recovered, his answer was devastating

It must have taken a lot of self-control not to yell, “Duh!” But a Duh moment is what it was. As in, “We run ads - DUH!”

Without understanding how Facebook makes its money, the 21st century makes no sense. Here, in real time, was a full-on collision of the old and the new worlds of work: on one side, the old world of work, a world in which businesses made or sold tangible things that you could drop on your foot and which were paid for by customers. And on the other, the world of ‘thin air’ organisations worth more than nation states, with minuscule workforces and billions of monthly users – most of whom don’t pay a thing.

When the Q&A was over, Hatch and Zuckerberg looked at one another in polite bafflement. My advice is to get used to that look. You’ll be seeing a lot more of it in the years to come. It’s the look of the old world of work as it encounters the new.

In the 20th century, to understand the old world of work, it was said that first you had to grasp the four P’s – Place, Product, Promotion, and Price.

From now on, four words will do: “Senator, we run ads.”



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Source: NRS PADD October 16 - September 17 (cross platform reach: web/mobile/print monthly reach)

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