

The Graduate Market in 2014

Annual review of graduate vacancies & starting salaries at Britain's leading employers



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New to graduate recruitment?

Get off to a flying start.

For the last twenty years, **High Fliers Research** has conducted detailed research into the graduate recruitment market in the UK, providing the country's leading employers with a unique insight into the attitudes and aspirations of final year university students.

Now, the company is delighted to offer **professional training** for new or recently-appointed graduate recruiters through intensive **one-day courses**, available monthly throughout the year at the High Fliers Research Centre in London. The courses have been designed to provide a highly practical insight into best-practice graduate recruitment and are ideal for those with up to 12 months experience of working in recruitment marketing or selection.

For more information about future training courses or to book a place, please call Carla Smith on 020 7428 9000 or email carla.smith@highfliers.co.uk

Foreword

Executive Summary

The Graduate Market in 2014 is a study of the latest graduate vacancies and starting salaries at the UK's one hundred best-known and most successful employers, conducted by High Fliers Research during **December 2013**:

- Graduate vacancies at organisations featured in *The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers* **increased by 2.5%** in 2013, compared with recruitment in 2012. Graduate recruitment at the leading employers dipped in 2012 by 0.8%, having risen by 2.8% in 2011 and 12.6% in 2010, after sharp falls of 17.8% in 2009 and 6.7% in 2008.
- The UK's leading employers expect to recruit **significantly more graduates in 2014** and are offering **8.7%** more entry-level vacancies than last year – the biggest annual rise in graduate recruitment for four years.
- This substantial increase in graduate vacancies for 2014 takes graduate recruitment to its **highest level since 2007** and means that there will be more opportunities for this summer's university-leavers than at any time since the start of the recession.
- Employers in eleven out of thirteen key industries and employment areas are expecting to take on **more new graduates** than in 2013.
- The biggest growth in vacancies is expected at **public sector employers, accounting & professional services firms, City investment banks, retailers and engineering & industrial companies** which together intend to recruit almost 1,200 extra graduates in 2014.
- The largest recruiters of graduates in 2014 will be **Teach First** (1,550 vacancies), **PwC** (1,200 vacancies) and **Deloitte** (1,000 vacancies).
- Recruiters have confirmed that a record 37% of this year's entry-level positions are expected to be filled by graduates who have **already worked for their organisations** – either through paid internships, industrial placements or vacation work – and therefore are not open to other students from the 'Class of 2014'.
- **Graduate starting salaries** for 2014 at the UK's leading graduate employers are expected to remain **unchanged for an unprecedented fifth year** – at a median of **£29,000**. Graduate salaries increased by 7.4% in 2010 and 5.9% in 2009.
- A quarter of top graduate programmes will pay new recruits more than **£35,000** when they start work and ten organisations are offering at least £40,000 to this year's graduates.
- The most generous salaries in 2014 are those on offer from **investment banks** (median of £45,000), **law firms** (median of £39,000), **banking & finance firms** (median of £33,000) and **oil & energy companies** (median of £32,500).

- **Public sector employers** (median of £22,400), the **Armed Forces** (median of £25,000) and **retailers** (median of £25,000) have the lowest graduate pay rates this year.
- The highest published graduate starting salaries for 2014 are at the **European Commission** (£41,500) and retailer **Aldi** (£41,000).
- More than a quarter of employers have **increased** their graduate recruitment budgets for the 2013-2014 recruitment round, the highest proportion for three years.
- The country's leading employers have been actively marketing their 2014 graduate vacancies at an average of **18** UK universities, using a variety of campus **careers fairs**, local **recruitment presentations**, **skills training** events, **online advertising** and promotions through **university careers services**.
- Graduate recruiters have done more promotions through **social media**, **skills training**, **university careers services**, **campus brand managers**, **careers fairs** and **recruitment presentations** during this year's recruitment campaigns – and less **advertising** in graduate directories, sector guides and local guides.
- The ten universities most-often targeted by Britain's top graduate employers in 2013-2014 are Nottingham, Manchester, Cambridge, Oxford, Bristol, Bath, Warwick, Leeds, Imperial College London, and University College London.
- More than two-fifths of employers said they had received **more completed graduate job applications** during the early part of the recruitment season than they had last year and nearly half of employer believed the quality of applications had improved.
- Together, the UK's top employers have received **9% more graduate job applications** so far, compared with the equivalent period in the 2012-2013 recruitment round.
- More than **four-fifths** of the UK's leading graduate employers are offering **paid** work experience programmes for students and recent graduates during the 2013-2014 academic year – a record **11,819 places** are available.
- Two thirds of employers provide **paid vacation internships** for **penultimate year students** and three-fifths offer **industrial placements** for undergraduates (typically lasting 6-12 months as part of a university degree course).
- Increasing numbers of employers now also have work experience places for **first year undergraduates** – a quarter of organisations offer paid internships and a third of employers run introductory courses, open days and other taster experiences for first year students.
- Over **half the recruiters** who took part in the research repeated their warnings from previous years – that graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are **unlikely to be successful** during the selection process and have **little or no chance** of receiving a job offer for their organisations' graduate programmes.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Researching the Graduate Market

Welcome to **The Graduate Market in 2014**, the annual review of graduate vacancies and starting salaries at Britain's top employers, produced by **High Fliers Research**.

This research, conducted during December 2013, examines how many graduates the leading employers recruited in 2013 and assesses their latest recruitment targets for 2014.

It also analyses the starting salaries on offer to new graduates, the number of paid work experience places that are available to students & recent graduates, and reviews the promotions being used by employers to publicise their graduate vacancies during the 2013-2014 recruitment season.

This is the eleventh year that High Fliers Research has produced its assessment of the graduate employment market. The latest research is based on a study of graduate recruitment at the organisations named as *The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers 2013* in a poll of 18,252 final year students to find "Which employer offers the best opportunities for graduates".

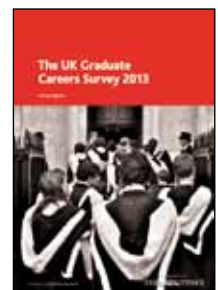


About High Fliers Research

Established in 1994, **High Fliers Research** is an independent market research company which specialises in student and graduate research. It has worked with more than 125 leading employers to measure the impact of their graduate recruitment campaigns on campus and help them understand their position in the graduate job market.

The company is best-known for *The UK Graduate Careers Survey* – its innovative annual study of over 18,000 final year undergraduates at thirty leading universities – which is supported and funded by up to 70 national & international employers each year.

The survey gives employers a unique insight into the career expectations and aspirations of final year students – just weeks before they graduate – and provides a definitive record of their search for a graduate job.



For the last decade, High Fliers Research has also conducted regular surveys of Britain's top employers to research current graduate vacancy levels, starting salaries and benchmark the latest graduate recruitment practices. The company hosts *The National Graduate Recruitment Conference*, a one-day event held exclusively for graduate recruiters in September each year, as well as providing monthly professional training courses for new recruiters.

Internationally, High Fliers Research works closely with the **Australian Association of Graduate Employers**, the **South African Graduate Recruitment Association** and the **New Zealand Association Graduate Recruitment** to carry out their annual surveys of graduate employers, new recruits and young managers.

The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers

As part of the campus research for *The UK Graduate Careers Survey 2013*, 18,252 final year students from thirty leading universities were asked the unprompted question “Which employer do you think offers the best opportunities for graduates?”.

Between them, finalists named over 1,000 different organisations during the survey – the one hundred employers with the most student votes form **The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers** for 2013.



It is these employers that are included in the research for *The Graduate Market in 2014* report:

<i>Accenture</i>	<i>Department for International Development</i>	<i>Microsoft</i>
<i>Airbus</i>	<i>Deutsche Bank</i>	<i>Mondelēz International</i>
<i>Aldi</i>	<i>Diageo</i>	<i>Morgan Stanley</i>
<i>Allen & Overy</i>	<i>DLA Piper</i>	<i>Morrisons</i>
<i>Apple</i>	<i>EDF Energy</i>	<i>National Grid</i>
<i>Arcadia Group</i>	<i>European Commission</i>	<i>Nestlé</i>
<i>Army</i>	<i>ExxonMobil</i>	<i>Network Rail</i>
<i>Arup</i>	<i>EY</i>	<i>Newton Europe</i>
<i>Asda</i>	<i>Foreign & Commonwealth Office</i>	<i>NGDP for Local Government</i>
<i>Atkins</i>	<i>Freshfields</i>	<i>NHS</i>
<i>BAE Systems</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>Oxfam</i>
<i>Bain & Company</i>	<i>GlaxoSmithKline</i>	<i>Penguin</i>
<i>Baker & McKenzie</i>	<i>Goldman Sachs</i>	<i>Police</i>
<i>Balfour Beatty</i>	<i>Google</i>	<i>Procter & Gamble</i>
<i>Bank of America Merrill Lynch</i>	<i>Grant Thornton</i>	<i>PwC</i>
<i>Barclays</i>	<i>Herbert Smith Freehills</i>	<i>Red Bull</i>
<i>BBC</i>	<i>Hogan Lovells</i>	<i>Rolls-Royce</i>
<i>BlackRock</i>	<i>HSBC</i>	<i>Royal Air Force</i>
<i>Boots</i>	<i>IBM</i>	<i>Royal Bank of Scotland Group</i>
<i>Boston Consulting Group</i>	<i>J.P. Morgan</i>	<i>Royal Navy</i>
<i>BP</i>	<i>Jaguar Land Rover</i>	<i>Sainsbury's</i>
<i>British Airways</i>	<i>John Lewis Partnership</i>	<i>Santander</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>KPMG</i>	<i>Shell</i>
<i>Cancer Research UK</i>	<i>L'Oréal</i>	<i>Siemens</i>
<i>Centrica</i>	<i>Lidl</i>	<i>Sky</i>
<i>Channel 4</i>	<i>Linklaters</i>	<i>Slaughter and May</i>
<i>Citi</i>	<i>Lloyd's</i>	<i>Teach First</i>
<i>Civil Service Fast Stream</i>	<i>Lloyds Banking Group</i>	<i>Tesco</i>
<i>Clifford Chance</i>	<i>Marks & Spencer</i>	<i>Thomson Reuters</i>
<i>Co-operative Group</i>	<i>Mars</i>	<i>Transport for London</i>
<i>Coca-Cola Enterprises</i>	<i>McDonald's</i>	<i>UBS</i>
<i>Credit Suisse</i>	<i>McKinsey & Company</i>	<i>Unilever</i>
<i>Danone</i>	<i>MI5 – The Security Service</i>	<i>WPP</i>
<i>Deloitte</i>		

Chapter 2

Graduate Vacancies

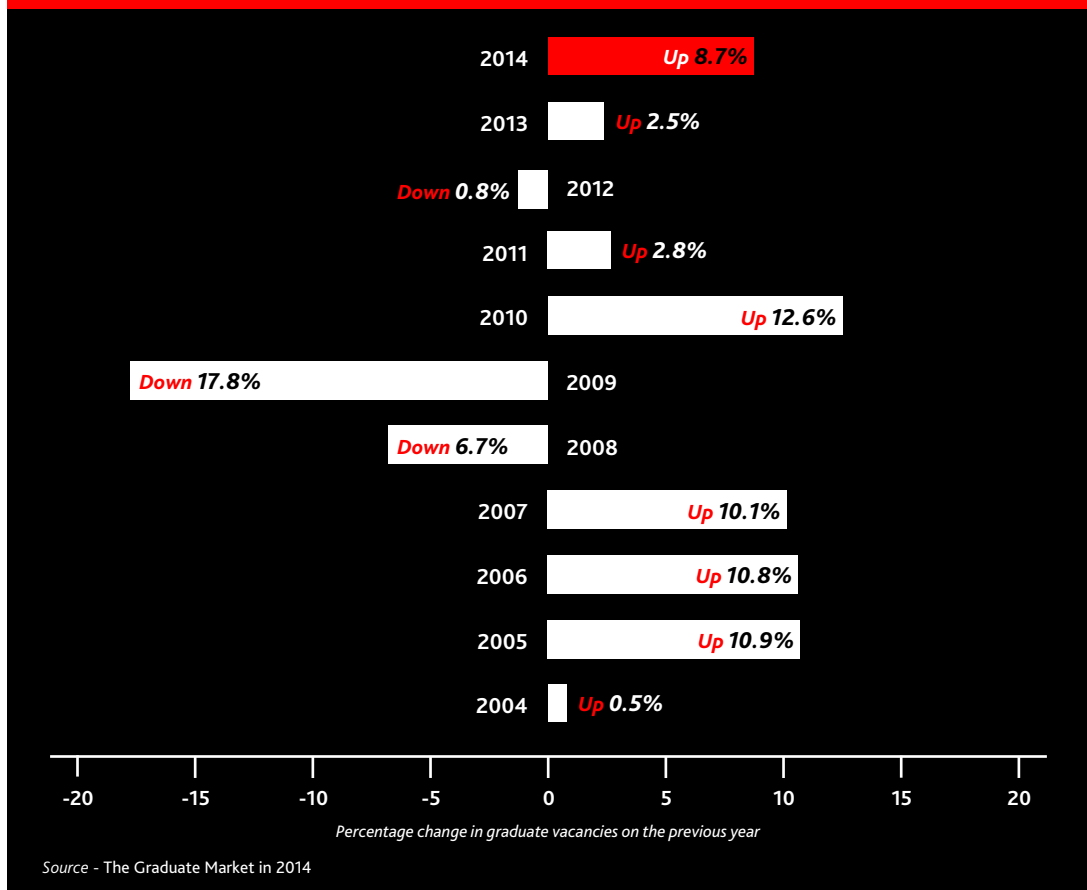
Job Vacancies for Graduates

The first part of the research examines the number of graduate vacancies available at the UK's leading employers in 2014, compared with recruitment in 2013. Graduate vacancies for 2014 are typically positions with an autumn 2014 start date, promoted during the current 2013-2014 recruitment season.

Twelve months ago, *The Graduate Market in 2013* reported that the continuing uncertainty in the wider economy during 2012 meant that the growth in graduate vacancies had stalled and final recruitment numbers for the year were 0.8% lower than 2011. Graduate recruitment improved in 2013 and employers increased their vacancies for university-leavers by 2.5%.

The latest research shows that the outlook for 2014 is significantly more upbeat, with the UK's leading employers expecting to hire 8.7% more graduates than were recruited during 2013 – the highest annual increase in vacancies for four years (see *Chart 2.1*).

Chart 2.1 How Employers' Vacancies for Graduates Changed from 2004 to 2014



Graduate Vacancies in 2013

After substantial reductions in graduate recruitment at the beginning of the recession in 2008 and 2009 when almost a quarter of entry-level vacancies at the UK's best-known employers were cut, employment prospects for university-leavers improved considerably in 2010 and 2011, but dipped again during the 2012 recruitment season.

At the start of the 2011-2012 graduate recruitment season, it seemed that a more buoyant mood had returned, with the leading employers preparing to hire over 18,300 graduates – nearly 2,000 more than had been recruited in 2012. But in the early months of the recruiting season, employers' graduate recruitment targets in a number of industries and business sectors changed significantly and the overall level of vacancies on offer was reduced (see *Chart 2.2*). By the summer, however, a number of major employers opted to increase their graduate intake and finished the recruitment season with more graduate recruits than in 2012.

This very mixed picture meant that in several sectors – including the accounting & professional firms, investment banks and law firms – graduate vacancy targets for 2013 were downgraded between September 2012 and January 2013, only to go back up again by the end of the recruitment round in July 2013 (see *Table 2.4*). The net effect of these changes was that graduate vacancies in these industries dropped slightly compared with recruitment in 2012. Different patterns emerged within the public sector and the Armed Forces where vacancies increased steadily through the recruitment season, and in consulting, where targets were reduced as the year progressed.

By the autumn of 2013, a total of 16,865 graduates started work with organisations featured in *The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers* – a modest increase of 2.5% on the number of graduates hired in 2012. In all, forty-seven employers increased their graduate intake, forty-one employers reduced their vacancies and twelve maintained their recruitment at 2012 levels (see *Chart 2.3*). Year-on-year, vacancies increased in seven areas – the public sector, IT & telecommunications, engineering & industrial, media, oil & energy, consumer goods and the Armed Forces – which together provided over 800 additional graduate roles, compared with recruitment in 2012.

Chart 2.2 How Graduate Recruitment Targets Changed during 2013

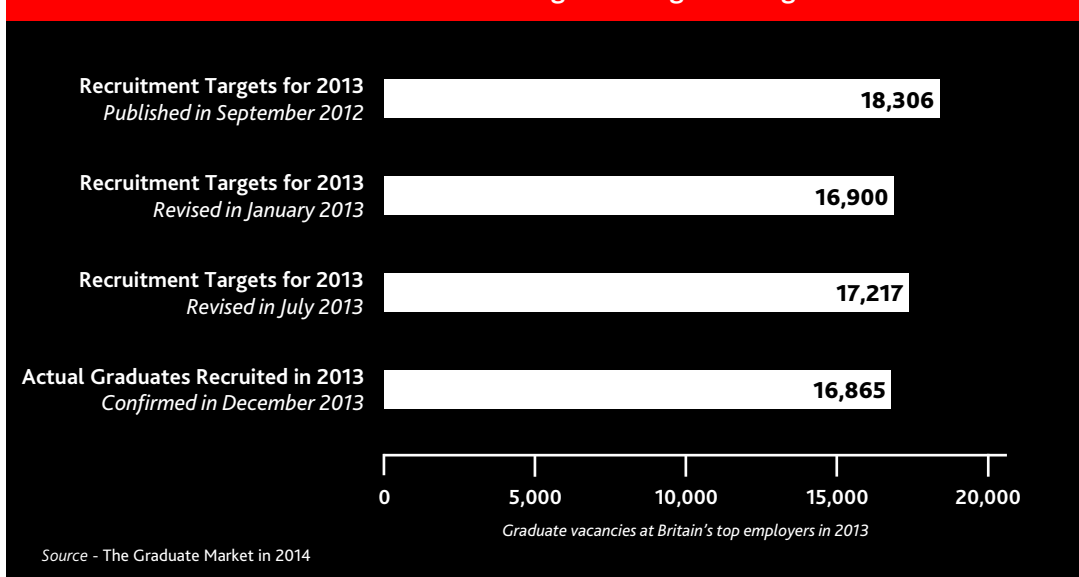
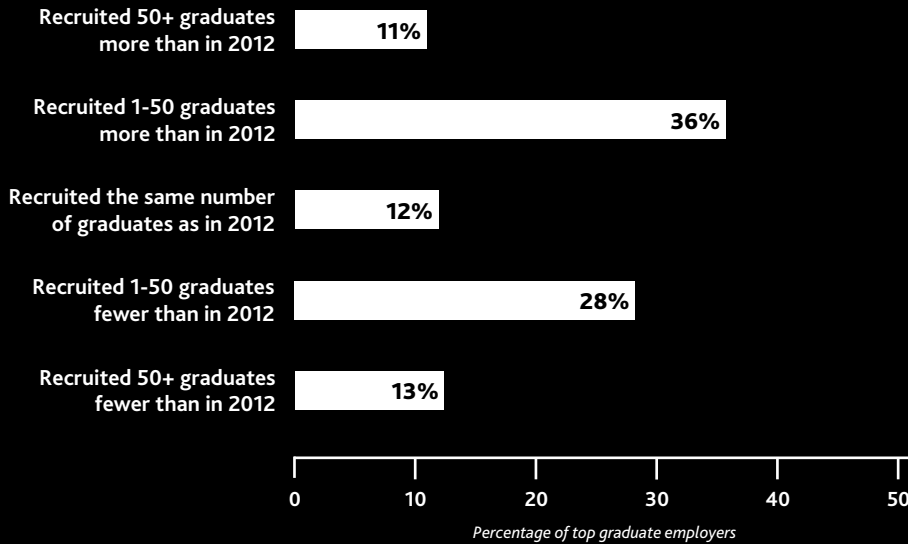


Chart 2.3 How Employers' Graduate Vacancies Changed in 2013, compared with 2012

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Table 2.4 Analysis of Graduate Vacancies in 2013, by Industry or Business Sector

Industry or Business Sector	Recruitment target for 2013, as published in Sept 2012	Recruitment target for 2013, as revised in Jan 2013	Recruitment target for 2013, as revised in July 2013	Actual graduates recruited by Dec 2013	% change from recruitment in 2012	Vacancies added (cut), compared with 2012
Accounting & professional services	4,600	3,827	3,955	3,838	-1.0	(39)
Armed Forces	830	910	1,212	1,032	2.0	20
Banking & finance	1,097	927	793	822	-6.1	(53)
Consulting	675	620	609	605	-2.4	(15)
Consumer goods	359	322	353	320	11.1	32
Engineering & industrial	1,510	1,324	1,343	1,299	8.1	97
Investment banking	2,700	2,270	2,343	2,137	-5.5	(125)
IT & telecommunications	695	681	610	744	17.9	113
Law	795	765	785	708	-6.2	(47)
Media	455	259	294	290	18.4	45
Oil & energy	640	565	556	584	5.8	32
Public sector	2,305	2,672	2,988	3,013	19.6	494
Retailing	1,375	1,572	1,220	1,311	-9.8	(142)
ALL SECTORS	18,306	16,900	17,217	16,865	2.5	413

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Expected Graduate Vacancies in 2014

Following the small increase in graduate vacancies in 2013, it is very encouraging that the organisations featured in *The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers* are now planning to expand their graduate recruitment programmes substantially – by an average of 8.7% in 2014 – the highest annual increase in graduate vacancies for four years.

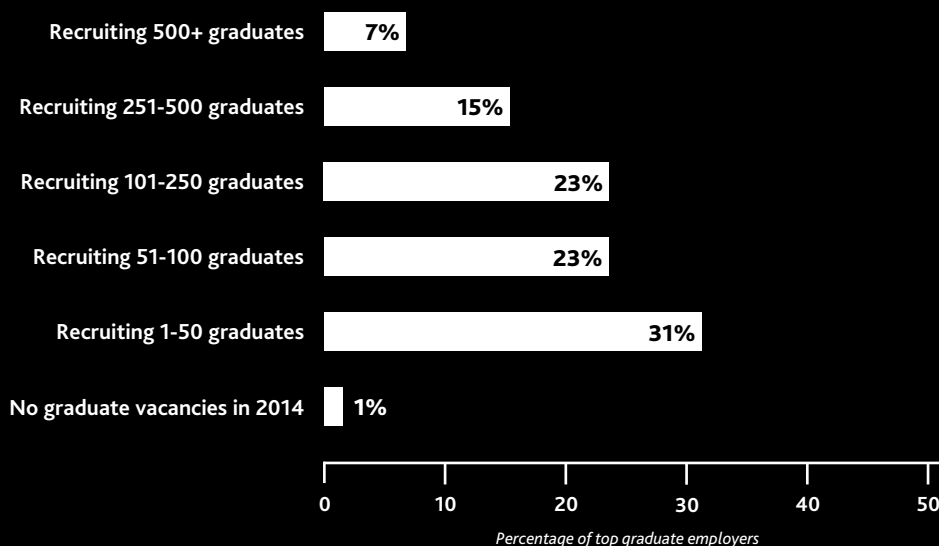
Nearly half the leading employers are expecting to recruit more graduates this year, with five organisations confident that they'll be hiring at least a hundred extra graduates during 2014. Over a third of employers plan to recruit similar numbers of graduates to their 2013 intake, whilst a fifth have fewer entry-level vacancies this year. On average, employers expect to take on 175 graduates in 2014 but seven of the largest employers are preparing to hire more than 500 university-leavers (see *Chart 2.5*).

Compared with the final recruitment figures for 2013, vacancies for graduates are set to increase in eleven out of the thirteen main employment areas (see *Table 2.7*). The biggest growth is at public sector employers, accounting & professional services firms, retailers, investment banks and engineering & industrial companies, which together expect to offer almost 1,200 additional positions in 2014.

Graduate vacancies in several sectors – including banking & finance, investment banking, IT & telecommunications, the public sector and retail – have increased since the original recruitment targets were published in September 2013. This means that for the first time since the beginning of the recession, the number of graduate vacancies on offer from employers has increased during the first three months of the recruitment season.

Although this data confirms there will be a significant increase in the number of new graduate jobs available at the UK's leading employers in 2014, recruiters warn that a record 37% of vacancies are expected to be filled by undergraduates who have had previous work experience with their organisations, such as paid internships or industrial placements (see *Chart 2.6*) and therefore will not be available to other final year students from the 'Class of 2014'.

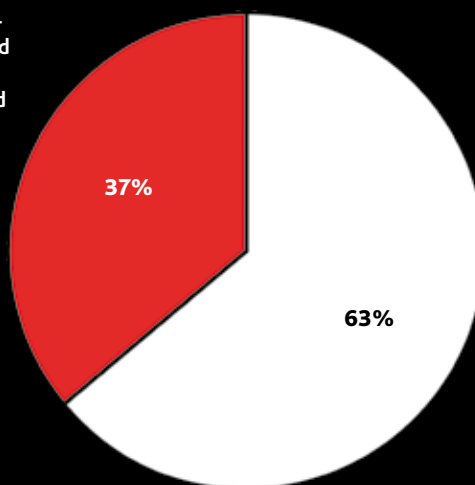
Chart 2.5 Graduate Vacancies at the UK's Top Employers in 2014



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Chart 2.6 How Graduate Vacancies at the UK's Top Employers are likely to be Filled

Vacancies for 2014
expected to be filled
by graduates who
had already worked
for the employer



Vacancies for 2014
available to final
year undergraduates
and recent graduates

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Table 2.7 Analysis of Graduate Vacancies in 2014, by Industry or Business Sector

<i>Industry or Business Sector</i>	<i>Recruitment target for 2014, as published in Sept 2013</i>	<i>Recruitment target for 2014, as revised in Dec 2013</i>	<i>% change from recruitment in 2013</i>	<i>Vacancies added (cut), compared with 2013</i>	<i>% of vacancies likely to be filled by graduates who had already worked for employer</i>
Accounting & professional services	4,000	3,848	7.2	260	30
Armed Forces	1,050	1,036	0.4	4	-
Banking & finance	840	955	16.2	133	46
Consulting	600	590	21.6	105	30
Consumer goods	423	372	7.5	26	58
Engineering & industrial	1,575	1,591	11.3	162	24
Investment banking	2,265	2,383	8.2	181	74
IT & telecommunications	600	760	2.2	16	26
Law	714	709	3.2	22	47
Media	368	247	-6.4	(17)	-
Oil & energy	540	526	-4.7	(26)	37
Public sector	3,280	3,508	12.1	380	14
Retailing	1,520	1,599	13.3	188	37
ALL SECTORS	17,901	18,264	8.7	1,462	37

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Location & Type of Graduate Vacancies in 2014

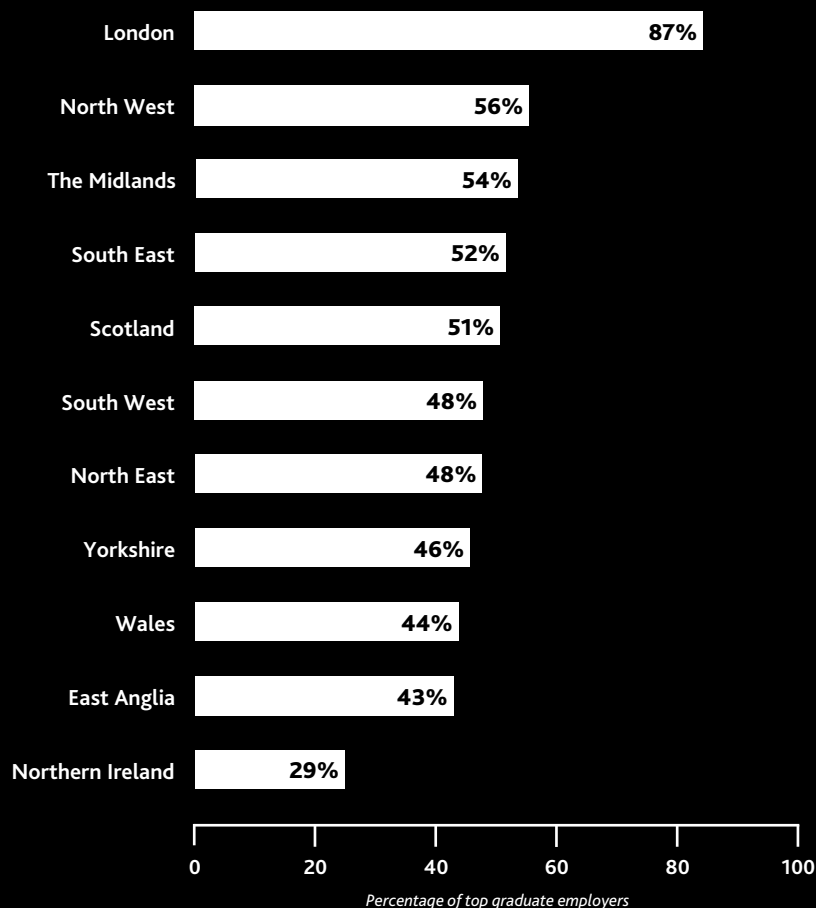
Looking at where within the UK employers expect to employ graduates shows that almost nine out of ten organisations are offering vacancies in London for 2013 and half plan to hire new recruits for positions in the south east of England (see *Chart 2.8*). Whilst this doesn't necessarily mean that the majority of graduate vacancies are in or around the M25, it does confirm that most major employers have opportunities within the region.

The north west of England, the Midlands and the south west have the next highest numbers of employers recruiting graduates into the regions, followed by the north east of England and Yorkshire. Of all the English regions, East Anglia is the least likely to yield graduate vacancies – 43% of employers have opportunities there in 2014.

A total of 51% and 44% of graduate employers have entry-level jobs on offer in Scotland and Wales respectively and 29% are recruiting for opportunities in Northern Ireland.

The Graduate Market in 2014 also records the type of job functions that employers are hoping to recruit graduates into in 2014. The most frequent requirement is for IT and finance vacancies – more than half of employers offer roles in these areas, irrespective of their organisation's main purpose (see *Chart 2.9*). Around two-fifths of employers have vacancies in human

Chart 2.8 Location of Graduate Vacancies at leading UK Employers in 2014

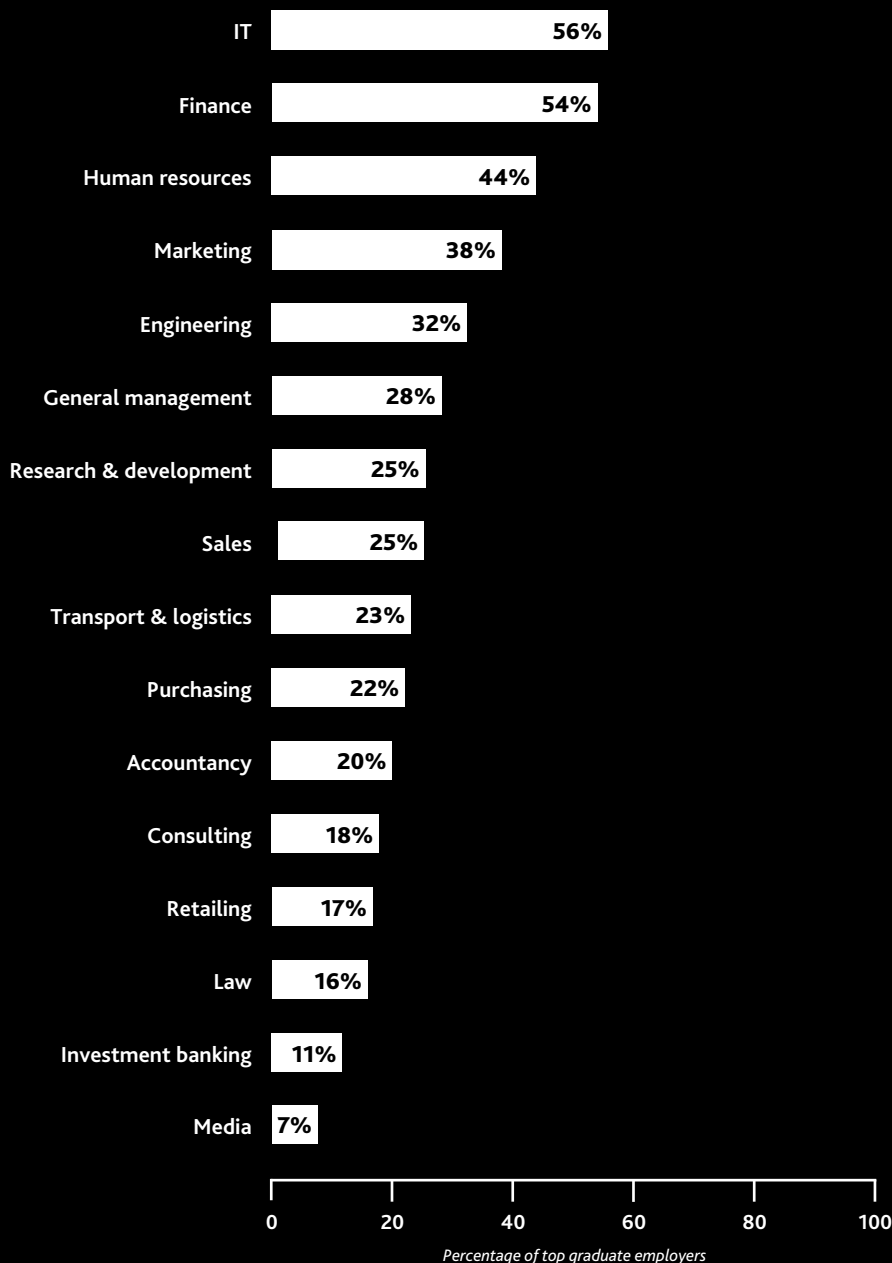


Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

resources or marketing, a third are recruiting for engineering positions and approximately a quarter are looking for graduates to work in general management, research & development, sales or transport & logistics.

These results underline the disparity between what organisations are perceived to do and their potential recruitment needs. For example, the number of vacancies at so-called 'IT companies' is relatively small and yet the volume of graduates needed to work in IT functions at a wide range of employers in other industries and business sectors is considerable.

Chart 2.9 Type of Graduate Vacancies at leading UK Employers in 2014



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Changes to Graduate Vacancies during the Recession & Beyond

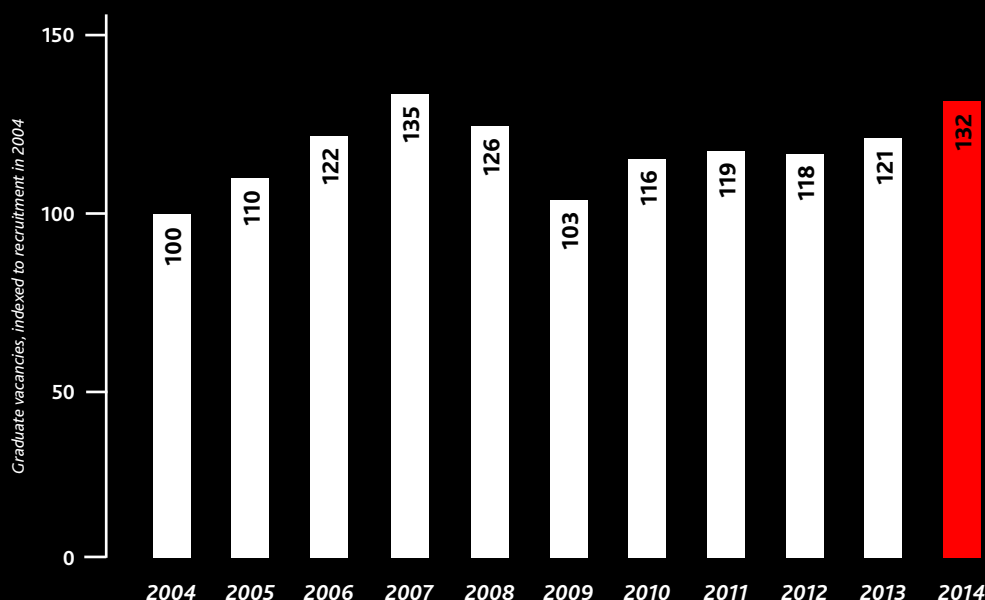
The onset of the global financial crisis and the recession that followed in the UK had a profound effect on the graduate market. In 2008 and 2009 graduate vacancies at organisations featured in *The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers* fell by an unprecedented 23.3% and entry-level positions were cut in thirteen of fourteen key industries and business sectors. In all, some fifty-nine employers saw their graduate recruitment decline.

The worst of the cuts took place at the investment banks, IT & telecoms firms, chemical & pharmaceuticals companies and within the media, where vacancies halved during the course of the two recruitment rounds. There were substantial falls too in recruitment at consumer goods manufacturers, engineering & industrial employers, oil & energy companies and accounting & professional services firms – vacancies dropped by between a quarter and a third in each sector between 2007 and 2009. Only one employment area, the public sector, managed to increase its graduate recruitment over the period, stepping-up vacancies by 45% during this two year period, helped by the considerable expansion of the Teach First scheme.

It is interesting to benchmark how graduate vacancies have changed over the last ten years (see *Chart 2.10*). This indexing of vacancies shows that during the four recruitment seasons between 2004 and 2007, opportunities for graduates grew by more than a third at Britain's top employers. Virtually all of this growth was wiped out in the following two years, and by 2009 graduate recruitment had returned to a similar level to that recorded in 2004.

Twelve months later, the graduate job market bounced back and vacancies grew by 12.6% in 2010, with a further increase of 2.8% in 2011. The recovery stalled again in 2012 but recruitment increased again in 2013, taking vacancies to their highest level for five years. The significant 8.7% rise in graduate recruitment expected this year means that there will be more graduate vacancies available in 2014 than at any time since 2007.

Chart 2.10 Indexing Graduate Vacancies at the UK's Top Employers 2004 to 2014

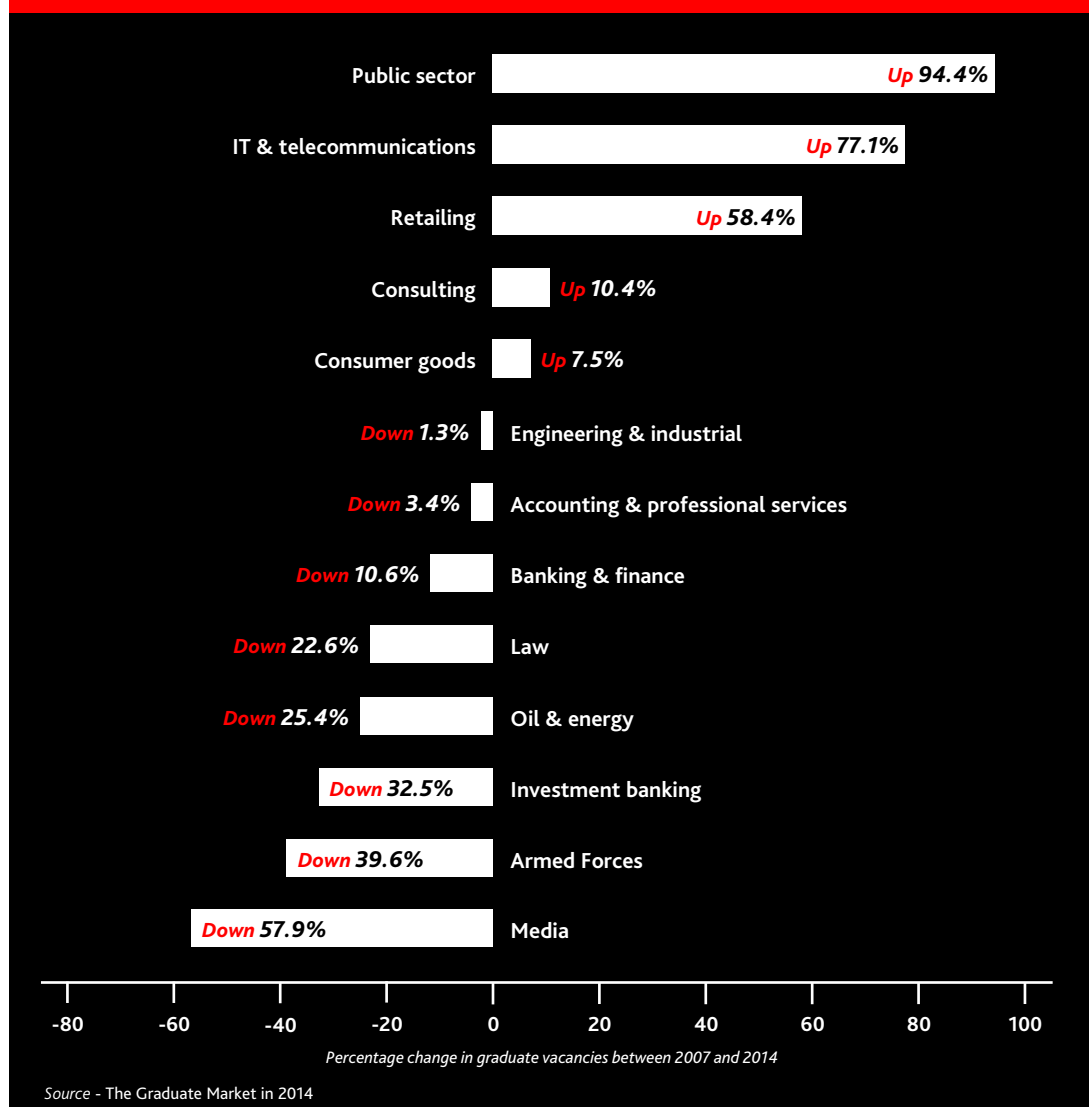


Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Comparing the graduate recruitment targets for 2014 with the numbers hired in 2007 shows that within five individual industries and business sectors, graduate vacancies are now higher than they were before the start of the recession (see *Chart 2.11*). The number of entry-level positions available for graduates in the public sector has virtually doubled over the last seven years and vacancies have increased by half in the retail sector and by three-quarters in IT & telecommunications.

Within five key employment areas – consulting firms, consumer goods manufacturers, engineering & industrial companies, accountancy & professional services firms, and banking & finance firms – graduate recruitment levels are now very similar to those seven years ago, despite substantial falls in graduate vacancies at the start of the recession. However, graduate recruitment at the well-known media organisations, the Armed Forces and City investment banks remains between 30% and 60% lower than it was in 2007 and there are around a quarter fewer graduate vacancies available this year at the leading oil & energy companies and top law firms.

Chart 2.11 How Graduate Vacancies Changed 2007 to 2014, by Sector or Industry



Summary

- Graduate vacancies at organisations featured in *The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers* **increased by 2.5%** in 2013, compared with recruitment in 2012. Graduate recruitment at the leading employers dipped in 2012 by 0.8%, having risen by 2.8% in 2011 and 12.6% in 2010, after sharp falls of 17.8% in 2009 and 6.7% in 2008.
- The UK's leading employers expect to recruit **significantly more graduates in 2014** and are offering **8.7%** more entry-level vacancies than last year – the biggest annual rise in graduate recruitment for four years.
- This substantial increase in graduate vacancies for 2014 takes graduate recruitment to its **highest level since 2007** and means that there will be more opportunities for this summer's university-leavers than at any time since the start of the recession.
- Employers in eleven out of thirteen key industries and employment areas are expecting to take on **more new graduates** than in 2013.
- The biggest growth in vacancies is expected at **public sector employers, accounting & professional services firms, City investment banks, retailers and engineering & industrial companies** which together intend to recruit almost 1,200 extra graduates in 2014.
- The largest recruiters of graduates in 2014 will be **Teach First** (1,550 vacancies), **PwC** (1,200 vacancies) and **Deloitte** (1,000 vacancies).
- Recruiters have confirmed that a record 37% of this year's entry-level positions are expected to be filled by graduates who have **already worked for their organisations** – either through paid internships, industrial placements or vacation work – and therefore are not open to other students from the 'Class of 2014'.

Chapter 3

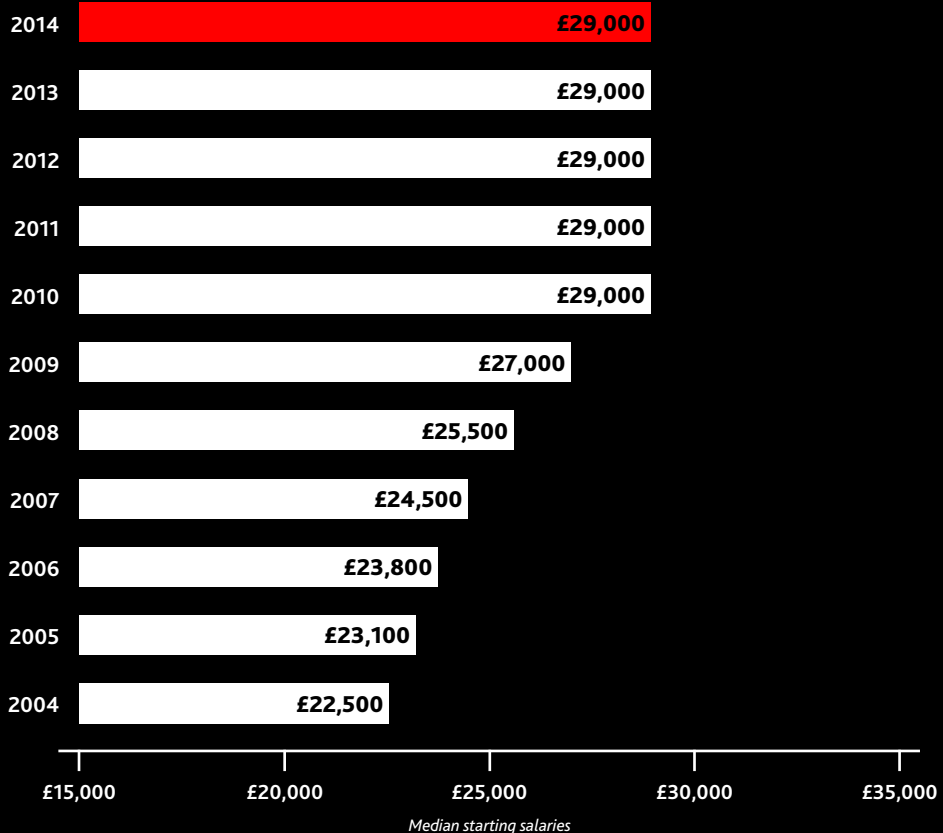
Graduate Salaries

Starting Salaries for Graduates

The second part of the research analyses the starting salaries that top employers are preparing to pay new graduates due to begin work in 2014, compared with salaries paid to graduate recruits who joined their organisations in 2013. The starting salaries quoted are generally the average national salaries that have been promoted by employers during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 recruitment rounds. The figures do not include additional benefits such as relocation allowances, regional weighting, subsidised company facilities or bonus schemes.

For the four years from 2004 to 2007, salaries rose by between 2.3% and 3.0% – effectively matching the increasing cost-of-living each year – and by more generous rises of 4.1% in 2008 and 5.9% in 2009 (see *Chart 3.1*). The improving graduate job market in 2010 brought a bigger jump to a median starting salary of £29,000 but pay for new graduates has remained at this level each year since and is expected to do so again in 2014.

Chart 3.1 How Employers' Graduate Starting Salaries Changed from 2004 to 2014



Graduate Salaries in 2014

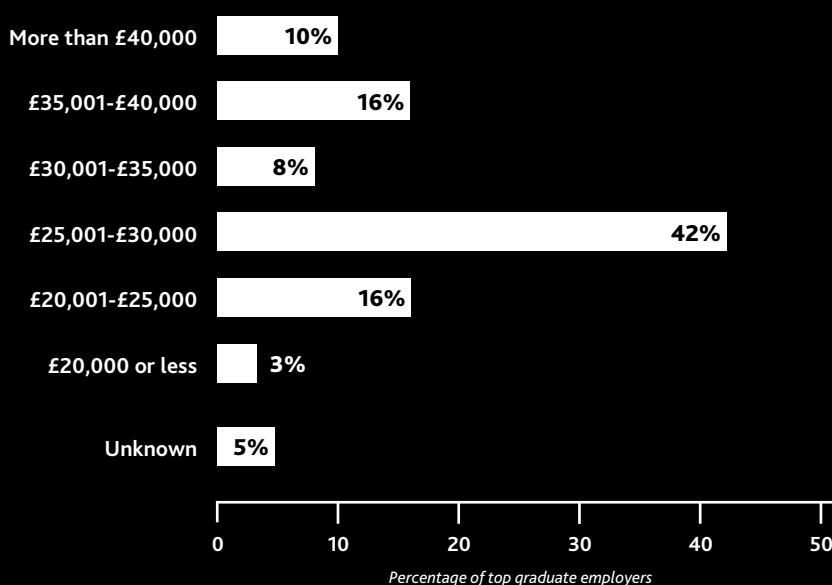
The research shows that although the UK's leading employers are offering a median starting salary of £29,000 for an unprecedented fifth year running, there is considerable variation in the starting salaries available from individual organisations in 2014.

Only three major employers are paying £20,000 or less to their new graduate recruits this year (see *Chart 3.2*). Most organisations – some three-fifths of those featured in the research – are offering graduates between £20,000 and £30,000. At the very top of the market, a quarter of graduate programmes now pay more than £35,000 and ten employers are intending to pay salaries in excess of £40,000 this year. Five of the best-known investment banks are offering basic salaries of £45,000 this year and three have confirmed that their overall graduate packages will be worth £50,000 or more to new joiners, when relocation allowances or sign-up bonuses are taken into account. Beyond the City, the highest salaries are again at Aldi, which pays graduates training to become area managers a first-year salary of £41,000, and the European Commission, where new graduates are paid a minimum starting salary of £41,500.

Within individual industries and business sectors, the highest-paying UK graduate employers in 2014 are again the investment banks and law firms (see *Chart 3.3*). Whilst it should be noted that several of the largest investment banks featured in the research declined to reveal their exact graduate starting salaries for 2014, the median rate for those that did is £45,000. Following increases in starting salaries at a number of leading law firms and two of the 'Big Four' accounting & professional services firms during the last twelve months – for both the 2013 and 2014 intake of graduates – the median salary for new graduates joining the legal sector is now £39,000 and has risen to £30,000 for trainee accountants.

Starting salaries of £30,000 or more are available in three other sectors in 2014 – banking & finance, oil & energy and consulting. Consumer goods and IT & telecommunications

Chart 3.2 Graduate Starting Salaries at leading UK Employers in 2014



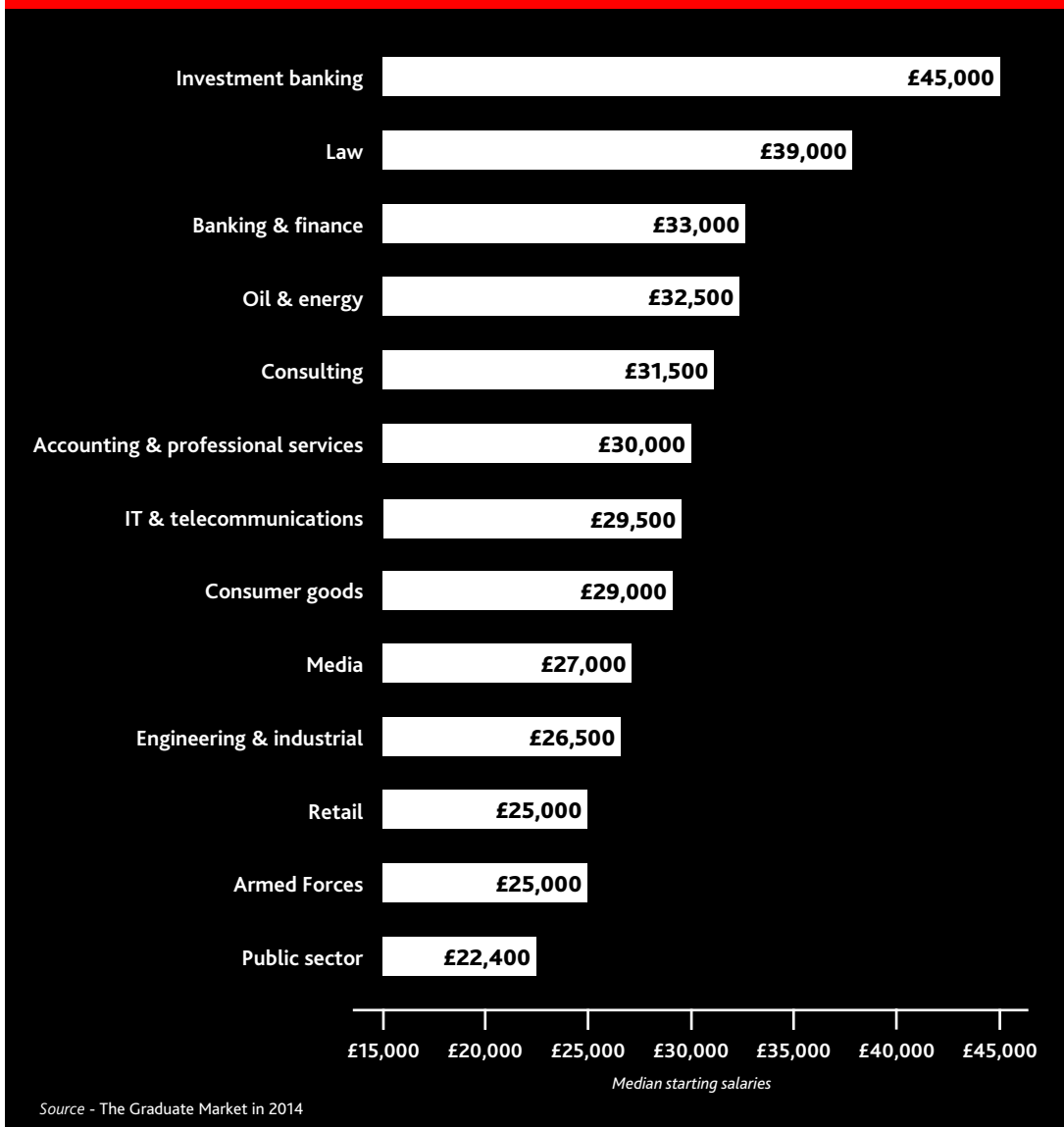
Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

companies are expecting to pay salaries close to the national median of £29,000. The lowest predicted salaries are for those starting work with public sector employers, high street retailers and those joining the Armed Forces, where the initial salary for graduates currently averages £25,000 upon commencement of Officer training.

Starting salaries in some employment areas may yet increase before graduates begin work in autumn 2014. For example, the 'Big Four' accountancy & professional services firms often don't finalise their starting salaries until the summer months, so pay for new graduates could be revised upwards then.

Whilst none of the data for graduate remuneration in 2014 includes additional incentives such as relocation allowances, approximately a quarter of employers did say they would be offering some form of 'starting work' or 'sign-up' bonus to new graduates this year, typically worth between £1,500 and £6,000.

Chart 3.3 Graduate Salaries at UK Employers in 2014, by Sector or Industry



Changes to Graduate Salaries since 2013

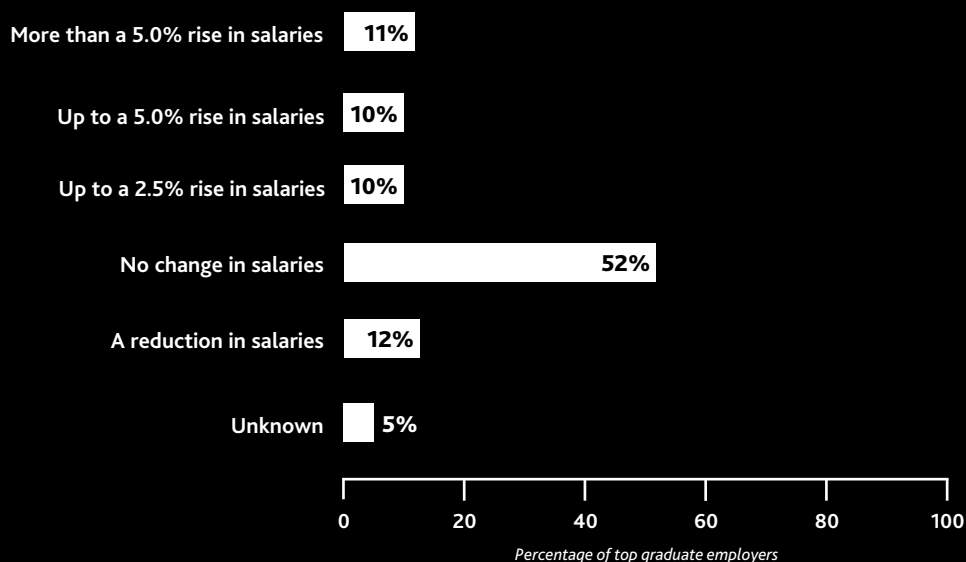
Examining how graduate starting salaries for 2014 at individual organisations compare with 2013, it is clear that whilst the majority of leading graduate employers included in the research have opted to leave their starting salaries unchanged, up to a third of employers are planning to pay their new recruits improved salaries this year (see *Chart 3.4*).

Ten employers have stepped-up their graduate starting salaries by 2.5% or less – a rise which could be considered to be a ‘cost-of-living increase’, given that the UK rate of inflation (CPI) stood at 2.1% in the final quarter of 2013. It is interesting that seven of the eleven employers that have opted to increase graduate salaries by more than 5.0% for 2014 had previously been paying university-leavers less than the national median graduate starting salary of £29,000 – several of these increases now bring these organisations’ starting salaries up to the median rate. A total of twelve well-known employers have reduced their graduate rates for 2014, although most appear to be either minor adjustments of £1,000 or less, or a change to the range of salaries on offer, rather than more significant reductions to their graduate starting salaries.

Within different industries and business sectors, many graduate starting salaries remain the same for 2014 as they were in 2013 (see *Chart 3.5*). In nine of the thirteen key employment areas featured within the research – including the Armed Forces, consulting, consumer goods, engineering & industrial, investment banking, law, oil & energy, retail and the public sector – there is no change to the median salary being offered. Small salary increases are expected at IT & telecommunications companies and accounting & professional services firms but rises of up to 10.0% are planned by graduate employers in banking & finance and the media. It is worth noting that many of the graduate positions in the media are commercial roles, rather than editorial jobs, which traditionally pay lower entry-level salaries.

Looking at starting salaries in 2014 in comparison with those on offer in previous years, it is apparent that pay rates have actually increased dramatically in several employment areas

Chart 3.4 How UK Employers have changed Graduate Starting Salaries since 2013

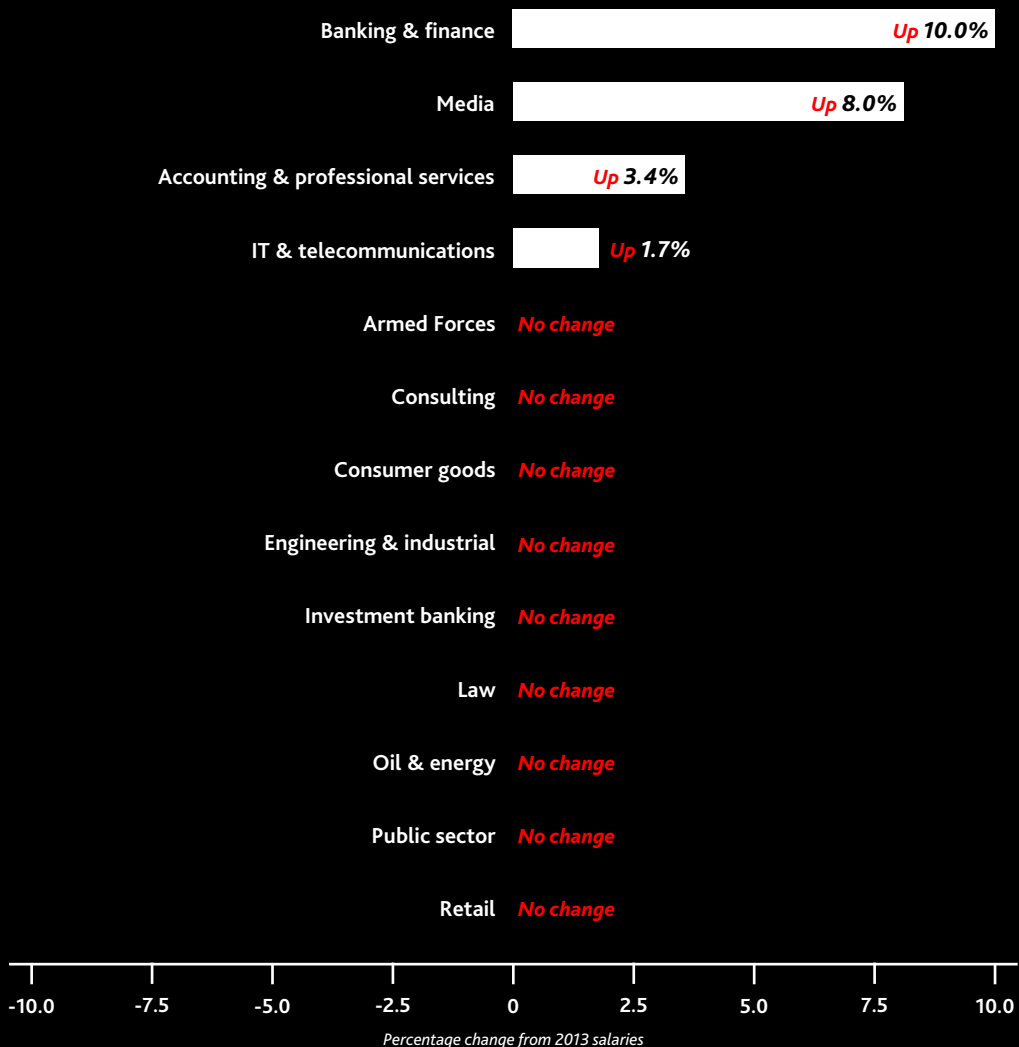


Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

during the years of the economic downturn. The leading City law firms are now offering new graduates a quarter more than they did before the recession began in 2008, whilst the top investment banks have stepped up their starting salaries by almost a third over the same period. By comparison, graduate starting salaries at the major public sector employers have risen by less than 10% since 2007 – well below the increase in the cost-of-living during over the last seven years.

These changes to graduate starting salaries mean that there remains a wide disparity between the individual employers featured within the research – the top salaries on offer to new graduates in 2014 are still more than £25,000 higher than the lowest rates. Six sectors now pay median salaries of at least £30,000 and with packages of between £32,000 and £42,000 on offer in the oil & energy industry, at three leading retailers and from one public sector employer, it is clear that generous remuneration packages are available for graduates beyond the City banks and legal firms.

Chart 3.5 Changes to Graduate Salaries since 2013, by Sector or Industry



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Summary

- **Graduate starting salaries** for 2014 at the UK's leading graduate employers are expected to remain **unchanged for an unprecedented fifth year** – at a median of **£29,000**. Graduate salaries increased by 7.4% in 2010 and 5.9% in 2009.
- A quarter of top graduate programmes will pay new recruits more than **£35,000** when they start work and ten organisations are offering at least £40,000 to this year's graduates.
- The most generous salaries in 2014 are those on offer from **investment banks** (median of £45,000), **law** firms (median of £39,000), **banking & finance** firms (median of £33,000) and **oil & energy** companies (median of £32,500).
- **Public sector employers** (median of £22,400), the **Armed Forces** (median of £25,000) and **retailers** (median of £25,000) have the lowest graduate pay rates this year.
- The highest published graduate starting salaries for 2014 are at the **European Commission** (£41,500) and retailer **Aldi** (£41,000).

Chapter 4

Graduate Recruitment in 2013-2014

Promoting Graduate Programmes

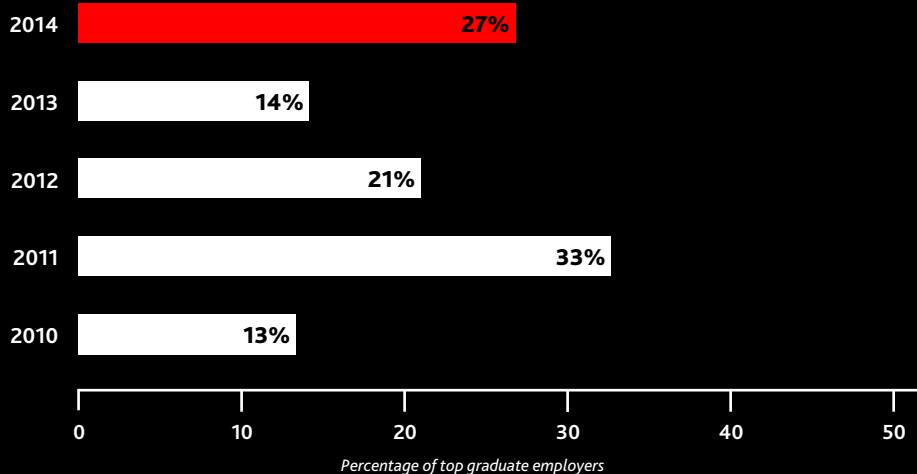
The next part of the research examines how the UK's leading recruiters have approached the 2013-2014 graduate recruitment round – from the promotions they used to publicise their graduate opportunities, the universities they targeted during their campus recruitment campaigns, to the volume and quality of applications received so far for their 2014 graduate vacancies.

It is no surprise that the recession in 2008 and 2009 had a substantial impact on the resources subsequently available to graduate recruiters. *The Graduate Market in 2010* report showed that recruitment budgets at almost half of the UK's leading graduate employers had been cut compared with the previous recruitment season, and 18% of organisations described the decrease as 'considerable'. Just thirteen employers increased their annual graduate recruitment budget that year (see *Chart 4.1*).

During the 2010-2011 recruitment season, the outlook seemed more encouraging and a third of top employers spent more on attracting and recruiting graduates. But during both the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 graduate recruitment rounds, employers whose budgets had increased were outnumbered by the organisations where spending on graduate recruitment had been cut year-on-year.

This year, for the first time since 2011, more than a quarter of the leading employers have increased their graduate recruitment budgets for 2013-2014, whilst smaller numbers of organisations have decreased their spending on graduate recruitment.

Chart 4.1 Top Employers whose annual Graduate Recruitment Budgets increased



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Graduate Recruitment Challenges in 2013-2014

Given that the number of graduate vacancies on offer from the UK's leading employers has risen substantially this year, it is perhaps understandable that graduate recruitment budgets have increased accordingly.

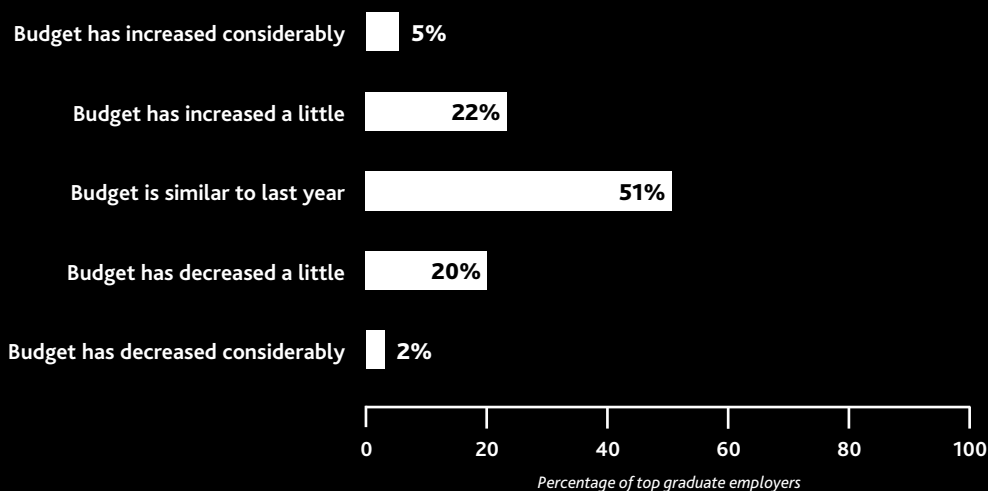
Some twenty-seven organisations have allocated more resources and budget to attract and recruit university-leavers this year (see *Chart 4.2*), with five employers – including a leading retailer, one of the Armed Forces and a major financial institution – reporting that their spending had 'increased considerably'. Half of employers have a similar budget to last year but recruiters from more than twenty organisations warned they have had less money to spend on graduate recruitment this year – including several engineering & industrial companies, one of the Big Four accounting & professional services firms and two of the key employers from the IT & telecommunications sector.

Graduate recruiters taking part in the research were asked about their main challenges and focuses during the current 2013-2014 graduate recruitment round (see *Chart 4.3*). Almost three-quarters confirmed that one of their key priorities was to improve students' perceptions of their organisations and over half were keen to step up their profile on campus and improve the quality of graduates they recruited. A quarter of recruiters feared increased competition for graduates from other employers this year, whilst nearly half warned they had insufficient resources in their graduate recruitment teams.

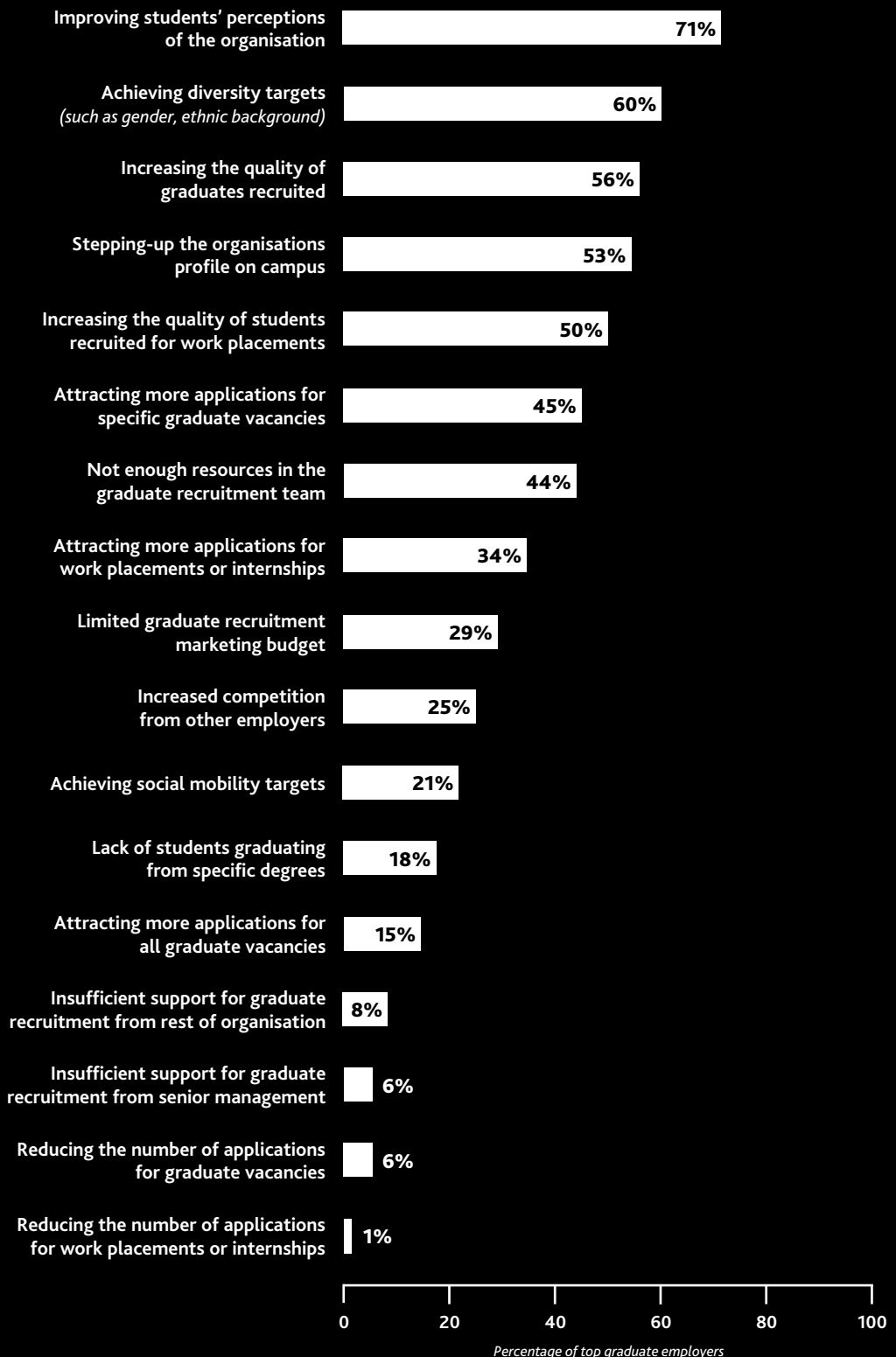
Three-fifths of organisations said that they were working to achieve diversity targets for their graduate recruitment, such as the number of women or ethnic minority applicants, but just one in five recruiters had social mobility targets, to recruit graduates from a wider range of backgrounds and circumstances.

Relatively few employers wanted to increase the overall number of graduate applications that they received but almost half of recruiters hoped to attract more applications for specific functions. For many recruiters, there was an increased emphasis on work experience with half looking to improve the quality of students recruited for internships or other work placements.

Chart 4.2 Employers' Graduate Recruitment Budgets for 2013-14



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Chart 4.3 Challenges for Graduate Recruiters at the UK's Top Employers in 2013-2014

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Graduate Recruitment Promotions in 2013-2014

The UK's top employers have used a very wide variety of different promotions to publicise their graduate opportunities during the 2013-2014 recruitment season (see *Table 4.5*).

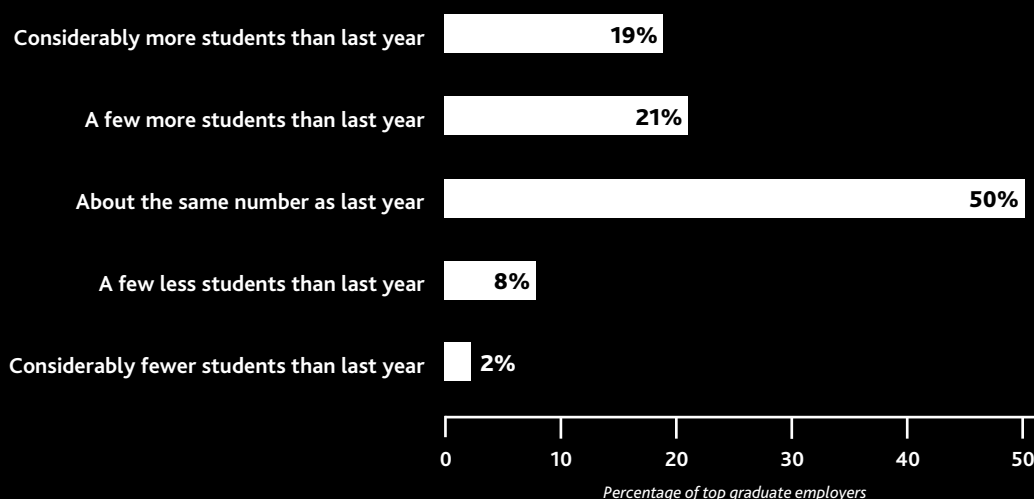
Virtually all the leading recruiters are working with university careers services this year and are advertising their graduate vacancies on graduate recruitment websites (such as *Milkround* and *Prospects*). There has been a sharp rise in employers' use of social media – more than 90% of organisations are now using *Facebook*, *Twitter* or *LinkedIn* to promote their graduate opportunities and two-thirds of recruiters said their use of social media had increased this year. A very high proportion of employers also used commercial or university email services to let individual students know about their graduate vacancies.

At local universities, more than ninety individual employers have held their own on-campus recruitment presentations and taken part in university careers fairs so far this year. Four fifths of employers have provided skills training sessions this year, with many organisations stepping up the number of events they have hosted. More than half of employers have also used some form of business game to promote their organisation and two thirds of employers have sponsored student societies this year, a noticeable increase on the 2012-2013 recruitment season.

Over half of employers now have their own network of campus brand managers – local students or postgraduates who are recruited to help publicise an employer's university events, to remind fellow students about application deadlines, and assist recruiters with identifying potential local promotional opportunities. More than a quarter of employers said they had made more use of campus brand managers this year. There has also been a rise in the number of organisations hosting student or graduate competitions to engage with potential graduate recruits and more recruiters have opted to host special one-off campus promotions around the UK – such as a roadshow event, campus vending machines and photo booths.

Overall, employers reported an increase in the attendance by students at their campus events so far during the 2013-2014 recruitment season (see *Chart 4.4*) – two-fifths of organisations

Chart 4.4 Number of Students taking part in Employers' Campus Events in 2013-2014



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

said that either a ‘few more’ or ‘considerably more’ students had taken part in their local presentations, skills training sessions or had met them at university careers fairs. Half of organisations thought the turnout from students had been similar to the previous recruitment season but ten organisations were disappointed to have seen fewer job hunters at their events this year.

It is interesting to see that record numbers of employers are now targeting first year undergraduates when promoting their graduate opportunities (see *Table 4.5*). More than four-fifths of organisations are holding events specifically for first year students during the 2013-2014 recruitment season, such as taster sessions, open days, skills events, business games and introductory courses. Over a quarter of employers confirmed that they have done more with first year students than ever before. Very high numbers of employers have also been keen to target penultimate students, particularly to let them know about work experience and internship opportunities, and virtually all employers still promote their graduate vacancies to students in their final year at university.

Table 4.5 Analysis of Employers’ Graduate Recruitment Promotions in 2013-2014

<i>Graduate Recruitment Promotion</i>	<i>% of employers who used promotion during 2013-2014</i>	<i>Done more than last year %</i>	<i>About the same as last year %</i>	<i>Done less than last year %</i>
University careers services	94	33	53	8
Graduate recruitment websites	93	21	61	11
Campus presentations	91	26	51	14
Careers fairs	91	28	44	19
Social media	91	62	28	1
Email services	85	22	54	9
Advertising in graduate directories	83	13	51	19
Skills training sessions	81	31	42	8
Advertising in sector guides	78	9	51	18
Advertising in local careers guides	73	8	49	16
Drop-in sessions	72	16	42	14
Academic lectures	66	13	47	6
Sponsorship of student societies	64	16	36	12
Campus brand managers	57	29	27	1
Competitions	54	24	24	6
Business games	51	14	32	5
Special one-off campus promotions	47	21	21	5
Advertising in student newspapers	45	4	34	7
<i>Year Groups Targeted</i>				
Promotions to first years	82	29	52	1
Promotions to penultimate years	87	25	62	0
Promotions to final years	93	20	65	8

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Universities Targeted by Employers in 2013-2014

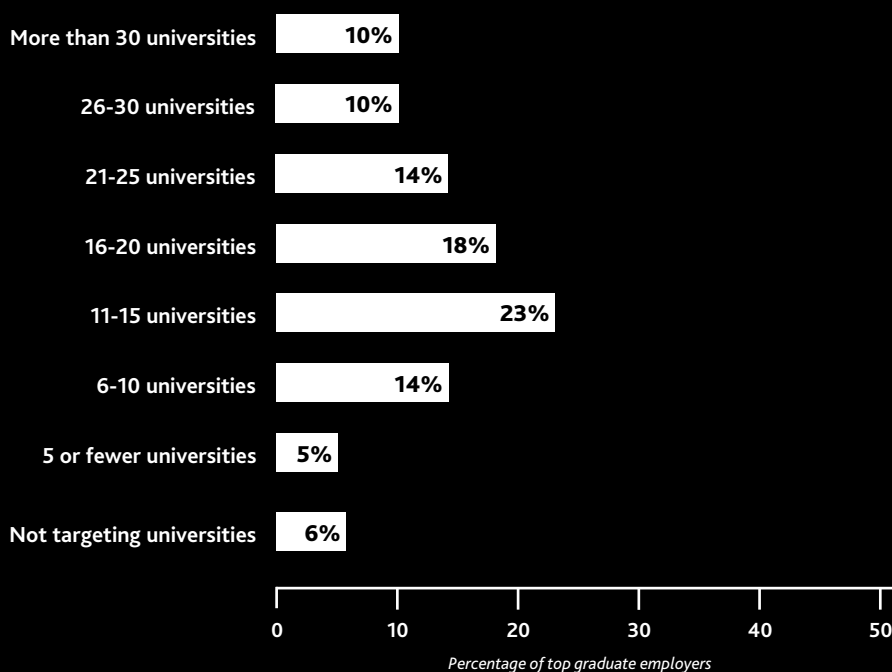
With over 130 universities now offering undergraduate degree courses in the UK, graduate employers have a very broad choice of institutions from which to recruit. Few organisations, if any, have the resources to target every university to promote their graduate opportunities, so most employers focus their recruitment publicity at a more limited number of institutions.

The results show that the majority of top graduate employers are targeting between 10 and 25 universities each in 2013-2014 (see *Chart 4.6*), although ten employers are currently visiting more than thirty campuses annually for their graduate promotions. Within individual business sectors, accounting & professional services and law firms have actively publicised their graduate vacancies at the largest number of universities, whereas media employers and consulting firms took part in local promotions at the fewest universities (see *Chart 4.7*).

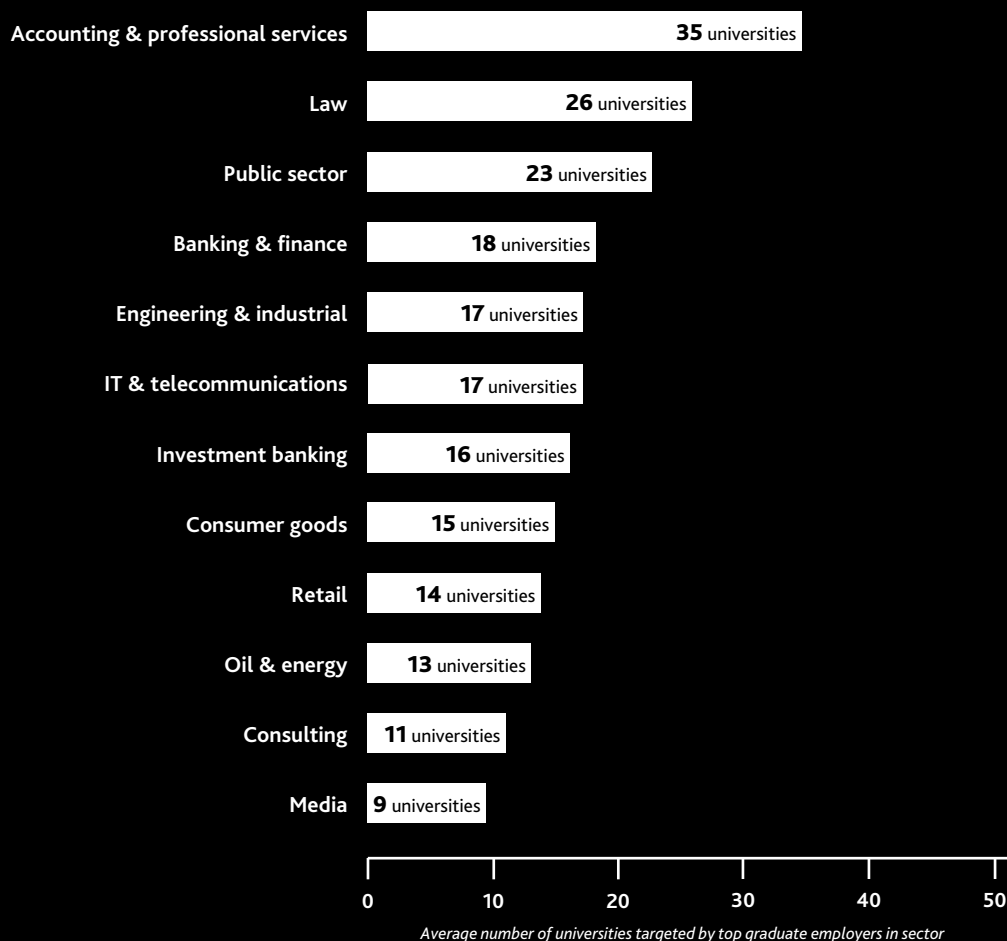
The top five universities targeted by the largest number of leading graduate employers are Nottingham, Manchester, Cambridge, Oxford and Bristol (see *Table 4.8*). These institutions have attracted the largest number of top graduate recruiters for campus fairs, recruitment presentations or other university promotions during 2013-2014.

It is interesting to compare this list with the rankings from *The Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide 2014* – the latest league table of leading institutions compiled from a range of university data including entry standards, teaching performance, academic research, student funding and graduates' career prospects. In it, Cambridge and Oxford are ranked in 1st and 2nd place but Nottingham and Manchester, the top two universities most-targeted by the leading employers, fail to even make the top twenty in the guide. And by contrast, St Andrews and Lancaster which are ranked 4th and 12th respectively in the guide, do not appear in the employers' top twenty-five universities.

Chart 4.6 Number of Universities Targeted by Top Employers in 2013-2014



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Chart 4.7 Universities Targeted by Top Employers in 2013-2014, by Sector or Industry

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Table 4.8 Universities Targeted by the Largest Number of Top Employers in 2013-2014

	Ranking in 'Good University Guide' *		Ranking in 'Good University Guide' *
1. Nottingham	23	14. Loughborough	21
2. Manchester	26	15. Edinburgh	22
3. Cambridge	1	16. London School of Economics	3
4. Oxford	2	17. Newcastle	18
5. Bristol	15	18. Exeter	8
6. Bath	7	19. Southampton	20
7. Warwick	10	20. Strathclyde	42
8. Leeds	29	21. York	11
9. London Imperial College	5	22. London King's College	27
10. London University College	9	23. Glasgow	25
11. Birmingham	16	24. Liverpool	36
12. Durham	6	25. Cardiff	33
13. Sheffield	18		

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

* The Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide 2014

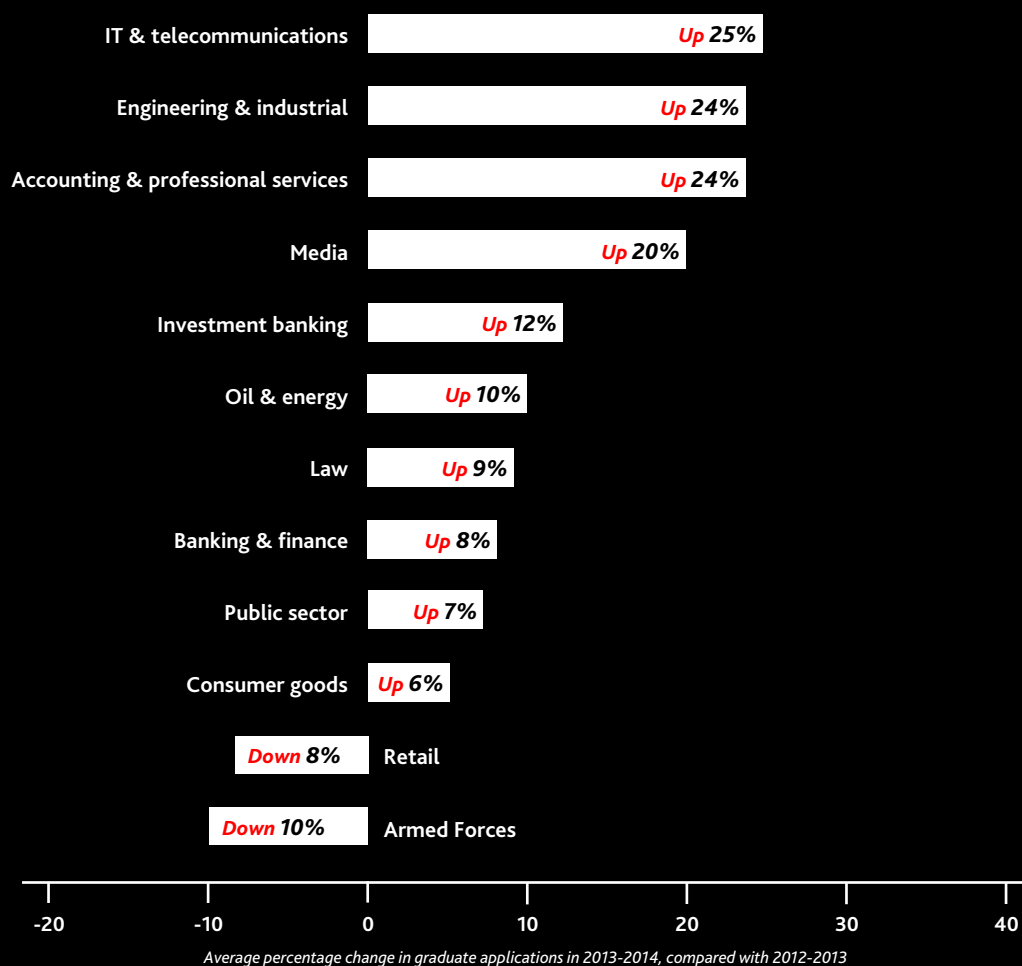
Graduate Applications Received in 2013-2014

More than two-fifths of Britain's top employers have seen an increase in the number of graduate applications they received in the early part of the 2013-2014 recruitment round, compared with the same period last year (see *Chart 4.10*).

Seventeen organisations from a broad range of different industries and business sectors said that their graduate application levels had risen by more than 25%, a very substantial year-on-year increase. Nine employers have received at least 10% more applications compared with this time last year and a further fifteen reported more modest increases. By contrast, six employers have seen their graduate applications fall by more than 10% this year. Together, these results equate to an average rise in graduate applications of 9%, compared with last year's recruitment round.

Employers reporting the biggest increases in applications in 2013-2014 are those in the IT & telecommunications, engineering & industrial, accounting & professional services and media sectors, where graduate applications have increase by an average of at least 20% compared with a year ago (see *Chart 4.9*).

Chart 4.9 Number of Applications to Employers in 2013-2014, by Sector or Industry



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Whilst nearly half of employers felt that the quality of the graduate applications they had received was similar to the previous recruitment season, two fifths commented that the quality of applications had increased ‘a little’ and six organisations thought that the standard of applicants had increased ‘considerably’. Nine employers – including two of the Armed Forces and one of the ‘Big Four’ accounting & professional services firms – warned that the quality of graduate applications they’d received had dropped this year.

Chart 4.10 Number of Graduate Applications Received by Employers in 2013-2014

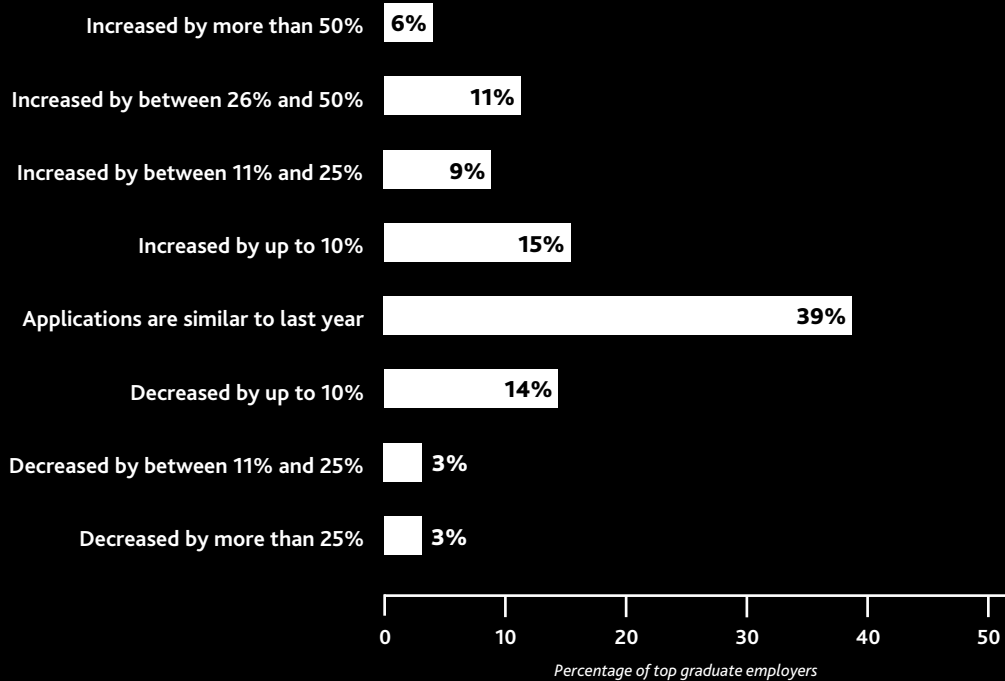
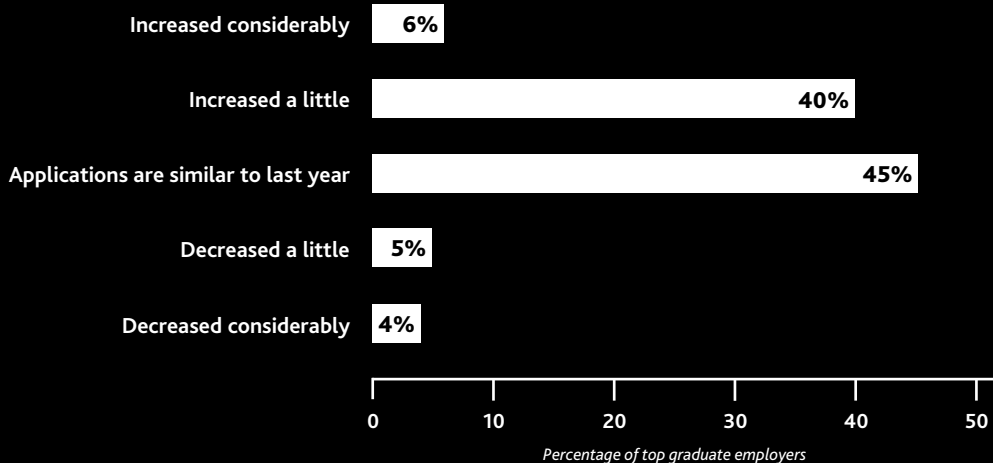


Chart 4.11 Quality of Graduate Applications Received by Employers in 2013-2014



Summary

- More than a quarter of employers have **increased** their graduate recruitment budgets for the 2013-2014 recruitment round, the highest proportion for three years.
- The country's leading employers have been actively marketing their 2014 graduate vacancies at an average of **18** UK universities, using a variety of campus **careers fairs**, local **recruitment presentations**, **skills training** events, **online advertising** and promotions through **university careers services**.
- Graduate recruiters have done more promotions through **social media**, **skills training**, **university careers services**, **campus brand managers**, **careers fairs** and **recruitment presentations** during this year's recruitment campaigns – and less **advertising** in graduate directories, sector guides and local guides.
- The ten universities most-often targeted by Britain's top graduate employers in 2013-2014 are Nottingham, Manchester, Cambridge, Oxford, Bristol, Bath, Warwick, Leeds, Imperial College London, and University College London.
- More than two-fifths of employers said they had received **more completed graduate job applications** during the early part of the recruitment season than they had last year and nearly half of employer believed the quality of applications had improved.
- Together, the UK's top employers have received **9% more graduate job applications** so far, compared with the equivalent period in the 2012-2013 recruitment round.

Chapter 5

Work Experience at Graduate Employers

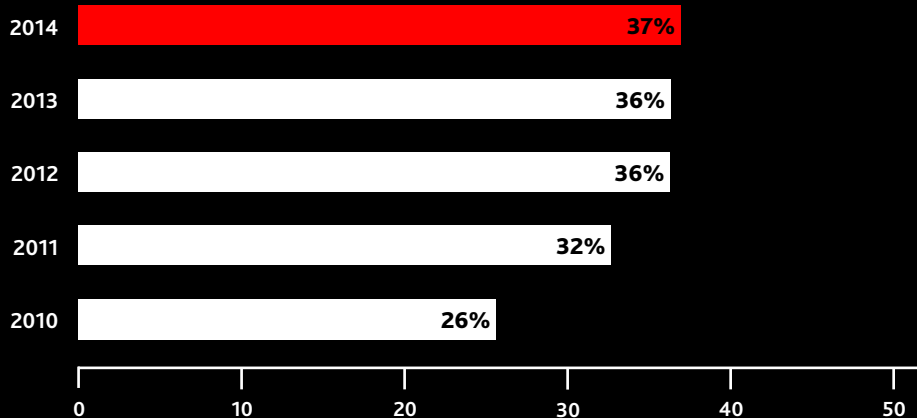
Recruiting Graduates through Work Experience Programmes

Over the last ten years there has been a very noticeable change in the purpose and aims of work experience programmes. A decade ago, the main reason that many major graduate employers offered university students work placements was simply to help individuals decide which career sector they were suited to and to enable students to experience the type of work that graduates did in a particular industry or business area. There were few direct links between these undergraduate work placements and the graduate recruitment process.

Now, for the majority of employers who offer work experience places, such schemes have become an integral part of recruiting new graduates. Students applying for work placements in their first or second year at university are selected through a very similar recruitment process to that used to recruit graduates. This means that once a placement has been successfully completed, recruiters are able to offer work experience students a graduate position, often a full year before students are due to leave university and several months ahead of employers who only recruit graduates during their final year of study, the traditional 'milkround' process. Many employers also consider that recruiting candidates who have proven their abilities during a work placement to be a more reliable way of employing graduates.

In the years following the start of the recession, the proportion of new graduates recruited directly through employers' work experience programmes has jumped from 26% in 2010 to a record 37% in 2014 (see *Chart 5.1*).

Chart 5.1 Graduates Recruited via Work Experience Programmes from 2010 to 2014



Percentage of vacancies at top graduate employers
filled by graduates who had already worked for the employer

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Availability of Work Experience in 2014

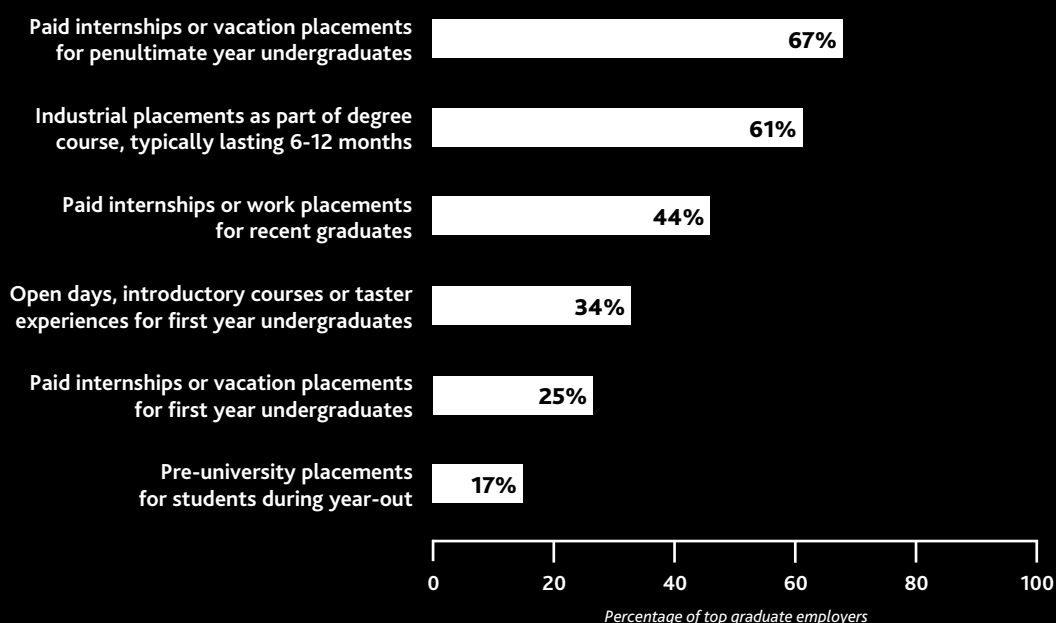
It is very encouraging to see that almost all of Britain's top graduate employers are providing paid work experience placements for university students or recent graduates in 2014.

Two-thirds of the employers featured in the research are offering paid internships to penultimate year undergraduates during their summer vacations (see *Chart 5.2*), whilst three-fifths of organisations are hosting industrial placements – structured work experience that is organised as part of university degree courses (often described as 'sandwich' courses) and typically lasts between six and twelve months, giving students first-hand experience of technical, commercial or research roles. It is interesting to see that a third of employers now offer work experience to first year students – either via paid internships and vacation placements, or through open days, short introductory courses or 'taster' experiences.

Together, Britain's top employers have a record number of paid internships and work experience placements on offer this year. There are more than 11,800 places available to students and recent graduates from employers featured in the research (see *Table 5.4*), an increase of 7% on the number of placements available during 2013. Employers are offering a median of 70 paid placements each this year, but eleven organisations are providing more than 250 paid internships or work placements during 2014 (see *Chart 5.3*).

The City's leading investment banks have the largest number of work experience places available this year, with over 3,000 paid internships and work placements. It is striking that investment banking is one of just three sectors where the number of work placements on offer from employers outstrips or matches the number of permanent jobs available to graduates. High street retailers, consulting firms and accounting & professional services firms have the lowest ratio of work placements to graduate jobs, making it harder for students interested in these areas to get relevant work experience before they apply for graduate roles.

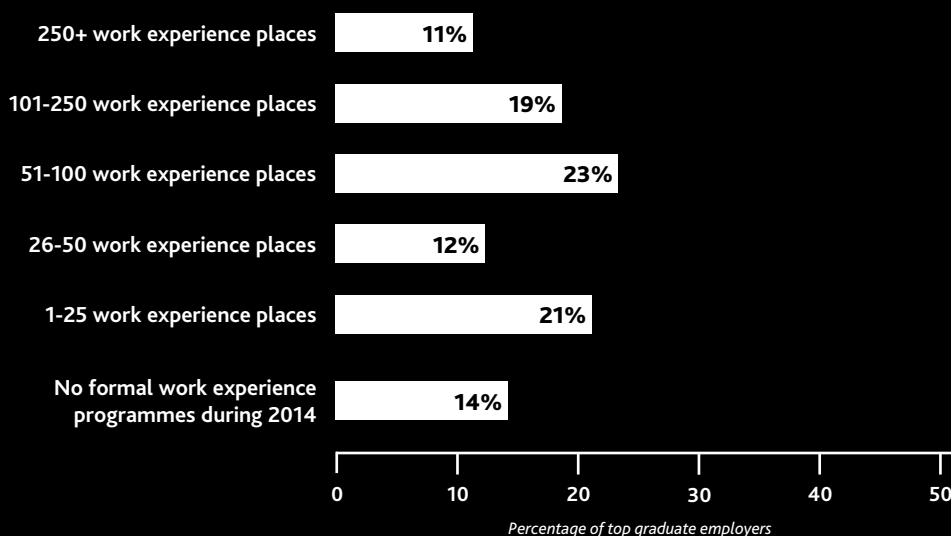
Chart 5.2 Type of Work Experience available at the UK's Top Employers in 2014



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Graduate recruiters at the organisations featured in the research were asked about the value of work experience when it comes to assessing students' applications for graduate roles. Two-fifths of recruiters stated that it was 'not very likely' and a further 12 per cent said it was 'not at all likely' that a graduate who'd had no previous work experience with any employers would be successful during their selection process and be made a job offer.

Chart 5.3 Paid Work Experience Places available at the UK's Top Employers in 2014



Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Table 5.4 Analysis of Paid Work Experience in 2014, by Industry or Business Sector

Industry or Business Sector	Total work experience places available in 2013	Total work experience places available in 2014	% change in places between 2013 & 2014	Ratio of work experience places to graduate vacancies in 2014
Accounting & professional services	1,626	1,844	13.4	48:100
Banking & finance	599	725	21.0	76:100
Consulting	203	174	-14.3	29:100
Consumer goods	335	375	11.9	101:100
Engineering & industrial	1,071	1,067	-0.4	67:100
Investment banking	2,957	3,189	7.8	134:100
IT & telecommunications	600	650	8.3	86:100
Law	725	710	-2.1	100:100
Oil & energy	388	419	8.0	80:100
Public sector	1,755	1,842	5.0	53:100
Retailing	345	364	5.5	23:100
ALL SECTORS	11,044	11,819	7.0	65:100

Source - The Graduate Market in 2014

Summary

- More than **four-fifths** of the UK's leading graduate employers are offering **paid** work experience programmes for students and recent graduates during the 2013-2014 academic year – a record **11,819 places** are available.
- Two thirds of employers provide **paid vacation internships** for **penultimate year students** and three-fifths offer **industrial placements** for undergraduates (typically lasting 6-12 months as part of a university degree course).
- Increasing numbers of employers now also have work experience places for **first year undergraduates** – a quarter of organisations offer paid internships and a third of employers run introductory courses, open days and other taster experiences for first year students.
- Over **half the recruiters** who took part in the research repeated their warnings from previous years – that graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are **unlikely to be successful** during the selection process and have **little or no chance** of receiving a job offer for their organisations' graduate programmes.