
Careers Advisory Service Annual Report 2004-5: Employment Market Supplement

Highlights
- 46% of employed Bath graduates are in professional jobs, compared with 25% nationally
- Bath is BP’s best University
- Research shows employers are best to promote themselves through careers services

1. The National Graduate Employment Market

Key points:
- Traditional graduate vacancies continue to expand at the same rate as in 2004, with the Association of Graduate Recruiters predicting 14.5% more vacancies than in 2004
- Most of the increase is in accountancy, general management, investment banking and IT
- Salaries are predicted to rise by 4.8% to £22,000, but the average masks a wide range
- Predictions apply only to the traditional “high flying” graduate training programmes, not the whole market.

The cautious optimism of early 2004 has grown into enthusiastic confidence in some sectors, particularly accountancy and investment banking in which the employers tend to have membership of the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR). Other AGR members, notably those recruiting smaller numbers of graduates into marketing, actuarial work and human resources did not report similar increases. The AGR surveys always attract wide publicity, but their members represent a very limited segment of the market – the traditional professional openings and graduate training programmes - and such predictions are not transferable to other graduate sectors. In addition, the sheer volume of vacancies in one area – in this case accountancy – has a big effect on predicted increases.

The Prospects Today Salary and Vacancy Survey analysed 5,700 vacancies advertised in Prospects Today (the national bulletin of graduate vacancies) between May 2004 and April 2005. It found the mean salary was £18,322, virtually unchanged from the previous year. Prospects Today includes advertisements from medium and small employers; the average salary for 2005 advertised in the Prospects Directory, in which larger-scale traditional recruiters advertise, is £21,997.


Key points:
- Bath graduates are more likely to be in jobs which involve training for a further qualification
• In other respects the national figures and Bath’s are almost identical.

2.1 Summary classification; First degree graduates

As last year, the biggest difference between Bath’s first degree destinations and the national figures lies in the new combined Work and Study category. This covers a large group of Bath graduates (12%, the same as in 2003) which compares
favourably with the national figure of 9%. Although the Work and Study category also includes those in full time study who also have a part-time job, the majority are those whose job is full-time and whose response to the survey includes details of their study or training. Under the old First Destination Return, this group would largely have been classified as employed. At Bath we feel that a high proportion of this group are in very good jobs, most of which involve working towards a professional qualification; this includes, for example, engineers who are aiming for chartered status, pharmacists on pre-registration training, and those undertaking a business qualification such as actuarial work, accountancy or personnel work.

Destination data for subjects of study

Data for Bath first degree graduates in each subject of study from 2002 onwards, together with employer names and further study details, are on the CAS website, www.bath.ac.uk/careers. The 2004 data will be posted in October-November 2005.

2.2 Job quality classification of employed first degree graduates

Key point:
• 46% of employed Bath graduates are in professional jobs (45% in 2003), compared with 25% nationally

This analysis measures job quality of first degree graduates using the Standard Occupational Code; it is the most reliable method of extracting the data. Other measures, some of which are very popular in the press, use measures based on optional responses from the graduates, for which the response rate is low. On the salary questions the Bath response rate is less than 50% of those who responded to the core survey questions.

Analysing the occupational category of those employed illustrates much more clearly the strong performance of Bath graduates in the market, in a way in which the traditional summary classification shown above does not.

For the first time this year, the DLHE first degree outputs feature on the new HERO Teaching Quality Information website, which is due for public launch in mid September 2005. The data is categorised into programme clusters, includes whether the jobs obtained are graduate level, and lists the most common occupational groups. The site is unhelpful due to the lack of explanation and interpretation.
Nationally, 61% of employed first degree graduates are in the top three groups, compared with 81% of employed Bath graduates. The proportion of employed Bath graduates in professional jobs is particularly impressive: 46% compared with the national average of 25%. At the other end of the scale, Bath has only 3% in sales and customer service occupations compared with 10% nationally.

3. Bath postgraduates: how did they fare?

3.1 Summary classification: Postgraduates
Key points:
- The employment data for Bath postgraduates overall is excellent
- Bath postgraduates are more likely to be in employment than postgraduates nationally

Postgraduates are a very diverse group and in some ways could be said to lack the coherence of a first degree population; nevertheless, the data is published nationally.
for this population so the comparison is thereby legitimate. Bath postgraduates noticeably outperform postgraduates nationally, with 86% in employment.

3.2 Job quality classification of employed postgraduates

Bath follows the national trend with the majority of employed postgraduates in the top three groups. However, the proportion of Bath postgraduates employed as managers and senior officials is higher: 17% compared with the national average of 5%.
4. Employer Recruitment Activities at Bath 2004-5

Key points:
- BP named Bath as the best UK University for graduate recruitment
- CAS hosted 320 employer visits to Bath (303 in 03-04)
- 105 employer presentations organised (92 in 03-04)
- Fair employer attendance up - 169 employers attended (158 in 03-04)

BP tells us we are their top UK University for graduate recruitment. The performance indicator used by BP is the ratio of applications to offers for both graduate positions and internships, and in our case 24% of the students and graduates who applied were successful. This beats Cambridge (22%), Imperial (18%), and Oxford (13%), amongst others. The performance of mechanical and chemical engineering students was particularly impressive.

The CAS is increasingly asked to contribute to research and to advise employers on marketing techniques and on student responses and behaviour.

4.1 Research into employer brands on campus
The year saw some significant research into students’ attitudes to employers’ marketing activities, seeking evidence to justify the innovative and sometimes bizarre attempts at branding which we have seen on campus in the last two years. The GTI survey of students’ views of the effectiveness of employer brands on campus So hard to build, so easy to destroy (May 2005) found:

- Too much marketing made students feel negative towards the employer
- The best place to for employers to promote their brand is through the Careers Service; 54% of students said they were most exposed to employers through CAS products, events and services
- Departments were the second best place for employers to promote themselves; 15% of students identified their department as the source of greatest exposure to employers
- Presentations were identified by students as the best method for employers to promote themselves.

4.2 Presentation programme
Evidence for employers’ continued targeting of the University is provided by the number of employer presentations booked on campus in 2004-5 (105). The effectiveness of innovative marketing methods (such as handing out doughnuts on the parade) is not supported by the research, and it is hoped that such methods will become less common.

4.3 Fairs
According to the GTI survey. Fairs were the fourth most effective marketing tool. Attendance at the Autumn Careers Fair was very high, as last year, with 74 stands taken compared with 75 last year.
The CAS **Vacation Work Fair**, run in conjunction with the Students’ Union, drew in 48 organisations, marginally more than last year’s 46. We are pleased with this number; this type of fair is harder to fill as some stands are charities and voluntary organisations, but it is an important way of alerting first and second year students to the opportunities for getting experience and developing their skills in a work environment.

Our fourth **Summer Recruitment Fair** was run in May and has now become a standard event in the national calendar of summer fairs promoted by Graduate Prospects. Employer numbers rose again, from 38 to 47.

### 4.4 Skills Training

Expansion of the Development Programme of skills training sessions remains one of the service's objectives. Thirty-seven employers booked to provide training workshops.

### 5. Student Participation in Careers Activities at Bath

At Bath student interest in careers and participation in Careers Advisory Service activities is high.

**Key points:**
- **Upward trend in student usage of the CAS:**
  - 4560 students attended employer presentations
  - 3 million successful web page requests
  - 1784 Careers Adviser interactions with students
  - 21,086 student visits to the CAS

#### 5.1 Fairs and Presentations

Students attended employer presentations in droves, and the on-line signing up system reveals that undergraduates from most disciplines attended, with large numbers from engineering, management and economics. International management, physics, modern languages and social and policy sciences were all represented. A substantial number of postgraduate management students attended. The Autumn Fair was very busy, attracting a pleasing 2,275 students.

#### 5.2 Skills training

Significant numbers (1298) attended Development Programme workshops, with both transferable skills and transition skills (including applications, interviews, selection centres and aptitude testing) all being very popular workshops.

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