What do graduates want? 2022/23

Building the workforce of tomorrow

BRIGHT
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Contents

Foreword

At Bright Network, we believe that making the right career choice is one of the most important decisions you'll ever make. Our mission is to connect the next generation with the opportunities, insights and advice to succeed as the workforce of tomorrow.

This research is vital to our work and the wider industry. We've combined over 100 million data points from our platform with this wide reaching survey to truly understand Gen Z on an individual level and, in this report, as a cohort.

There have been significant challenges and change over the last year, both for employers and new graduates entering the working world. This year, we focus on what really matters to graduates when it comes to their first job and how employers can stay relevant to students today. At the time of writing, it's a 'candidate-led market' with a high level of vacancies and employers typically increasing graduate hiring – new thinking and strategies are needed for employers to hire the very best talent from across the student population.

In this report, we look at students' attitudes to their careers, as well as wellbeing, diversity and how you can support them to achieve future career success. Discover how, as a graduate recruiter, you can be an employer of choice for Gen Z, while tailoring your offering to attract and retain the best graduate talent in the coming recruitment cycle.

We hope you find the results and actions insightful and helpful. We welcome your thoughts, feedback and questions.

The Bright Network Research Team

Kirsten Barnes
Chief Commercial Officer

kirsten.barnes@brightnetwork.co.uk

Ben Triggs
Marketing Director & Head of Research

ben.triggs@brightnetwork.co.uk

Shelly O'Gilvie
Student Marketing Lead

shelly.ogilvie@brightnetwork.co.uk
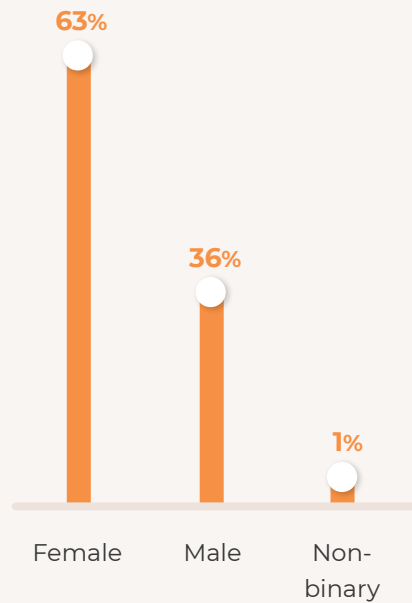
About the respondents

What do graduates want? seeks to understand the career preferences, concerns and ambitions of the next generation, offering exclusive insights into their current behaviours and attitudes.

The results from **14,234** Bright Network members were collected through an online survey between 4th January and 31st January 2022. We have broken down the findings by gender, ethnicity, sexuality, educational background and graduation year where useful.

Gender

Q. Which of the following best describes your gender?

- Female: 63%
- Male: 36%
- Non-binary: 1%

Ethnicity

Q. Which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

- Arab: 3%
- Asian/Asian British: 32%
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: 21%
- Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Background: 4%
- White/White British: 33%
- Other: 4%
- Prefer not to say: 3%
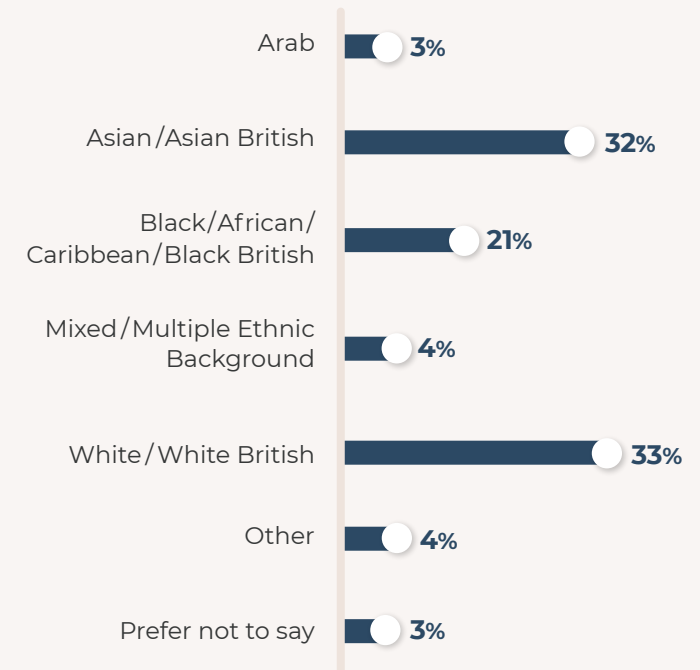
Sexuality

Q. Which of the following best describes your sexuality?

- Bisexual — **8%**
- Gay — **2%**
- Lesbian — **1%**
- Straight/Heterosexual — **80%**
- Other — **2%**
- Prefer not to say — **8%**

Graduation year

Q. What is your graduation year?

- **23%** Grad
- **36%** 2022
- **23%** 2023
- **17%** 2024+
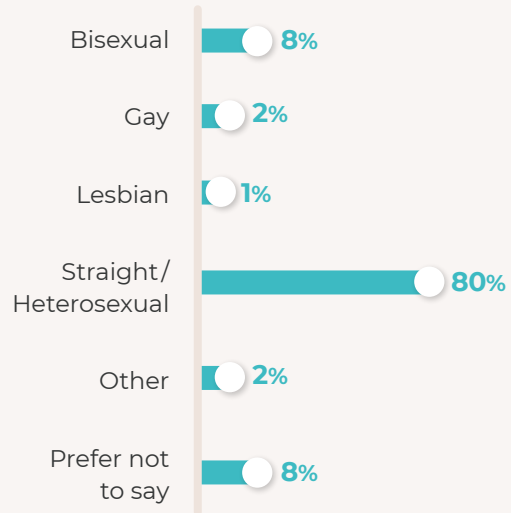
Disability

Q. Do you consider yourself to have a disability or learning difficulties?

- No — **86%**
- Yes — **11%**
- Prefer not to say — **3%**
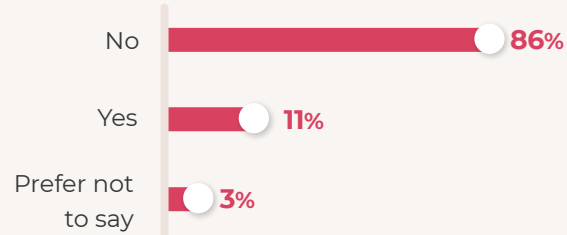
Education

Q. Which type of school did you attend?

- Non-selective (NS) state — **67%**
- Private — **22%**
- Grammar — **11%**
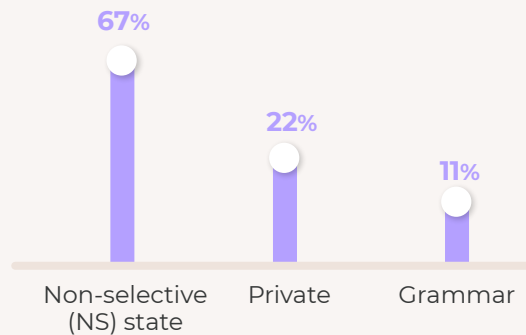
i. Number of institutions represented

159 universities
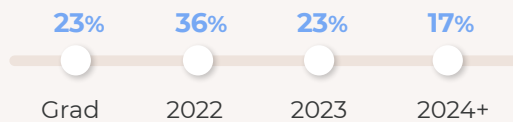
1 Current career thinking and challenges

Key findings:

- **Confidence has risen across the student population, with 55% confident of securing a graduate level role after university.**

- **Lack of network is now considered the biggest barrier to securing a graduate role.**

- **30% of members believe their background has hindered them when applying to an opportunity, rising to 43% across our Black Heritage members.**

- **There are vast differences between those who attended private school and those who attended non-selective state school when it comes to confidence and feeling prepared for the working world.**

Future plans

Q. **What do you plan to do straight after finishing university?**
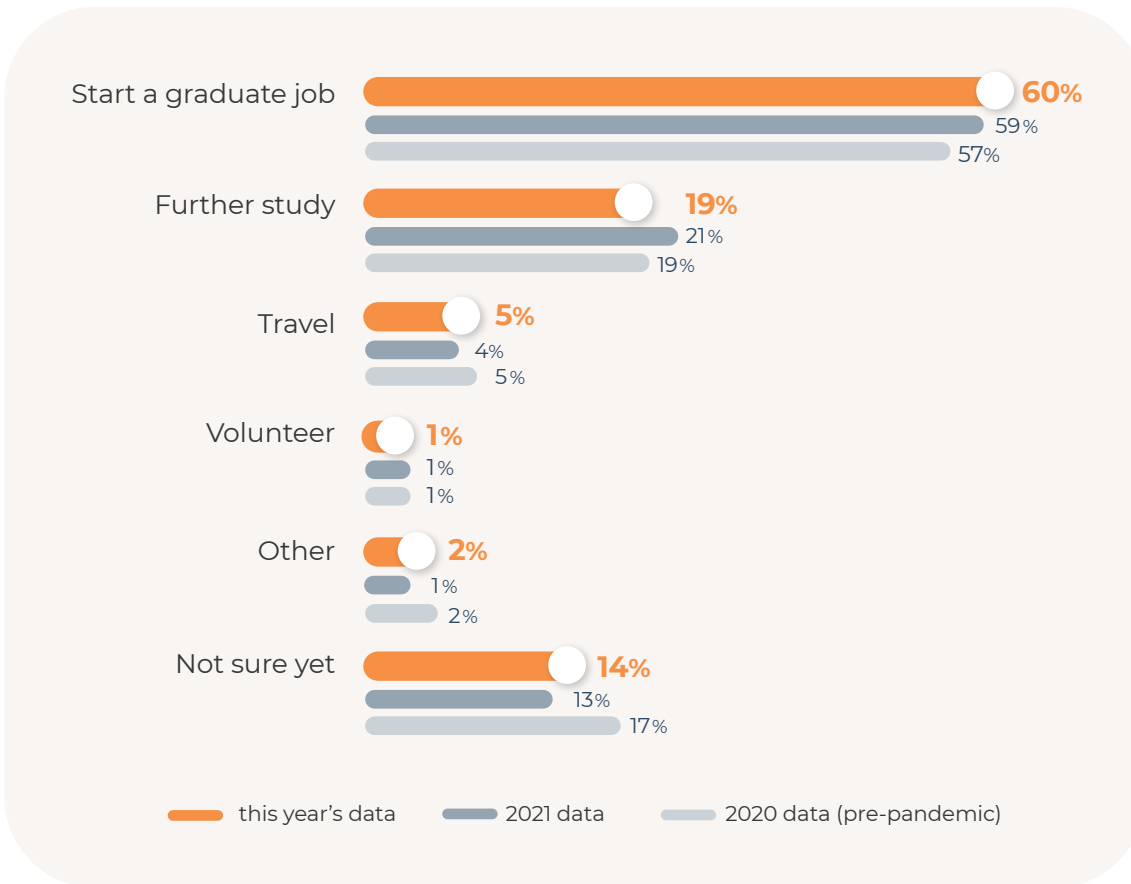
Q. **Are you worried about COVID-19 impacting your graduate prospects?**

Start a graduate job
60%
59%
57%

Further study
19%
21%
19%

Travel
5%
4%
5%

Volunteer
1%
1%
1%

Other
2%
1%
2%

Not sure yet
14%
13%
17%

— this year's data   — 2021 data   — 2020 data (pre-pandemic)

Not sure
17%

No
29%

Yes
54%
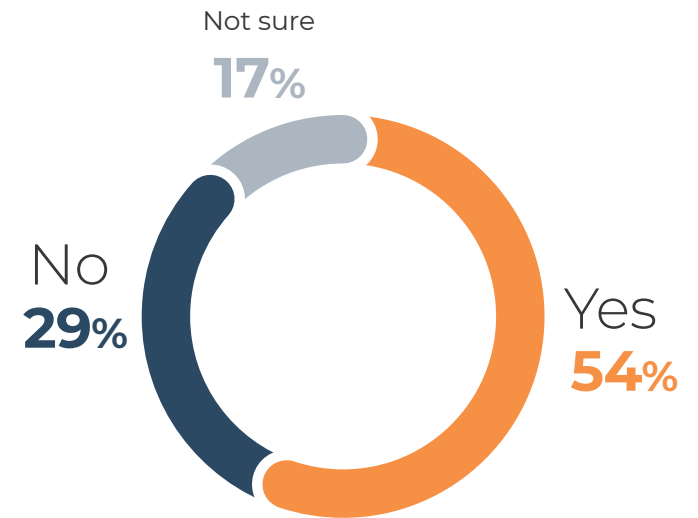
More students than before will be looking for a graduate job straight after finishing university, but there are still worries about the long term impact of the pandemic on the job market and the working world.

Confidence

Q. Are you confident about securing a graduate role after university?

Yes

All	**55%**
All 2021	**39%**
Disability	**41%**
LGBTQ+	**44%**
Black Heritage (BH)	**68%**
Female	**47%**
Male	**66%**
NS state	**41%**
Private	**60%**
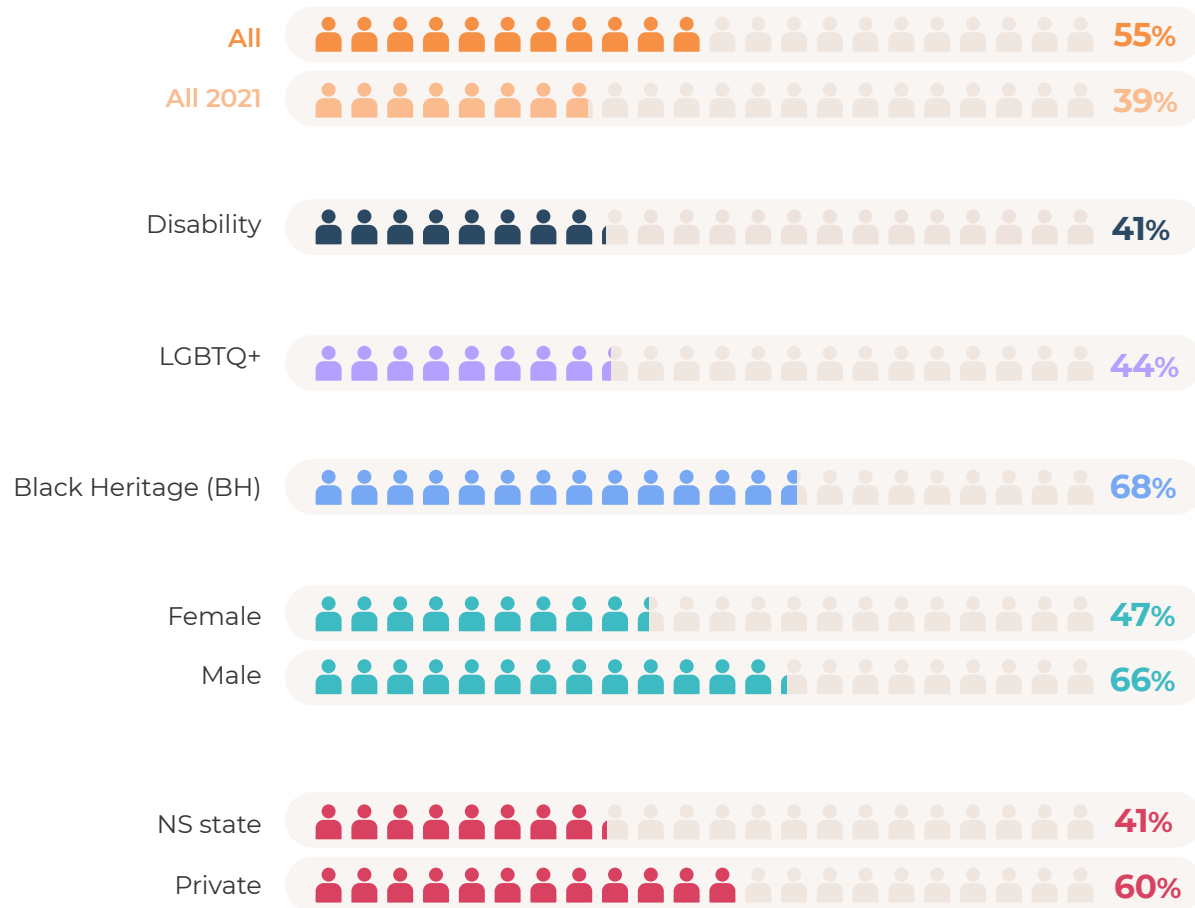
Confidence has returned to pre-pandemic levels amongst the student population.

Those from a Black Heritage background are typically **more confident** than the student population as a whole.

Men are **40%** more likely to say they are confident about securing a graduate role than women.

Privately-schooled university students are **46%** more likely to be confident about securing a graduate role than their state-schooled counterparts.

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i. **Confidence over time (all members)**

Yes

57%	57%	49%	33%	37%	39%	50%	55%
January 2018	January 2019	January 2020	April 2020	October 2020	January 2021	October 2021	January 2022

Pre-pandemic
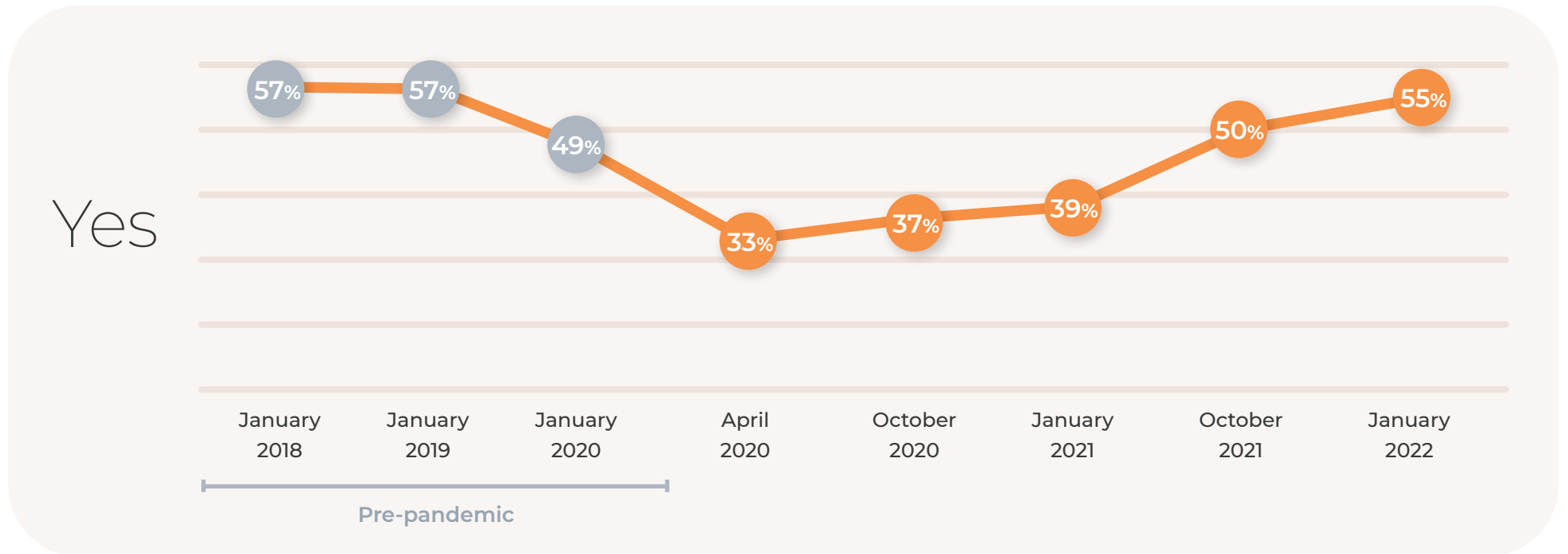
Employers' survey 💼

Looking ahead to the 2022/23 campus season, our employer survey found that 53% of employers are hiring more graduates next year, 47% hiring at the same level and no-one is hiring fewer. Good news for graduates but this will lead to increased competition for top talent amongst employers.

Career concerns

Q. What are the biggest barriers to pursuing a career path you wish?

23% Lack of network/ contacts — 16%

22% 22% Lack of relevant experience

19% 21% Strong competition from other graduates
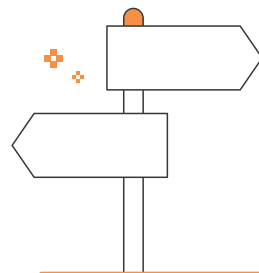
11% 23% Economic factors

7% 5% Absence of role models

5% 4% Don't think my degree is relevant

5% 4% Lack of sector/ career knowledge

3% 2% My ethnicity

3% 2% My economic background

1% 1% A disability

1% 0% My gender

0% 0% My sexuality

i. **22%** of our Black Heritage members put their ethnicity as one of their top three barriers to success for their early career.

— this year's data — 2021 data

Economic factors (e.g. the pandemic or Brexit) are no longer seen as the biggest barrier, unlike last year. Lack of network is the biggest challenge for nearly **1 in 4** members – all students have struggled to build their networks during lockdowns and need to make up for lost time.

Q. Have you ever felt your background has hindered you in an application process for work or academic study?

Yes

All		**30**%
All 2021		**29**%
BH		**43**%
NS state		**33**%
Private		**24**%
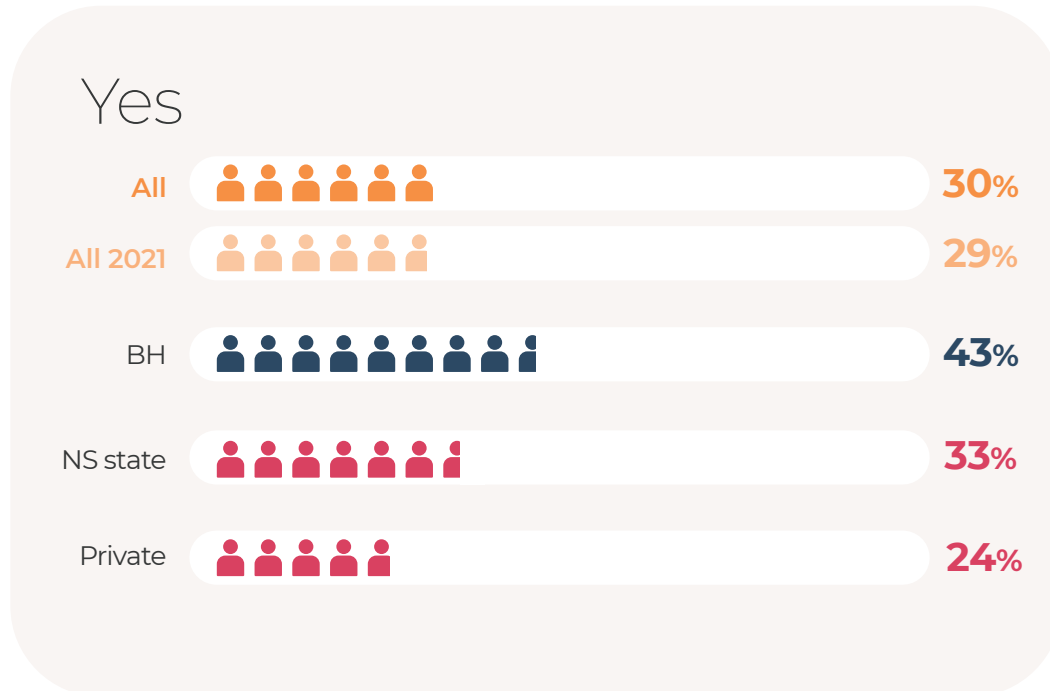
Q. What inclusive processes would you like to see more commonly in applications?

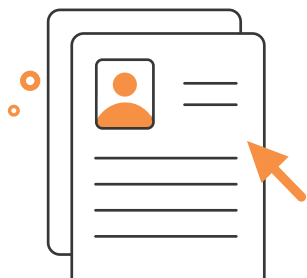|	
Coaching during the application process	**59**%
CV-blind interviews/ assessments	**48**%
Companies having unconscious bias training ahead of a process	**45**%
Diverse interview panels/assessors	**44**%
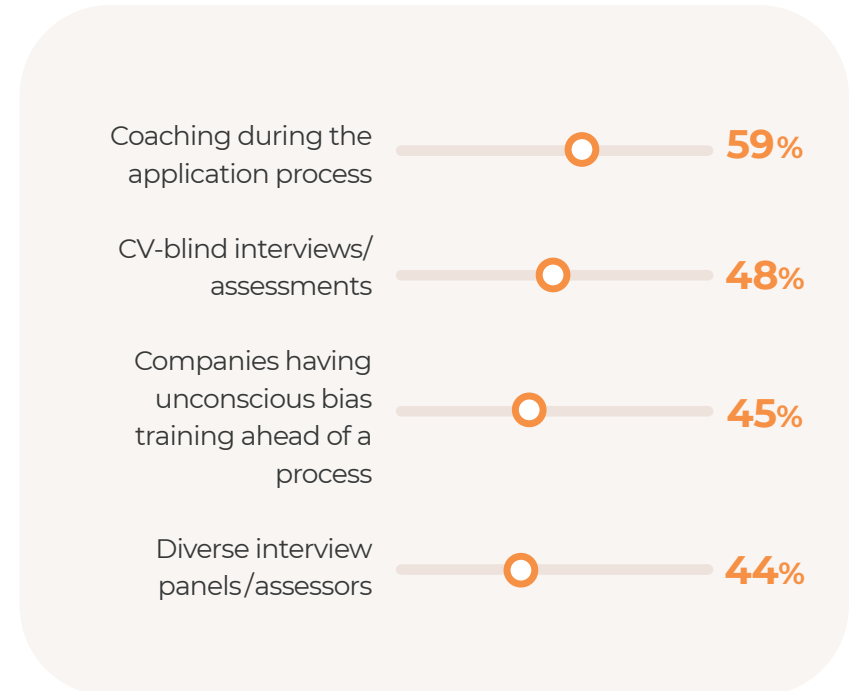
A large proportion of members from ethnic minorities and lower socio-economic statuses believe they have been **discriminated against in at least one application process.** The industry needs to address this as it has a direct impact on confidence and desire to go into certain sectors.

Feeling prepared

Q. Do you think the graduate recruitment marketplace is inclusive of all young people entering the world of work?

👤 Members' data

38% Yes

62% No

💼 Employers' data

23% Yes

77% No
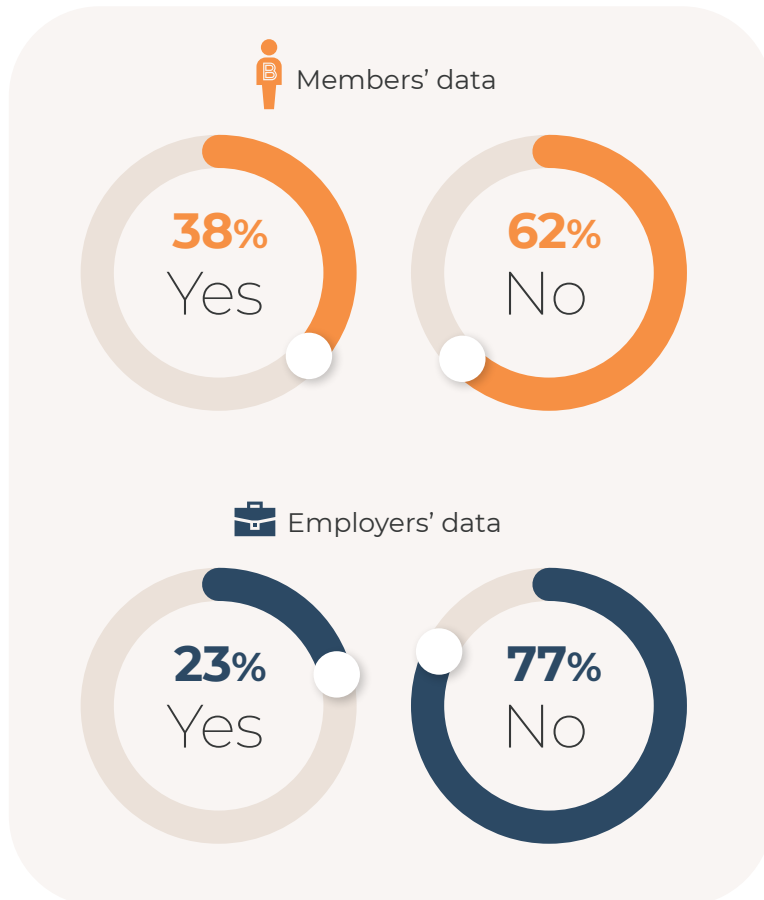
Q. Do you feel prepared to enter the world of work?

Yes

All	2021 data	Female	Male	BH	NS state	Private
55%	**42%**	**48%**	**68%**	**63%**	**46%**	**57%**
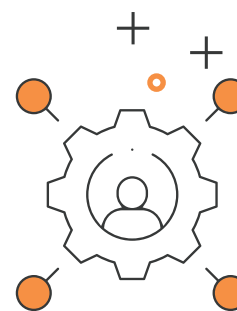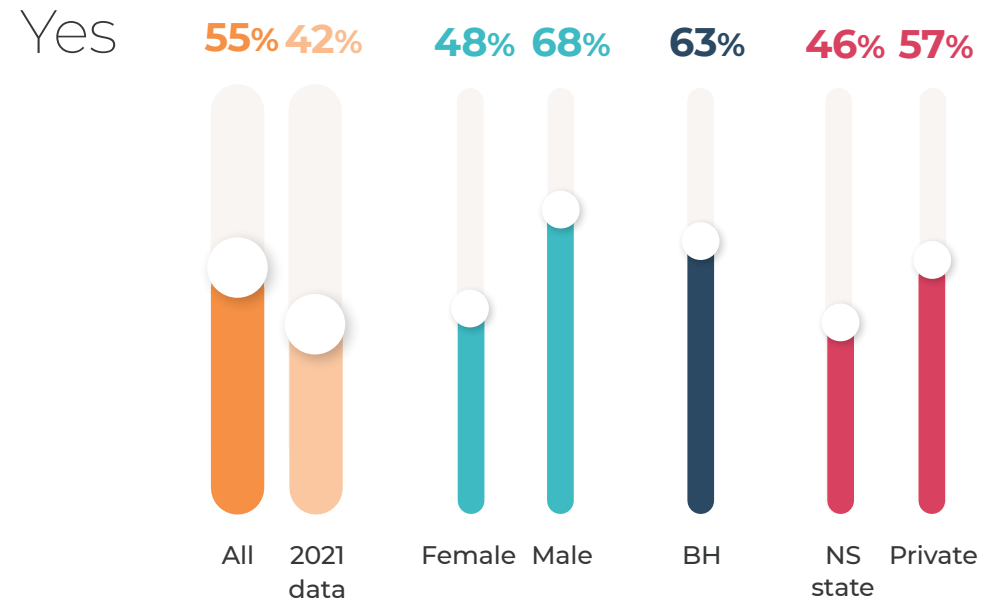
As the future of the post-pandemic working world becomes clearer to graduates, they are likely to feel more confident that their skillset is adequate. However, there's still so much to do to ensure students **develop vital skills**, which we explore further in the next section.

Actions

1 **Reviewing processes —** employers need to assess their application processes, looking for any areas of potential bias and where certain demographics are consistently underperforming. **3 in 10** believe they have been discriminated against in an application and students are calling out for coaching, CV blind interviews and other best practice.

2 **Driving social mobility —** those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less confident and feel less equipped for the working world. In Bright Network's Social Mobility whitepaper, there are 10 actionable steps for employers to shift the dial in this space. Email **employers@brightnetwork.co.uk** to get your free copy.

3 **Thinking about networks —** more students than ever feel they need to work on networking and building their network. Employers who lead the way in supporting students in gaining connections and help them to develop this vital skill will stand out as an employer of choice.

From our members

"Role models allow applicants from under-represented backgrounds to feel more comfortable when applying for positions. To see a person from their background in a position they want to be in also boosts confidence and will lead to a better application on their behalf as their end goal becomes more realistic."

Jonida

2 Having an upskilling strategy

Key findings:
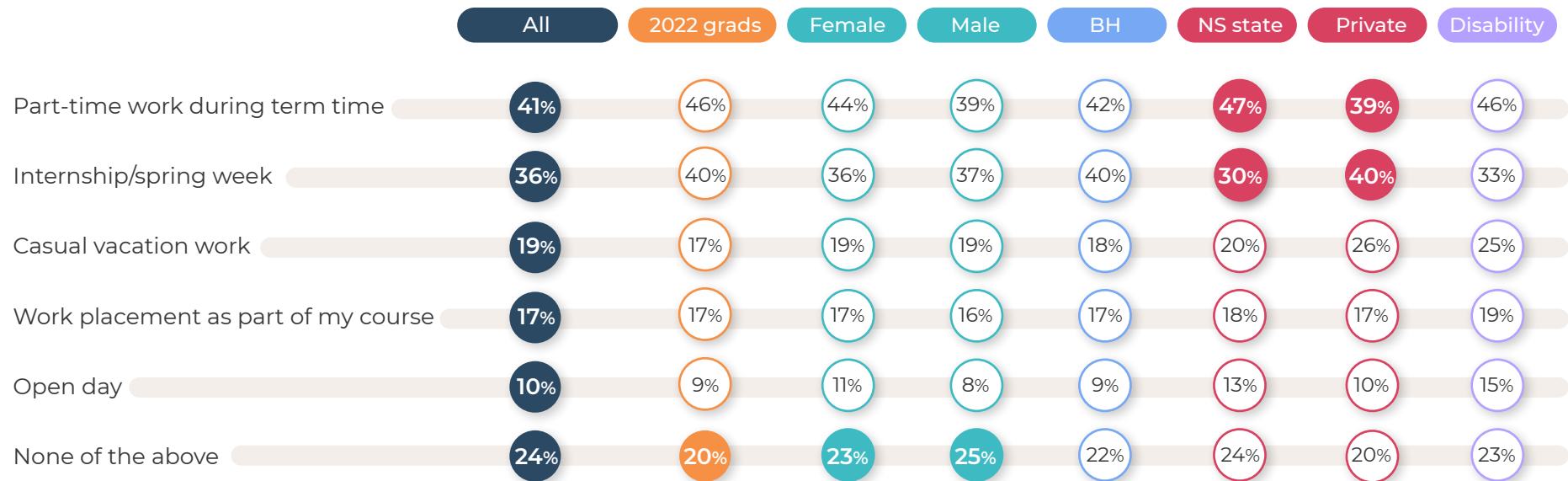
- **80**% of 2022 graduates will leave university having gained some work experience.

- **Coding**, **networking** and **commercial awareness** are the skills members most want to develop, as well as **data analytical skills**.

- **95**% of members want to be upskilled directly by employers.

- Students are seeking out **in-person workshops** and **mentorship opportunities** from employers.

Work experience

Q. Have you gained any work experience while at university?

	All	2022 grads	Female	Male	BH	NS state	Private	Disability
Part-time work during term time	41%	46%	44%	39%	42%	47%	39%	46%
Internship/spring week	36%	40%	36%	37%	40%	30%	40%	33%
Casual vacation work	19%	17%	19%	19%	18%	20%	26%	25%
Work placement as part of my course	17%	17%	17%	16%	17%	18%	17%	19%
Open day	10%	9%	11%	8%	9%	13%	10%	15%
None of the above	24%	20%	23%	25%	22%	24%	20%	23%

20% of those graduating this year haven't gained experience while at university; last year that was **19%** and before the pandemic in 2020 it was **15%.** This highlights that the pandemic has impacted students' ability to gain experience ahead of graduation.

Female members are more likely to gain experience, yet are less confident than **males**.

Members who attended a private school are **33%** more likely to gain a formal internship compared to their state-school educated counterparts. However, the latter are more likely to do part-time work to earn money whilst they study.

Q. Are you interested in doing a formal internship while at or just after university?

Respondents that said no to internship/spring week on previous question

85%
Yes
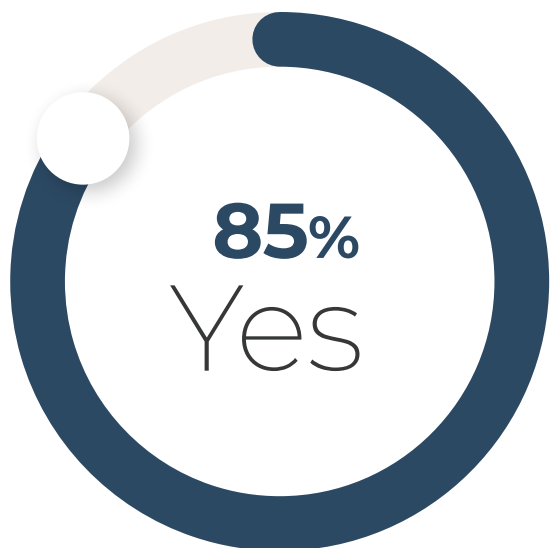
Q. What is the biggest barrier to you getting one?

	All	NS state	Private
People like me don't tend to get one	9%	10%	6%
They don't tend to fit around studies or other work	11%	10%	12%
I don't feel confident securing one	15%	15%	13%
I don't know much about them	25%	22%	22%
They are too competitive	40%	42%	47%
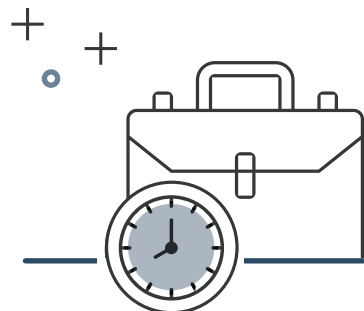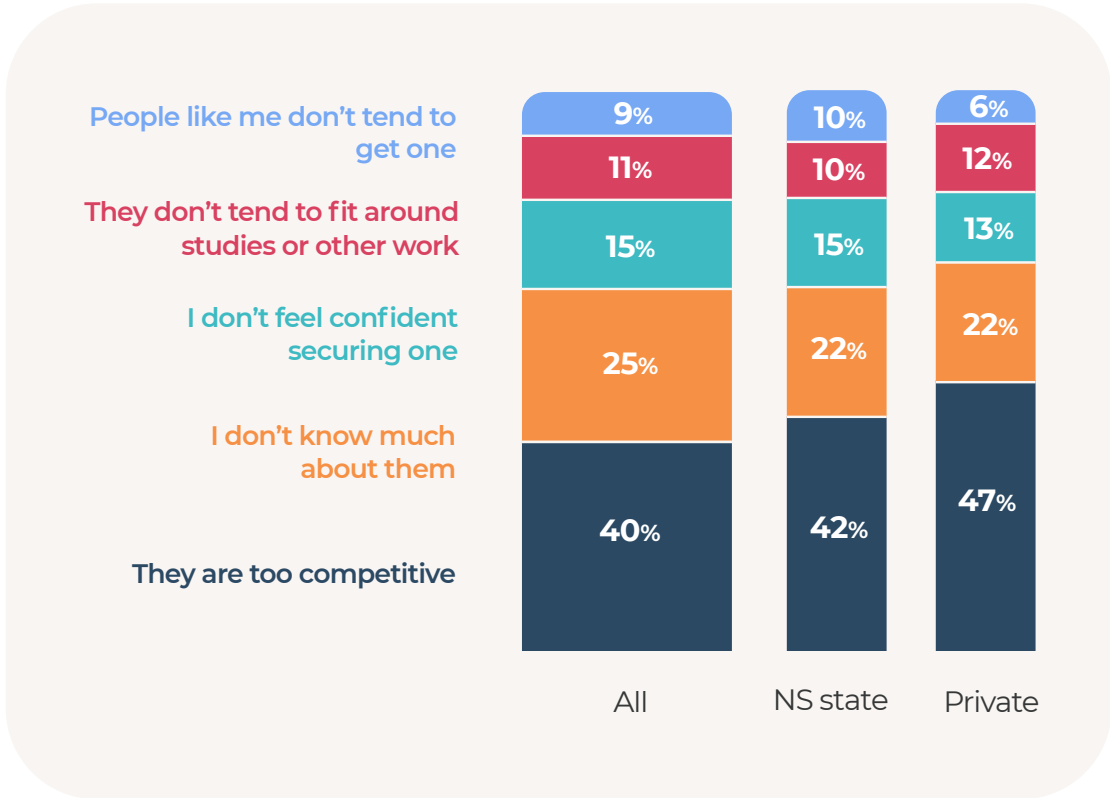
There's still more employers can be doing to promote the internship opportunities they have and instil confidence across the whole student population about securing them.

Skills development

Q. Outside of your university course, what do you feel you most need to learn or upskill in before entering work?

Coding — **17%**, 20%, 10%
Networking — **15%**, 13%, 14%
Commercial awareness — **13%**, 18%, 14%
Core IT skills — **12%**, 14%, 8%
Leadership or management skills — **12%**, 10%, 12%
Problem solving — **7%**, 6%, 8%
Negotiation & persuasion — **5%**, 6%, 9%
Organisation/ time-management — **5%**, 4%, 7%
Presentation skills — **5%**, 5%, 7%
Teamwork — **4%**, 3%, 5%
Resilience — **3%**, 3%, 5%

Legend: this year's data | 2021 data | 2020 data (pre-pandemic)
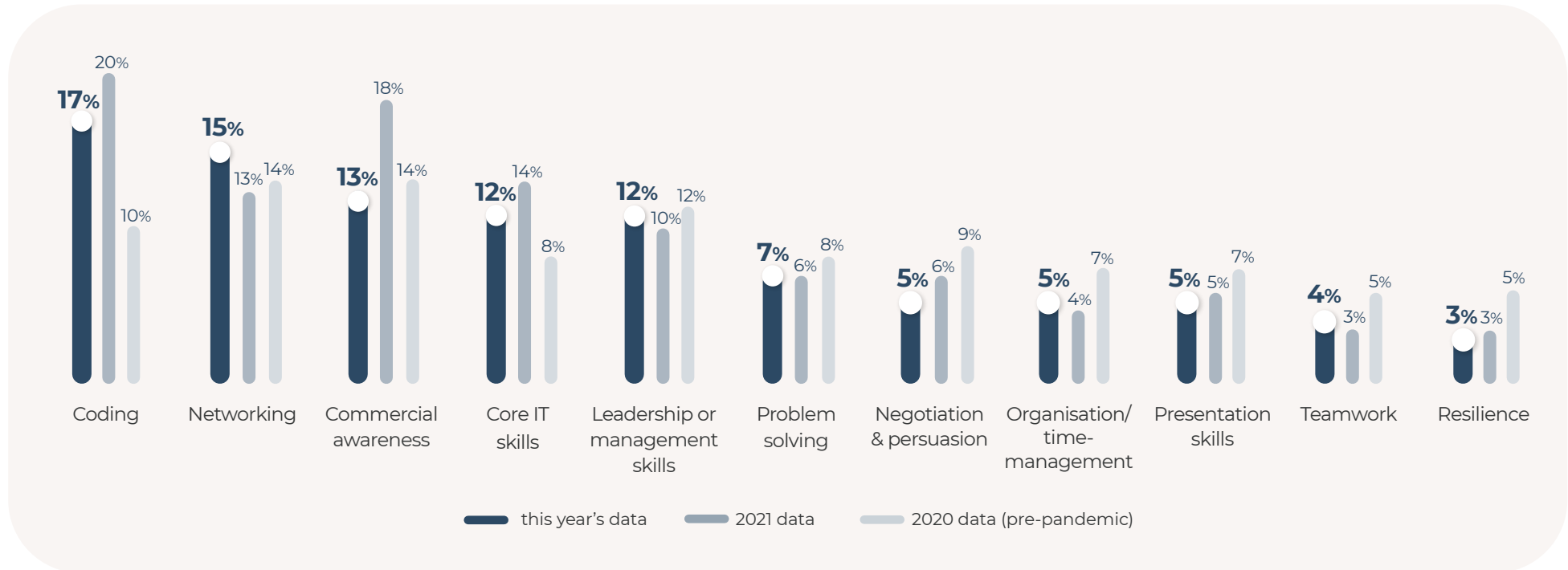
Coding and data analytical skills are becoming very important for today's graduates. Many are also keen to develop their in-person networking skills after two years without many opportunities for face-to-face events.

What employers can do

Q. **Should graduate employers be supporting the student population with upskilling during university?**

Yes

All		**95%**
2020 data (pre-pandemic)		**90%**
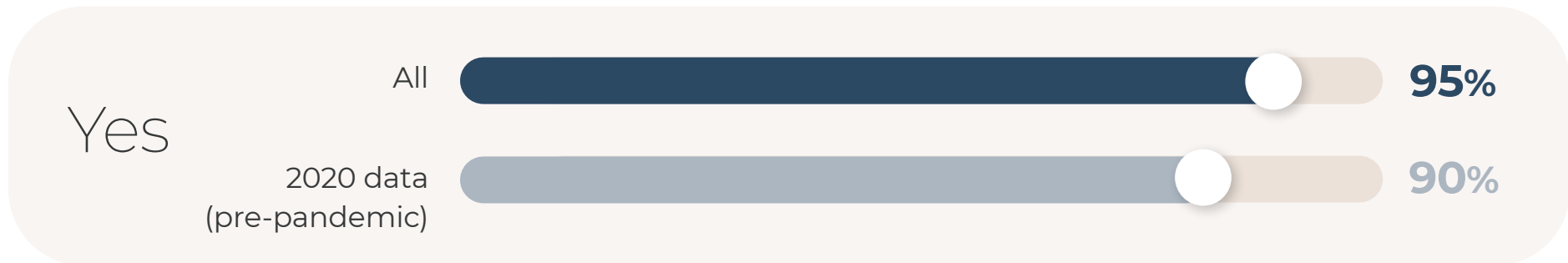
Q. **In what ways would you like to see graduate employers supporting the student population with upskilling during university?**
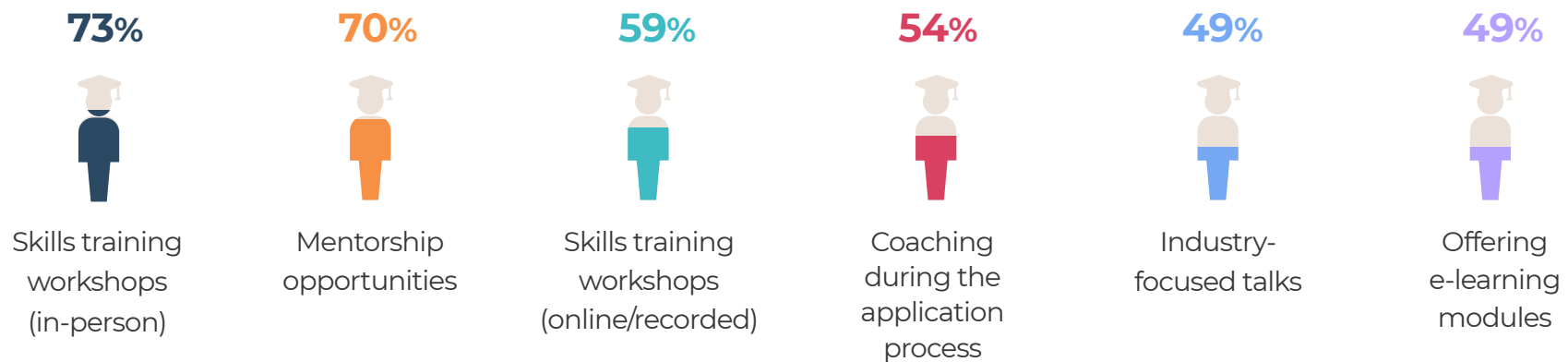
73%
Skills training workshops (in-person)

70%
Mentorship opportunities

59%
Skills training workshops (online/recorded)

54%
Coaching during the application process

49%
Industry-focused talks

49%
Offering e-learning modules

Q. Do you feel you have the required level of digital skills to enter the working world?

No
28%

Yes
72%

Q. Which digital skill do you feel you need to improve most?

4%
Social media

3%
Word processing

6%
Digital presentations

6%
Graphic design

49%
Data analytics

33%
Coding
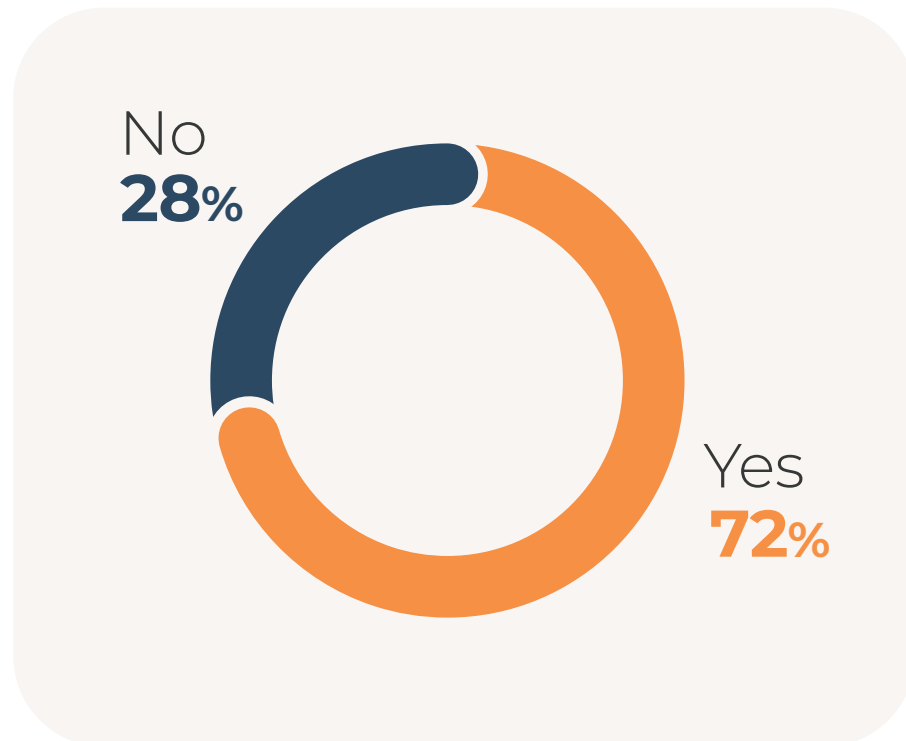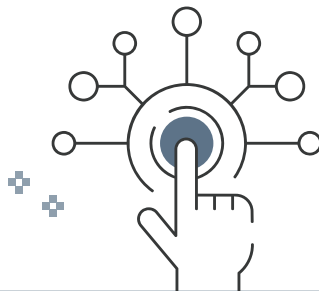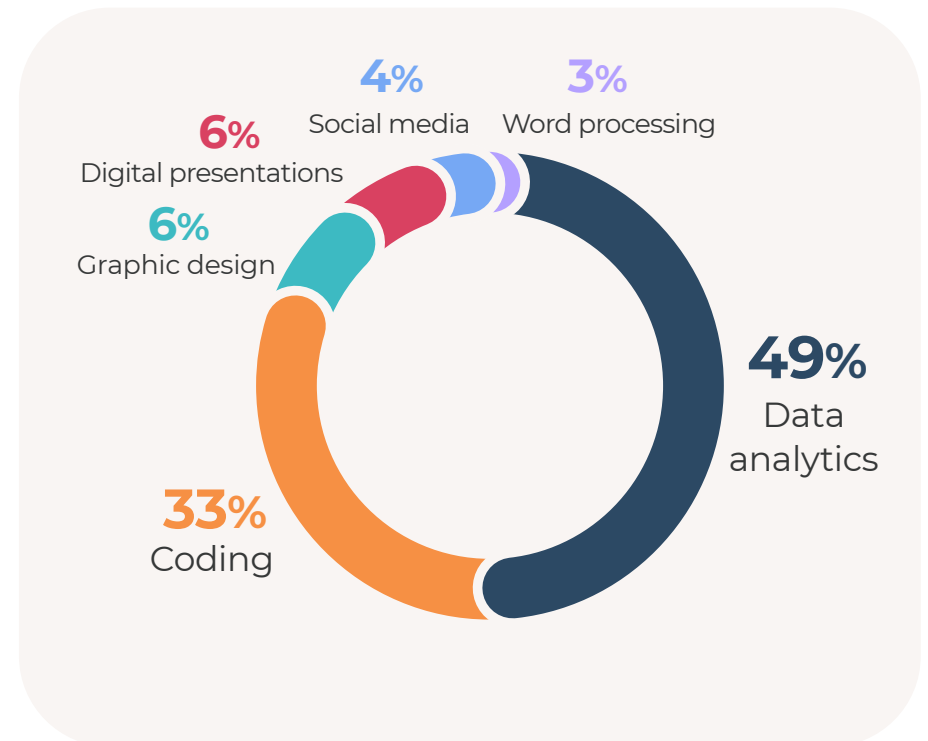
Technology is becoming an increasingly popular sector for all graduates – employers who can harness potential and upskill students in this space will gain a leading edge with their hiring.

Understanding future tech hires

Results from STEM members interested in going into the technology sector.

Q. **What attracts you most to the tech sector?**

- I find the work interesting — **40%**
- It fits my skillset best — **27%**
- The salary and benefits — **12%**
- The progression opportunities look good — **8%**
- It will give me the right work-life balance — **6%**
- The people and culture feels right — **3%**
- It's a prestigious sector — **2%**
- Other — **1%**
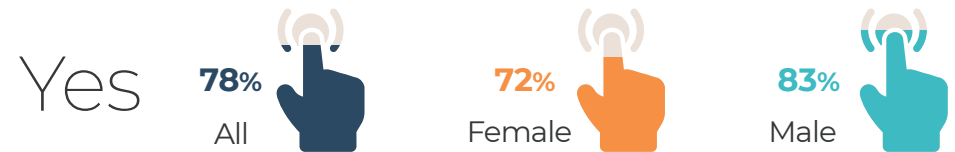
Q. **Do you feel you have the required level of digital skills to enter the working world?**

(results from STEM members interested in tech)

Yes
- **78%** All
- **72%** Female
- **83%** Male

Q. **Which digital skill do you feel you need to improve most?**

(results from STEM members interested in tech)

- Coding languages — **68%**
- Data analytics — **23%**
- Graphic design — **4%**
- Digital presentations — **3%**
- Social media — **1%**
- Word processing — **1%**
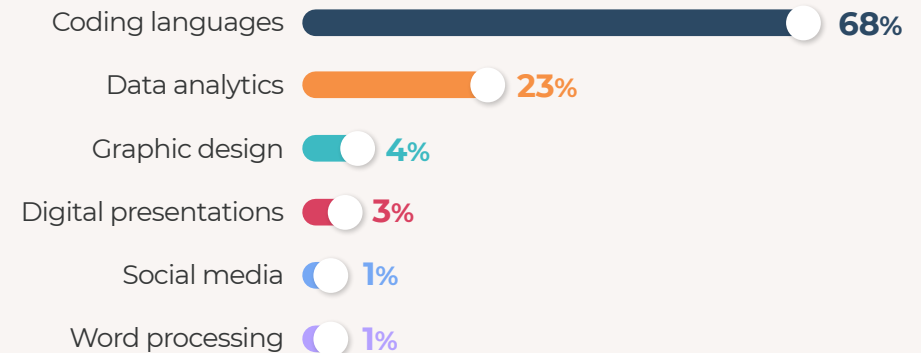
Our focused report on STEM members and how talent acquisition professionals can engage future tech hires is released on 1st May 2022. Email **employers@brightnetwork.co.uk** to receive this free report.

Actions

1 **Upskilling —** company-run workshops, coaching and speaker events need to be built into a modern strategy. Gen Z want to be affiliated with a good brand and will respond better to high-level touch points. This research gives good starting points for the topics that would work best for events to put into your calendar.

2 **Valuing transferable skills —** think about whether you're favouring those with formal experience in application processes, as this gives an unfair advantage to those from privileged backgrounds. Instead, focus on transferable skills and strengths which can be picked up from any form of experience.

3 **Technical skills —** the workplace has changed and students are looking to develop technical skills. Employers, on the other side, are struggling to hire tech talent – companies that take the initiative and offer or sponsor technical upskilling not only broaden the number of students potentially going into tech roles, but will position your business as a tech leader.

From our members

"Studying a Japanese degree, it felt so important for me to develop my technical skills given that most jobs these days require them in some form or another. I was always a bit frustrated that we don't learn this more at school – what we do learn is all really basic."

Helena

3 What makes employers and roles stand out

Key findings:

- A **good culture** and **exciting roles** are key for members when selecting a graduate role.

- The average graduate expects to earn **£27,270** in their first job, **£1,955** more than last year.

- **89%** of students think about an employer's commitment to D&I before applying and **91%** think about their commitment to employees' mental wellbeing.

- **1 in 5** students have changed their minds on which sectors they most want to work in due to the pandemic.

What's important when choosing a role

Q. What is most important to you when choosing a graduate role?

36% / 40%	**26%** / 25%	**21%** / 21%	**18%** / 14%
All / 2021	All / 2021	All / 2021	All / 2021
The firm's people and culture	**The role's characteristics**	**Remuneration and advancement within the firm**	**The firm's reputation and image**
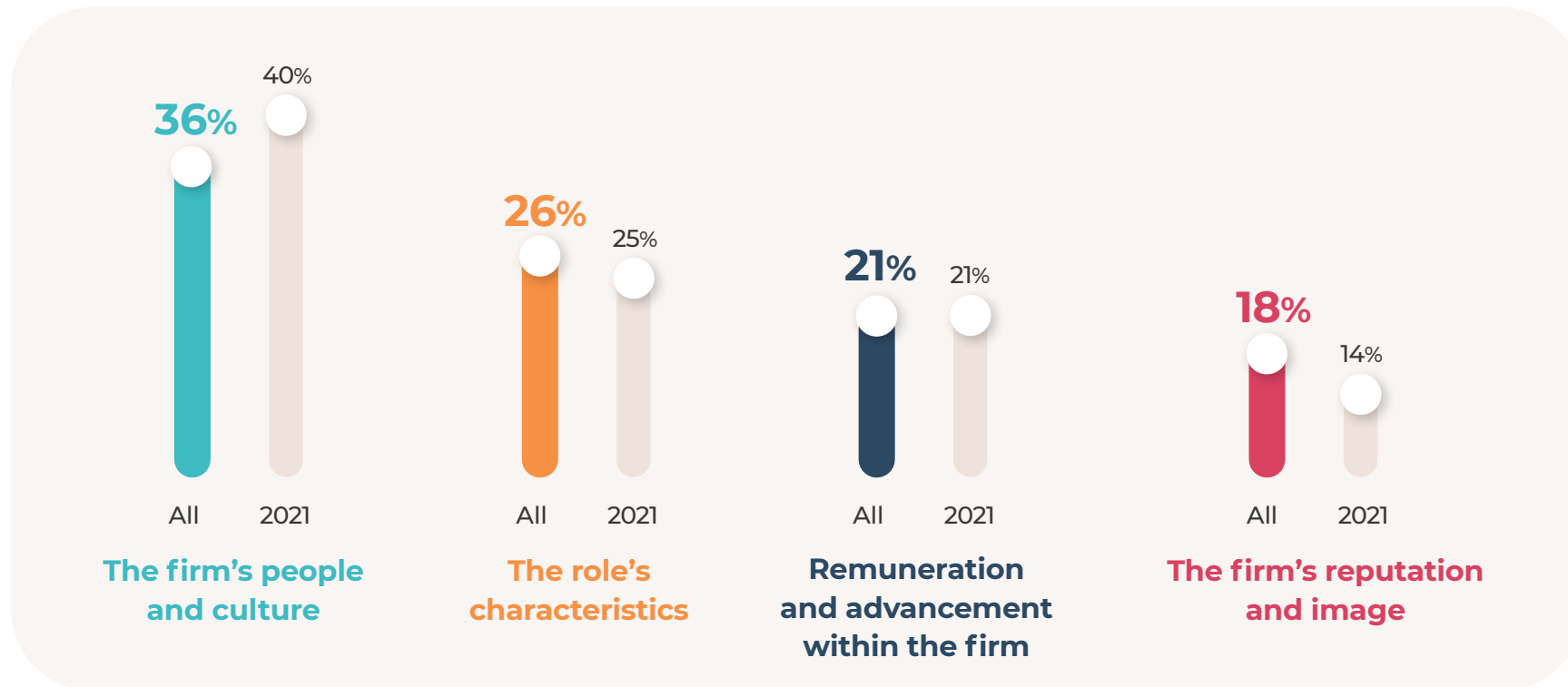
Highlighting the **people and culture** throughout your attraction campaigns and application processes is essential in Gen Z picking you as an employer of choice. Also, having engaging job descriptions which showcase what the role actually entails is very important.

Q. What is your expected salary?

£27,270

Last year £25,315

Average salary expectation for graduate job

£26,567

£28,727

Female   Male

£25,755

£28,878

NS state   Private

£46,902

Last year £43,662

Average salary expectation after 5 years
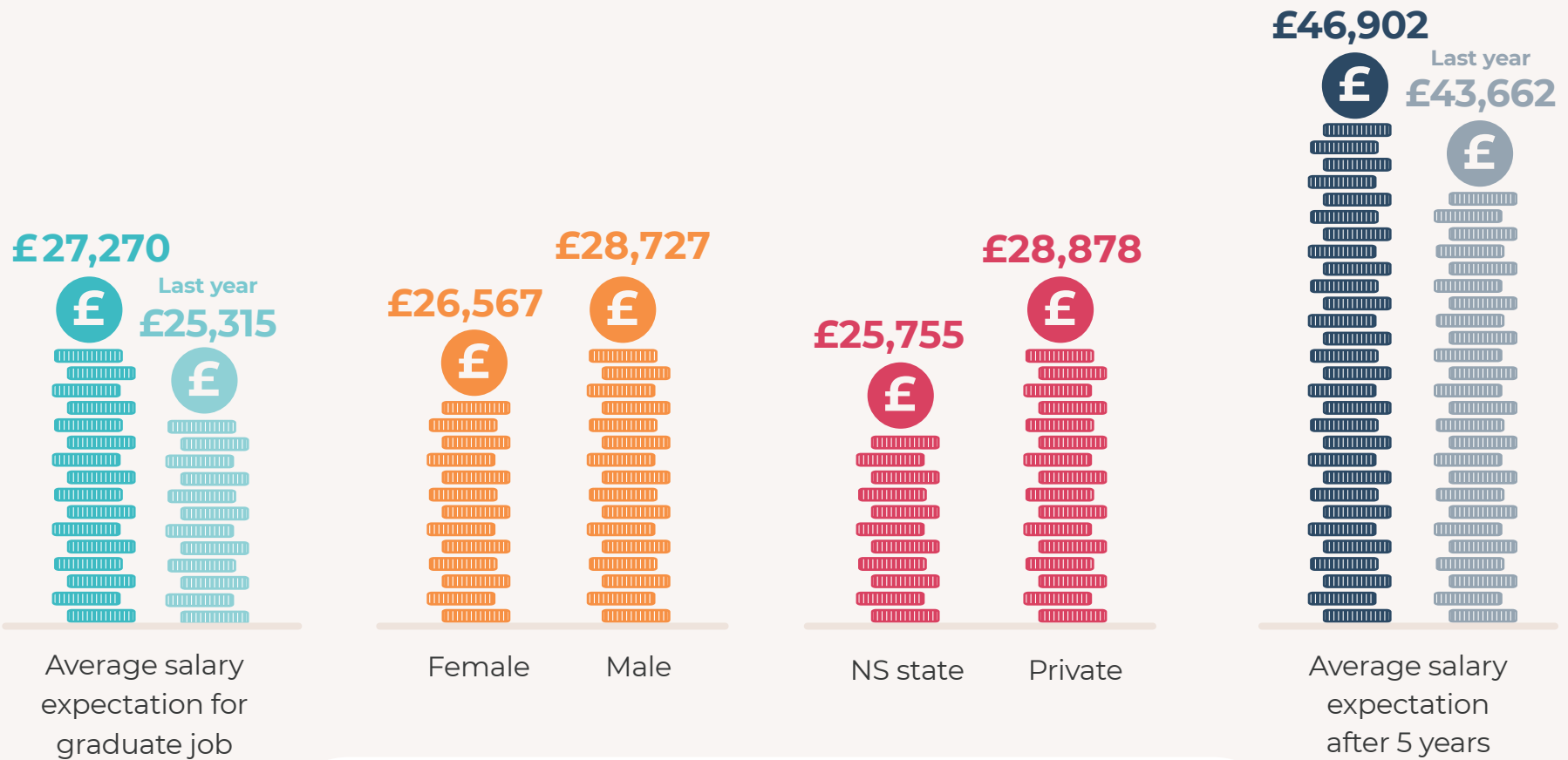
There are still significant salary expectation differences based on schooling, gender and other factors. The biggest is based on where a student went to school, with privately schooled university students expecting **12%** more in their first job compared to those who attended a non-selective state school.

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i. **Salary expectation over time (graduate job)**

Salary
expectation
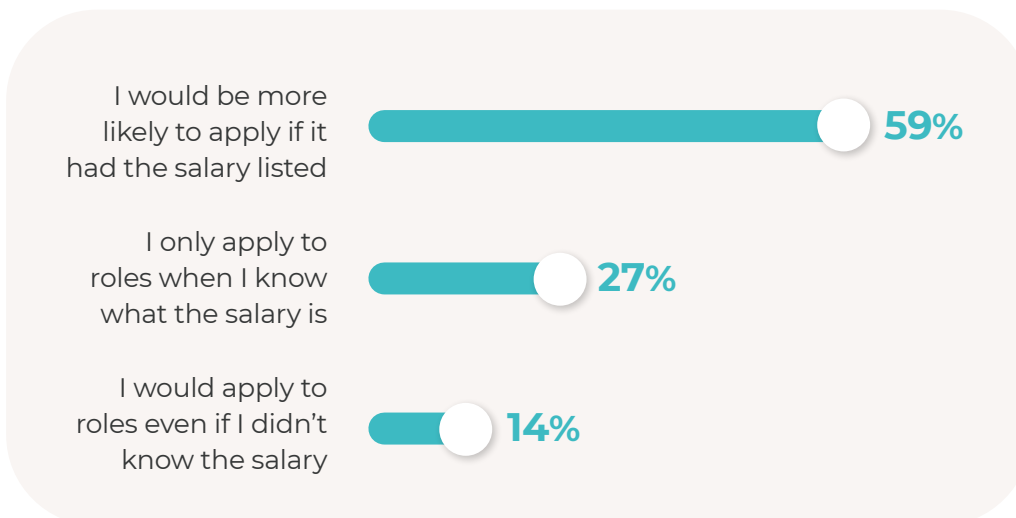(first job)

£30,000
£29,000
£28,000
£27,000
£26,000
£25,000

£27,437   **£27,200**   **£27,611**   **£27,270**

                                        £25,315

2018   2019   2020   2021   2022

Research results by year
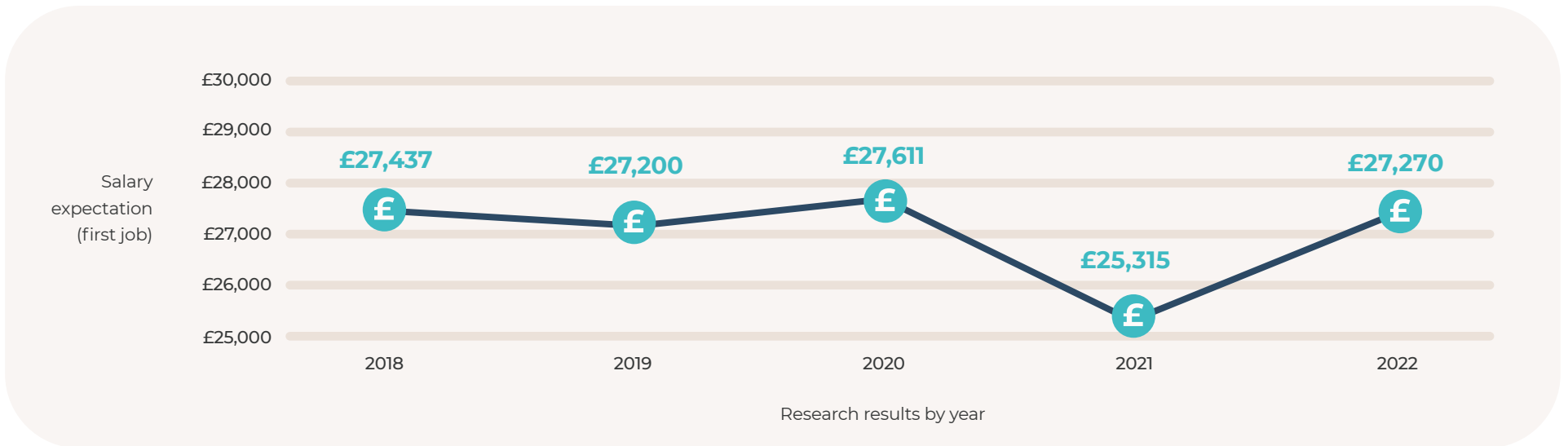
Q. **Is it important to see salary listed on the job description?**

I would be more
likely to apply if it
had the salary listed   **59%**

I only apply to
roles when I know
what the salary is   **27%**

I would apply to
roles even if I didn't
know the salary   **14%**

Graduates' salary expectations
have returned to pre-pandemic
levels. Ahead of the new
recruitment cycle, it's important
that employers benchmark their
salaries against competitors, as
well as decide whether to
openly list the amount
on job descriptions.

Q. In which region would you most like to work in for your first graduate job?
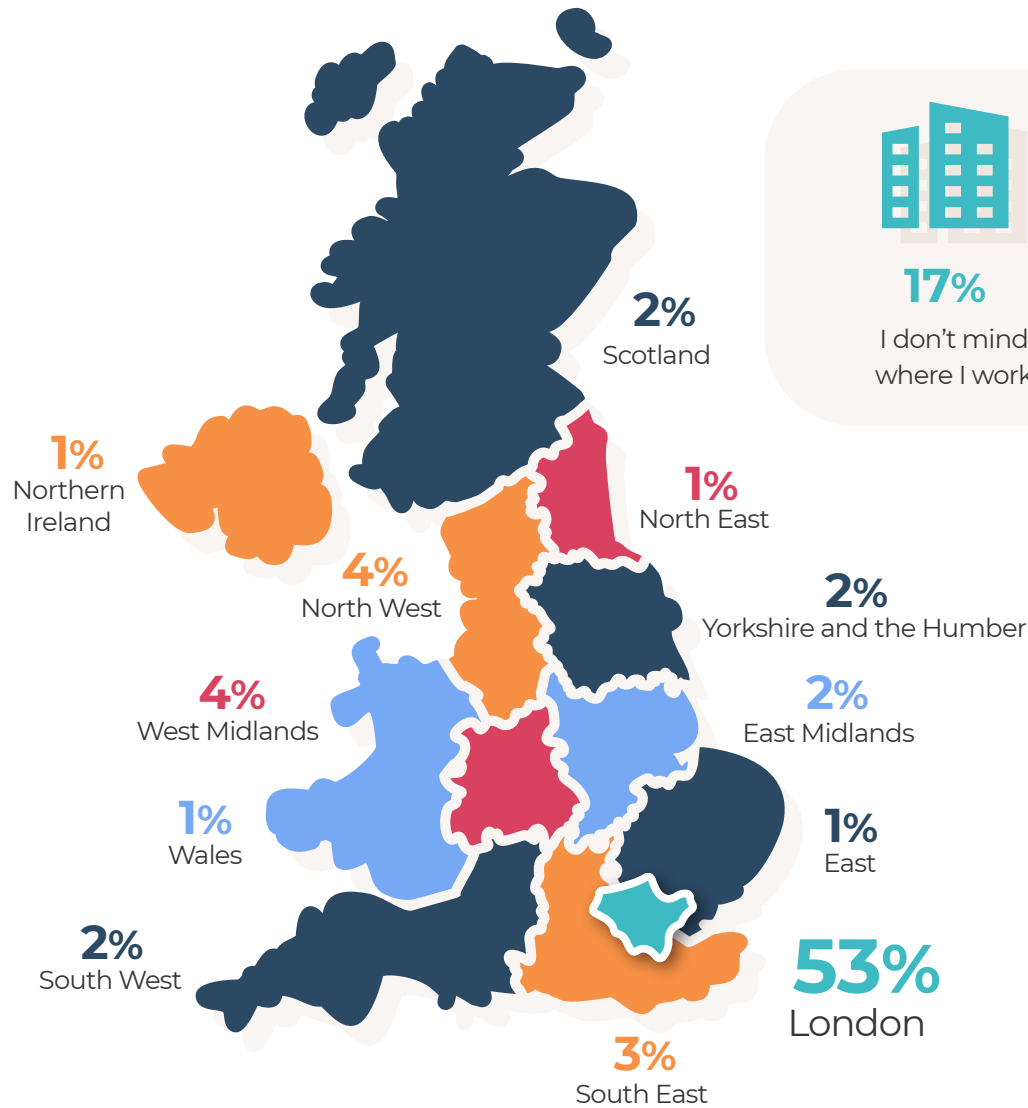
17%
I don't mind where I work

7%
I'd like to work abroad

2%
Scotland

1%
Northern Ireland

1%
North East

4%
North West

2%
Yorkshire and the Humber

4%
West Midlands

2%
East Midlands

1%
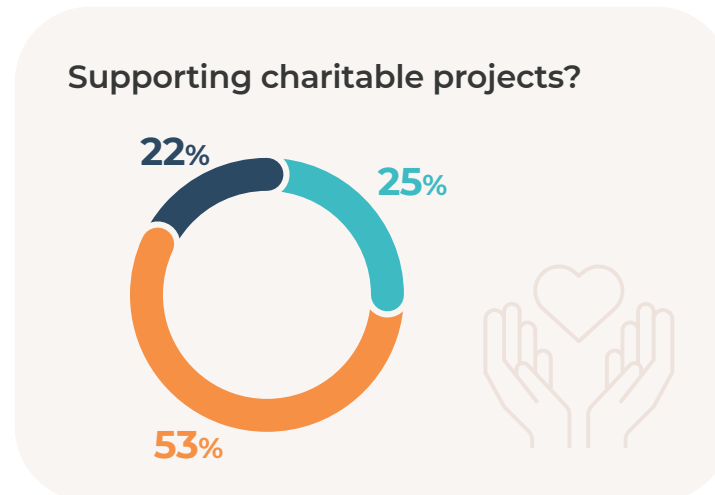Wales

1%
East

2%
South West

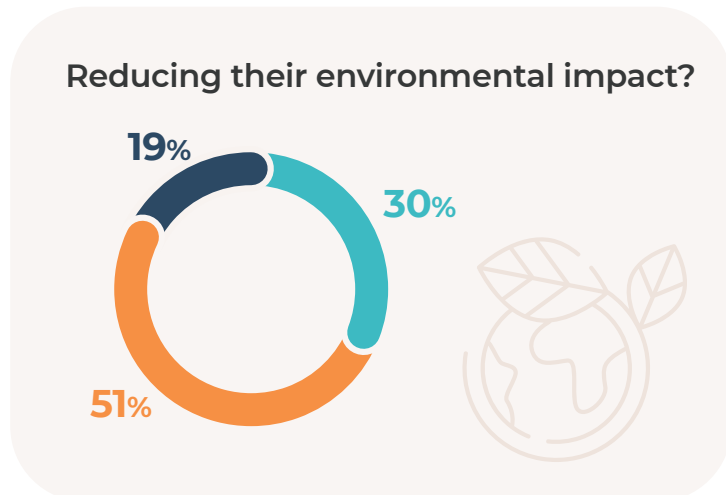**53%**
London

3%
South East

Even with more companies offering flexible working and the 'levelling up' agenda, London is still the preferred destination for over half of our members.

Being an employer of choice

Q. Before applying to a company, do you consider their commitment to...

● I actively research it　　● I consider it　　● I don't think about it

Diversity and inclusion?

12%
46%
43%

Employees' mental wellbeing?

8%
42%
49%

Reducing their environmental impact?

19%
30%
51%

Supporting charitable projects?

22%
25%
53%
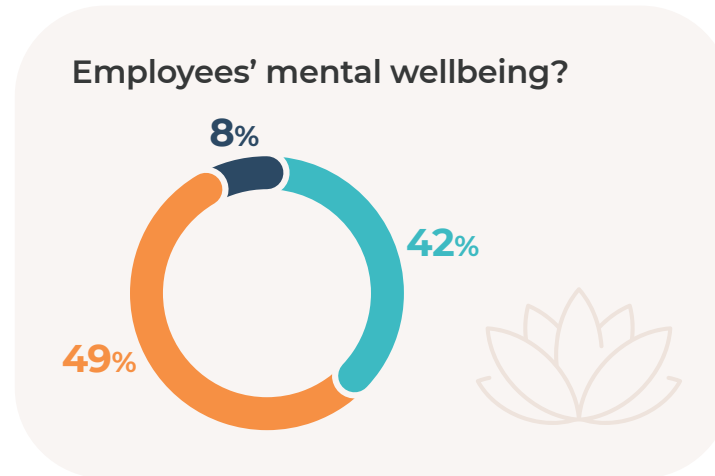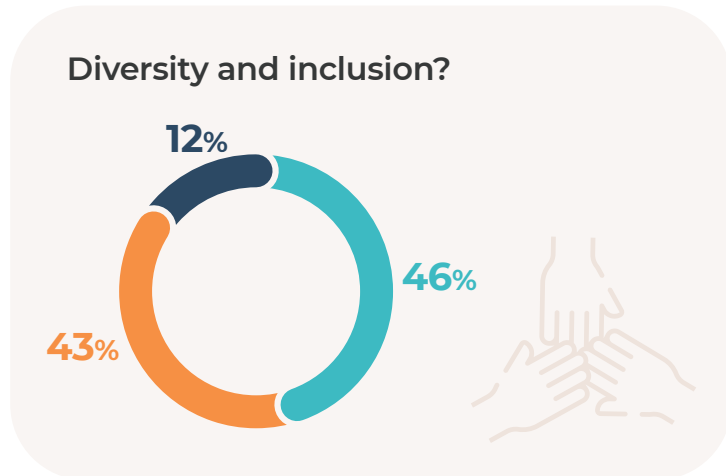
Gen Z want to work for businesses doing good. **89%** will think about an employer's commitment to D&I before applying and **91%** think about their commitment to mental wellbeing.

Sector preferences

Q. **Have you changed your mind about the sectors you're interested in as a result of the pandemic?**

61% No

20% Yes

19% Don't know
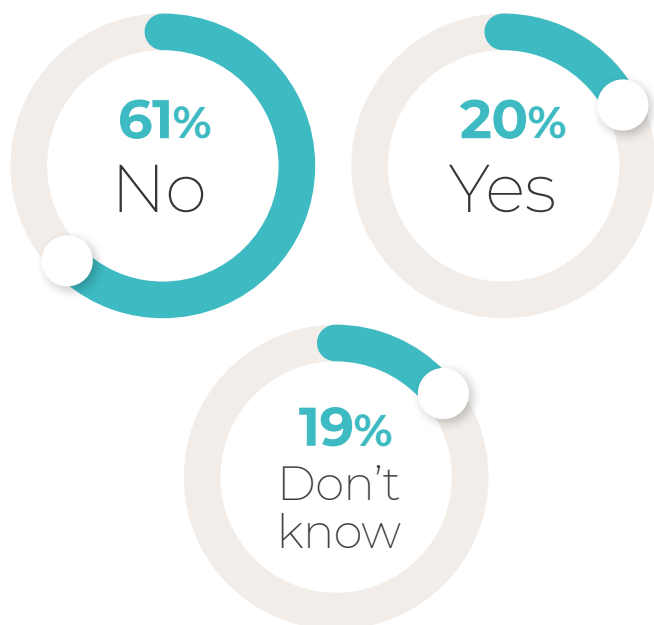
i. **Sector and popularity compared to last year**

A comparison of the percentage of respondents who selected one sector as their preferred option this year compared to last year.

- Arts
- Banking & Finance
- Charity & Public Sector
- Consulting
- Consumer, FMCG & Retail
- Education & Teaching
- Law
- Marketing, Media & PR
- Science & Pharmaceuticals
- Starting my own business
- Technology, Engineering, Construction & Manufacturing
- I'm not sure
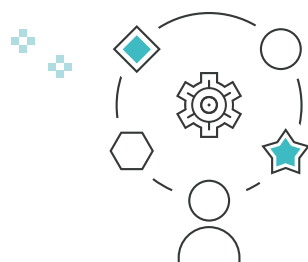
There has been an increase in students wanting to go into technology, sciences and the third sector, whilst more 'City' careers have declined in popularity through the pandemic.

Q. Are there any sectors which you perceive as lacking diversity and inclusivity?

Banking & Finance — **36%** / 40%

Technology, Engineering, Construction & Manufacturing — **29%** / 30%

Law — **28%** / 30%

Consulting — **19%** / 19%

Science & Pharmaceuticals — **19%** / 18%

Arts — **13%** / 13%

Marketing, Media & PR — **13%** / 12%

Education & Teaching — **12%** / 11%

Charity & Public Sector — **10%** / 9%

Consumer, FMCG & Retail — **10%** / 8%

All sectors above feel inclusive to me — **28%** / 27%

this year's data   2021 data
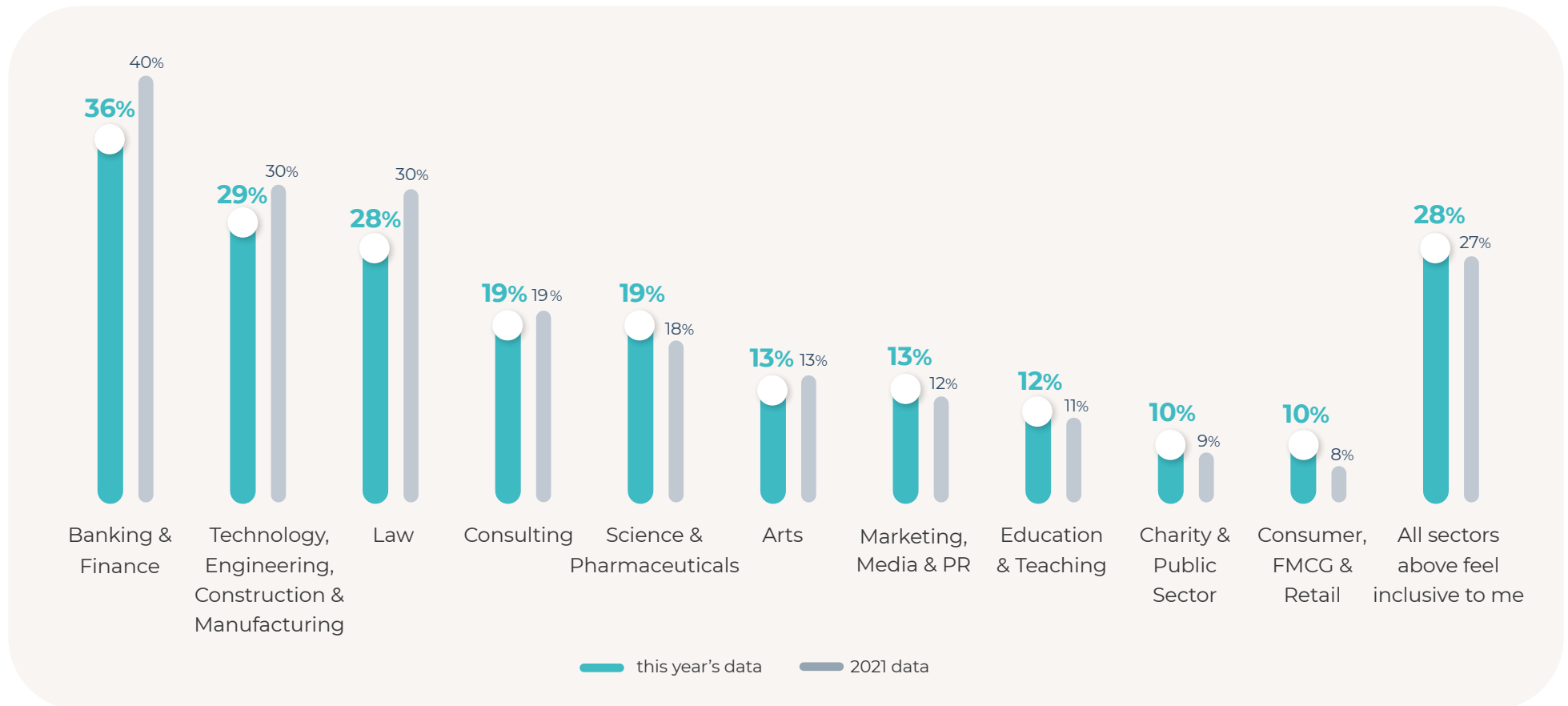
Across a number of sectors, there have been small improvements year-on-year in students' belief about their inclusivity, but there's still a long way to go – especially in traditionally 'City' careers and technology. If these attitudes prevail, employers will continue to miss out on top talent, especially those from backgrounds currently under-represented in the sector.

Insights on reneging offers

Q. If you had already accepted an internship or graduate role offer, what would most likely make you reject this in favour of another opportunity?

More exciting role	**27%**
Bigger salary	**18%**
Better experience during the other application process	**15%**
More prestigious firm	**14%**
Better location	**7%**
Regular communication with recruiters	**3%**
Joining bonus	**2%**
Other	**1%**
I wouldn't reject an offer I had accepted	**12%**
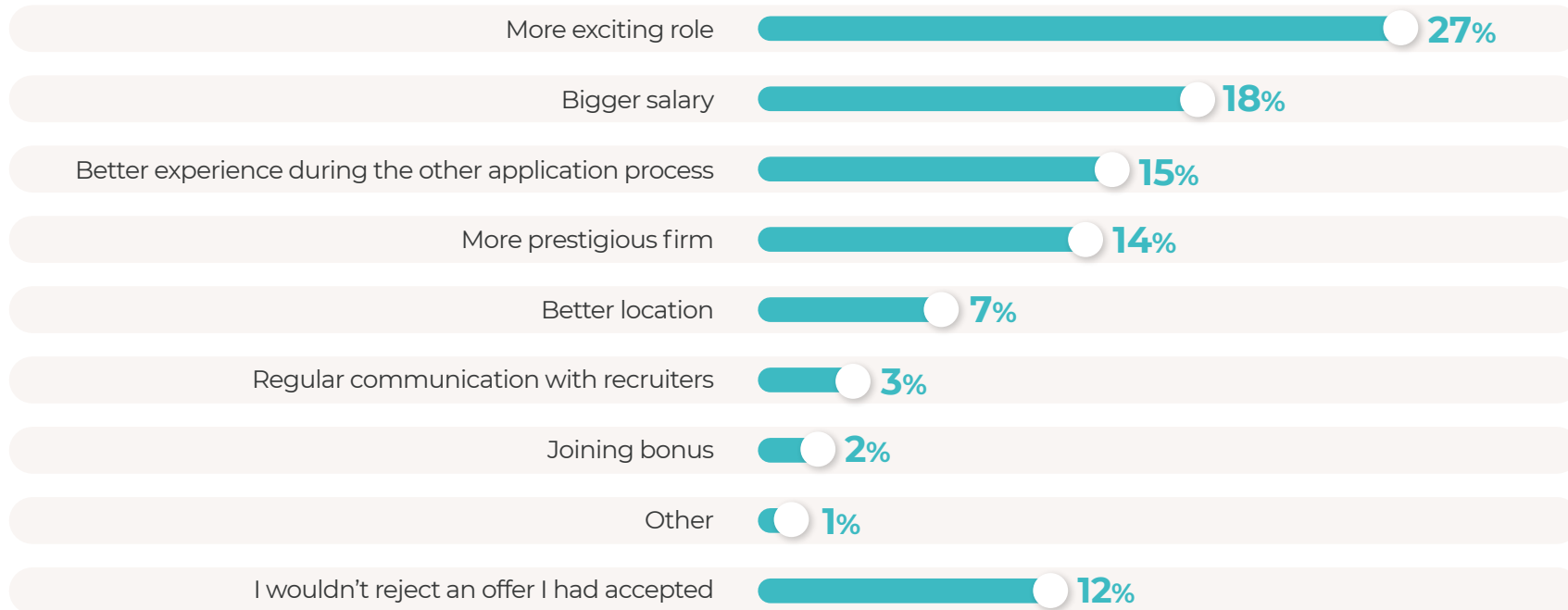
88% of graduates would consider reneging on a job offer. An employer's treatment of candidates during the application process and engagement after an offer can have a significant impact on reducing renege rates.

Actions

1 **Reviewing graduate pay —** on average, graduates are looking for more money and this is likely to continue to increase as high inflation causes price rises. Companies should be reviewing their pay, benchmarking it against competitors and then deciding whether they display salary on job descriptions. The data suggests this will lead to more applications.

2 **Creating a comms plan —** students care about what the business is doing in the DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging) space, on the environment, for mental wellbeing and in their community. Is this a key part of your campus messaging? Reviewing this ahead of the 2022/23 recruitment season is essential.

3 **Have a post-offer roadmap —** connecting incoming graduates with the team and highlighting the exciting work they will be doing when they start is so important to reducing renege rates. Make sure there is a plan in place for the months before they start.

From our members

"One of the main things I look for in a job description is the opportunity for growth, I want to know that the company I'm going to work for cares about upskilling me as a person and will provide additional training, mentoring and courses to enable this (before, during and after the application process)."

Lara

4 Important trends for Gen Z

Key findings:

- **82%** of students talk to their friends/peers about careers, including what sectors they are interested in and the application processes they're going through.

- **2 in 3** members think employers should be doing more to support their employees' mental wellbeing.

- **91%** would prefer some form of flexible working, with over **3 in 10** saying it's an essential requirement for their first role.

- On average, a graduate expects to be working **41.5** hours a week.

Wellbeing and careers

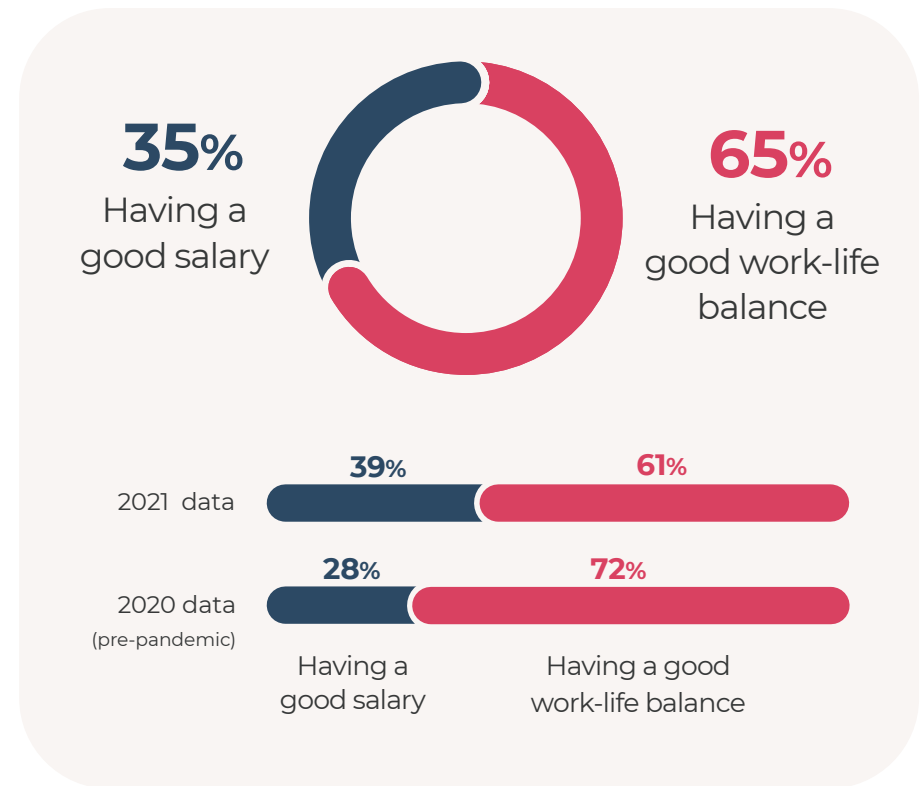**Q.** Do you think employers are doing enough to support their employees' mental wellbeing?

No

67% All
67% 2021 data
71% Female
60% Male
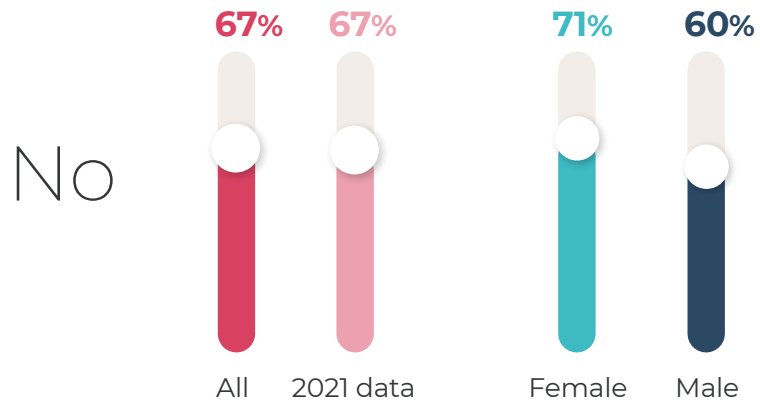
Q. What would you most like to see from employers to support this? (respondents who answered no to above)

Employers need to provide more flexibility **37%**

Employers need to provide more access to counselling services and professional mental health support **32%**

Employers need to provide more time off **18%**

Employers need to provide more mentorship **13%**

Q. What's more important to you in your early career?

35% Having a good salary

65% Having a good work-life balance

2021 data **39%** **61%**

2020 data (pre-pandemic) **28%** **72%**

Having a good salary

Having a good work-life balance

Mental wellbeing and having a good work-life balance is a priority for a large proportion of graduates.

The office of tomorrow

Q. How many hours per week do you expect to be working in your first graduate job?

41.5 hours

42.4 hours
2020 data (pre-pandemic)
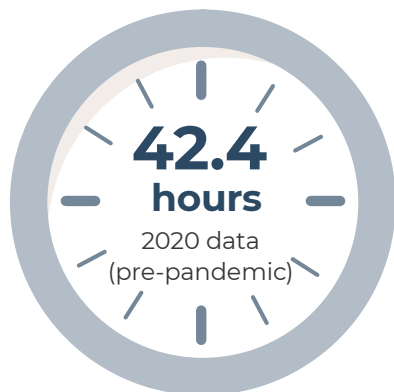
Q. Is flexible working a key requirement in your first graduate job?

91% of graduates are interested in having flexible working in their first role.
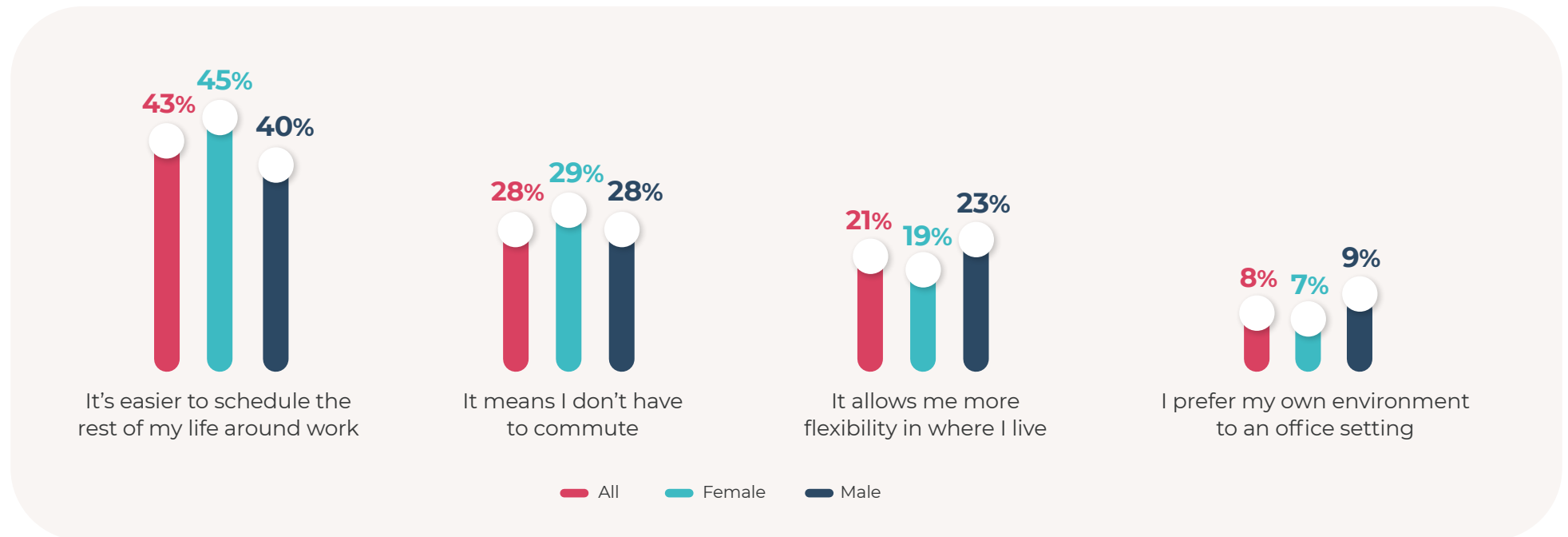
31%
Yes, this is essential to me

60%
It's nice to have but not essential

9%
It's not a key consideration for me

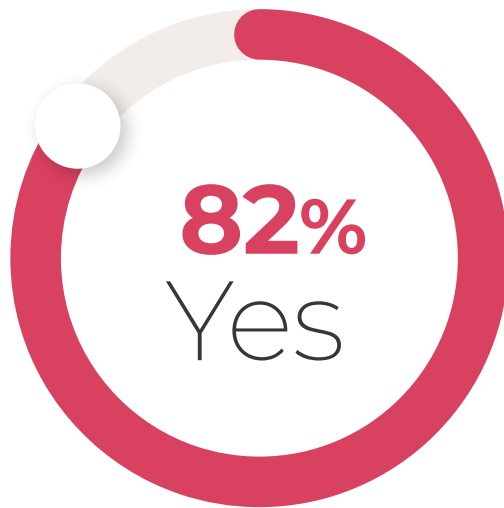**Q.** **What do you see as the main benefit of working remotely?**

It's easier to schedule the rest of my life around work
- All: 43%
- Female: 45%
- Male: 40%

It means I don't have to commute
- All: 28%
- Female: 29%
- Male: 28%

It allows me more flexibility in where I live
- All: 21%
- Female: 19%
- Male: 23%

I prefer my own environment to an office setting
- All: 8%
- Female: 7%
- Male: 9%

● All ● Female ● Male

Q. **Do you expect to be able to choose the hours you work in your graduate job?**
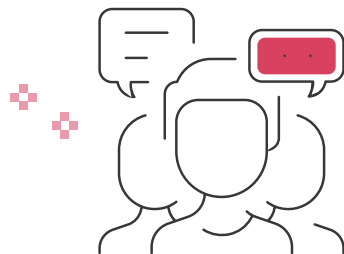
26% Yes

74% No

Flexible working is currently a key focus for many graduates in their first role. This was prominent before the pandemic but has become even more important amongst today's students.

Going viral

Q. **Do you talk to your friends/peers about your career?**

82%
Yes

Q. **What would you typically speak about?**

Sectors you're interested in — **78%**

Applications you're working on — **75%**

Events/workshops you go to or that are coming up — **50%**

Employers you would or would not recommend — **45%**

Gen Z broadcast: They share their thoughts and experiences during their career search, both good and bad. This presents an opportunity for employers looking to build a strong on-campus brand reputation.

Actions

1 **Flexible working policy —** post-pandemic, employers need to have a clear policy towards flexible working for graduates. Young professionals clearly want it, with **1 in 4** even wanting to pick their own hours. However, they may not know what is best for them in their early career – it's up to the employer to find a sweet spot and communicate this clearly.

2 **Mobilising brand advocates —** Gen Z trust their peers and word spreads quickly across university campuses. Invest time and resources in those who like your brand (e.g. previous interns and event attendees) and give them the tools to talk about you.

3 **Mental wellbeing —** it's a good time to review your actions to support employees' mental wellbeing. If you're doing good things in the space, students aren't seeing this – **67%** think employers should be doing more. Focus some of your comms on the initiatives you're running and the impact they're having.

From our members

"With the rapid rise of remote working, flexible working hours are quickly becoming an important factor in the current job market. I myself along with many of my peers find that it contributes greatly to maintaining a healthy work life balance as well as allowing us to be more productive."

Jonathan
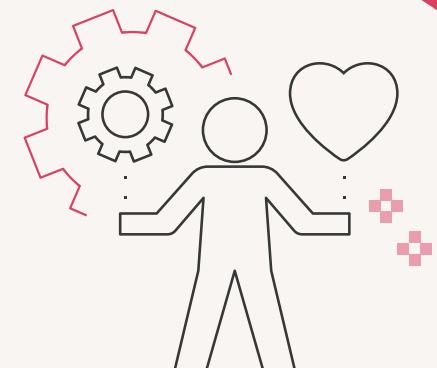
5 Application strategies

Key findings:

- Students believe graduate employers are most looking for strong academics and formal industry experience, whereas employers say they are more focused on passion for the business, resilience and problem solving.

- On average, students plan to start applying for graduate jobs later than last year as confidence in the graduate jobs market returns.

- Members worry most about face-to-face interviews when it comes to typical graduate application processes.

BRIGHT NETWORK RESEARCH

Student perceptions

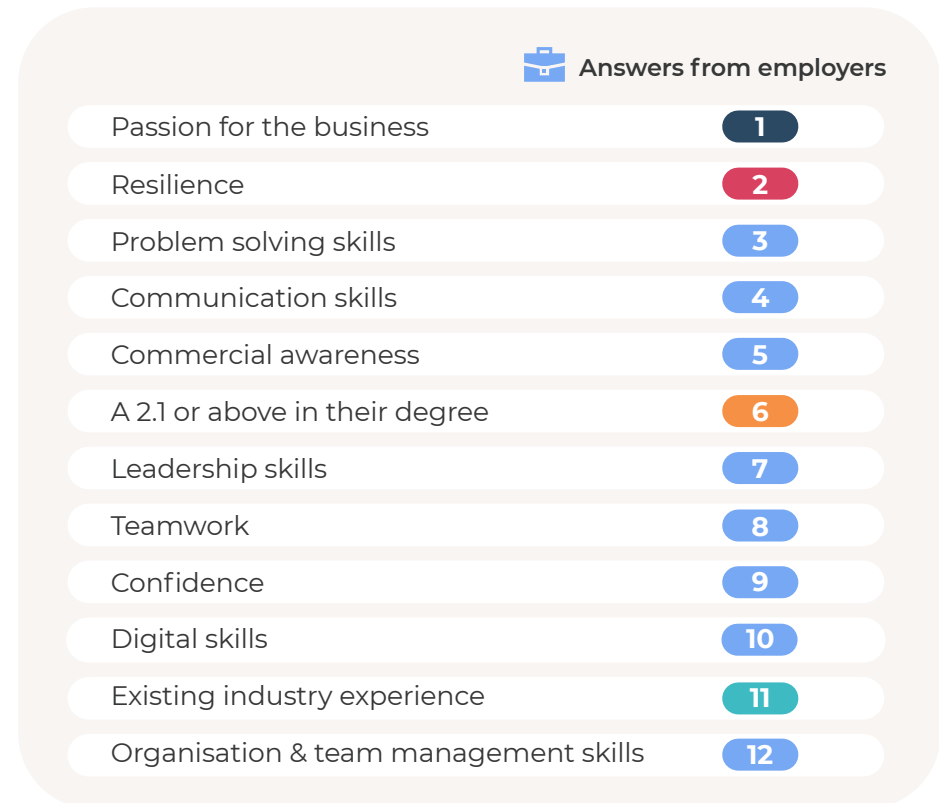**Q.** **What do you think graduate employers value most in candidates?**

Answers from students

A 2.1 or above in their degree	1
Existing industry experience	2
Communication skills	3
Problem solving skills	4
Confidence	5
Passion for the business	6
Commercial awareness	7
Digital skills	8
Teamwork	9
Organisation & team management skills	10
Leadership skills	11
Resilience	12
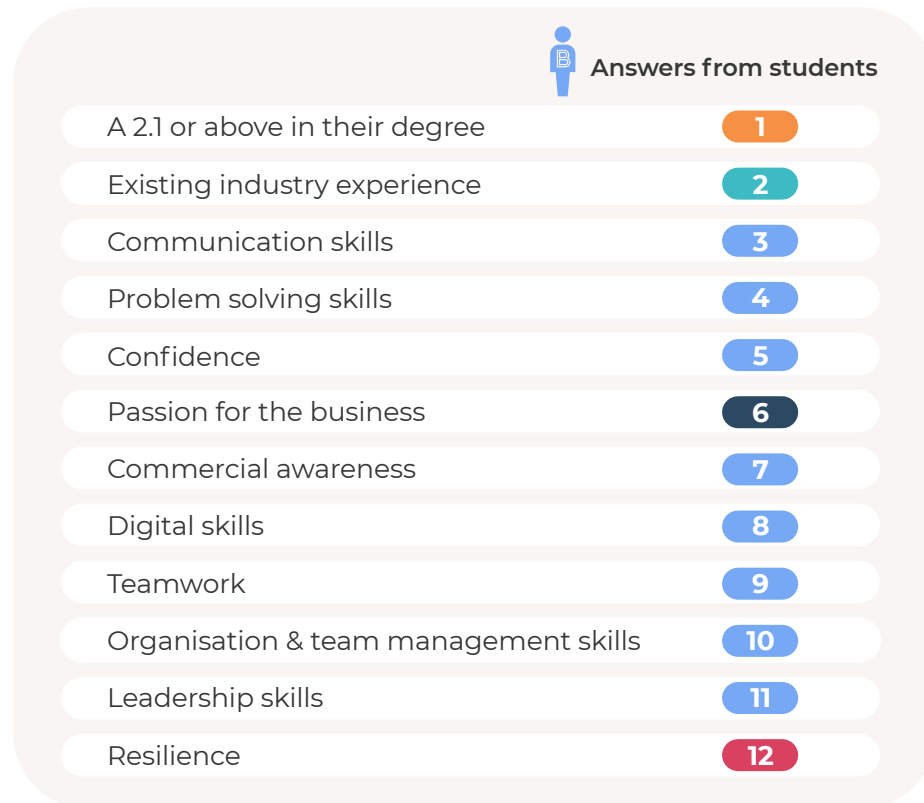
Q. **What do you value most in candidates?**

Answers from employers

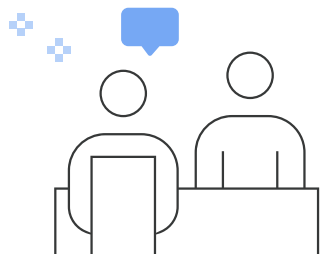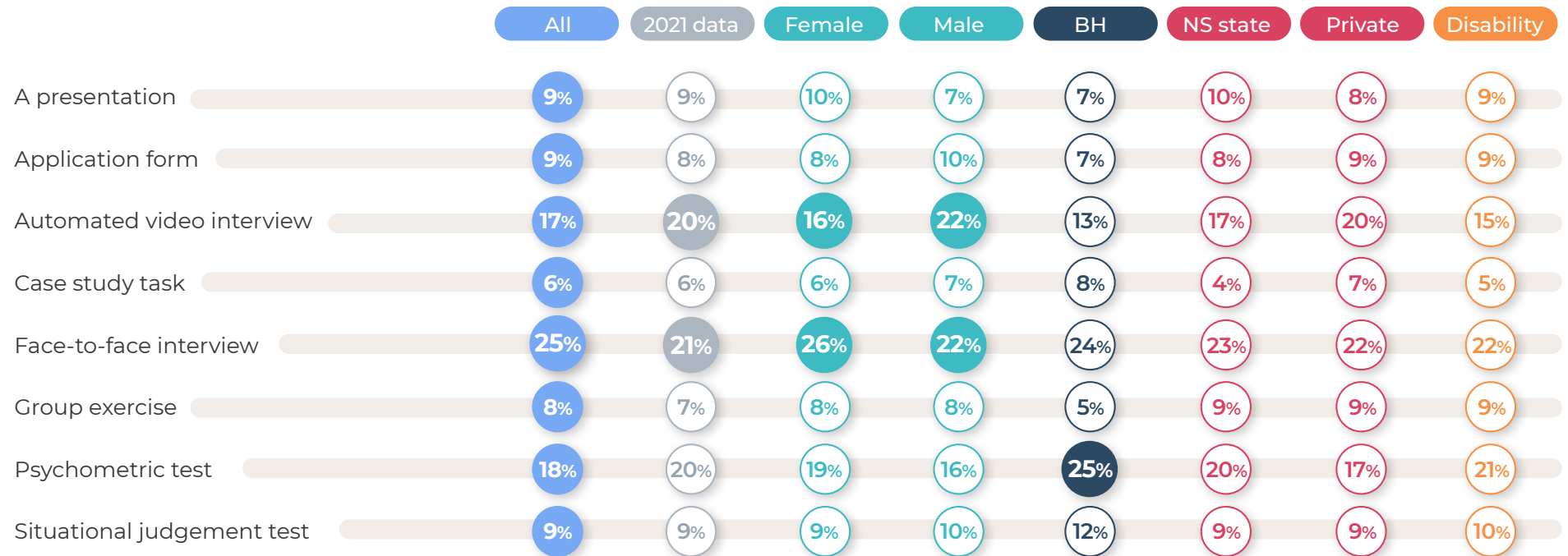|	
Passion for the business	1
Resilience	2
Problem solving skills	3
Communication skills	4
Commercial awareness	5
A 2.1 or above in their degree	6
Leadership skills	7
Teamwork	8
Confidence	9
Digital skills	10
Existing industry experience	11
Organisation & team management skills	12

More so than ever employers are looking for candidates who have strong **resilience,** but it's not something students consider important when they are applying.

Graduates are being put off applying for roles because they don't have formal **industry experience**. This isn't important for employers and should be communicated further on job descriptions and throughout applications.

Application worries

Q. Which part of an application process would worry you most?

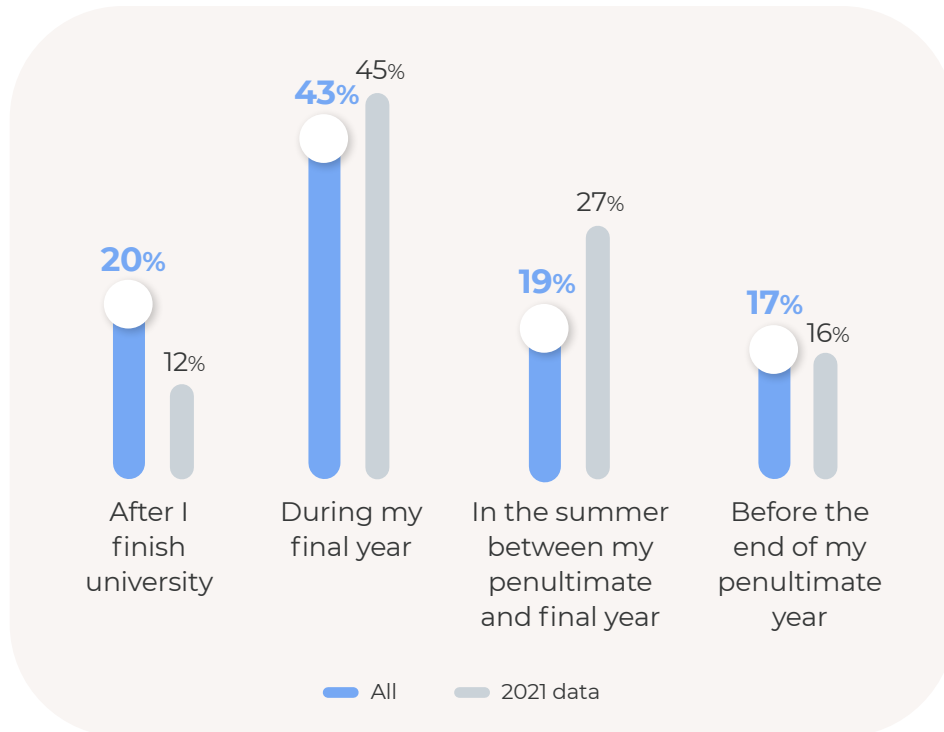|	All	2021 data	Female	Male	BH	NS state	Private	Disability
A presentation	9%	9%	10%	7%	7%	10%	8%	9%
Application form	9%	8%	8%	10%	7%	8%	9%	9%
Automated video interview	17%	20%	16%	22%	13%	17%	20%	15%
Case study task	6%	6%	6%	7%	8%	4%	7%	5%
Face-to-face interview	25%	21%	26%	22%	24%	23%	22%	22%
Group exercise	8%	7%	8%	8%	5%	9%	9%	9%
Psychometric test	18%	20%	19%	16%	25%	20%	17%	21%
Situational judgement test	9%	9%	9%	10%	12%	9%	9%	10%

With many students out of practice with in person interviews, it's not surprising we have seen an increase in worries about **face-to-face interviews.** This is felt more so by our female members, with men more likely to be worried about **automated video interviews**.
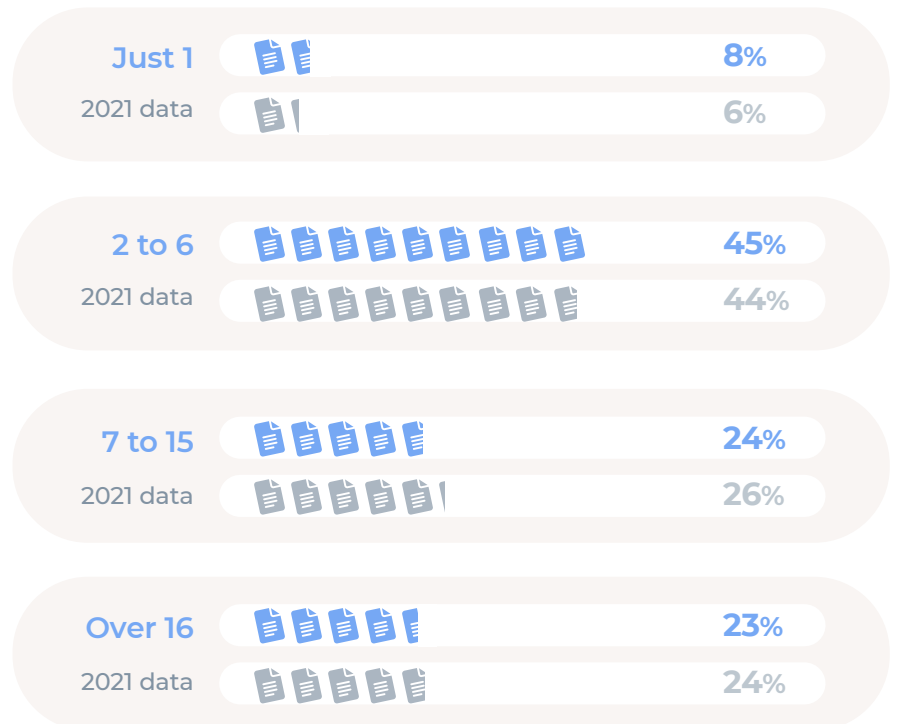
Our Black Heritage members are **38%** more likely to say they are worried about psychometric tests.

When and how many

Q. **When do you plan to start applying for a graduate role?**

20%
12%

43%
45%

19%
27%

17%
16%

After I finish university

During my final year

In the summer between my penultimate and final year

Before the end of my penultimate year

● All   ● 2021 data

Q. **When applying for insight days, internships or graduate programmes, on average how many applications do you submit?**

| Just 1 | **8%** |
| 2021 data | 6% |

| 2 to 6 | **45%** |
| 2021 data | 44% |

| 7 to 15 | **24%** |
| 2021 data | 26% |

| Over 16 | **23%** |
| 2021 data | 24% |

With more job vacancies available and an increase in confidence, students are typically starting their graduate job applications later.
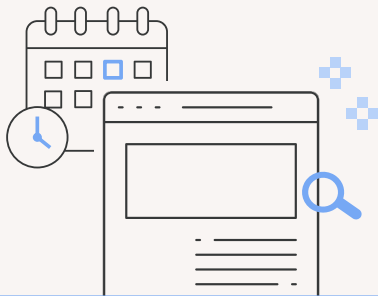
Actions

From our members

"Employers stand out when they can truly demonstrate an openness to work with you, making the most of your perspective and lived experience to strengthen the team. It's one thing to relate to a personal specification but another when a role can be reimagined with your unique ideas, skillset, and personality."

Lucien

1 **Educating students —** our members have very different ideas on what employers want to see from applicants. It's essential to highlight on career pages and in conversations that things like the best academics and formal experience aren't the key attribute when applying. You could be putting off great applicants, especially from lower socio-economic backgrounds who haven't had the best educational and internship opportunities.

2 **Coaching within processes —** audit each part of your application process and see if certain groups are more likely to drop out or perform poorly at a particular stage. If this is the case, implement coaching to ensure all candidates can perform to the best of their ability.

3 **Responding to application trends —** now students have more confidence in the graduate market, many more (**1 in 5**) are happy to wait until after university to focus on their career. Employers with a good strategy to engage graduates in their first year out of university will benefit.

Insights that make an impact.

Talk to us about your 2022/23 graduate recruitment strategy

employers@brightnetwork.co.uk

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