Graduate recruitment actually grew in 2013 and looks set for even more growth in 2014

Despite a rather gloomy forecast, in AGR’s Summer 2013 review, that graduate recruitment would decline by 8.2% it actually grew by 4.3% according to actual figures from employers. In addition graduate recruiters are forecasting a further growth of 10.2% in 2014. However the inaccuracies within the Summer forecast demonstrate the differences between employers predictions and their actual recruitment. AGR members are predicting a total number of graduate vacancies, from the 202 surveyed, as 23,121. This represents an average of 114.5, per employer, which is an increase of around 11 vacancies per employer compared with 2013 and an increase of 16 vacancies per employer compared with 2012.

Growth predicted in most industry sectors

Of the 12 industry sectors with sufficient representation 10 are predicted to see growth in graduate recruitment. The highest growth is predicted in IT/Telecommunications (+40.3%), Public Sector (+20.1%) and Energy and Utilities (+17.5%). The 2 industry sectors predicted to see a reduction in graduate recruitment are Investment Banking (-1.4%) and Law (-4.2%).

In 2013 Accountancy and professional services still accounted for the largest number of vacancies (18.3%) but encouragingly the Public Sector, which is experiencing growth moved back to being the second largest recruiting industry sector, with a 12.5% market share.

London is still the key location for graduate opportunities

Despite the AGR Summer 2013 review suggested a greater geographical spread of graduate opportunities amongst its members the actual recruitment was still very much focussed on London. Of the 16,672 jobs represented by the AGR members answering the location question in the survey 50.1% (8549) of the jobs in 2013 were in London with a further 9.8% (1643) of jobs were in the nearby South East. Conversely only 4% (670) jobs were in Yorkshire and Humberside. Once again the message for graduates wishing to remain in the region, has to be, they need to look beyond the obvious and most marketed graduate recruiters. Recent trends, in a report on graduate recruitment within SMEs, may suggest this would be a good place for graduates to focus their job search effort.

Graduate salaries

There is no data in this survey about expected graduate salary levels but this is often included in the summer review. Most surveys are expecting overall graduate salaries to remain static with some regional and occupational variations.

Graduate recruitment marketing spending set to increase but online promotion will overtake on-campus activities

The mean marketing spend per AGR member employer is set to increase from £98,500 to £109,000. Obviously the amount of spend varies significantly depending on how many graduates the employer is looking to recruit. The greatest growth in spending will be amongst employers looking to recruit more than 500 graduates. The only employers looking to significantly reduce their graduate recruitment spending are those looking to recruit between 101 and 250 graduates. However the mean spend per graduate is still highest with those looking to recruit less than 25 graduates (£3176 per vacancy)

The most likely promotion of graduate recruitment amongst AGR members will be online (including company websites, social media and job boards) with 93.3% of employers likely to use this method. This was followed closely by On-campus activities (including presentations and careers fairs) with 92.3% of employers expected to use this method.