



EMPLOYERS SURVEY 2005
Graduate Employers in the area surrounding
Universitat Jaume I

RESULTS SUMMARY

October 2007

**Employment Observatory
Career Development Area
Office for International and Educational Cooperation
Vice-Rectorate Office for Students and Employment
Universitat Jaume I
observatori@uji.es**

INDEX

1	OBJECTIVES	1
1.1	Specific objectives	1
2	DETAILS OF THE STUDY.....	1
3	EMPLOYERS' DETAILS	1
3.1	Geographic distribution.....	1
3.2	Business activity	2
3.3	Economic sector.....	2
3.4	Size.....	2
3.5	Geographic areal	2
4	GRADUATE RECRUITMENT PROCESS	2
4.1	Working conditions offered by organisations.....	2
4.2	Common graduate candidate selection processes at organisations.....	2
4.3	Common graduate selection processes at organisations	3
5	GRADUATE EMPLOYEES.....	3
5.1	Graduate recruitment.....	3
5.2	Degrees held.....	3
5.3	Characteristics of graduates employment.....	3
6	COMPETENCES THE JOB REQUIRES AND GRADUATES HAVE	4
7	ASSESSMENT OF GRADUATES EMPLOYED	4
7.1	Assessment of various aspects concerning graduates.....	5
7.2	Organisation satisfaction with graduates employed	5
7.3	Differences between graduates from UJI and those from other universities.....	5
8	RELATIONSHIP WITH UJI.....	5
8.1	Organisations' knowledge, use of and satisfaction with services offered by UJI to companies.....	5
8.2	Relationship between UJI and the companies in the surrounding area	6
9	PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYING GRADUATES IN THE FUTURE	6
9.1	Expectations of having a closer relationship with UJI.....	6
9.2	Expectations of taking students on to do work placements	6
9.3	Expectations of hiring graduates	6
9.4	Expectations concerning job categories to be covered by graduates	7
9.5	Expectations concerning operational areas to be covered by graduates	7
10	SOME CONCLUSIONS	7

1 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is to find out the opinions of potential employers about recent Universitat Jaume I (UJI) graduates.

1.1 *Specific objectives*

- To find out about the needs of public and private companies regarding to training/competences of recent UJI graduates.
- To find out about the graduate recruitment processes and working conditions.
- To find out about the situation and prospects for the following 12 months regarding graduate recruitment.
- To find out about the level of knowledge of the business sector regarding the services developed by UJI for the improvement of professionals in the workplace and the assessment of these companies.
- To provide relevant information to university students and graduates.
- To provide relevant information to UJI management for decision-making.
- To provide relevant information for the Career Development Centre (AIP) in the Office for International and Educational Cooperation (OCIE) for professional guidance processes.

2 DETAILS OF THE STUDY

RANGE: Potential employers in the area surrounding UJI including public and private organisations.

UNIVERSE: Organisations included in the historical database in the Career Development Centre that have collaborated in compulsory work placement or Practicum subjects (1868 organisations).

SAMPLE COLLECTION. 305 questionnaires correctly filled out (16.33% of the universe).

PROCEDURE: Survey sent by post together with a SAE (postage-paid). Two batches were made in order to maximise the response rate.

ERROR: For a confidence level of 95.5%, and $P=Q$, the real error is $\pm 5.13\%$ for the sample as a whole and assuming simple random sampling was performed.

DATE CONDUCTED. From August to December 2005.

3 EMPLOYERS' DETAILS

3.1 *Geographic distribution*

The organisations that most widely answered the questionnaire, by province, were from Castelló (76.86%), followed by València (17.47%), although a long way behind. By autonomous communities, 95.63% of the companies who responded were from the Valencian Community, followed by organisations from Aragon (2.18%), again a good distance behind.

3.2 Business activity

81.79% were private companies, while 9.60% were public and 8.61% were non-profit-making organisations.

3.3 Economic sector

The main economic sectors (as in CNAE-93¹) in the sample were from the manufacturing industry (23.86%), estate agents and business services (19.65%) and other social activities and services to the community (16.14%). Next, with lower values but still relevant, were organisations from public administration (7.37%), construction (7.37%) and the stores (6.67%).

3.4 Size

According to the survey, most organisations had up to 10 employees (38.94%), followed by those between 11 and 50 (31.35%). Companies with more than 200 employees made up 13.25% of the sample.

3.5 Geographic area

As far as the geographic area where the organisations carry out their economic activity, the survey shows that 41.78% of the organisations are local and 26.6% work at a province level. 12.50% conduct their business on an international basis.

4 GRADUATE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Graduate requisites as requested by organisations

In relation to the requisites that organisations look for in university graduates applying for a job, 85.77% of companies explicitly required them to have a university degree. 73.08% required them to have specific competences. 60.99% asked for them to have language skills. 54.50% asked for graduates to be ready to travel, and 20% of the organisations asked for them to be ready to move. 51.79% required graduates to have previous work experience. Finally, 34% of companies asked for candidates to have knowledge of Catalan.

4.1 Working conditions offered by organisations

The survey shows that 36.82% of the organisations involved offer permanent contracts. 24.32% offer a work experience contract, while 36.04% offer various kinds of temporary contracts. 85.38% of the organisations propose full-time jobs. As regards salaries, 55.88% of the organisations offer a monthly gross salary of between 500 and 1000 euros, and 23.96% of them offer between 1.000 and 1500€. Only 7.56% of the organisations offer a lower salary. 86.25% consider promotion opportunities. In 64.54% of companies, salaries are linked to performance, and in 28.62% employees are offered access to social benefits.

4.2 Common graduate candidate selection processes at organisations

Regarding selection of candidates for jobs, the survey shows that 24.42% of the organisations consider people who are undertaking work placements in the organisation,

¹ Classification of Spanish business activities, revised in 1994. www.ine.es

and 5.04% to the same with those who had carried out work placements in the past. 15.89% of the organisations opt for unsolicited candidates, and 12.69%, select them through a public employment agency. 8.53% of the organisations resort to recommendations or personal references.

4.3 Common graduate selection processes at organisations

The selection interview is the most widely used method (60.35%). Consideration of competences and skills comes second (21.40%). The factors considered as being more important when selecting a graduate are the following: a positive attitude towards integration into the company (3.4 on a scale from 0 to 4), personal effort (3.22) and the command of specific professional knowledge and skills (3.02). Other factors rated medium-high include: having initiative and taking risks (2.82), computer skills (2.82) and previous work or professional experience (2.81). Factors such as further training (2.4), knowledge of languages (2.02) and holding a university degree (1.99) had scores within the average range.

5 GRADUATE EMPLOYEES

5.1 Graduate recruitment

The organisations surveyed indicate that in the last 12 months they had hired an average of almost three university graduates (2.84). Of these, 27.39% had previously undertaken a work placement at the company. In the organisations in the study, 13.25 of employees were graduates, of whom 43.95% were women.

5.2 Degrees held

The UJI degrees held by most people at the organisations surveyed were: Labour Sciences Diploma (43.93% of the organisations employ graduates with this degree), Law (36.72%), Business Management and Administration (35.08%), Labour Relations Diploma (29.84%), Industrial Engineering (22.95%) and Computer Science Engineering (21.31%).

Another interesting result was the number of different sectors covered by graduates holding a specific degree. This parameter is useful as an indicator of a degree's diversification or specialisation. In this regard, the Labour Relations Diploma, the Labour Sciences Diploma and the Business Management and Administration Degree are present in 13 out of 17 sectors considered in this study. The Law Degree appears in 12 different sectors. At the other end of the scale we find the Music and Physical Education Diplomas, which are present in two sectors, and studies such as Audiovisual Communication, Technical Architecture, Psycho pedagogy or Early Childhood Education, in 4 different sectors.

5.3 Characteristics of graduates employment

75.34% of graduates employed at the organisations surveyed have a permanent contract. As regards their professional level, 38.48% were higher or mid-level technicians, 18.08% had middle-management positions and 17.57% of them were managers. 17.81% of them were administrative workers. The organisational areas which employed the

most graduates were administration and finance (24.08% of graduates work in this area), production (16.01%) and general services (9.49%). 5.04% of university graduates employed in these organisations were found in Research & Development departments. Furthermore, 89.71% worked full time.

As far as salaries are concerned, in 35.80% of cases, salaries were in accordance with employee performance. 36.26% of the organisations offer social benefits to graduate employees. There were differences in salary among graduates depending on the degrees held. In 81.08% of the organisations there were differences in salary based on position. Finally, in 63.57% of companies there were differences depending on the work experience of graduates employed.

Another piece of information obtained through the survey was the time graduates remained in the organisation. On average, they worked in the organisation for 5.63 years.

6 COMPETENCES THE JOB REQUIRES AND GRADUATES HAVE

Organisations have been evaluated as regards both competences graduates have and those required for the position. Furthermore, some competences graduates commonly had included their ability to learn (2.84 on a scale from 0 to 4), computer skills (2.69), oral and written communication in the mother tongue (2.45), achievement motivation (2.39) and the ability to apply knowledge in a practical way (2.38). Found amongst the less common competences were decision making (1.52), knowledge of foreign languages (1.80) and critical and self-critical ability (1.81).

On the other hand, as regards the competences required for the position, organisations valued the ability to learn (3.34), concern about quality (3.34), ability to apply knowledge in a practical way (3.31), problem solving (3.30) and teamwork (3.23). The least common competences among graduates are, according to the organisations' evaluation, knowledge of foreign languages (1.80), critical and self-critical ability (2.67), and decision making (1.52).

Finally, the difference between competences required for the post and competences graduates actually had when they joined the organisation was also calculated. The competences where large differences were detected include problem-solving ability (1.40 points different), decision making (1.34) and time planning and management (1.07). The competences showing the least difference were knowledge of foreign languages (0.03) and computer skills (0.39).

7 ASSESSMENT OF GRADUATES EMPLOYED

In this section, the organisations surveyed showed their level of agreement with a series of statements, as well as their level of satisfaction with certain aspects of training received by graduates.

7.1 Assessment of various aspects concerning graduates

74.58% of the organisations either agreed or totally agreed with the idea that the company has a fundamental mission in job training for graduates. In contrast, 23.29% either agreed or totally agreed that the university should provide a basic education, while the company would provide the specific training needed. 42.91% thought that behaviour (i.e., “attitude”) is more important than the knowledge gained by graduates at university. 9.52% think that there is a lack of university graduates in the Spanish job market. And, even though 30.85% believe that a post requiring a university graduate is more difficult to fill than one requiring a vocational training student, 21.89% think that it is always better to hire a university graduate even if the job does not require it. 63.97% either agreed or totally agreed with the statement that most graduates have a mistaken idea of the world of work. In this line, only 5.4% of organisations agreed or totally agreed with the statement “University studies are highly oriented towards the job market”.

7.2 Organisation satisfaction with graduates employed

While 57.09% of the organisations surveyed were satisfied or totally satisfied with the theoretical education of graduates employed by them, only 20.48% were satisfied or totally satisfied with the practical training they received. Likewise, only 26.21% of the organisations were satisfied or very satisfied with the entrepreneurial values shown by graduates employed. 39.66% of the organisations were satisfied with the levels of initiative and innovation that graduates employed brought to their job. 35.79% of the companies were satisfied or very satisfied with the further training of graduates employed. Finally, as regards the general level of satisfaction with graduates (regardless of the university they come from), 61.99% of the companies were satisfied or very satisfied (59.53% for graduates are from UJI).

7.3 Differences between graduates from UJI and those from other universities

Organisations were also asked whether they found differences between graduates from UJI and those from other higher education institutions. In this case, 62.63% of the organisations surveyed stated they found no differences. 23.68% stated that they did not have sufficient facts to be able to form an opinion on this or that differences did not depend on the university graduates came from but, rather, their degrees or other factors. Finally, 8.42% said that UJI graduates were the best, while 4.21% declared that they were the worst.

8 RELATIONSHIP WITH UJI

8.1 Organisations’ knowledge, use of and satisfaction with services offered by UJI to companies

A first subsection attempted to find out the organisations’ level of knowledge of, use of and satisfaction with the services offered to them by UJI. The most widely known services were compulsory final-year student work placements (95.09% of the organisations were aware of this), followed by postgraduate student work placements (51.25%). The less well-known services included the advanced business consultancy services (16.01%) and the employment conferences (23.76%). As regards the most

widely used services, at the top of the list were final-year student work placements (used by 86.23% of the companies that knew about them) and, a good distance behind, the distribution list concerning job offers (35.21%) are on top of the list. Among the lesser used services, companies included the advanced business consultancy services (15.91%) and the employment conferences (18.46%). Finally, the level of satisfaction with the service actually offered to organisations ranged from neutral to highly satisfactory. 85% of the organisations were satisfied or totally satisfied with final-year student work placements. Next, 84.21% of these organisations are satisfied or totally satisfied with the distribution lists concerning job offers. Lower scores were obtained with regard to the employment conferences (54.55%) and the advanced business consultancy services (66.67%).

8.2 Relationship between UJI and the companies in the surrounding area

Finally, the level of agreement of the organisations surveyed is shown through a series of statements relative to the relationship between UJI and the companies in the surrounding area. Few organisations think that the institutional relationship between the University and them is poor (17.24% of them agreed or totally agreed). Furthermore, 62.60% agreed or totally agreed that the establishment of relationships between the UJI and the companies in the surrounding area is very positive, while 79.38% believed that UJI has a positive economic and social impact on the town of Castelló and its surrounding area. However, 79.55% of the organisations surveyed stated that this relationship should be encouraged further.

9 PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYING GRADUATES IN THE FUTURE

The questions in this section referred to the plans of organisations for the following 12 months.

9.1 Expectations of having a closer relationship with UJI

Here the expectations concerning the future relationship between organisations and UJI are shown. It can be observed that 81.56% of the organisations who took part in the survey would like to have a closer relationship with this University.

9.2 Expectations of taking students on to do work placements

From all the companies surveyed, 81.38% showed an interest in taking students on to do work placements

54% of them would prefer to take students from UJI, while 44.44% do not mind and only 1.33% would prefer to take students from other universities to do work placements.

9.3 Expectations of hiring graduates

60.27% of the organisations surveyed were planning to hire graduates in the future. On average, these organisations would hire 2.46 graduates in the following 12 months.

51.91% of the organisations that would hire graduates did not have a preference about the university they come from. In contrast, 43.72% would prefer to hire UJI graduates, and 4.3%, students from other universities.

Those which the organisations were most interested in were: Labour Sciences (31.05%), Business Management and Administration (29.51%), Law (21.31%) and Industrial Engineering (18.03%).

In contrast, the degrees less required by companies were the four Education diplomas (Primary Education and Early Childhood Education with a 0.55% and Music and Physical Education with a 0%).

9.4 Expectations concerning job categories to be covered by graduates

According to the employers in the survey, 45.7% of university graduates would be hired for higher technical positions. The category of mid-level technicians comes next with 38.07%. Thirdly, we find administrative posts, for which 32.43% of the organisations would hire graduates. Other job categories had lower percentages, among them manual workers (5.95%) and managers (3.23%). In this section more than one option could be ticked, so answers do not necessarily add up to 100%.

9.5 Expectations concerning operational areas to be covered by graduates

The questionnaire also included a section on the departments for which graduates would be hired. Administration and finance (16.77%) and production (16.47) were the two operational areas most required. Next we find the customer service/communication areas (13.77%), general services (11.98%) and sales/marketing (11.68%). The lower percentages correspond to operational areas such as education/teaching (1.80%), health (0.60%) or general management (0.30%). In this section more than one option could be ticked, so answers do not necessarily add up to 100%.

10 SOME CONCLUSIONS

The results seem to indicate that the kind of relationship with UJI depends on the type of organisation (here various economic sectors and organisation sizes have been considered). Different organisations have different views and expectations concerning UJI, depending on the need for typical services in each sector and organisation size.

Another obvious result is the need for different methodologies when dealing with the employer needs survey, depending on their public or private nature. A survey like this seems to be appropriate for finding out the needs of private companies, but other methods – such as the analysis of the public sector vacancies list – may need to be developed