



STUDENTS'
CHOICE
AWARDS

EMPLOYMENT CHOICES

OF
TERTIARY-LEVEL
STUDENTS

2023



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MOMENTUM FOREWORD



A SURVEY TO DETERMINE THE VIEW OF TERTIARY-LEVEL STUDENTS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS ON THEIR EMPLOYMENT CHOICES.

Introduction

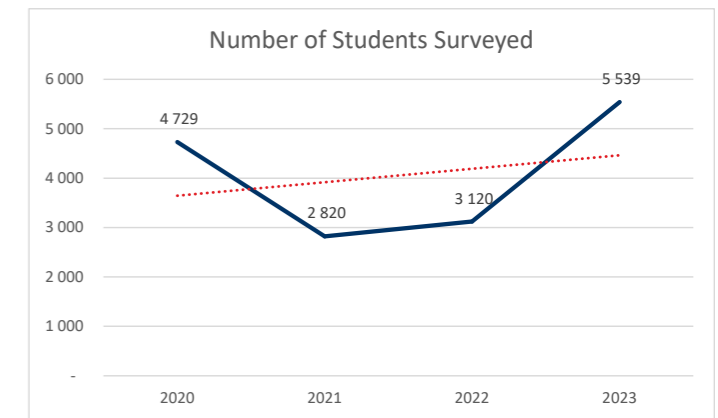
The goal of the survey is to better understand how students perceive potential employment environments, and to provide future employers with insight into how students think and see themselves, as well as the kinds of cultures they believe will be a good fit, when stepping out into the employment market. Now in its fourth year, the survey was first conducted in 2020, and is sponsored by Momentum Metropolitan.

The report aims to understand the following:

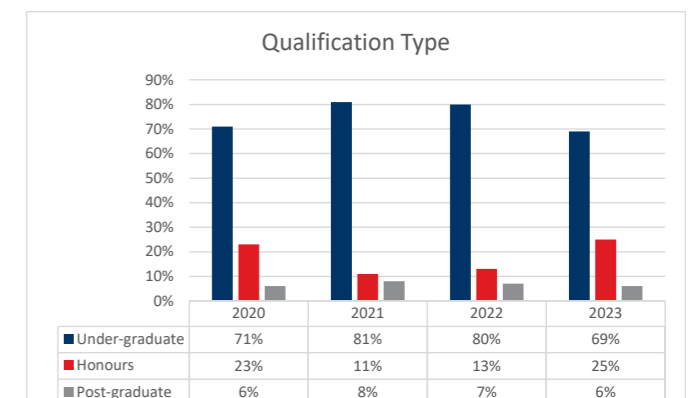
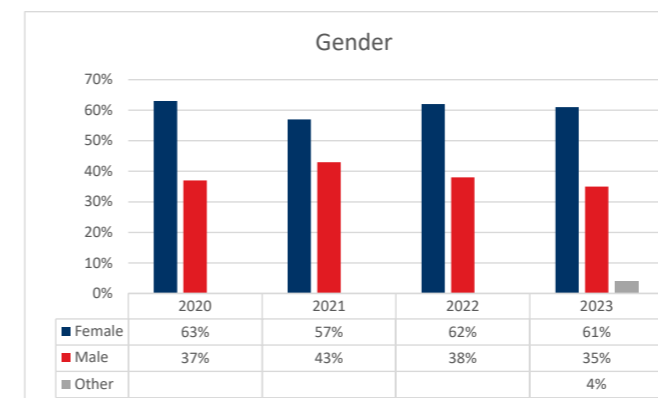
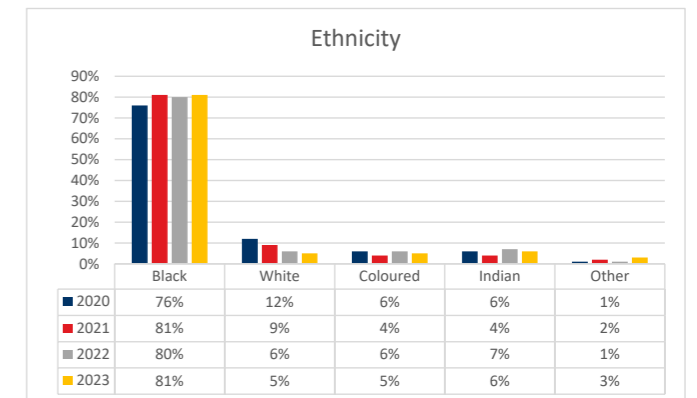
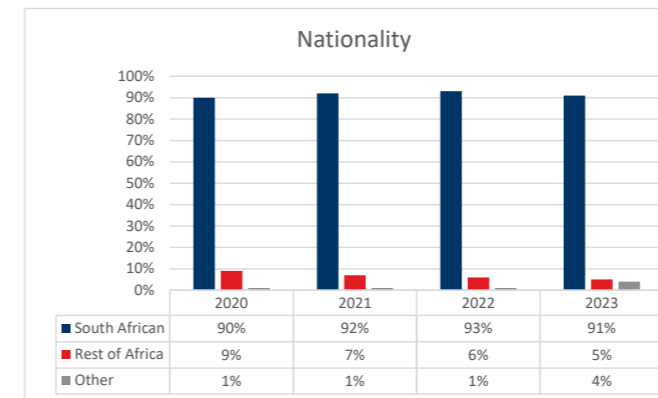
- Preferred office culture of students
- Likelihood of transferring out of South Africa
- The importance of travel
- Most-valued employee benefits
- Preferred industry to work in
- Salary expectations
- Level of comfort working outside core background
- Top preferred employers

Student Sample

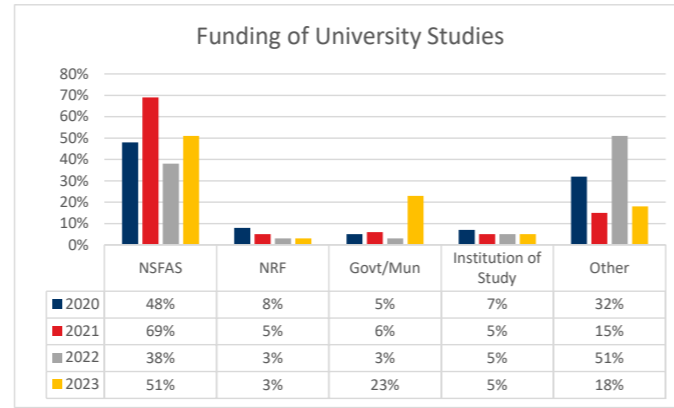
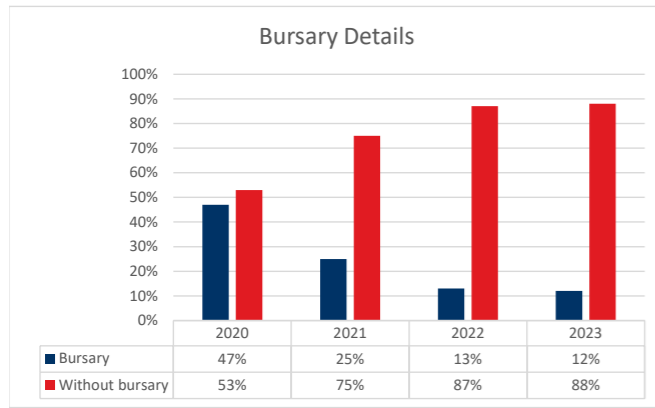
A web-based survey was used, which was completed as and when students registered to enter the DHL GradStar Awards 2023, and took place between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023.



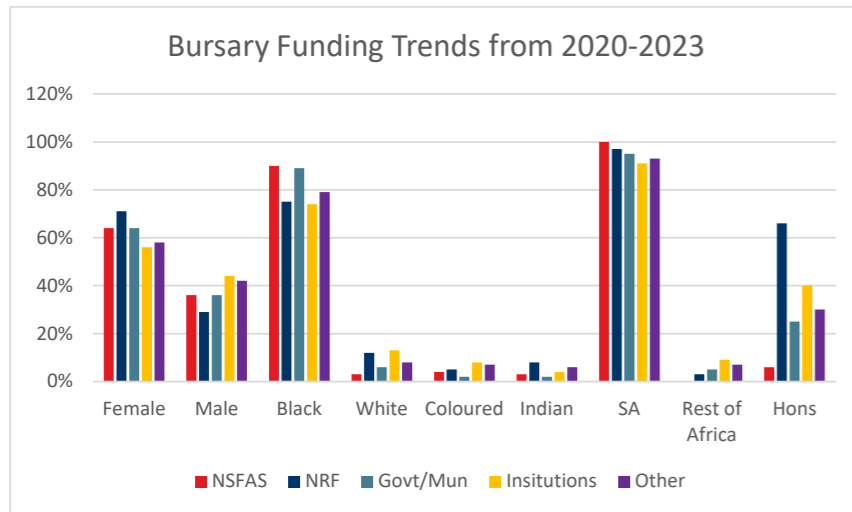
Demographics



Bursary Funding



Data from the past four years shows that allocations from funding sources to the students surveyed has been relatively stable across demographics.



- 52%** NSFAS remains the primary bursary provider, funding over 50% over bursaries over the 4-year period.
- While **government** has averaged 9% of bursary funding, this is largely due to a **spike to 23% in 2023**, from a previous average of 5%.
- 55%** Black females are the recipients of 55% of all bursaries awarded over the 4-year period.

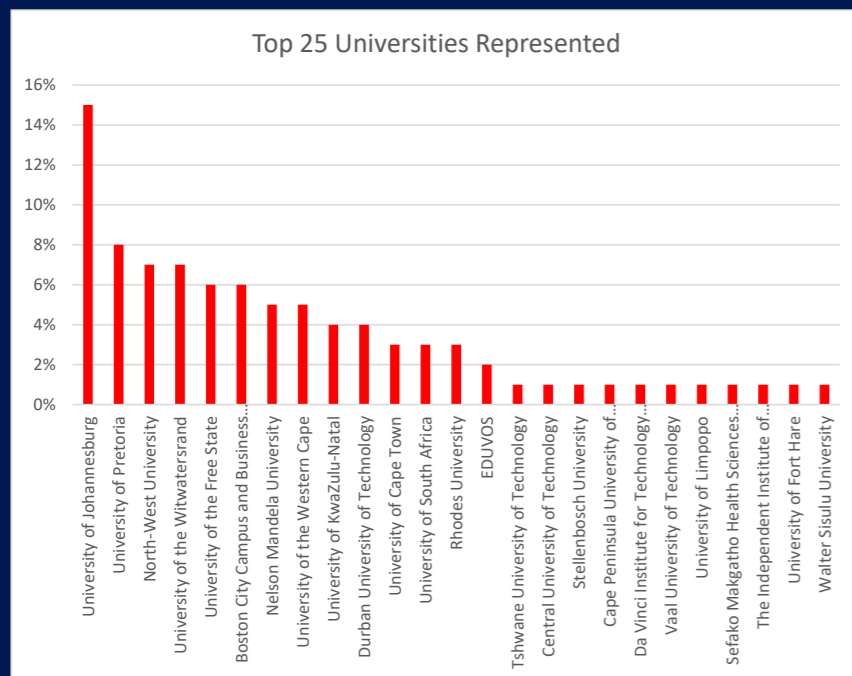
QUESTION 1: WHAT SORT OF OFFICE CULTURE APPEALS TO YOU?

Students consistently value open and free communication between employers and employees as the most important part of office culture. Respect, teamwork, a growth mindset and innovation complete the top five office culture attributes desired by students entering the workplace.

Ranked in order of preference:

- Open and free communication between employers and employees
- Respectful
- Teamwork is promoted
- Growth mindset
- Innovative
- Non-discriminatory
- Study leave and opportunities for further study
- Professional
- Integrity
- Mentoring
- Transparent
- Friendly
- Working hard
- Positive
- Positive empowerment rating
- Fun
- Entrepreneurial
- Casual and relaxed
- Clan office culture
- Formal

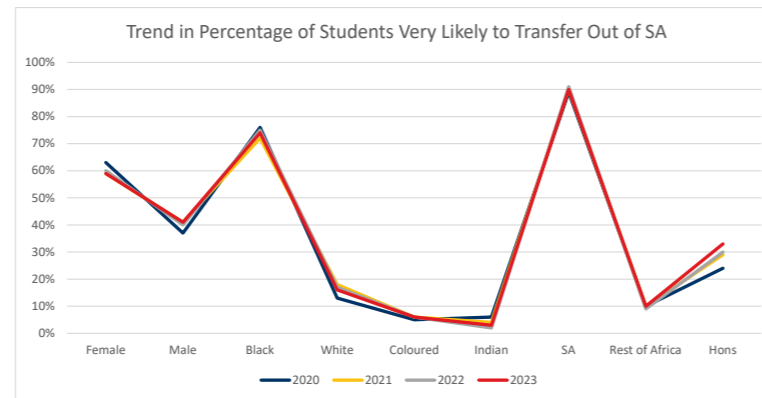
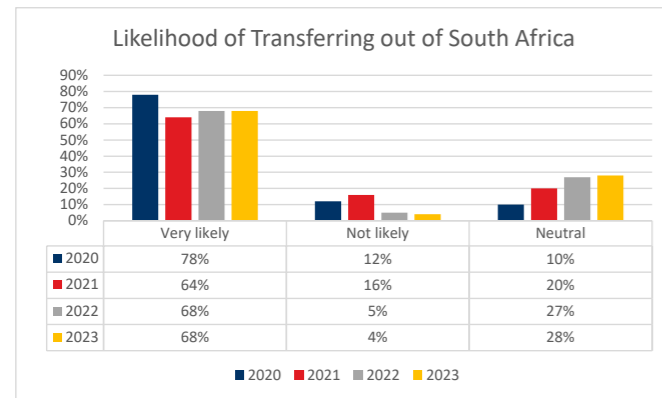
There were 52 universities represented in the 2023 survey.



Universities with less than 1% representation: Belgium Campus, Boston Media House, College Campus, CTI Education Group, Damelin, IMM Graduate School of Marketing, Institute of Accounting Science, Intec College, Management College of Southern Africa (MANCOSA), Mangosutho University of Technology, Milpark Education, Monash South Africa, Open Learning Group, PM Academy, Prestige Academy, Regent Business School, Richfield Graduate Institute of Technology, Sol Plaatje University, Stadio, The Institute of Certified Bookkeepers, The South Africa College of Applied Psychology, University of Durban – Westville, University of Mpumalanga, University of Port Elizabeth, University of Venda, University of Zululand, Varsity College, Vega School of Brand Communications.

- 76%** of students highlighted 'open and free communication between employers and employees' as being important to them
- 63%** of students want to work in an environment where people **respect** each other and their stakeholders.
- 57%** of students see 'promoting teamwork' as key to a healthy, collaborative office culture, and value this in an employer.
- 47%** of students highlighted a 'growth mindset' as something they would like to see displayed by their future employer.

QUESTION 2: IF YOU ARE EMPLOYED BY A GLOBAL FIRM, WHAT IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT YOU WOULD LOOK TO TRANSFERRING OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA?



70% On average over the 4-year period, 70% of students are **'very likely'** to consider transferring outside of South Africa for work.

45% **Black females** represent the largest demographic willing to transfer outside of South Africa for work, at 45%

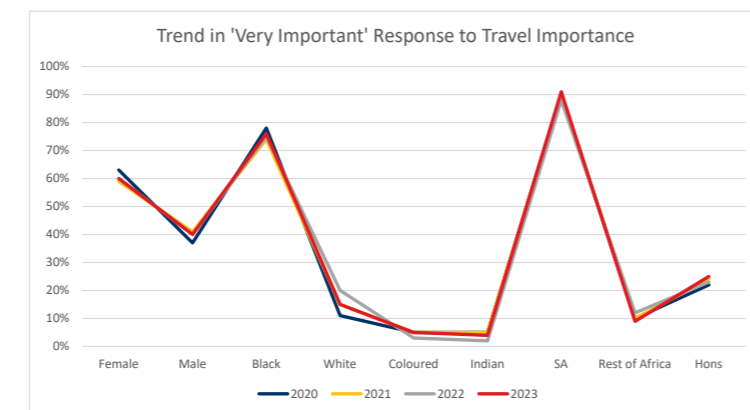
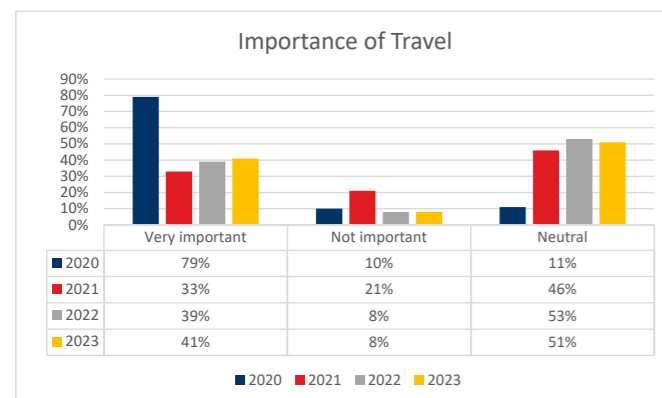
QUESTION 4: WHAT BENEFITS DO YOU MOST VALUE IN AN EMPLOYER?

Students value training and learning opportunities the most in an employer. In 2023, making a difference in the community ranked higher than previous years.

All benefits ranked in order of importance:

1. Training and learning opportunities
2. Personal growth and development
3. Financial Insurance – pension, medical, disability insurance, maternity pay etc
4. Opportunities for promotion
5. Community engagement and making a difference
6. Conducive work environment
7. Mentorship
8. Job Security
9. Competitive salary
10. Safe and secure environment
11. Exposure to other positions
12. Travelling
13. Flexible working hours
14. Wellness programmes
15. Performance bonuses
16. Recognition Programmes
17. Car and travelling allowance
18. Work from home
19. 13th cheque
20. Additional paid leave

QUESTION 3: HOW IMPORTANT IS TRAVEL TO YOU?



48% On average over the 4-year period, 48% of students consider travel to be **'very important'** to them,

46% **Black females** represent the largest demographic to which travel is very important, at 46%

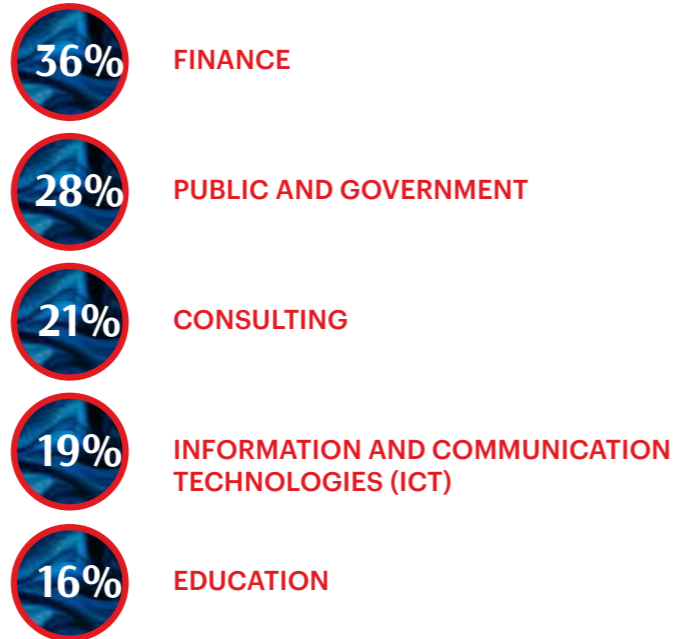
QUESTION 5: WHAT WILL MAKE OR BREAK YOUR CHOICE IN AN EMPLOYER?

1. Open communication
2. Growth potential within the company, including skills development, training and opportunities for promotion
3. A conducive working environment
4. Competitive remuneration, rewards and recognition structure
5. Organisational culture and management style where employees are supported and cared for, as opposed to one where employees are exploited and treated unfairly
6. Mutual respect
7. Honesty
8. Employee benefits
9. Growth focus
10. A diverse non-discriminative environment
11. Physical work conditions including promotion of health and wellness and working hours
12. Job security
13. Inclusive and authentic leadership
14. The company's outlook on innovation and change
15. Availability of mentorship
16. The way the company treats their clients
17. The company values, mission, vision and reputation
18. Flexible working hours and ability to work from home
19. The company's social and environmental responsibility
20. An employer that encourages creativity

QUESTION 6: WHAT ARE YOUR PREFERRED INDUSTRIES TO WORK IN?

The top four industries that students prefer to work in, remain finance, public and government, consulting and ICT, year-on-year. This year, education moves up in preference to the top five.

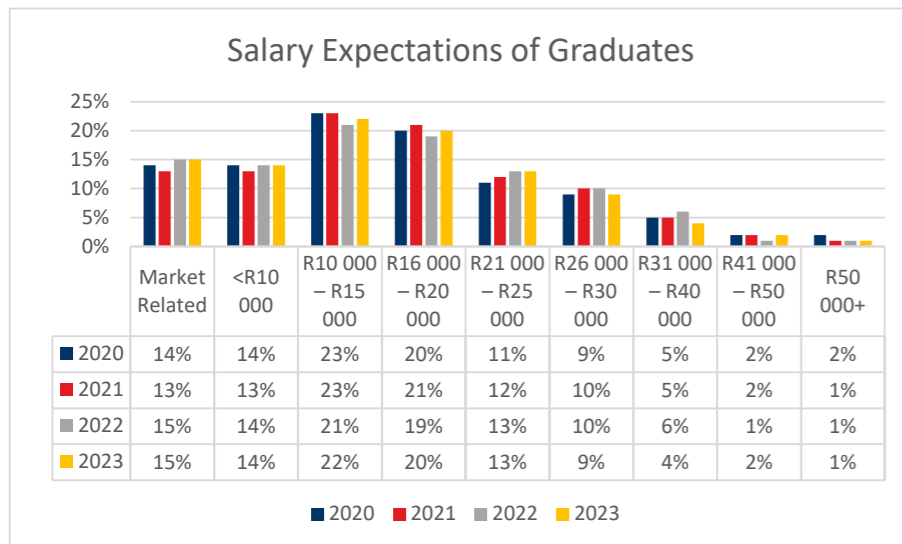
1. Finance
2. Public and Government
3. Consulting
4. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
5. Education
6. Healthcare
7. Energy and Mining
8. Human Resources and Management
9. Manufacturing
10. Property
11. Construction and Engineering
12. Logistics and Transport
13. Retail
14. Automotive, Aviation and Aerodynamic
15. Corporate Social Investment and Sustainability
16. Agricultural
17. Tourism
18. Other



QUESTION 7: WHAT SALARY EXPECTATION DO YOU HAVE AS A GRADUATE?

Year-on-year, salary expectations amongst students are similar:

- Most students expect a monthly salary of between R10 000 and R20 000.
- The salary expectancy of female students is notably lower than that of male students
- Students in the rest of Africa expect a higher salary than South African students.
- Honours students expect a salary of between R16 000 and R40 000 per month.



21% The four-year average of students who expect a salary between R10,000 and R20,000 per month is **21%**.

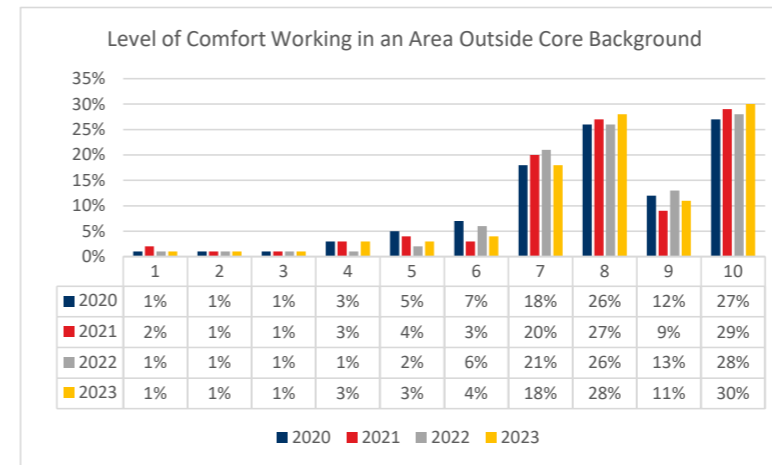
Only 14% of students surveyed expect a **market-related** salary. **14%**

3% Around **3%** of students surveyed expect a monthly salary of over R30,000 per month.

QUESTION 8: ON A SCALE OF 1 – 10, HOW COMFORTABLE ARE YOU TO WORK IN AN AREA OUTSIDE OF YOUR CORE BACKGROUND?

Most students are very comfortable to work in an area outside of their core background.

The figure below, where 1 is least comfortable and 10 is most comfortable, shows that this is the trend over the past four years, varying minimally over time:



QUESTION 9: WHERE DO YOU FIND MOST OF YOUR INFORMATION ABOUT GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES?

1. LinkedIn
2. University career services, mailing lists, notice boards and lecturers
3. Recruitment websites
4. Employer websites
5. Facebook
6. Career fairs
7. Word of mouth/family and friends
8. University websites
9. Other social media (WhatsApp, Telegram, etc.)
10. Google notifications
11. Government websites
12. Twitter
13. Other (newspapers, professional associations, etc)

LinkedIn remains the primary source of information for students on graduate opportunities, closely followed by university resources.

**QUESTION 10:
PLEASE LIST THE TOP 5 EMPLOYERS YOU WOULD LIKE TO WORK FOR WHEN YOU GRADUATE.**

AUTOMOTIVE



- 2. BMW
- 3. Toyota
- 4. Volkswagen
- 5. Ford

ACCOUNTING & AUDITING



- 2. PwC
- 3. KPMG
- 4. Ernst & Young
- 5. BDO

BANKING & FINANCIAL SERVICES



- 2. FNB
- 3. Standard Bank
- 4. Allan Gray
- 5. Nedbank

INSURANCE



- 2. Sanlam
- 3. Santam
- 4. Clientele
- 5. Outsurance

LEGAL



- 2. Webber Wentzel
- 3. Werksmans
- 4. ENSAfrica
- 5. Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr (CDH)

LEISURE, TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY



- 2. SANParks
- 3. Sun International
- 4. Marriott
- 5. Tsogo Sun

BROADCASTING & MEDIA



- 2. SABC
- 3. Media24
- 4. Ogilvy
- 5. ENCA

CONSULTING



- 2. PwC
- 3. KPMG
- 4. Ernst & Young
- 5. Accenture

CONSULTING ENGINEERING



- 2. Zutari
- 3. Aecom
- 4. SMEC South Africa
- 5. Aurecon

MINING & MINERALS



- 2. Sibanye-Stillwater
- 3. Exxaro
- 4. Epiroc
- 5. Impala Platinum

PHARMACEUTICAL



- 2. Johnson & Johnson
- 3. Cipla
- 4. Pfizer
- 5. Adcock Ingram

PROPERTY & CONSTRUCTION



- 2. Concor
- 3. Murray & Roberts
- 4. Raubex
- 5. Motheo Construction

ENERGY, CHEMICALS & HEAVY ENGINEERING



- 2. bpSA
- 3. Sappi
- 4. Total
- 5. Engen

FMCG



- 2. Coca-Cola
- 3. Tiger Brands
- 4. Nestle
- 5. ABInBev

HEALTHCARE



- 2. Lancet
- 3. Mediclinic
- 4. Life Hospitals
- 5. Ampath

RETAIL



- 2. Woolworths
- 3. Massmart
- 4. TFG
- 5. Takealot

STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES



- 2. SARB
- 3. Eskom
- 4. SARS
- 5. CSIR

TELECOMMUNICATIONS



- 2. MTN
- 3. Telkom
- 4. Cell C
- 5. Rain

HEALTHCARE INSURANCE



- 2. Momentum Metropolitan
- 3. Liberty
- 4. Hollard
- 5. PPS

ICT



- 2. Amazon
- 3. Accenture
- 4. Microsoft
- 5. Apple

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGIES



- 2. Samsung
- 3. ABB
- 4. Tesla
- 5. Philips

TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS



- 2. Imperial, a DP World Company
- 3. DSV
- 4. Barloworld
- 5. Value Logistics



TOP PREFERRED EMPLOYERS

It is important to note that the students surveyed nominated the companies on the preceding pages as their preferred employers through an entirely unscripted process. The question was open-ended, and not segmented into industries - nor were the students provided with any examples as prompts. Their choices are based on their knowledge of the employment landscape as a whole, and industry segmentation was applied after the survey was complete.

While the top employer nominated by our students to work for remains the government, it is important to note that this category includes all government departments, hospitals, schools and entities not mentioned separately in the list. The top 5 private preferred employers for 2020 were Absa, Deloitte, PwC, Standard Bank and Investec, and in 2021 were Absa, Deloitte, PwC, FNB and Standard Bank. Last year, Absa again netted the top spot, with Deloitte, FNB, DHL and PwC in the remaining positions.

In 2023, we are proud to announce that Absa is once again the top private preferred employer overall, followed by Deloitte and FNB. PwC moves up from fifth place in 2022 to fourth place this year, and Standard Bank returns to the top 5 in fifth place.



Deloitte.



DISCUSSION AND KEY FINDINGS

The survey was first conducted in 2020, during the beginning phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the following year, while less stringent lockdown levels meant greater student mobility, the effects of an ongoing pandemic were still being felt.

In 2023, a number of factors still remain an influence on the results of this survey:

- Although South African employment increased by 5% in Q2 2023, this substantial increase in employment contrasts with weak economic growth due to, amongst other factors, electricity load-shedding and supply chain disruptions.
- Increased focus on physical and mental health
- An ongoing focus on flexibility in working hours and being able to work from home.

Open and free communication between employers and employees was ranked the highest in preferred office culture by students surveyed in 2023, and was also top-ranked as "making or breaking" a student's choice in employer. Year-on-year, students have shown that they value mutual respect, integrity and honesty in their future employers, and that they want to work in a diverse environment where teamwork is promoted.

As in previous years, most students are likely to transfer outside of South Africa if given the opportunity, however, travel remains low in importance - the result of a new world of work where the opportunity now exists to work virtually in almost any country in the world.

Training and learning opportunities are the most preferred benefit students are looking for from an employer, ahead

of benefits such as personal growth and development, and financial insurance including pension fund, medical aid, paid leave, maternity and paternity leave, life/disability insurance, sick leave and UIF. However, these are still highly regarded amongst students, ranking in the top three benefits desired.

Opportunities for promotion, a conducive work environment and the opportunity to make a difference in communities also ranked highly amongst students surveyed in 2023.

The top preferred industry to work in remains finance, followed by public and government, consulting, ICT, and education.

Year-on-year, salary expectations amongst students have remained constant, with most students expecting a monthly salary of between R10 000 and R20 000. The salary expectancy of female students remains lower than that of male students. Interestingly, only 14% of students year-on-year expect a market-related salary, which could be indicative of a lack of understanding of what such a salary would be in real terms.

Most students are very comfortable to work in an area outside of their core background, and survey results over the past four years are consistent in this section.

LinkedIn is the most widely used platform for searching for graduate opportunities, closely followed by university resources. Recruitment and employer websites are also popular sources, as well as social media, career fairs and word of mouth. ■

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