

Identifying the skill gap faced by employers among fresh graduates in the UK

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ABSTRACT

Aim: This research focuses on one of the most persistent issues of the UK employment market: the mismatch of skills between newly graduated individuals and the job market. It was, therefore, the purpose of the study to establish which of the technical and soft skills are specifically lacking in recent graduates and, in so doing, determine the extent to which higher education institutions have prepared students for the necessary skills in industries and, most importantly, compare the expectations of employers to the actual graduates about the required skills.

Method: Employing a qualitative research approach, the study employed interviews with the participants, who included HR managers, recruitment officers and team leaders in the technology, healthcare, engineering and business service industries.

Findings: The key themes emerged through thematic analysis: lack of practical skills, lack of relevance of the curriculum, match between employers' requirements and graduates, difficulties in the recruitment process due to skills gaps, and strategic recommendations to improve graduate employability. The findings have important implications for education curricula to better reflect the industry requirements and for increased collaboration between academia and employers to produce a workforce capable of handling the dynamic nature of today's work environment.

Conclusion: The conclusions of the study contribute to the current discourses on graduate employability and provide feasible solutions to allow for the minimisation of a gap in skills required to meet the operation necessities of modern organisations.

Keywords: Skills, fresh graduates, UK, skill gap, employers.