



POSTGRADUATE EXPERIENCE PROJECT

Understanding today
for a better tomorrow

3 Case Studies

Large Company
Medium Company
Small Company

Large Company

Company profile

- UK owned. Products/services within the UK and internationally
- Commercial organisation in **Digital and creative sector**
- During the past 12 months the number of employees **increased**

Importance of Masters qualification

The higher level of a qualification **DOES NOT** equate with a higher skill base
Having people with a masters qualification is **NOT IMPORTANT**

“Working experience is a priority, not their education”

UNSURE about intentions to employ graduates with masters degrees in the future.

Large Company

Attitudes towards recruitment practices

Would you employ an applicant who has a masters qualification over someone who has an UG degree for a post that only requires an UG qualification? **SOMETIMES**

“Candidates are offered positions and are scored primarily against their ability to do the job - through proven work history. If the position requires an undergrad degree and both candidates are eligible, then they will be ranked based on aptitude and work experience.”

Shortlisting of candidates:

1. Previous work experience
2. Overall quality of the application (e.g. grammar, spelling)
3. Demonstration of technical skills (e.g. lab, measurement)

Work-based experience as part of a qualification (UG or masters) is **IMPORTANT**

Large Company

Company collaboration and engagement with universities

Has your company undertaken any of the following activities with universities?

Currently do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend university careers fairs
Used, but not anymore	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given lectures at a university
Actively planning to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked with university career services to identify candidates
No plans but would like	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offered internships/industrial placements as part of a degree/course• Sponsored/commissioned university research• Participated in knowledge transfer partnerships• Invited to comment on course development• Member of a university industrial advisory board• Supervision of masters' research/dissertations
Never done	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsored university students

Large Company

Company collaboration and engagement with universities

Has your company been offered the opportunity to contribute to the curriculum design/delivery of UG or PG courses by a HE provider? **NO**

How important is it for industry to input into the curriculum design of universities, to keep them up to date and to shape work-ready students? **VERY IMPORTANT**

From your company's perspective, what should be the priorities of HE institutions when educating students in a subject field?

1. **Design and deliver courses that meet industry needs**
2. **Increase students' awareness of labour market opportunities**
3. **Develop personal and social skills they will need in adult life, particularly those related with lifelong skill development**

How are you most likely going to achieve your company's future skills requirements?

1. **Offer your own apprenticeships and train in-house**
2. **Recruit graduates with an undergraduate qualification**
3. **Work with universities to tailor courses for your needs**

Medium Company

Company profile

- UK owned. Products/services within the UK
- Commercial organisation in **Manufacturing sector**
- During the past 12 months the number of employees **decreased**

Importance of Masters qualification

The higher level of a qualification **DOES** equate with a higher skill base

- **Subject-specific specialist knowledge**
- **High-quality research/technical skills**
- **High-level analytical thinking/problem-solving skills**
- **Workplace professionalism**
- **New ideas, help to innovate**

Having people with a masters qualification is **ESSENTIAL**

“To ensure the key people have required skills and are keen on continuous development”

INTENDS to employ graduates with masters degrees in the future: Engineering, Technology areas

Medium Company

Attitudes towards recruitment practices

Would you employ an applicant who has a masters qualification over someone who has an UG degree for a post that only requires an UG qualification? **SOMETIMES**

Shortlisting of candidates:

1. **Previous work experience**
2. **Their qualification level**
3. **Enthusiasm**

Work-based experience as part of a qualification (UG or masters) is **IMPORTANT**

Common issues as an employer who employed Masters qualified graduates:

- **Knowledge too narrow focused or over-specialised**
- **Knowledge too wide**
- **Unrealistic expectations of role in the company**
- **Difficulty adapting from an academic to non-academic environment**
- **Company's difficulties competing for the best students with larger employers**

Medium Company

Company collaboration and engagement with universities

Has your company undertaken any of the following activities with universities?

Currently do	
Used, but not anymore	
Actively planning to do	
No plans but would like	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offered internships/industrial placements as part of a degree/course• Attend university careers fairs• Worked with university career services to identify candidates
Never done	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsored university students• Sponsored/commissioned university research• Participated in knowledge transfer partnerships• Invited to comment on course development• Member of a university industrial advisory board• Supervision of masters' research/dissertations• Given lectures at a university

Medium Company

Company collaboration and engagement with universities

Has your company been offered the opportunity to contribute to the curriculum design/delivery of UG or PG courses by a HE provider? **NO**

How important is it for industry to input into the curriculum design of universities, to keep them up to date and to shape work-ready students? **VERY IMPORTANT**

From your company's perspective, what should be the priorities of HE institutions when educating students in a subject field?

1. **Ensure that programmes contain both theory and applied knowledge**
2. **Design and deliver courses that meet industry needs**
3. **Increase students' awareness of labour market opportunities**

How are you most likely going to achieve your company's future skills requirements?

1. **Offer your own apprenticeships and train in-house**
2. **Recruit graduates with an undergraduate qualification**
3. **More emphasis on training own staff**

Small Company

Company profile

- UK owned. Products/services within the UK and internationally
- Commercial organisation in **Digital and creative sector**
- During the past 12 months the number of employees **broadly remained the same**

Importance of Masters qualification

The higher level of a qualification **DOES** equate with a higher skill base

- **Subject-specific specialist knowledge**
- **High-quality research/technical skills**
- **High-level analytical thinking/problem-solving skills**
- **Guaranteed high-calibre candidates**
- **Future leadership potential**

Having people with a masters qualification is **NOT IMPORTANT**

“Creativity is key for most roles (only 2 senior managers, including me, have MAs)”

INTENDS to employ graduates with masters degrees in the future: Business, administration and marketing; Technology; Computer Sciences; Creative arts and design; History or English

Small Company

Attitudes towards recruitment practices

Would you employ an applicant who has a masters qualification over someone who has an UG degree for a post that only requires an UG qualification? **SOMETIMES**

“(...)creativity and talent are the most important aspects for us and we look at showreels and the personality of the candidates as much as qualifications”

Shortlisting of candidates:

1. Previous work experience
2. Their qualification level
3. Overall quality of the application (e.g. grammar, spelling)

Work-based experience as part of a qualification (UG or masters) is **VERY IMPORTANT**

Small Company

Company collaboration and engagement with universities

Has your company undertaken any of the following activities with universities?

Currently do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offered internships/industrial placements as part of a degree/course• Worked with university career services to identify candidates
Used, but not anymore	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given lectures at a university
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No plans but would like	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invited to comment on course development• Member of a university industrial advisory board• Supervision of masters' research/dissertations
Never done	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsored university students• Attend university careers fairs• Sponsored/commissioned university research• Participated in knowledge transfer partnerships

Small Company

Company collaboration and engagement with universities

Has your company been offered the opportunity to contribute to the curriculum design/delivery of UG or PG courses by a HE provider? **NO**

How important is it for industry to input into the curriculum design of universities, to keep them up to date and to shape work-ready students? **VERY IMPORTANT**

From your company's perspective, what should be the priorities of HE institutions when educating students in a subject field?

1. **Design and deliver courses that meet industry needs**
2. **Ensure that programmes contain both theory and applied knowledge**
3. **Engage students in company-related projects**

How are you most likely going to achieve your company's future skills requirements?

1. **More emphasis on training own staff**
2. **Recruit graduates with an undergraduate qualification**
3. **Offer your own apprenticeships and train in-house**

Case studies: key common findings

- **Shortlisting criteria**
 1. **Previous work experience**
- **Work-based experience as part of a qualification** (UG or masters) is **IMPORTANT** or **VERY IMPORTANT**
- How important is it for **industry to input into the curriculum design of universities**, to keep them up to date and to shape work-ready students? **VERY IMPORTANT**
- From your company's perspective, what should be the priorities of HE institutions when educating students in a subject field?
 1. **Design and deliver courses that meet industry needs**
- How are you most likely going to achieve your company's future skills requirements?
 - **Offer your own apprenticeships and train in-house**
 - **Recruit graduates with an undergraduate qualification**