

Press release: 25 March 2020

Firms cut opportunities for school leavers and graduates – Institute of Student Employers

Firms have scaled-down their recruitment of entry-level staff as they take steps to adjust for coronavirus.

Institute of Student Employers (ISE), which represents some of the [UK's largest employers](#), found that more than a quarter (27%) of businesses are reducing the number of graduates they recruit this year and 23% will cut apprenticeship and school leaver programmes.

Short-term work such as internships and placements will also be reduced by almost a third (31%) of businesses and 68% have cancelled work experience and taster opportunities.

While some firms are moving employability initiatives such as mock assessments, enterprise competitions and talks online, the majority have cancelled them.

One of the strongest patterns that emerges from the [ISE survey](#), which asked how coronavirus is affecting how employers recruit and develop entry-level talent, is of uncertainty. Around a third of firms are still undecided about their hiring plans.

However, around a third of firms also plan to continue with their recruitment plans, adopting their processes by shifting interviews (71%) and assessments (60%) online.

Stephen Isherwood, ISE Chief Executive said: "At the start of the year firms reported [entry-level recruitment to be stagnant](#). We should expect that although many are still working out how to adjust to coronavirus, the number of entry-level jobs will be less than last year.

"Thousands of young people are supposed to be entering the labour market from July and they could be left without work and nothing to do while coronavirus is sorted out.

"The future success of the country and its businesses is bound up with the skills and talents of young people. We need to make sure that a whole generation isn't lost. We need support for those about to transition from education to work.

"They will be disadvantaged, not only by entering a competitive jobs market, but also by having their chance of work experience cut. Those who are lucky to have already secured a job may also find their offer reneged or deferred.

"Students shouldn't assume that all recruitment will stop. Don't panic, there will be jobs and there are things that you can do. Stay active in your job hunt, work on your career choices and be flexible. If you have a job offer, make regular contact with your employer as they may be switching to virtual processes."

Ends

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Notes to editors

Institute of Student Employers

The Institute of Student Employers (ISE), [formerly the Association of Graduate Recruiters \(AGR\)](#), is an independent, not-for-profit member organisation that was established in 1968. As the UK's leading independent voice for student employers, ISE's vision is that every business's success is maximised by full access to student talent. ISE achieves this by bringing together employers, the education sector and supplier partners, providing leadership and support in all aspects of student recruitment and development. ISE activities include:

- Promoting excellence and innovation in the resourcing, assessment and development of emerging talent including school leavers, apprentices and graduates
- Providing expert information and insight to ISE member organisations, creating engaged communities for professional networking and sharing of best practice
- Delivering comprehensive research on a range of issues affecting graduate, intern and apprenticeship recruitment and development, including current and future trends and benchmarking data
- Investing in the professional development of members to enhance their skills and knowledge, maximising their career opportunities within the profession
- Influencing key policy areas affecting student employment and the education sector
- Building a strong professional organisation with the right structure and team capabilities to deliver the services and support members require to fulfil their objectives

For further information:

- www.ise.org.uk
- Follow us @IoSEorg
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