



STUDENTS'
CHOICE
REPORT



Employment
Choices
OF TERTIARY-LEVEL
STUDENTS

2021



fueled by

passion and
ambition?



Imagine playing a role in creating a better world.

At bp South Africa, we're looking for the next generation of talented, skilled minds to take on some of the world's most complex challenges. We're dedicated to creating opportunities where people from diverse backgrounds can thrive; making a positive impact on the people and communities they serve.

If you're fueled by passion and ambition; you're the type of person we're looking for. **Scan the QR code**, reach out to our team via email: earlycareers@bp.com, or visit bp careers website at www.bp.com/careers.



 [linkedin.com/company/bp/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/bp/)

EMPLOYMENT CHOICES OF TERTIARY-LEVEL STUDENTS

Foreword

bp is delighted to be supporting the second annual Students' Choice Awards, an important initiative that ranks the best organisations to work for, based entirely on university students' opinions. The awards are the culmination of a year's research into the employment choices of tertiary level students - providing insightful data that enables organisations to benchmark their employer brand and reinvent their strategies to foster a positive work environment.

The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have forced organisations to rethink and reshape their businesses. As we navigate the uncertainty brought on by the pandemic and the resulting organisational changes such as remote working, rising mental health issues and accelerated digitization, organisations clearly need to raise the bar for culture excellence and employee value propositions to meet employee needs in order to retain and attract top talent.

The research contained in the pages that follow is relevant to any organisation wishing to build a strong talent pipeline, ensuring that from as early as graduate-level, employees are understood, and that what drives them forms part of Employee Value Proposition programmes going forward.

Not only does this research show who graduates want to work for when they leave tertiary education, but it shares valuable insights into how students perceive potential employment environments - whether a culture will be a good fit, what benefits they most value, and what the likelihood is that they would travel for work, to name a few.

At bp, we are very aware that starting a career might be a daunting experience, and that graduates are often not exposed to opportunities that are readily available to help kick-start their careers. Prospective employers can use the information contained in this report to ensure that their recruitment and EVP programmes



Taelo Mojapelo
CEO – bp Southern Africa

are more tailored to suit employing graduates, and to help them introduce their brands to this dynamic young group within the workforce.

For example, at bp, we're on an exciting, challenging, and transformative journey to net zero and to be a new kind of energy company. As we head there, we continue to work as one global workforce with all employees playing a role. From the people who chart our course to those who put our plans into action, bp is an exciting place to be for anyone who wants to take part in leading the global energy transition. Through our best-in-class early careers programme, we offer opportunities in a wide range of disciplines that will help develop future career paths for graduates.

As you read the research, I would encourage you to take a look at your own graduate recruitment, development and retention strategies, and delve into the areas shown by this report to be of value to these candidates. They are our future leaders, and if we nurture them now, we will see the fruits of our labour multiply in years to come.



STUDENTS' CHOICE REPORT

A survey to determine the view of tertiary-level students from South African institutions on their employment choices.

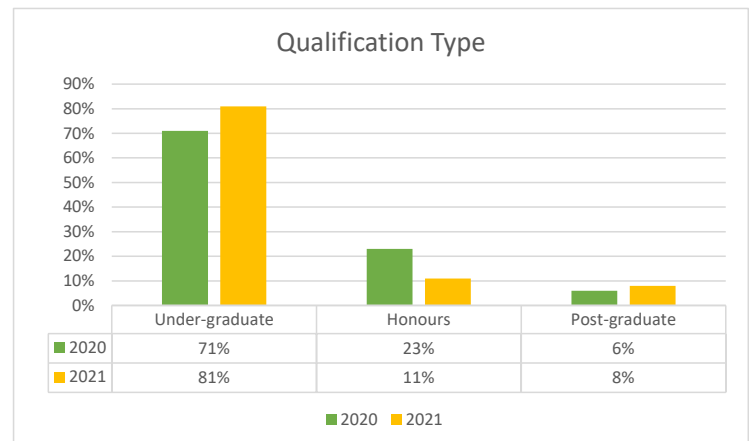
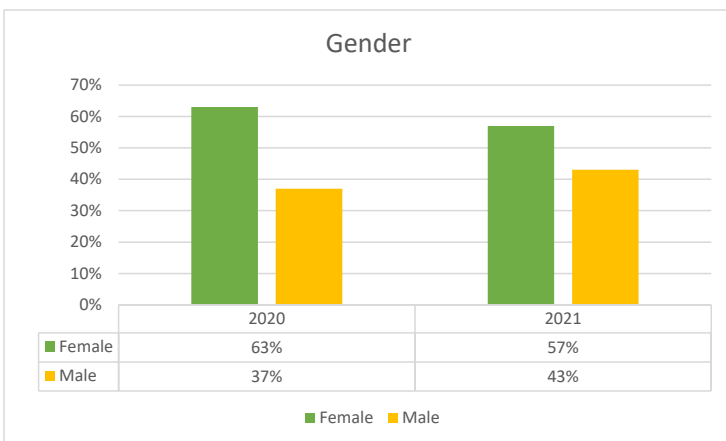
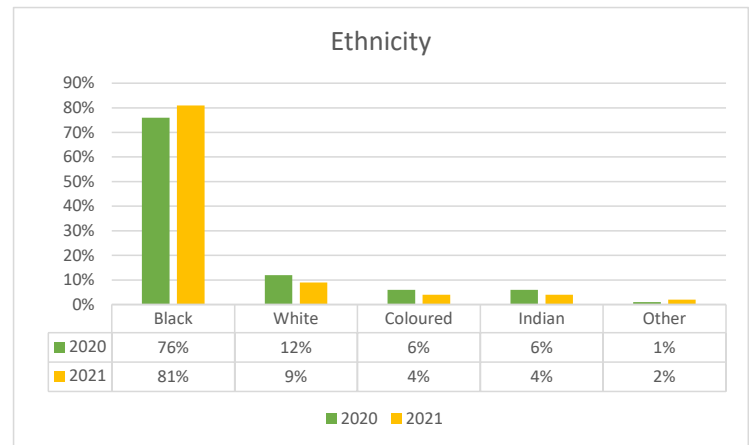
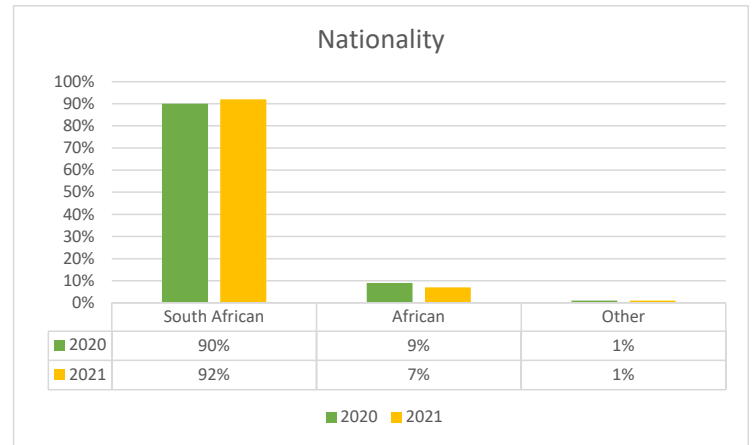
The goal of the survey is to better understand how students perceive potential employment environments, and to provide future employers with some insight into how students think and see themselves, as well as the kinds of cultures they believe will be a good fit, when stepping out into the employment market. The survey was first conducted in 2020, and as the survey progresses annually, possible future trends will be able to be identified. The survey was sponsored by bp Southern Africa.

The report aims to understand the following:

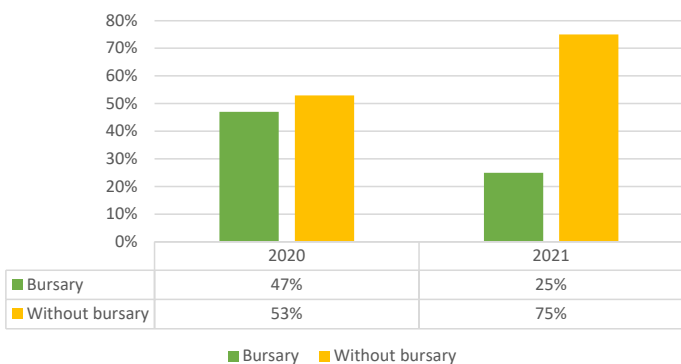
- The preferred office culture of students
- The likelihood of students to transfer out of South Africa
- The importance of travel
- Most-valued employee benefits
- Preferred industry to work in
- Salary expectations
- Level of comfort working outside core background
- Top preferred employers

Student Sample

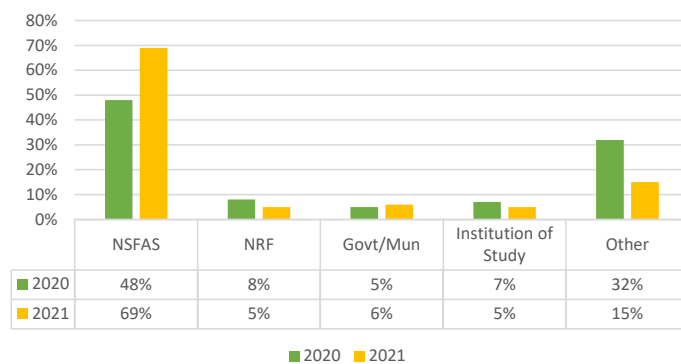
A web-based survey was used, which was completed as and when students registered to enter the GradStar Awards 2021. A total of 2 820 students were surveyed between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021.



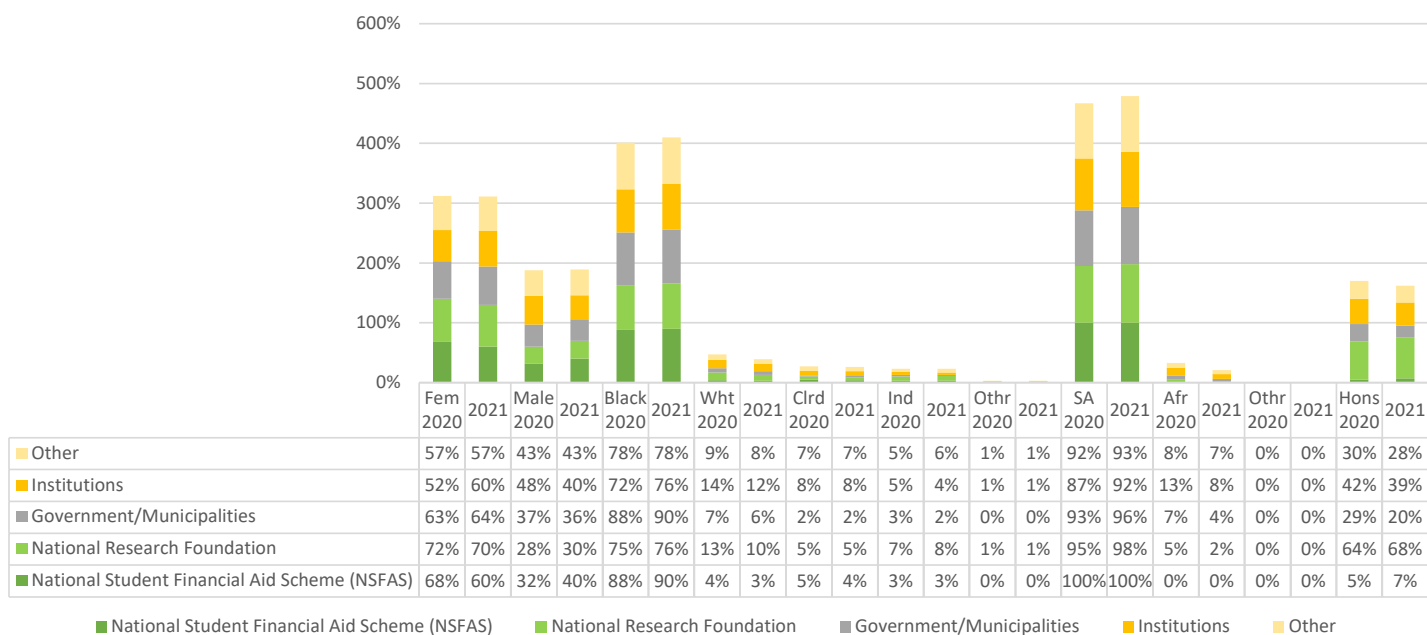
Bursary Details



Funding of University Studies



Bursary Details by Demographic



Question 1:

What sort of office culture appeals to you?

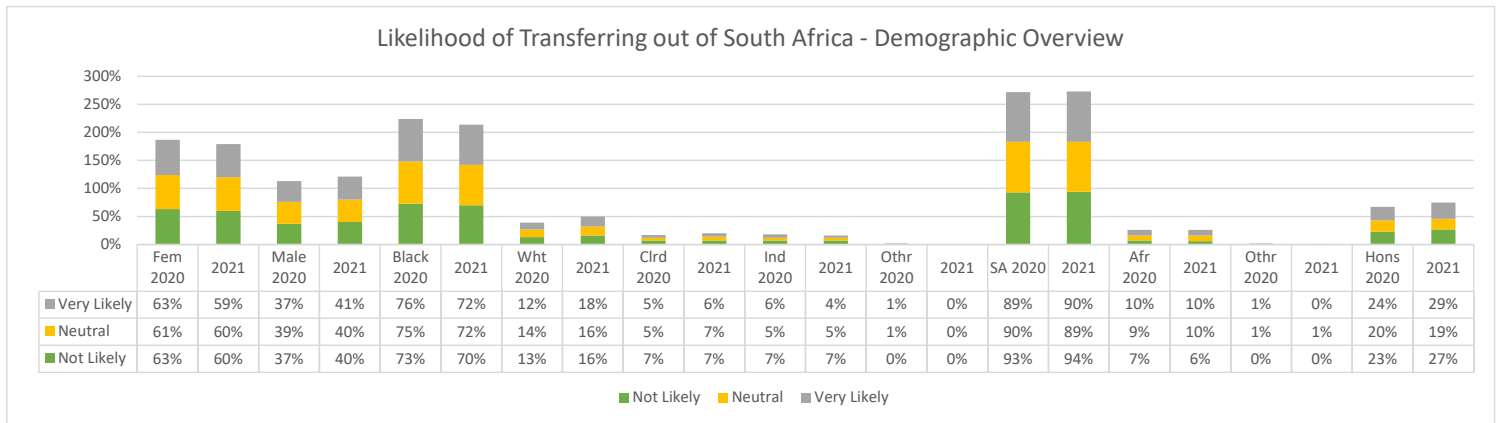
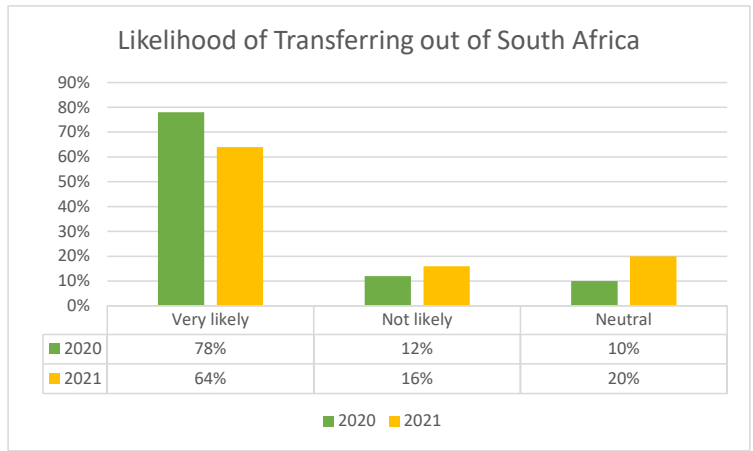
Most students prefer an environment with open and free communication between employers and employees; a casual and relaxed environment where teamwork is encouraged, and where respect and friendliness to peers and clients are key.

- 1. Flexibility is allowed
- 2. Open and free communication between employers and employees
- 3. Respectful
- 4. Innovative
- 5. Diverse
- 6. Teamwork is promoted
- 7. Casual and relaxed
- 8. Friendly
- 9. Growth mindset
- 10. Fun
- 11. Integrity is key
- 12. Non-discriminative
- 13. Clan office culture
- 14. Transparent
- 15. Positive
- 16. Mentoring
- 17. Culture of Working Hard
- 18. Formal
- 19. Professional
- 20. Adhocracy

Additional office culture elements included family friendly, productive, competitive and entrepreneurial. Loyalty and trust were also mentioned, as was promoting healthy living.

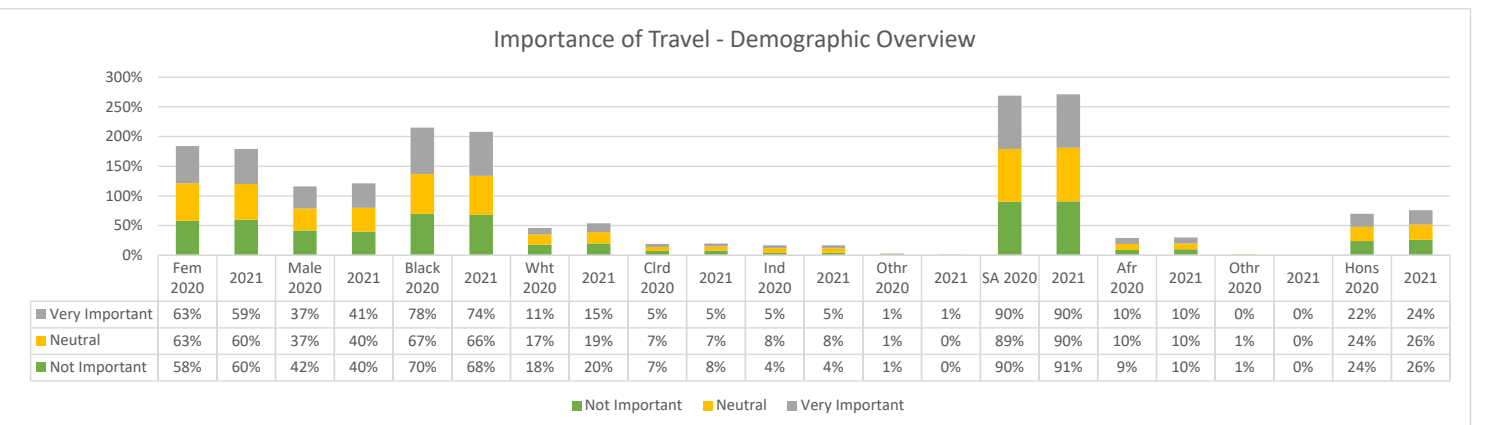
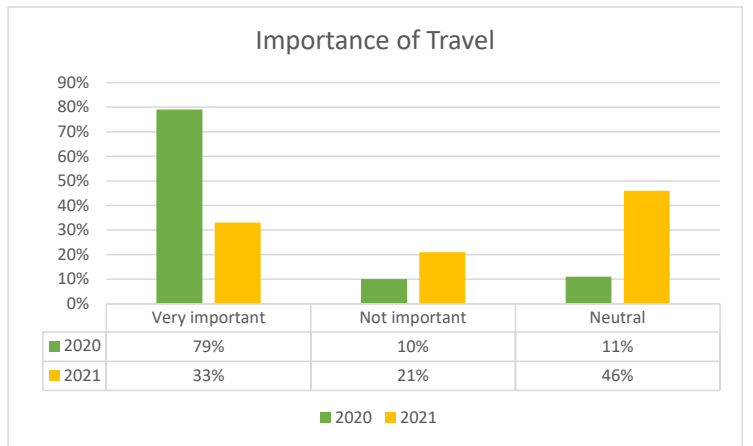
Question 2:

If you are employed by a global firm, what is the likelihood that you would look to transferring out of South Africa?



Question 3:

How important is travel to you?



Question 4:**What benefits do you most value in an employer?**

1. Pension fund, medical aid, paid leave, maternity/ paternity, life/disability insurance, sick leave, UIF
2. Flexible work hours
3. Work from home
4. Competitive salary
5. Wellness programs
6. Job security
7. Training & learning opportunities
8. Housing allowance
9. Exposure to other positions
10. Personal growth and development
11. Community engagement and making a difference in the community
12. Conducive work environment
13. Opportunities to be promoted or grow in the company
14. Mentorship
15. Recognition programs
16. Car, fuel or travelling allowance
17. Travelling
18. Additional paid family leave
19. Safety and security (environment)
20. Performance or birthday bonuses

Additional preferred benefits: tuition reimbursement, exposure to international opportunities, stability, study leave, empowerment, available resources such as laptops, internet etc, phone allowance, savings and investment opportunities within the company, food provision, 13th cheque, company stocks/share options, relocation allowance, family bursaries, company credit card, internet for personal use, funeral cover, childcare assistance.

Question 5:**What will make or break your choice in an employer?**

1. An organisation culture and management style where employees are supported and cared for, opposed to an environment where employees are exploited and treated unfairly
2. Growth potential within the company, including skills development and training provided, as well as opportunities for promotion
3. Flexibility in working hours and being able to work from home
4. A diverse non-discriminative environment
5. Open communication
6. Mutual respect
7. Competitive remuneration, rewards and recognition structure
8. The company values, mission, vision and reputation
9. The company's outlook on innovation and change
10. Employee benefits
11. Demographic location
12. Job security
13. Physical work conditions including promotion of health and wellness and working hours
14. Availability of mentorship
15. The company's social and environmental responsibility

Question 6:**What is your preferred industry?**

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

Question 7:**Where do you find most of your information about graduate opportunities?**

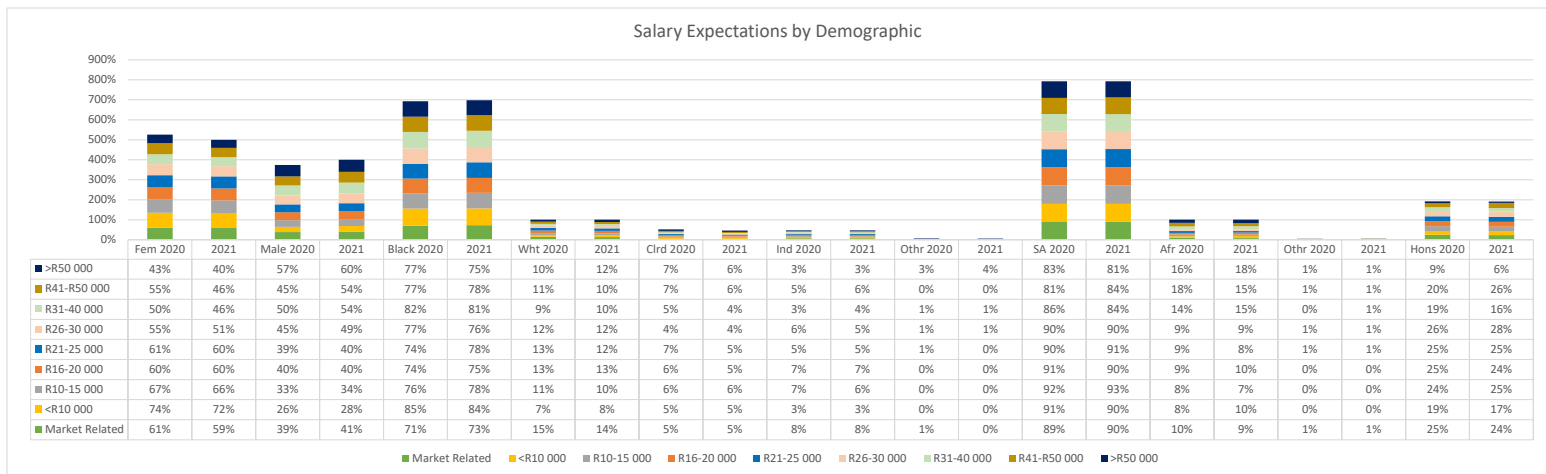
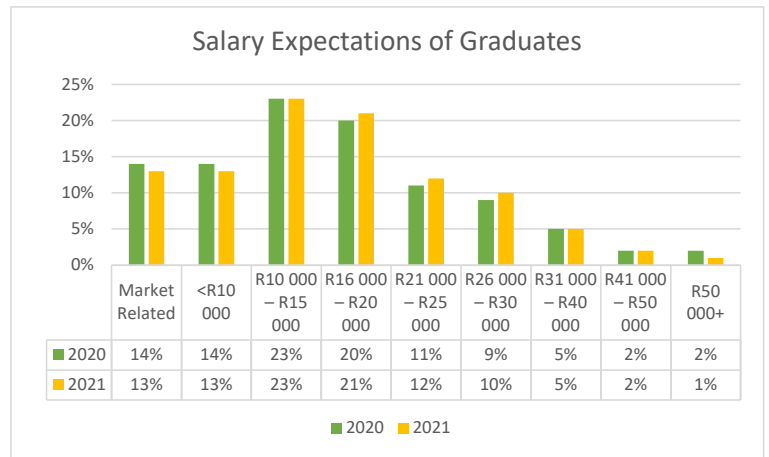
1. University career services, mailing lists, notice boards and lecturers
2. LinkedIn
3. Recruitment websites
4. Employer websites
5. Career fairs
6. Word of mouth/family and friends
7. Facebook
8. Other (newspapers, professional associations, etc)
9. University websites
10. Google notifications
11.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

Question 8:

What salary expectation do you have as a graduate?

Data gathered from 2020 and 2021 respondents generated similar results:

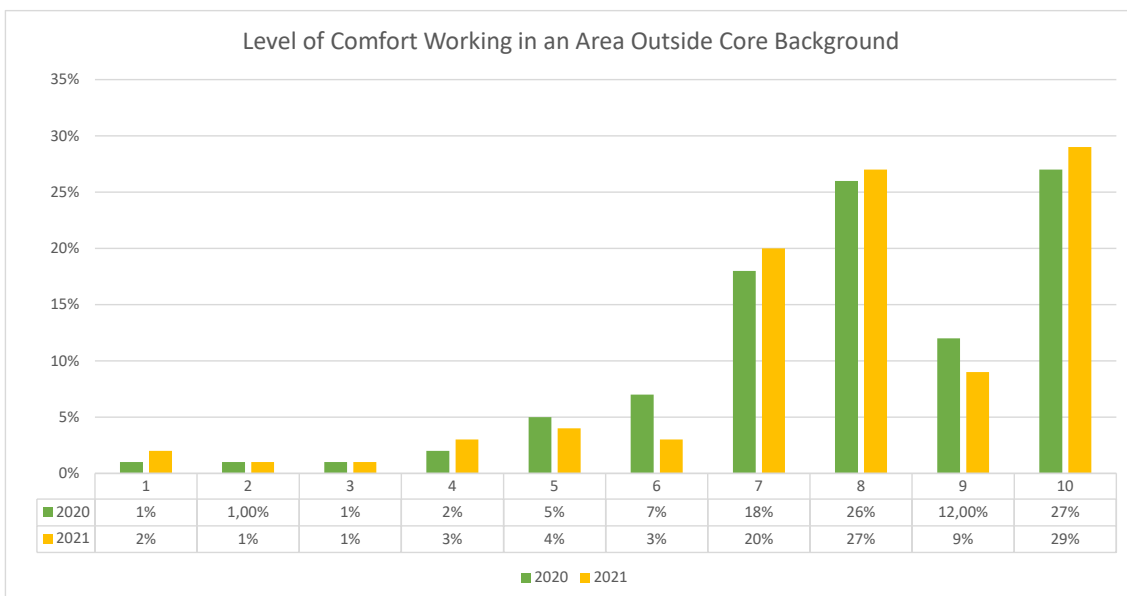
- Most students expect a monthly salary of between R10 000 and R15 000.
- The salary expectancy of female students is notably lower than that of male students, where most female students expect a salary of less than R10 000 per month.
- Students in the rest of Africa expect a higher salary than South African students.
- Honours students expect a salary of between R16 000 and R30 000 per month.



Question 9:

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 (see figure below, where 10 is most comfortable, and 1 is least comfortable):



Question 10:

Please list, 1 – 5, the top 5 employers you would like to work for you when you graduate.

Top 5 preferred employers by industry:

AUTOMOTIVE



Mercedes-Benz

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

BANKING & FINANCIAL SERVICES



2. FNB
3. Standard Bank
4. Allan Grey
5. Investec

BROADCASTING & MEDIA



2. SABC
3. Media24
4. Joe Public
5. Boomtown Strategic Brand Agency

ENERGY, CHEMICALS & HEAVY ENGINEERING



2. BP
3. Shell
4. Engen
5. Sappi

EDUCATION

1. Universities & Colleges
2. Schools other than Government
3. Pearson Institute

ELECTRONICS



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

FMCG



2. Coca-Cola
3. Tiger Brands
4. P&G
5. Nestle

HEALTHCARE



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

HEALTHCARE INSURANCE



2. Metropolitan/Momentum
3. Liberty
4. Bonitas
5. PPS

INSURANCE



2. Old Mutual
3. Sanlam
4. Metropolitan/Momentum
5. Liberty

ICT



2. Google
3. Amazon
4. Microsoft
5. Huawei

LEISURE, TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY



2. Marriott
3. Tsogo Sun
4. Sun International
5. Flight Centre

Question 10 (continued):

Please list, 1 – 5, the top 5 employers you would like to work for you when you graduate.

Top 5 preferred employers by industry:

MINING & MINERALS



- 2. Exxaro
- 3. Epiroc
- 4. Impala Platinum
- 5. Glencore

PHARMACEUTICAL



- 2. Johnson & Johnson
- 3. Pfizer
- 4. Cipla
- 5. Parexel

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



- 2. Dalitso Holdings
- 3. Future Fit Academy
- 4. PsySSA
- 5. Kontak Recruitment

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: ACCOUNTING & AUDITING



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

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: CONSULTANCY



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

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: CONSULTING ENGINEERING



- 2. Aurecon
- 3. Zutari
- 4. AECOM
- 5. SRK Consulting

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: LEGAL



- 2. Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr
- 3. ENSAfrica
- 4. Webber Wentzel (in alliance with Linklaters)
- 5. Werksmans

PROPERTY & CONSTRUCTION



- 2. Concor
- 3. GVK Siyazama
- 4. Motheo Construction
- 5. Group 5

RETAIL



- 2. Woolworths
- 3. Takealot
- 4. Pick n Pay
- 5. Massmart

STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES



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

TELECOMMUNICATIONS



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

TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS



- 2. Transnet
- 3. Imperial
- 4. DSV
- 5. Barloworld

Top OVERALL 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 are Absa, Deloitte, PwC, FNB and Standard Bank.



Deloitte.



FNB



Standard Bank

DISCUSSION AND KEY FINDINGS

The 2020 survey was conducted during the beginning phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, and while the 2021 survey was conducted during less stringent lockdown levels, the effects of an ongoing pandemic are clearly still being felt. The following factors remain an influence on the results of this survey:

- The continued downturn experienced by the South African economy
- Increased economic uncertainty
- Increase in unemployment
- Students completing studies at home
- A new requirement for working from home
- Increased focus on physical and mental health
- Increased focus on family
- Increased online activity

It is notable that working from home and flexibility in working hours and conditions have risen in the ranking of influencers chosen by the students regarding their choice of employer. However, a supportive organisational culture and management style where employees are valued and cared for remains a top priority.

Both the 2020 and 2021 survey results show that students prefer a more informal office culture. They want open and free communication between themselves and the rest of the organisation, and an innovative, respectful and diverse environment where teamwork is promoted.

Most students are likely to transfer outside of South Africa if given the opportunity, however, travel is not as important to 2021 survey respondents as it was to those who responded in 2020 – the majority of 2021 respondents are neutral. This is likely due to decreased

travel in general, due to the pandemic, and the opportunity to work virtually in almost any country in the world.

General benefits such as pension fund, medical aid, paid leave, maternity and paternity leave, life/disability insurance, sick leave and UIF are highly regarded amongst the students. Flexibility and the ability to work from home now rank higher than before, and a competitive salary, wellness programmes and job security are highly valued. Notably, the importance of travelling as a benefit has dropped.

The top preferred industry to work in remains finance, followed by information and communication technology, human resources and management, public and government, education and healthcare.

Similar to 2020, the salary expectancy of female students in 2021 is notably lower than that of male students, where most female students expect a salary of smaller than R10 000 per month. Students in the rest of Africa have notably higher salary expectations than South African students, and honours students' expect between R16 000 and R30 000 per month. The results for 2021 follow a very similar demographic trend as those of 2020.

Most students are very comfortable to work in an area outside of their core background, and 2021 survey results are similar to 2020 for this section.

Most students find information about graduate opportunities through university career services, notice boards and lecturers. Other platforms used include LinkedIn, recruitment and employer websites, career fairs and social media, as well as word of mouth.



STUDENTS' **CHOICE** **REPORT**

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