



# EMPOWERING GRADUATE WOMEN

Understanding the career concerns of  
today's graduate women

graduatejobs.com

# Introduction

We are excited to be focusing on our graduate-women offering this year, seeking to understand the current issues women face as they enter the workplace. Our goal is to shape our platform into one that educates and empowers women. Additionally, we aim to offer enhanced support for employers, enabling them to effectively engage and communicate with female talent.

Our research indicates that sexual harassment ranks as the foremost concern for women in the workplace, followed closely by a lack of leadership opportunities and pregnancy discrimination. Whilst this may not be surprising, it underscores the ongoing importance for companies to address these issues when hiring the next generation of talent. How effective are your current diversity initiatives, and what additional steps could be taken to tackle these challenges? This is the crucial question that employers must confront.

**Please read on as we share our latest insights revealing:**

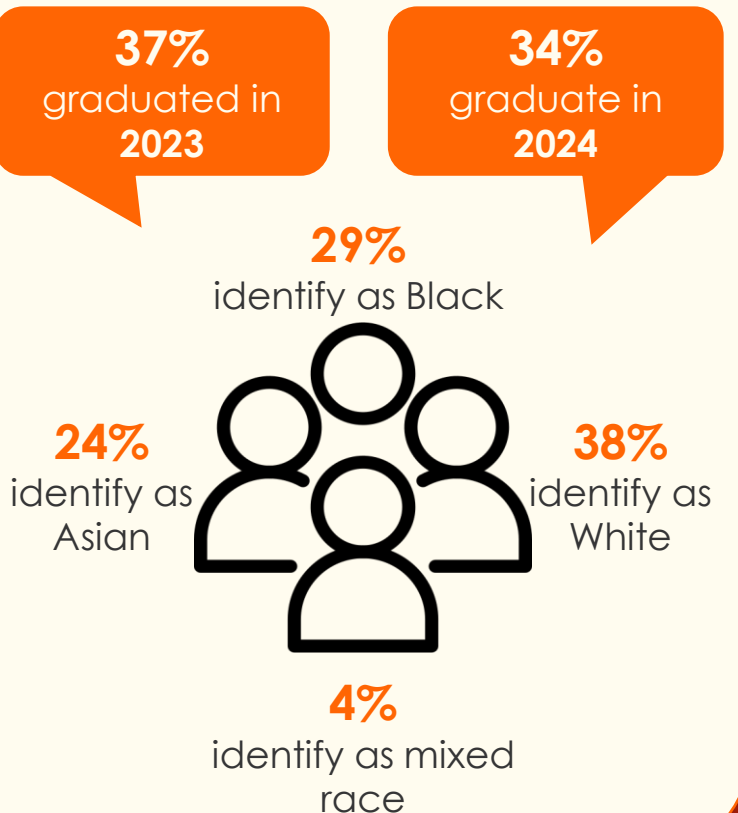
- **What women are looking for from their future careers**
- **How important diversity, equity and inclusion is**
- **The main concerns surrounding gender in the workplace.**

**Georgie Day**  
Head of Marketing  
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## Survey demographics:

**300** female student and graduate respondents



# Industry hesitations for women

## Top 5 Sectors women are looking to enter:

- 1 Computing and IT (11%)
- 2 Science and Technology (8%)
- 3 Finance (6%)
- 4 Health (6%)
- 5 Human Resources (5%)

VS.

## When asked what industries they would be concerned entering due to their gender:

- 1 Construction (44%)
- 2 Engineering (32%)
- 3 Computing and IT (28%)
- 4 Finance (26%)
- 5 Banking (26%)

## What women value when planning their future careers:

The following reveals our respondents' top priorities in job search and applications. While salary ranked highest, work-life balance closely followed, emphasising the importance of employers being realistic and empathetic to employee needs.

MOST IMPORTANT

- 1 SALARY
- 2 WORKLIFE BALANCE
- 3 COMPANY REPUTATION
- 4 FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS
- 5 COMPANY BENEFITS

## How important are Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives?

We wanted to explore whether women are taking a company's diversity practices into consideration when applying for jobs.

**72%** shared they actively look at a company's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives before applying for a job, and whilst **17%** currently don't, they aim to do so moving forwards.

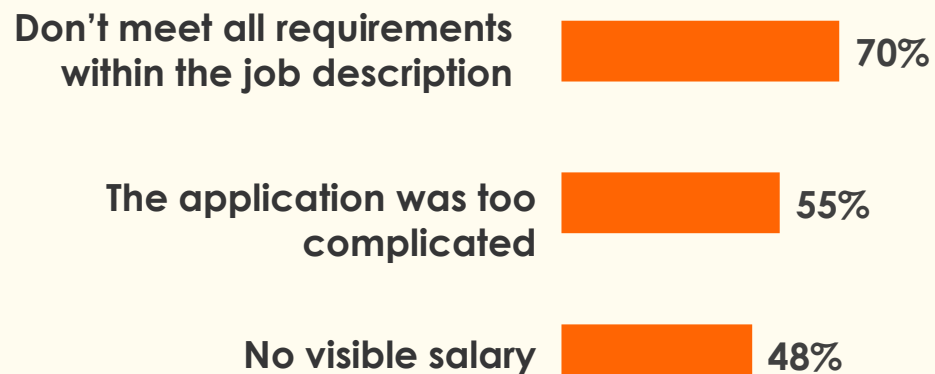
When it comes to what they are looking for from employers, Over **66%** want companies to offer Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training for employees alongside mentorship programmes. And **42%** are keen for employers to build employee resource groups.



# Unlocking career apprehensions:

Recognising general career concerns that don't relate to gender is important as it helps employers to understand how they can better attract and adapt application processes. The graph below highlights the ongoing concern that women feel they need to meet all the requirements within a job description to apply for a job, as well as them sharing that applications are simply too complicated at times, emphasising a need to simplify processes.

## What puts them off applying for a job:



## Main concerns surrounding future careers:



# Concerns for women in the workplace

Worry about **sexual harassment** in the workplace.

72%

Worry they will not get the same **leadership opportunities**.

71%

Worry about **pregnancy discrimination** in the workplace.

70%

Worry that they will not **receive fair pay**.

70%

Worry they won't have the same **development prospects**.

69%

Worry **talking about periods** in the workplace.

61%

*"Men are allowed to express their opinions, but when I do so, I am "unprofessional", "emotional" or "rude", etc.*



*"Career progression for men is more advanced. Men in these spaces tend to be patronising to women.*



*"Discrimination is real in practice. But not all companies are ready to have that conversation.*



# Key takeaways and tips

After conducting our research, we met with employers and agencies to understand how companies can improve the workplace for women. And here were our top takeaways:

While significant strides have been made to encourage women to pursue careers in industries they may not have considered before, our research highlights ongoing hesitations in entering fields such as Construction, Engineering, and Computing IT. Employers could address this by creating candid 'day-in-the-life' content to dispel misconceptions, while also fostering transparent communication channels for candidates to express and discuss their concerns openly.

A considerable number of women are eager to understand how employers are improving diversity in the workplace. Employers should ensure that this information is readily available to candidates, accompanied by examples illustrating the success of diversity initiatives to ensure credibility.

Previous research indicates that women are less likely than their male counterparts to apply for jobs if they don't meet all the listed requirements. With seven out of ten women expressing this concern, it's crucial for employers to reconsider how they present job requirements to clarify essential qualifications versus desirable ones. Employers should also recognise that many skills can be acquired on the job and that entry-level positions should not request years of prior experience.

Gender-related worries persist among women, with nearly three-quarters expressing concerns about sexual harassment in the workplace, and seven out of ten worried about leadership opportunities and equitable pay compared to their male peers. This shows the ongoing need for employers to address these apprehensions. Employers should actively highlight their efforts to promote gender equality, ensuring accessibility to information that includes tangible examples of their initiatives.



Have questions about our research or want to find out how  
you can engage with graduate women?

**Get in touch today, [campaigns@graduate-jobs.com](mailto:campaigns@graduate-jobs.com)**