**Social Science Overview**

**Written by Janice Montgomery**

The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Survey 2013-14 indicates that one in seven graduates studied social sciences. This group of graduates enjoyed higher levels of employment than last year by an average of 2.4 percentage points across all the subjects and also experienced lower levels of unemployment six months after graduation. Social scientists are valued for their ability to: understand complex issues holistically; research, analyse and evaluate data; communicate concisely and solve problems.1

**Economics**

Roles in business, human resources, finance, marketing and sales were popular with this subject cluster, due to the need for the skills that social scientists possess. 64.0% of employed economics graduates were known to be working in these fields.

**Law**

The greatest number of graduates entering legal-related positions unsurprisingly came from law. Six months after graduation these positions were not as lawyers because a postgraduate qualification is required, but rather as paralegals, contracts managers, legal secretaries, legal researchers, Citizens Advice Bureau advisers and police officers.

**Politics**

Business-related positions were also popular with politics graduates, who took up trainee positions in banking and accountancy; as well as assistants to members of parliament, researchers for political consultancies and think-tanks, campaign organisers and parliamentary assistants for pressure groups.

**Psychology**

Of the 15.7% of psychology graduates that went on to further study, the majority (over 60%) opted for masters in psychology specialisms or mental health. Those wishing to become full-time clinical psychologists are encouraged to acquire experience in a related field. This may account for the large number of psychology graduates in work (63.8%).

**Geography**

Geography graduates enjoyed high levels of employment in 2013-14 with only 5.8% unemployed six months after graduation. This cohort was most likely to work in business and marketing-related professions. Employment routes for geographers also include environment and sustainability careers and in the oil and gas industries or town planning.

**Sociology**

75.2% of sociology graduates were in employment six months after graduation. While 14.9% entered business-related and marketing professions, 25.9% pursued jobs in the social, welfare, education and childcare professions.

**Salaries**

The majority of social science graduates were earning between £16,000 and £24,000 per annum. The best paid were likely to be working in the finance sector, where average salaries with the top firms were in excess of £36,000.2 Those working for charities, in the care sector, or in supportive roles in education were likely to earn less, although these roles could, in the long-run, lead to highly professional positions such as teachers, psychologists or environmental consultants.

**References**


**Resources**

Royal Economic Society – www.res.org.uk
The Law Society of Scotland – www.lawscot.org.uk
Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) – www.rgs.org
British Sociological Association – www.britisoc.co.uk
The British Psychological Society – www.bps.org.uk
AGCAS Options series – www.prospects.ac.uk/options_with_your_subject.htm

**Table 1. Destinations of First Degree Social Science Graduates from 2013/14, Six Months After Graduation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Numbers Graduating (Survey Respondents)</th>
<th>In Employment</th>
<th>In Further Study</th>
<th>Working &amp; Studying</th>
<th>Unemployed (Including Those Due to Start Work)</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>4,805</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>2,355</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>9,975</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>11,455</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>6,340</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>4,690</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Subjects</td>
<td>267,735</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data taken from HESA’s Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey 2013/14.
OUTCOMES SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION

- Working full-time in the UK: 56.7%
- In further study, training or research: 13.3%
- Working and studying: 8.0%
- Unemployed, including those due to start work: 7.7%
- Working part-time in the UK: 6.4%
- Other: 5.6%
- Working overseas: 2.2%

TYPE OF COURSE FOR THOSE IN FURTHER STUDY
- Masters (e.g., MA, MSc): 79.3%
- Doctorate (e.g., PhD, DPhil, MPhil): 4.7%
- Other study, training or research: 4.2%
- Professional qualification: 3.3%
- Other postgraduate diplomas: 3.2%
- Total number of graduates in further study: 640

EXAMPLES OF COURSES STUDIED
- MSc Accounting
- MSc Economics
- MSc Petroleum, Energy, Economics and Finance
- MSc Public Administration
- MSc Computational Statistics
- Professional accountancy exams

TYPE OF WORK FOR THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT

- Business, HR and finance professionals: 54.3%
- Marketing, PR and sales professionals: 9.8%
- Clerical, secretarial and numerical clerk occupations: 8.4%
- Retail, catering, waiting and bar staff: 7.3%
- Managers: 5.5%
- Other occupations: 4.2%
- Information technology (IT) professionals: 2.7%
- Other professionals, associate professionals and technicians: 2.7%
- Education professionals: 1.7%
- Legal, social and welfare professionals: 1.0%
- Arts, design and media professionals: 0.8%
- Engineering and building professionals: 0.7%
- Childcare, health and education occupations: 0.6%
- Unknown occupations: 0.2%
- Science professionals: 0.2%
- Health professionals: 0.0%

EXAMPLES OF 2014 ECONOMICS GRADUATE JOB TITLES AND EMPLOYERS (SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION)

- Trainee manager – Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Procurement manager – Fujitsu
- Accountant – an accountancy firm
- Secondary teacher – Teach First
- QHSE adviser – an oil company
- Personal tax adviser – accountancy firm
- Compliance officer – HMRc
- Financial analyst – Pfizer
- Economist – Civil Service
- Merging acquisitions officer – Goldman Sachs
- Policy adviser – HM Treasury
- Consultant – PwC
- Sales representative – Coca Cola
- Software sales person – IBM
- Editorial assistant – a national newspaper
- Surveyor – a utility service company
- Shipbroker – a shipbroking company
- Professional squash player – self-employed
- Research analyst – an energy company
- Administrative assistant – NHS
- Customer assistant – Waitrose
GEOGRAPHY GRADUATES FROM 2014

OUTCOMES SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION

- Working full-time in the UK: 52.0%
- In further study, training or research: 17.8%
- Working part-time in the UK: 8.4%
- Other: 7.4%
- Unemployed, including those due to start work: 5.8%
- Working and studying: 5.7%
- Working overseas: 3.0%

TYPE OF COURSE FOR THOSE IN FURTHER STUDY

- Masters (e.g. MA, MSc): 59.1%
- Postgraduate qualification in education: 26.1%
- Other postgraduate diplomas: 5.2%
- Other study, training or research: 3.7%
- Doctorate (e.g. PhD, DPhil, MPhil): 3.3%
- Professional qualification: 2.5%

Total number of graduates in further study: 420

EXAMPLES OF COURSES STUDIED

- PhD Atmospheric and Environmental Science
- MSc Sustainable Development
- MSc China and Globalisation
- MSc Ecology
- MSc City Planning
- MSc Rural Surveying
- PGCE Primary education
- PGDE in Geography
- HNC in Theatre Performance
- CIPS Diploma in Procurement

EXAMPLES OF 2014 GEOGRAPHY GRADUATE JOB TITLES AND EMPLOYERS (SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION)

- Pilot – RAF
- Store location planner – Sainsbury’s
- GIS coordinator – a media company
- Receptionist – Audi
- Customer assistant – Lidl
- Waiting staff – Yo Sushi
- Postman – Royal Mail

TYPE OF WORK FOR THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT

Graduates who were in employment either full-time, part-time or working and studying in the UK

FEMALE: 850 | MALE: 705 | TOTAL IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK: 1,555

- Business, HR and finance professionals: 20.2%
- Marketing, PR and sales professionals: 14.1%
- Retail, catering, waiting and bar staff: 13.9%
- Clerical, secretarial and numerical clerk occupations: 10.5%
- Other occupations: 7.4%
- Managers: 6.8%
- Other professionals, associate professionals and technicians: 6.3%
- Education professionals: 4.9%
- Engineering and building professionals: 4.3%
- Childcare, health and education occupations: 3.8%
- Legal, social and welfare professionals: 3.7%
- Information technology (IT) professionals: 1.6%
- Arts, design and media professionals: 1.5%
- Science professionals: 0.9%
- Unknown occupations: 0.2%
- Health professionals: 0.1%
SOCIAL SCIENCE

LAW GRADUATES FROM 2014

SURVEY RESPONSE: 76.0% | FEMALE: 6,290 | MALE: 3,685 | TOTAL RESPONSES: 9,975 | ALL GRADUATES: 13,125

OUTCOMES SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION

- Working full-time in the UK: 42.1%
- In further study, training or research: 26.3%
- Working and studying: 10.8%
- Working part-time in the UK: 9.5%
- Unemployed, including those due to start work: 5.4%
- Other: 4.6%
- Working overseas: 1.3%

TYPE OF COURSE FOR THOSE IN FURTHER STUDY

- Professional qualification: 38.7%
- Masters (e.g., MA, MSc): 31.7%
- Other postgraduate diplomas: 18.4%
- Other, study, training or research: 7.4%
- Postgraduate qualification in education: 2.6%
- Doctorate (e.g., PhD, DPhil, DPhil): 1.2%
- Total number of graduates in further study: 2,620

EXAMPLES OF COURSES STUDIED

- PhD International Law
- LLM Criminal Justice
- LLM Oil and Gas Law
- MSc Human Resource Management
- MSc Information Management
- MSc International Fashion Marketing
- Legal Practice Certificate
- Diploma in Professional Legal Practice
- PGDE Primary
- Professional Bar Training Course

TYPE OF WORK FOR THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT

Graduates who were in employment either full-time, part-time or working and studying in the UK

FEMALE: 4,025 | MALE: 2,190 | TOTAL IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK: 6,215

- Legal, social and welfare professionals: 28.8%
- Retail, catering, waiting and bar staff: 14.5%
- Clerical, secretarial and numerical clerk occupations: 14.1%
- Business, HR and finance professionals: 12.7%
- Other occupations: 7.7%
- Other professionals, associate professionals and technicians: 5.6%
- Marketing, PR and sales professionals: 5.3%
- Managers: 4.8%
- Childcare, health and education occupations: 2.3%
- Education professionals: 1.8%
- Information technology (IT) professionals: 0.9%
- Arts, design and media professionals: 0.8%
- Health professionals: 0.3%
- Engineering and building professionals: 0.2%
- Unknown occupations: 0.2%
- Science professionals: 0.1%

EXAMPLES OF 2014 LAW GRADUATE JOB TITLES AND EMPLOYERS (SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION)

- Business manager – bioscience company
- Commercial graduate – Fujitsu
- Area manager – ALDI
- Commercial graduate – Rolls-Royce
- Paralegal – a law firm
- In-court adviser – an action charity
- Legal assistant – Crown Prosecution Service Adviser – Citizen’s Advice Bureau
- Trainee – European Commission

- Auditor – financial services company
- Chartered accountant – KPMG
- Inspector of taxes – HMRC
- Horse trainer – an equestrian stables
- Intern – Classic FM
- Army officer – Army
- Dispatcher – British Gas
- Police officer – Police Scotland

- Customer adviser – RBS
- Legal secretary – a law firm
- HR administrator – Police Scotland
- Call handler – AA
- Ramp agent – airport
- Events coordinator – an events company
SOCIAL SCIENCE

POLITICS GRADUATES FROM 2014

SURVEY RESPONSE: 76.8%  |  FEMALE: 2,000  |  MALE: 2,690  |  TOTAL RESPONSES: 4,690  |  ALL GRADUATES: 6,110

OUTCOMES SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION

- Working full-time in the UK: 47.9%
- In further study, training or research: 17.8%
- Working part-time in the UK: 10.5%
- Unemployed, including those due to start work: 7.3%
- Working and studying: 6.8%
- Other: 5.8%
- Working overseas: 3.8%

TYPE OF COURSE FOR THOSE IN FURTHER STUDY

Master’s (e.g. MA, MSc) 68.5%
Other postgraduate diplomas 10.0%
Postgraduate qualification in education 7.9%
Other study, training or research 6.3%
Doctorate (e.g. PhD, DPhil, MPhil) 4.0%
Professional qualification 3.2%
Total number of graduates in further study: 835

EXAMPLES OF COURSES STUDIED

- PhD Political Science
- PhD Sociology
- MSc Media and PR
- MSc Human Resource Management
- MA Broadcast Journalism
- MSc International and European Politics
- MSc Strategic Studies
- PGDE in Sociology
- PGCE Primary Education

TYPE OF WORK FOR THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT

Graduates who were in employment either full-time, part-time or working and studying in the UK

FEMALE: 1,355  |  MALE: 1,690  |  TOTAL IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK: 3,045

- Business, HR and finance professionals: 20.8%
- Marketing, PR and sales professionals: 15.7%
- Retail, catering, waiting and bar staff: 15.2%
- Clerical, secretarial and numerical clerk occupations: 11.7%
- Other occupations: 8.3%
- Other professionals, associate professionals and technicians: 7.1%
- Managers: 5.9%
- Legal, social and welfare professionals: 4.6%
- Education professionals: 2.9%
- Childcare, health and education occupations: 2.5%
- Arts, design and media professionals: 2.3%
- Information technology (IT) professionals: 1.5%
- Science professionals: 1.0%
- Engineering and building professionals: 0.3%
- Health professionals: 0.2%
- Unknown occupations: 0.2%

EXAMPLES OF 2014 POLITICS GRADUATE JOB TITLES AND EMPLOYERS (SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION)

- Management trainee – L’Oreal
- Supply chain specialist – Schlumberger
- Management Trainee – local authority
- Commercial officer – Thales
- Commercial graduate – Ministry of Defence
- Manager – Majestic Wines
- Lecturer – further education college
- Teff teacher – a school
- Music teacher – self employed
- Charity officer – Cancer Research UK
- Graduate trainee – Lloyds Bank
- HR officer – National Citizen Service
- Finance officer – ATOs
- Compliance analyst – HSBC
- Officer – Royal Navy
- Communication officer – ANM
- Marketing associate – oil company
- Publishing assistant – a publishing house
- Assistant – Member of Parliament
- Researcher – a political consultancy
- Housing officer – a local authority
- Campaign organiser – a political party
- Tennis coach – a private club
- Administrator – an oil company
- Administrator – NHS
- Head chef – a cafe
SOCIAL SCIENCE

PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATES FROM 2014

SURVEY RESPONSE: 77.4% | FEMALE: 9,240 | MALE: 2,215 | TOTAL RESPONSES: 11,455 | ALL GRADUATES: 14,805

OUTCOMES SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION

- Working full-time in the UK: 45.9%
- Working part-time in the UK: 16.6%
- In further study, training or research: 15.7%
- Working and studying: 8.4%
- Unemployed, including those due to start work: 6.2%
- Other: 5.9%
- Working overseas: 1.3%

TYPE OF WORK FOR THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT

Graduates who were in employment either full-time, part-time or working and studying in the UK

FEMALE: 6,565 | MALE: 1,540 | TOTAL IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK: 8,105

- Retail, catering, waiting and bar staff: 17.1%
- Childcare, health and education occupations: 16.9%
- Legal, social and welfare professionals: 13.5%
- Clerical, secretarial and numerical clerk occupations: 11.4%
- Business, HR and finance professionals: 8.7%
- Other occupations: 7.6%
- Marketing, PR and sales professionals: 5.8%
- Education professionals: 4.7%
- Other professionals, associate professionals and technicians: 4.2%
- Health professionals: 3.5%
- Managers: 3.4%
- Information technology (IT) professionals: 1.1%
- Science professionals: 1.0%
- Arts, design and media professionals: 0.7%
- Engineering and building professionals: 0.2%
- Unknown occupations: 0.2%

EXAMPLES OF COURSES STUDIED

- PhD Social psychology
- PhD Neuroscience
- MSc Mental Health
- MSc Organisational Psychology
- MSc Human Resource Management
- MSc Childhood and young people’s mental health
- MSc Project management
- MSc Cyber psychology
- PGCE in Sciences
- PGCE in Maths

TYPE OF COURSE FOR THOSE IN FURTHER STUDY

- Masters (e.g. MA, MSc) 60.4%
- Postgraduate qualification in education 21.5%
- Doctorate (e.g. PhD, DPhil, MPhil) 6.6%
- Other study, training or research 6.5%
- Other postgraduate diplomas 3.8%
- Professional qualification 1.1%
- Total number of graduates in further study 1,805

EXAMPLES OF 2014 PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE JOB TITLES AND EMPLOYERS (SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION)

- Manager – Hilton Hotels
- Operations manager – Royal Mail
- Assistant psychologist – NHS
- Occupational therapist – NHS
- Nursery assistant – a private nursery
- Teaching assistant – a university
- Support worker – an autism charity
- Alzheimers adviser – an alzheimers charity
- Apprentice engineer – Caterpillar
- HR trainee – Nestle
- Accountant – PwC
- Market researcher – Glaxo Smith Kline
- Events organiser – Thistle Hotels
- Make-up artist – Harvey Nichols
- Digital media planner – a magazine
- Outdoor activity leader – a school
- Mental health research officer – NHS
- Prison officer – HM Prison Service
- Sales supervisor – Joules
- Florist – Garden centre
- Air steward – Emirates
- Housekeeper – Travelodge
SOCIETY GRADUATES FROM 2014

SURVEY RESPONSE: 74.8% • FEMALE: 4,700 • MALE: 1,640 • TOTAL RESPONSES: 6,340 • ALL GRADUATES: 8,480

OUTCOMES SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION

- Working full-time in the UK: 50.6%
- Working part-time in the UK: 18.1%
- In further study, training or research: 11.4%
- Unemployed, including those due to start work: 7.6%
- Other: 5.8%
- Working and studying: 5.4%
- Working overseas: 1.1%

TYPE OF WORK FOR THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT

Graduates who were in employment either full-time, part-time or working and studying in the UK

FEMALE: 3,525 • MALE: 1,175 • TOTAL IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK: 4,695

- Retail, catering, waiting and bar staff: 21.0%
- Clerical, secretarial and numerical clerk occupations: 14.0%
- Legal, social and welfare professionals: 11.7%
- Childcare, health and education occupations: 10.6%
- Other occupations: 10.6%
- Business, HR and finance professionals: 8.6%
- Other professionals, associate professionals and technicians: 6.7%
- Marketing, PR and sales professionals: 6.2%
- Managers: 3.9%
- Education professionals: 2.8%
- Arts, design and media professionals: 2.2%
- Information technology (IT) professionals: 1.0%
- Health professionals: 0.8%
- Science professionals: 0.5%
- Unknown occupations: 0.2%
- Engineering and building professionals: 0.1%

EXAMPLES OF COURSES STUDIED

- PhD Sociology
- PgDip Social Work
- Msc Human Resource Management
- MRes Sociology
- MSc Journalism

EXAMPLES OF 2014 SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE JOB TITLES AND EMPLOYERS (SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION)

- Social performance consultant – Shell
- Management trainee – Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Social sciences lecturer – FE college
- PE Teacher – a private school
- Domestic violence adviser – Womens’ Aid
- Youth worker – HM Prison Service
- Key worker – MIND
- Youth worker – a church
- HR associate – Caterpillar
- Researcher – KPMG
- HR coordinator – a university
- PR intern – a PR company
- Marketing assistant – a university
- Advertising intern – an advertising company
- Children’s author – self-employed
- Researcher – ITV
- Revenues officer – local authority
- Police officer – Police Scotland
- Probation officer – probation service
- Check in assistant – an airport
- Duty planner – British Transport Police
- Barstaff – Wetherspoons
- Sales manager – Laura Ashley
- Tree surgeon – self-employed