



Barriers to Employment Report

MNGT200 Management Consulting

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Executive Summary

This report delves into the multifaceted and nuanced barriers encountered by applicants and employers within the employment system, with a particular emphasis on the engineering sector in the North West of the UK. The investigation targets secondary school students, university students, neurodiverse students (focusing on those with Autism, Aspergers, and Dyslexia), and employers, identifying the distinct challenges each group faces in the employment process. Through a comprehensive study utilising both primary (interviews and questionnaires) and secondary research, this report sheds light on the significant obstacles from the early stages of career contemplation in secondary school through to the university phase and into the professional arena.

Key findings highlight a lack of career guidance and practical experience for secondary and university students, which hampers their ability to navigate the employment landscape effectively. For neurodiverse students, additional layers of complexity are introduced, such as difficulties in processing vast amounts of information, multitasking, and the social aspects of job applications, like interviews. Employers acknowledge the lengthy and intricate nature of the hiring process and the need for adjustments to better accommodate neurodiverse candidates, though there is a notable gap in implementing comprehensive diversity and inclusion strategies. The recommendations put forth aim to address these barriers systematically. For neurodiverse candidates, creating jargon-free job descriptions, allowing early disclosure of neurodiversity, providing interview questions in advance, and considering work experience over traditional interviews are suggested. Engineering students would benefit from streamlined employment processes, increased networking opportunities, and enhanced career guidance, particularly in CV and cover letter preparation. Secondary schools should integrate more individualised career guidance, incorporating CV workshops and transferable skills training, to better prepare students for their future careers.

Furthermore, employers are encouraged to foster a more inclusive hiring process by raising awareness among hiring managers about neurodiversity, adapting interview practices to reduce intimidation, and emphasising the unique contributions neurodiverse individuals can bring to the workplace. These measures not only aim to mitigate the barriers identified but also promote a more equitable and inclusive employment ecosystem for all parties involved.

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1.0 Introduction

The employment system is infested with barriers for applicants and employers, making it extremely complicated for candidates to achieve their desired career. As will be discovered throughout this report, these barriers start within secondary schools when students begin their university applications. Further continuing into their university years when applying for internships and jobs. Neurodiverse candidates encounter their own unique challenges which require adaptations from the hiring process and employees to help overcome the barriers. Finally, employers experience the difficulties of the overwhelming and time consuming nature of the job market.

This report focuses on identifying these existing barriers affecting secondary school students, university students and employers. In order to provide viable recommendations to help overcome the barriers within the employment process. Furthermore, the report will have a focus on addressing the employment barriers for neurodiverse students. The chosen protected characteristics for investigation are Autism, Aspergers and Dyslexia. Moreover, this project is concerned with university students studying engineering within the UK and engineering employers within the North West of the UK, due to the “high levels of inequality and lack of diversity within the engineering industry” (Ridgway et al., 2023). Additionally, university students across the UK will be used to voice the barriers within secondary schools. Due to legal restitutions with the UK, we are unable to involve current secondary school students.

The research will address the barriers for the 4 research categories (university students, school students, neurodiverse students and employers) separately, and finally link the findings together in the recommendations to provide viable solutions to help all parties within the employment process.

2.0 Literature Review

Although this research report has a focus on the collection of primary data, it is important to utilise literature to help support our findings and especially for where primary data collection is limited. The literature review for this report will focus on identifying the employment barriers that individuals with Autism and Aspergers face, and how the employment process could be adapted to support these individuals.

The University of Latvia conducted a similar investigation into the barriers for individuals with high functioning autism (HFA) in 2022 (Nīmante & Laganovska, 2022). The report includes various interviews throughout each stage of the employment process for 3 participants aged 18 to 26. The initial barrier for the employment process included a lack of CV writing skills and insufficient experience (Nīmante & Laganovska, 2022). Which can be considered general barriers to employment that all candidates experience, and supports our own findings. Secondly, there was a clear struggle of maintaining constant communication after the application had been sent. With candidates having to keep track of a variety of applications it can become difficult to maintain (Nīmante & Laganovska, 2022). Candidates further struggled with disclosing they're condition to employers, and would choose to only disclose this issue further into the career (if at all) (Nīmante & Laganovska, 2022). The perceived idea that the candidate will be judged or treated unfairly due to disclosing their condition is a huge barrier for individuals with protected characteristics, as it prevents any adaptations being made to ensure a fair hiring process. However, employers should be willing and able to adapt the hiring process to accommodate these individuals. Additionally, the participants voiced their concerns related to multitasking and the need for direct clear communication from employers (Nīmante & Laganovska, 2022).

The National Autistic Society published an article in 2022 discussing simple adaptations which could be made to support individuals with Autism. Firstly, in order to make the process more streamlined employers should have concise and jargon-free job descriptions (National Autistic Society). Job descriptions/applications should also provide ample opportunity for the candidate to disclose their condition (National Autistic Society). For interviews, allow the candidate to have access to interview questions in advance with clear information regarding how the interview will be conducted and structured (National Autistic Society). Avoiding abstract interview questions, instead making them specific past experience questions. Alternatively, providing the candidate with work experience rather than an interview will allow them to understand the day-to-day activities and whether the environment should be suitable for them (National Autistic Society). Overall, ensure that the hiring process is as transparent and concise as possible, and allow for adaptations to ensure a fair hiring process for Autistic candidates.

3.0 Methodology

The project's reliance on primary sources is crucial for capturing the current experiences and perceptions of the target demographic, specifically engineering students and employers in the Northwest of the UK. Primary data collection, via interviews and surveys, directly captures specific insights into the experiences of groups, highlighting current challenges and prospects in education and employment. It's adaptable to focus on specific traits like dyslexia, autism, and Asperger's, ensuring data aligns with study objectives. For the data collection of this research project we have decided to choose two different types of primary data: interviews and questionnaires. This was done to be able to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. We picked out interviews because the benefits of interviewing doesn't only lie in its ability to provide a comprehensive pictures, analyse verbatim and report on specific individual's perspective of the questions, but also in its capacity to allow interviewers to "speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings" (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Using questionnaires was also very advantageous to our research due to its large population-based samples providing an infinite quantity of desirable and valuable data (Alderman & Salem, 2010). Meanwhile, secondary sources contribute foundational knowledge, contextualising and benchmarking primary data against known trends.

Ethical considerations are informed consent from all participants, anonymity, confidentiality of responses, the right to withdraw from the study at any point, and non-discrimination against participants with protected characteristics. However, the study faces logistical challenges, particularly in recruiting participants with relevant protected characteristics within the designated area and potential hesitance to disclose these characteristics due to privacy concerns.

Although the self-reported data is valuable for having an understanding of individuals' perceptions and experiences, it also comes with several limitations. The reliance on self-reported data introduces limitations due to potential bias (e.g., subjective questions, mood-influenced responses, desire for positive self-presentation), misinterpretation of questions leading to inaccurate responses, selection bias (how participants are chosen or self-select for the survey), and non-response bias (differences between respondents and non-respondents) (Rosenman, Tennekoon and Hill, 2011). These factors can negatively impact the data's accuracy and representation.

4.0 Findings, Analysis and Discussion

4.1 University Students

One of the primary focuses for this research report was the barriers to employment for Engineering Students at Lancaster University. During interviews and surveys, we discussed the main influences on their choice of career and what employment barriers they have faced (See Appendix A16). We obtained a total of 60 responses, where 73.3% were males and 26.7% were females. 15% of responses declared that they are neurodiverse (for example: Dyslexia, Autism, Aspergers, Dyspraxia and ADHD). The majority (73.3%) of these participants attended a public/state school and the others (26.7%) attended either a Grammar, Private, or an International school.

In terms of the main choice of the degree (Engineering), the majority (28.3%) answered that it's because of their parents' influence on them, while 11.7% answered that it was because of their school teachers. Other responses included their personal interest in the actual subject, looking for a stable career, and work experience in the field. This clearly shows that the upbringing and the insight on the field makes a massive difference when it comes to choosing a career. This is due to children having an insight into their parents' careers growing up. The fact that they have not seen anything different makes it even harder to choose an alternative career path.

With regards to the barriers they faced when they chose their career choice, we received a lot of responses that suggest that the high school curriculum needs to be changed to be more adaptable to fit in with the engineering lifestyle. Examples of this are having more hands-on and practical engineering experience at school to be able to understand what type of career they're getting involved in. As well as having more engineering related courses to be able to have a better insight to the subject they're studying at university.

When we asked about the main barriers with the employability search, the majority of students , 73.3%, voted ¾ for the efficiency of the support they receive for their employability search. This shows that the vast majority of people are not fully satisfied with the service they have been given and there is a big room for improvement to get to the point where students feel more comfortable with the employment process. (See Appendix 16)

4.2 Secondary School Students

Through the use of surveys we were able to gather a total of 18 respondents from a variety of UK universities, who commented on their career services within secondary school. The interview questions had a clear focus on what career services were available for the students during their secondary school years, how supported they felt by these services, key challenges and what should be implemented into secondary schools to support the employment process (see Appendix A1). The participants were 61.1% Female and 38.9% Male, 17 participants aged between 17-21 (, the other participant was 21+). Most participants attended either a private (50%) or public/state school (38.9%), with one attending an international school and one attending a Grammar school. 3 respondents disclosed their protected characteristics; Dyslexia, ADHD and Dyspraxia. Therefore showcasing a wide range of participants with different secondary school experiences.

Starting with the career services that were available for the participants during their secondary school years, 83.3% stated that a career service was available to them. However, 3 respondents declared that there was no career guidance available to them at their school, clearly demonstrating a lack of support towards the student's employment after secondary school. Although the majority of participants had a career guidance service available at their school, not one participant would give the service a 5 out of 5 for support. 38.9% of respondents gave the service a 3 out of 5 for support. However, worryingly 33.3% gave either a 1 or 2 for support (for the full results see Appendix A11). These results showcase the lack of vital individual employment support (which students need during their secondary school years). It demonstrates that students must be independent in their employment search, which could be overwhelming especially due to the complex nature of the process. Moreover, the respondents commented on what career services were available to them. The most common services included one to one guidance, university application advice and careers fairs. These are all great services which should help support students wishing to attend university and get an idea of the careers available to them. Other slightly less common services included CV and cover letter writing advice and university talks (for the full results see Appendix A12). Although it makes sense for a secondary school to have its services geared towards university advice, it's important to notice the lack of services towards the wider employment process. Guidance on internships, practice assessment centres and competency based tests were some of the least common services available. Students wishing to go into employment or seeking summer internships would require guidance on these skills and how the employment search is conducted. Additionally, internships could help strengthen a student's CV or university application letter, as well as, provide them with the opportunity to explore a potential career path. Therefore, making it vital to implement these services into secondary schools.

The most challenging aspects of the employment process which respondents commented on regarded the complex and time consuming nature of the employment search. Having to make and keep track of many applications can be confusing. Furthermore, respondents commented needing more guidance on building CVs (with limited work experience (see Appendix A13), and the want for finding relevant work experience. Finally, the issue of the interview stage was brought up by a couple of respondents. They stated that they needed more guidance on how to prepare and what to expect.

Finally, the main careers services which students would like to see implemented into secondary school are; CV and cover letter writing support, transferable skills workshops and advice on potential internships available (see Appendix A14). Therefore, demonstrating the need for more individual attention to students when composing their CVs and seeking internships to explore potential careers.

4.3 Neurodiverse Students

The data collection process for neurodiverse students was divided into two. Firstly, focusing on dyslexia and its difficulties, and later exploring the more intense challenges students in the autism spectrum face. Both parts included interviews with open-ended questions, due to requiring in-depth personal experiences.

For dyslexia, several interviews were conducted, with variety in their degree of dyslexia. Participants were currently studying at university or recently graduated. Therefore, searching for internships and graduate jobs.

Participant's overall experience with the job application process was described as exhausting, due to overwhelming information when reading job descriptions, which might ultimately confuse them. Only half of participants disclosed their dyslexia, as the other half believed it was irrelevant for the role, or they feared judgement by employers. The most challenging part for all participants was tests, especially multitasking tests and exercises involving figures/numbers. Additionally, tight time constraints can affect them, as they often have difficulties when processing information, and tend to not have a good short time memory.

Due to the small number of students with autism and aspergers, few interviews on the subject were undertaken. In order to cover that lack of information, secondary research was carried out and linked together with the interview findings. From the research undertaken, it is clear that students in the autism spectrum require more help and awareness than dyslexics because of their complications when interacting with other people.

There are two main areas where they struggle, first one being communication. This refers particularly to the interview stages, where they can feel really uncomfortable talking to a stranger. This deteriorates their performance in the interview, and subsequently reduces their chances of being selected for the role. Secondly, students in the spectrum thrive in structured environments and encounter difficulties with uncertainty. The unpredictable nature of the job application process makes it hard for them, as they have to deal with unexpected delays, joined with long waits for responses from potential employers.

4.4 Employers

Our study on recruitment, diversity, and inclusion within engineering companies, particularly focusing on neurodiverse individuals, gathered responses from 5 companies and 1 in-depth interview. Participants hailed from varied sectors: 40% manufacturing, 40% education, and 20% recruitment (See Appendix A5). Notably, 80% of these companies hire employees monthly, with the remainder hiring on a needed basis (See Appendix A6). Furthermore, 80% offer apprenticeships, internships, or placements, highlighting their commitment to nurturing future talent (See Appendix A7)

Our findings reveal that the hiring processes are perceived to be time-consuming by both employers and candidates. Unanimously, employers believe in the necessity for improvement of these processes. The proposed changes aim to identify minor adjustments that can yield significant benefits. Recommendations include establishing neurodiversity requirements of all candidates during pre-screening, enhancing training materials for students to better prepare them for job decisions and interviews and emphasising the importance of organisational culture, role stability, economic influence on those practice questions and most importantly, educating hiring managers. These insights underline a critical need for refinement in the hiring process to benefit all stakeholders, especially in accommodating neurodiverse candidates.

Despite 80% of companies stating that they felt relatively familiar with the challenges faced by neurodiverse candidates (See Appendix A8), only 40% had an inclusion and diversity manager or related initiatives in place (See Appendix A9). Merely 20% of companies were frequently making adaptations to support individuals with protected characteristics (See Appendix A10), a statistic that is indeed startling. Moreover, the results showed a lack of certainty regarding adjustments made during interviews for neurodiverse candidates, further emphasising a significant gap in awareness and implementation of inclusive practices.

In order to make a change, our study aimed to find various initiatives that could be implemented to support neurodiverse candidates. The suggested changes/initiatives include allowing extra time for tests or responses during interviews, presenting questions in a way to aid those who may experience blank moments, raising awareness among hiring managers, providing detailed briefs and interview preparation templates, and avoiding the use of figurative language.

The interview made it abundantly clear that employers recognize the pressing need to take more proactive steps and consistently review their HR systems. There's a pressing need to overhaul the rigid, machinery-based processes and foster flexibility to accommodate individuals who may not fit into the traditional mold and are the employers themselves the ones that propose that change. It was stated that hiring managers, given their significant responsibility in shaping an organisation's culture to be willing to celebrate diversity and actively address the barriers faced by neurodiverse individuals, given their pivotal role in shaping workplace culture.

At the end, despite this shared awareness on the topic and challenges, what remains alarming is the inertia evident in addressing these issues.

5.0 Conclusion

This report's aim is to address the intricacies and barriers to employment faced by school students, university students, neurodiverse students, and employers, with a specific focus on the engineering industry, and then provide the adequate recommendations for improvement. . To gather information about this, primary research was conducted through interviews and surveys, in order to gather first hand, up to date information about the current job application processes, together with some secondary research to apply the expertise professionals on the field can provide.

The findings express how important it is to provide more assistance in both work and educational sectors to break down the barriers mentioned. The research indicates there is a lack of career services for school and university students, as well as a shortage of practical experience and assistance for people pursuing jobs. For neurodiverse students this is even harder, since they must face multiple challenges that make it even more difficult to secure their desired jobs. In the next section

6.0 Recommendations

Through our research we explored a variety of barriers and solutions to the employment process. Firstly, utilising secondary research we identified potential recommendations for Autistic candidates, in order to simply and equalise their career search. Job descriptions/posts must be jargon-free and clearly outline what the job entails (National Autistic Society). This limits confusion and allows the individual to understand if they would be a suitable candidate. Furthermore, individuals with protected characteristics must have the opportunity to disclose their protected characteristic without judgement, to allow for adaptations (National Autistic Society). This must take place early on during the employment process. During the interview stage, questions should be provided ahead of time and avoid abstract situations (National Autistic Society). Finally, if possible, have a work experience day rather than an interview to allow the candidate to fully understand the environment of the position, as Autistic candidates can be heavily influenced by their surroundings (National Autistic Society). These small adaptations would allow for a fairer employment process and allow candidates to fully understand the job requirements.

Additionally, our research explored recommendations for engineering university students during the employment process. A lot of students said it would be helpful if an easier employment process gets implemented in the future. For example, less aptitude tests, decreasing the long series of interviews, and less assessment centres. This is due to the time consuming and complex nature of the job application process, which in turn decreases the likelihood of students succeeding in this process. In addition, increasing networking events and employer visits to the university would also really help as students struggle to find employers that would accept less qualified candidates. However, if there are personal interactions with them they would potentially find it easier to secure internships and graduate jobs. Finally, having career guidance that helps with CVs and cover letters would also help greatly. This is due to the fact that all the students that we spoke to fully agreed that this a big area of improvement as they have never received enough support on how to tailor these job applications to each job requirement.

Furthermore, the need for adjustment to the employment process is also required in secondary schools. After interviewing a wider range university students on their secondary school experience, we identified the need for more individual career guidance. School students should have more regular sessions with a career guidance counsellor, allowing them to better understand career paths available to them. Additionally, this would allow for employment skill gaps to be identified. For example, there is a need to add CV and cover letter writing workshops, as well as more transferable employment skills workshops (such as interview skills). These skills would better prepare students choosing to go into apprenticeships and internships. Students

should also be made better aware of what internships are available and how they can help to improve their CV. More regular individual attention from career guidance counsellors would help better prepare and support students for their employment search (See Appendix 17).

Moreover, for neurodiverse individuals, there are many improvements needed. It is vital for employers to be willing to recruit neurodiverse candidates and provide any needed assistance. Focusing on dyslexia, applications should be adapted with different test structures, where exercises that require multitasking are reduced. Extra time should also be granted, as this allows dyslexics an equal chance to secure an employment role. For individuals in the autism spectrum, tests are easier for them to handle, so they could be presented with more tests rather than interviews, and if interviews are needed, make these online as they will feel more comfortable. Companies should also try to be sensitive with these candidates, and provide them with realistic dates of feedback, and try to have a structured process in order for them to cope with the application successfully.

At last, employers play a crucial role in accommodating the needs of neurodiverse people during the recruitment process, highlighting the importance of raising awareness among managers of the barriers that neurodiverse people face. It is essential to communicate that Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is fundamental to a creative team and pivotal to a team that are problem solvers. When discussing neurodiversity, the language used should always be positive to empower individuals, ensuring they recognize and feel confident in the unique and valuable contributions they can offer to an employer. While this may seem like a small change for organisations or employers, it represents an important step for people who identify with neurodiversity, as it helps them to perceive their condition not as a disability, but as an ability in the workplace. This would clearly encourage them to feel comfortable disclosing their protected characteristics during the hiring process. Employers should also strive to create a comfortable interview experience for candidates, allowing extra time for responses and steering clear of figurative language.

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8.0 Appendices

A1: Secondary School Survey Questions

1. Have you read, understood and agree to the Ethical Approval Form, Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form (as linked in the description above)?
2. How old are you?
3. What gender are you?
4. Are you neurodiverse?
5. If Yes, Do you have: Dyslexia, Autism, Aspergers or Other
6. What type of school did you attend?
7. Does the school provide a university/career guidance service?
8. How supported do you feel with the careers advice service available at your school? (On a scale of 1 to 5)
9. Which of the following careers services does the school provide?
 - One to One guidance
 - University Application Process
 - CV and Cover Letter Writing
 - Careers Fairs
 - Practice Assessment Centres
 - Practice Competency Based Tests
 - University Talks
 - Transferable Skills Workshops
 - Potential Internships Available Advice
 - None of the Above
10. What do you find most challenging about the employment process?
11. What would you like to see implemented into schools in order to help address these challenges?
 - One to One guidance
 - University Application Process
 - CV and Cover Letter Writing

Careers Fairs
Practice Assessment Centres
Practice Competency Based Tests
University Talks
Transferable Skills Workshops
Potential Internships Available Advice
None of the Above

12. Any additional information you'd like to add regarding the barriers to employment for school students?

A2: Employer Survey Questions

1. What is the size of your company?
2. What industry does your company operate in?
3. How often does your company hire new employees?
4. Does your company offer apprenticeships/internships/placements?
5. If Yes, could you describe your hiring process in more detail (how the candidate progresses through the process, required tasks, hiring platforms used, etc.)?
6. Would you find it helpful for candidates identifying as neurodiverse to indicate this at application?
7. What initiatives or changes do you think could be implemented to make the hiring process more accessible and less overwhelming for neurodiverse students?
8. As an employer, what do you think are the most challenging aspects of the recruitment process?
9. Does your organisation understand how to make reasonable adjustments at interviews for neurodiverse candidates?
10. How familiar are you and your hiring team with the specific challenges faced by candidates with protected characteristics such as Dyslexia, Autism, and Asperger's during the recruitment process?
11. Does your company have a dedicated Diversity and Inclusion Manager?

12. Which of the following diversity and inclusion initiatives does your company have in place?
13. Has your company ever made adaptations to its hiring process to support individuals with Dyslexia, Autism and Aspergers?
14. Any additional comments or suggestions regarding the barriers to employment within the hiring process:

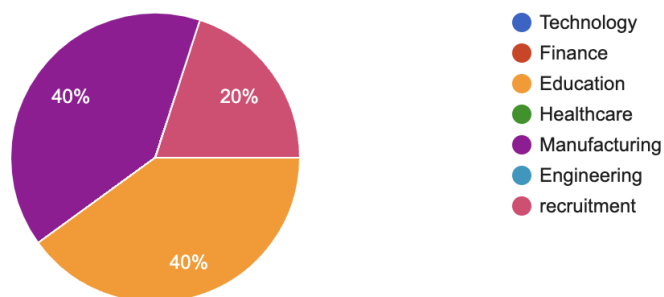
A3: Employer Interview Questions

1. Could you tell me if your company offers apprenticeships/internships/placements?
2. Could you describe your hiring process in more detail? Such as how the candidate progresses through the process, their required tasks, the hiring platforms that are used, etc.
3. With that in mind, what unique challenges do you think candidates encounter during the engineering industry's recruitment process, especially those who are neurodiverse?
4. Could you elaborate on the importance of candidates disclosing neurodiversity during the application process and how it might affect their journey through the hiring process in engineering fields?
5. From your point of view, what strategies or initiatives could engineering companies implement to make their hiring process more accessible and less overwhelming for neurodiverse individuals?
6. Talking about inclusion in the workplace, could you tell me if your company has a dedicated Diversity and Inclusion Manager?
7. What inclusion and diversity initiatives does your company have in place?
8. Since your company has all those initiatives in place, do you think that engineering firms understand and make accommodations for neurodiverse candidates during interviews?
9. Lastly, has your company ever made adaptations to its hiring process to support individuals with dyslexia, autism and aspergers?
10. To finish with, do you have any additional comments or suggestions regarding the barriers to employment within the hiring process?

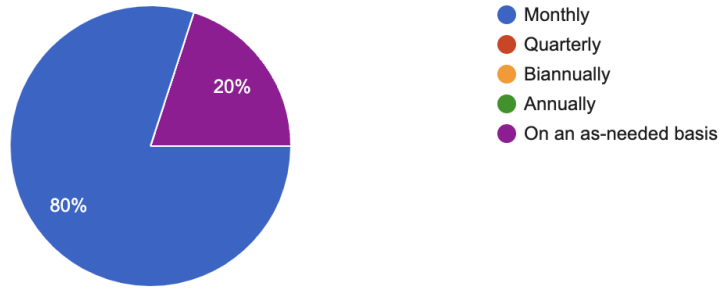
A4: Neurodiverse Students Interview Questions

1. How old are you?
2. What gender are you?
3. What type of protected characteristics do you have?
4. What type of challenges have you faced in the application process?
5. How would you describe your overall experience with job and internship applications?
6. Do you tend to disclose your protected characteristics when applying?
7. If so, how do employers respond to that, what support do they offer?
8. What additional resources or accommodations do you think would be helpful?
9. Have you experienced challenges during interviews because of your protected characteristics?
10. What alternative is there for making interviews less difficult for you?
11. How important is the company's commitment to diversity and inclusion to you when applying for jobs and internships?
12. What changes would make the job application process more accessible?
13. How do you feel about the current state of awareness towards people with protected characteristics in the job application process?

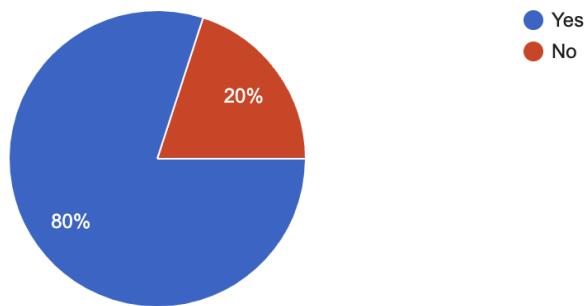
A5: Pie Chart Employer Survey Results: "What industry does your company operate in?"



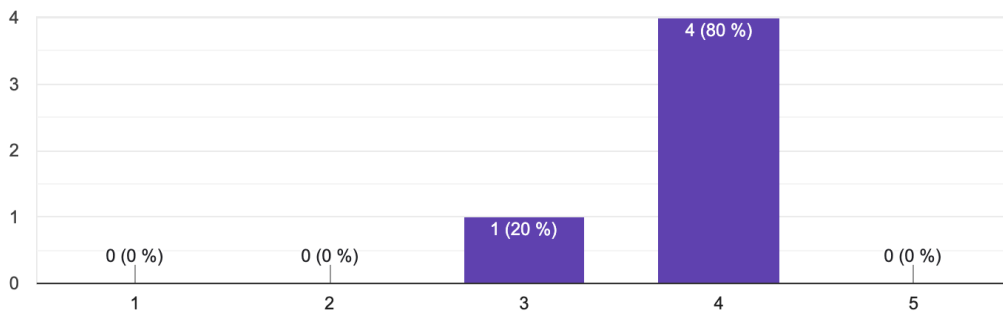
A6: Pie Chart Employer Survey Results: “How often does your company hire new employees?”



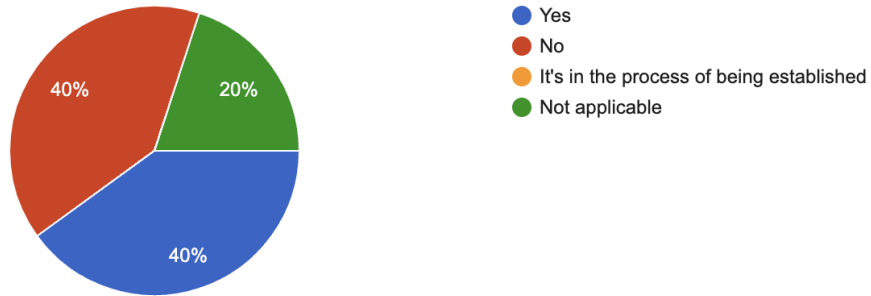
A7: Pie Chart Employer Survey Results: “Does your company offer apprenticeships/internships/placements?”



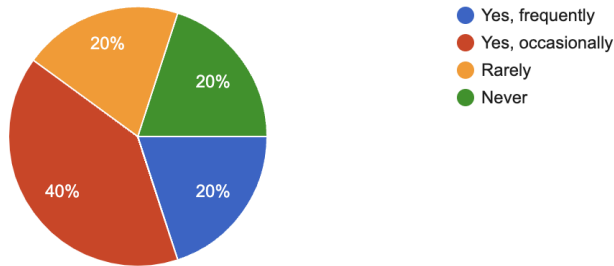
A8: Bar Chart Employer Survey Results: “How familiar are you and your hiring team with the specific challenges faced by candidates with protected characteristics such as Dyslexia, Autism, and Asperger's during the recruitment process?”



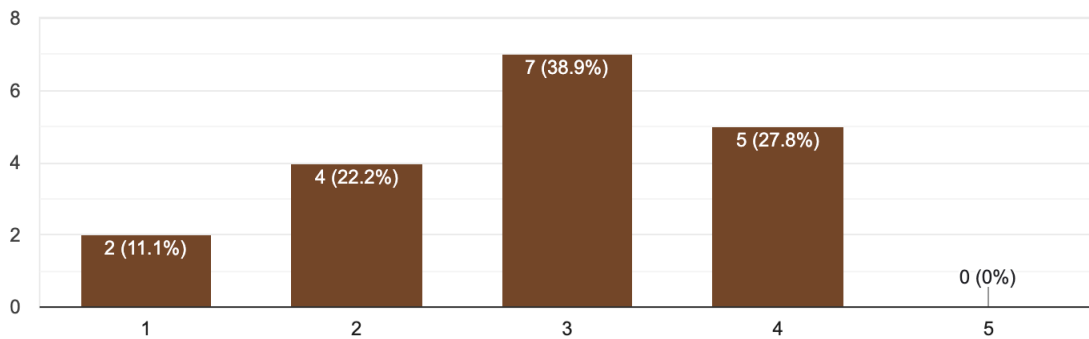
A9: Pie Chart Employer Survey Results:“Does your company have a dedicated Diversity and Inclusion Manager?”



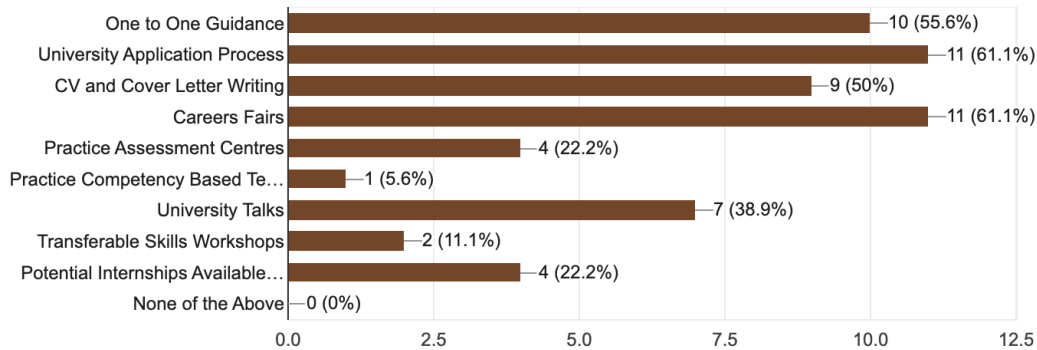
A10: Pie Chart Employer Survey Results: “Has your company ever made adaptations to its hiring process to support individuals with Dyslexia, Autism and Aspergers?”



A11: Bar Chart Student Survey Results: “How supported do you feel with the careers advice service available at your school?”



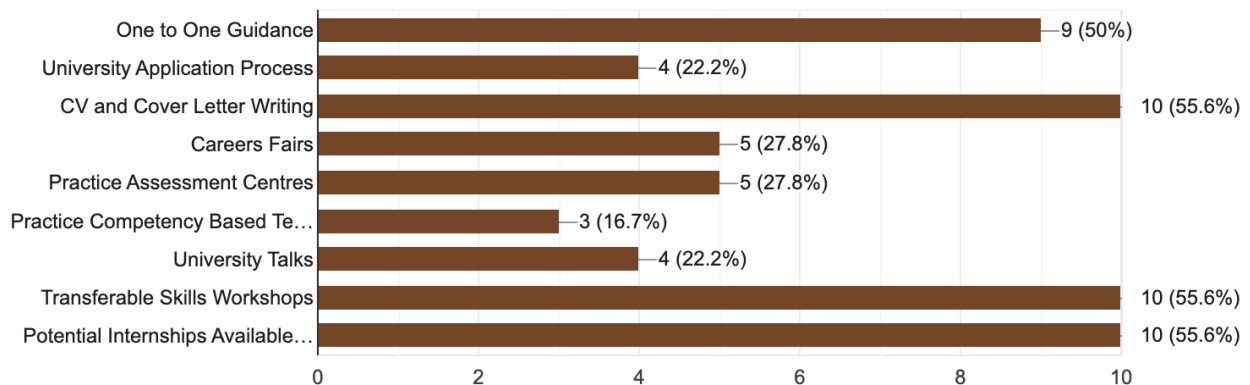
A12: Bar Chart Student Survey Results: “Which of the following careers services does the school provide?”



A13: Student Survey Results: “Any additional information you’d like to add regarding the barriers to employment for school students:”

“The lack of work experience, which often puts them at a disadvantage compared to more experienced candidates. Additionally, their limited availability due to school schedules restricts their options for suitable part-time jobs. Also age restrictions in certain industries or positions, along with the requirement for certifications that students may not yet possess, further limit their employment opportunities.” School Student Survey Respondent

A14: Bar Chart Student Survey Results: “What would you like to see implemented into schools in order to help address these challenges?”



A15: Engineering Students Survey Questions

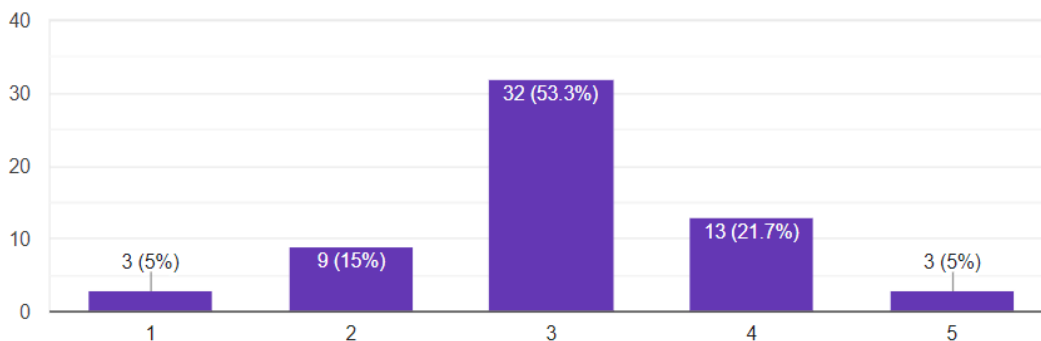
1. How old are you?
2. What gender are you?
3. Are you neurodiverse?
4. If yes, could you specify what type of neurodiversity?
5. What type of school did you attend?
6. What were your main influences in your choice of degree?
7. What changes would you like to see in the high school curriculum to benefit future engineering students?
8. On a scale of 1 to 5, how supported do you feel with your employability search?
9. What do you consider to be the most challenging part to your employability search?
10. How could your university support your future employability search?

A16: University students response to how much support they get towards their employability search:

On a scale of 1 to 5, how supported do you feel with your employability search?



60 responses

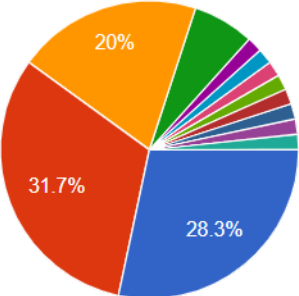


A17: University students response on how can we improve the employability search:

How could your university support your future employability search?



60 responses



- 1 to 1 Career Advise
- Help with your CV & Cover Letter
- Provide networking Events
- Practice Assessment Centres
- 1 to 1 Career advise and help with...
- All of the above
- Invite engineering companies to do...
- Help with asking/finding people to...