

SHAPE Graduates:

1 Are found across all sectors of the UK economy.

From professional, scientific and technical careers (where 15.8% of all first-degree SHAPE graduates worked in 2023), to arts and recreation (4.5%), financial and real estate services (8.6%) and construction (2.7%).

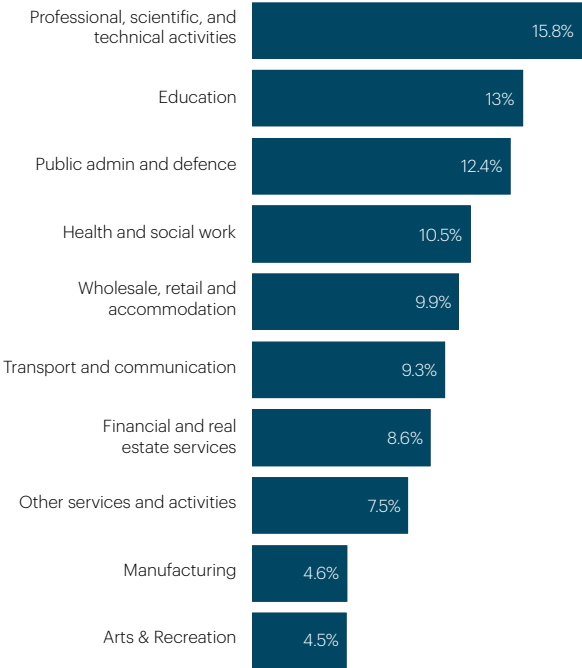
2 Sustain important public sector services.

In 2023, 77.7% of graduates working in education had studied SHAPE subjects, 64% working in public administration and 40.8% working in health and social work. However, there has been a long-term shift away from the education sector, from 19.5% of all first-degree SHAPE graduates in 2002, to 13% in 2022.

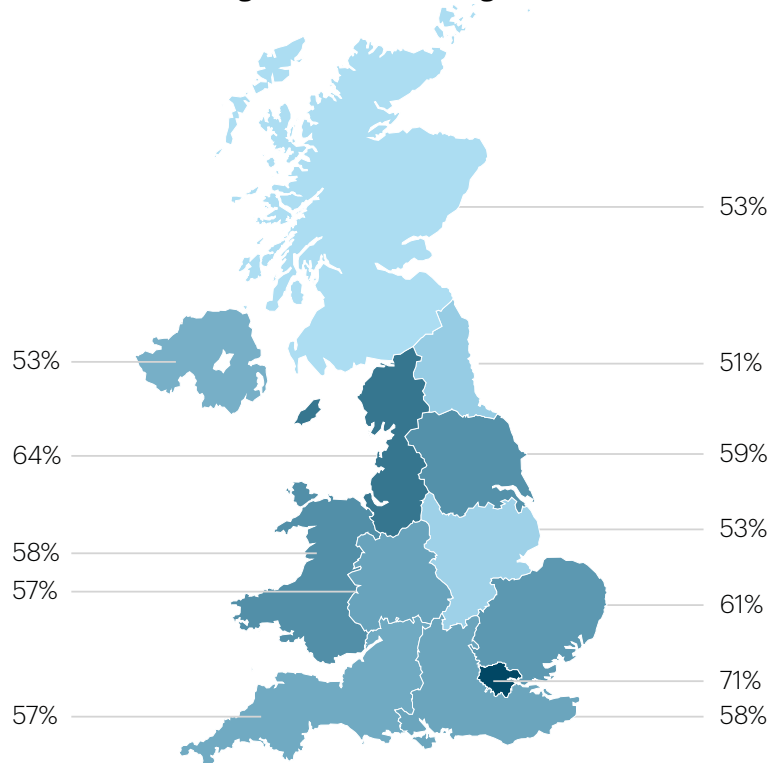
3 Increasingly work in the UK's highest-growing sectors.

Between 2010 and 2022, the top three growth sectors were: manufacturing; transport and communication; and professional, scientific and technical services. The percentage of the graduate workforce in these sectors who studied SHAPE subjects has risen from 45.8% in 1997 to 52.8% in 2023.

Sector of Employment of first-degree SHAPE graduates, 2023 (% of all SHAPE first-degree graduates)



Nation/Region of Residence of SHAPE first-degree graduates, 2023 (% of all first-degree in each nation/region)



4 Support the economy of their regions of study.

In 2020/21, 53% of the 2009/10 cohort of SHAPE first-degree graduates were still living in the region of England they had studied in.

5 But are also regionally mobile.

In 2020/21, 47% of the 2009/10 cohort of SHAPE first-degree graduates had moved to another region of England.

6 Underpin the graduate workforce, particularly in London, North West England and the East of England.

71% of first-degree graduates living in London in 2023 had studied SHAPE subjects, as well as 64% of those living in North West England and 61% in the East of England.

Source: All key findings are based on London Economics' analysis of Office for National Statistics' quarterly Labour Force Surveys (1997-2023) or London Economics' analysis of published Longitudinal Education Outcomes data. For more information, please see the British Academy's [Understanding SHAPE Graduates toolkit](#).

SHAPE Graduates:

7 Achieve positive outcomes, as defined by the Office for Students.¹

In 2020/21, 83% of male and 84% of female first-degree SHAPE graduates, who had graduated 10 years previously, were in sustained employment, further study or both.

9 Earn significantly higher wages than non-graduates.

In 2023, SHAPE first-degree graduates earned on average £4.86 more per hour than non-graduates at the previous qualification level.

10 Have strong wage growth in the years after graduation, despite lower salaries when compared with STEM graduates.

In the years up to 2020/21, SHAPE first-degree graduates' median earnings increased by 26% from 1 to 3 years and by 43% from 1 to 5 years after graduation. While average SHAPE salaries remain lower overall compared those of STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine) graduates, their rate of salary growth is higher in relation to their STEM counterparts.

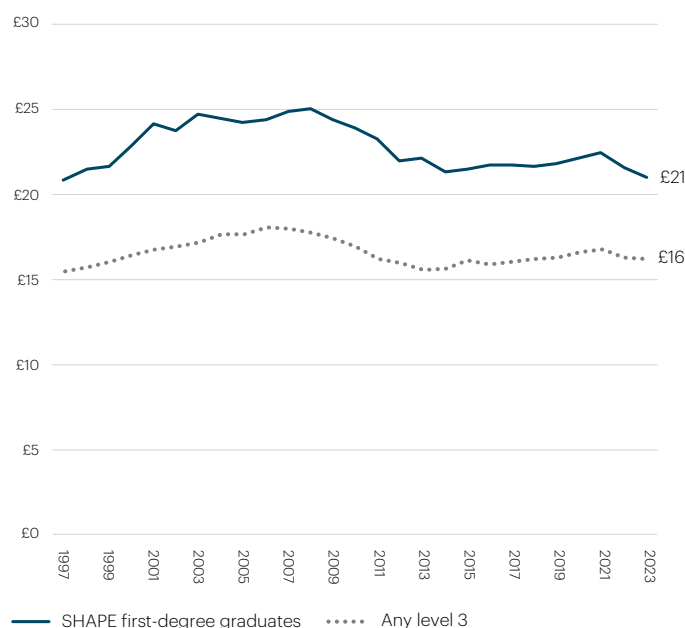
11 Are resilient to wider economic shocks.

SHAPE graduate employment quickly recovered after an initial dip when the Covid-19 pandemic began. While this recovery has not been as steady during the recent cost-of-living crisis, SHAPE first-degree graduates' employment rates remained significantly higher than non-graduates throughout these periods.

8 Are highly employable, with consistently high rates of working age employment.

In 2023, 87% of SHAPE graduates were in employment, compared to 79% of non-graduates at the previous qualification level.

Real Hourly Wages of SHAPE first-degree graduates and those with Any level 3 qualifications (November 2023 prices)



12 Quickly bounce back into work.

Of SHAPE first-degree graduates, men are 11 percentage points and women 15 percentage points more likely to be in employment 12 months after being unemployed than non-graduates at the previous qualification level.