

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

PRESS RELEASE . SEPTEMBER 2025

Graduate Programmes (GP) are emerging as a key pathway for young talent, offering structured entry into the workforce while supporting career development. They align closely with the expectations of new generations of graduates, at a time when companies are struggling to attract, retain, and upskill their employees.

The EDHEC NewGen Talent Centre is releasing a new, expanded edition of its Graduate Programmes study, bringing together three perspectives:

- Graduate Programme offers from more than 1,500 corporate entities
- The experiences of young graduates in these programmes
- Employer insights

95%

Of GP participants recommend it to their peers

98%

of participants consider it to be a good way to enter the professional world

75%

of participants have stayed or plan to stay with their Graduate Programme company

79%

of participants consider that it has sped up, or will speed up career progression

A system that appeals to both young people and businesses

Our expanded study reveals very strong support for the Graduate Programme model:

- 98% of those who have taken part in a GP consider it to be an excellent way of entering professional life.
- 100% of businesses say that GPs make it possible to attract high-quality profiles based on recruitment methods often more demanding than for traditional permanent employment contracts, and 9 out of 10 businesses also see it as a means of retaining young talent.
- 75% of young people have stayed or plan to stay with the company after completing their Graduate Programme.

A true career springboard

Contrary to popular belief, GPs are not just a first job experience: **they are an ambitious career decision.**

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FOR PARTICIPANTS

THE TOP 3 STRENGTHS of Graduate Programmes

- 1 Skill **developpement**
- 2 Mission **diversity**
- 3 **Support** (coaching, mentoring, etc.)

FOR BUSINESSES

THE TOP 3 MOTIVATIONS to propose Graduate Programmes

- 1 To attract better profiles
- 2 To retain young graduates
- 3 To build a talent pool

- **79% of young graduates** say that their GP has sped up (or will speed up) their careers.
- **69%** see it as leverage for better pay.
- **95%** would recommend GPs to other young graduates.

Several factors contribute to the success of Graduate Programmes among young adults. They offer development in a **multitude of professional skills, especially soft skills** (such as agility, autonomy, and resilience), **high-stakes missions, the creation of an in-house network**, and **increased visibility with management**.

And yet, most young people aren't familiar with their benefits

Our study highlights a **difference in perception** between those who have experienced a GP and those who have only heard of them.

- Not all GPs require international travel:

Although international mobility is often seen as inevitable, only 24% of GPs include a foreign assignment.

- Support is also underrated:

The general public is largely unaware of the quality of managerial support, as evidenced by the following statistics: **75%** of participants benefited from **mentoring**, **66%** from **technical training**, and **58%** from **management training**.

Those differences in perception highlight the importance of the graduate-programmes.com platform, which lists all Graduate Programmes and provides direct access to company career opportunity websites.

On the business side: Graduate Programmes are a strategic employer brand and talent retention investment. Setting up a GP requires significant in-house resources, in particular to structure the programme and organise logistics with the various departments. However, the benefits are numerous: **accelerated onboarding**

"In a job market in which recruiters and applicants alike often struggle to find what they are looking for, there are few integration schemes that generate as much enthusiasm as Graduate Programmes. They attract better candidates to businesses and help keep them on board. They promote the professional development of young graduates and speed up their careers."

Manuelle Malot, Newgen Talent Centre director

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2 out of 3 businesses

have a participant retention rate*
of over 75% directly following
their Graduate Programme

1 out of 2 businesses

has a participant retention rate*
of over 75% 3 years after their
Graduate Programme

* The retention rate is the percentage of Graduate Programme participants who are still working for the company.

to the in-house environment, **the creation of a high-potential talent pool**, and the **enhancement of the employer brand** with young graduates.

79% of businesses consider the GP recruitment process to be more selective and **two-thirds of them keep on over 75% of their participants** at the end of the programmes.

Methodology

This study is based on:

- a quantity survey of 753 young Master2 graduates (15% had been part of a GP, 73% were aware of them),
- an additional survey of 80 businesses, 40 of which have a Graduate Programme,
- and the analysis of over 1,500 Graduate Programmes listed on graduate-programmes.com.

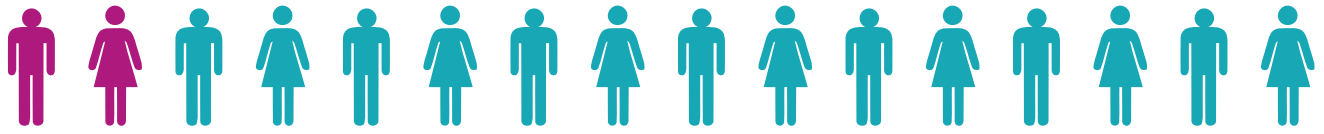
Graduate Programme definition

A Graduate Programme is a structured recruitment and training programme for young Master's level graduates of a duration of 12 to 36 months that has a rotational structure (positions, trades, sites, and even countries), and benefits from personalised training and mentoring.

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About EDHEC NewGen TALENT CENTRE

Created in May 2013 under the direction of Manuelle MALOT, the NewGen Talent Centre is EDHEC's centre of expertise on the aspirations, behaviours, and skills of the new generations of graduates.

To find out more: [Newgen-talent-centre](#)

ABOUT EDHEC BUSINESS SCHOOL

EDHEC Business School, a leader in management education in Europe since 1906, has been ranked 7th Best Business School in Europe by the Financial Times for three straight years. EDHEC's 2024-2028 strategic plan – Generations 2050 – reflects the school's commitment to driving the world's most significant economic, social, and environmental transformations through impactful education and research. Our "raison d'être" is to make a positive impact on the world

EDHEC PROFILE

- 9400 undergraduate students, 175 professors and researchers, 14 centres of expertise, 130 nationalities
- A portfolio of transformative higher education programmes: Bachelor (BBA and BSc), Master in Management, Master of Science (MSc), MBAs (Full-time, Executive MBA and MBA Online), PhD in Finance, EDHEC Executive Education (for managers, executives, and entrepreneurs), EDHEC Online (created in 2018) for distance learning
- 3 French campuses that offer rich student experiences in Lille, Nice, and Paris, as well as 3 entrepreneurship campuses: the Jean Arnault Campus in Roubaix, EDHEC Entrepreneurs at Station F, the world's largest start-up campus in Paris, and Techforward in partnership with Eurecom and Institut les Mines-Telecom at Sophie Antipolis in Nice
- Triple-accredited for the highest quality in business education by AACSB, EQUIS, and AMBA

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**The results of the study are available on
the EDHEC NewGen Talent Centre website:
CLICK HERE**

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