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Advancing Higher Education with Industry Micro-Credentials

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Introduction

What is a micro-credential?

As defined by UNESCO,[3] a micro-credential focuses on a specific set of learning outcomes in a narrow field of learning and is achieved over a shorter period of time. Micro-credentials are offered by commercial entities, professional bodies, and private providers.

## What is a Professional Certificate?

Coursera offers Professional Certificates, a type of micro-credential, from leading companies such as IBM, Intuit, Google, Meta, and Salesforce that teach the specific skills needed for entry-level jobs such as data analyst, software developer, digital marketer, and more. They also involve hands-on projects that simulate tasks done on the job. Each Professional Certificate takes an average of four to six months to complete.

The future of learning is skills-based

The jobs students want today, and the skills required for them, are changing. By 2025, advances in digitalization, data, and artificial intelligence are projected to create up to 97 million new jobs while displacing 85 million existing ones.[1] As the global talent shortage widens,[2] higher education institutions must lean into equipping students with job skills that will power the new, digital economy—from data analysis and software engineering to UX design and digital marketing.

A new survey conducted by Coursera and featured in this report identifies the unique pain points of students searching for a job and employers that are hiring in this new market. The data makes clear that both students and employers view skills as the pathway between education and employability. 60% of students around the world said that "using their skills" matters the most to them in a job and 77% of employers are already using or actively exploring skills-based hiring.

The survey data further reveals that industry micro-credentials, such as Professional Certificates offered by Coursera, provide a valuable link between students and employers. Professional Certificates teach students the specific skills needed for in-demand, entry-level jobs such as data analyst, software engineer, digital marketer, and more. By earning a Professional Certificate, students can demonstrate to employers that they are qualified and job-ready. Higher education institutions can use Professional Certificates in Coursera's [Career Academy](#) to enhance their curriculum and attract and retain students that are increasingly focused on employment outcomes.
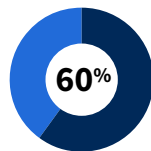
60% of students around the world said that "using their skills" matters the most to them in a job
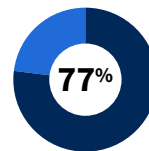
77% of employers are already using or actively exploring skills-based hiring

Higher education leaders, employers, and government leaders must align their efforts to help students obtain the skills that make them job ready.

Skills-based learning is key to driving employability across the hiring ecosystem. Higher education leaders, employers, and government leaders must align their efforts to help students obtain the skills that make them job ready.

This report first explores global student, employer, and university leader perspectives on industry micro-credentials and skills-based learning and hiring. The second half of the report delves into how these three parties vary on a country-level.

The key insights featured are based on a survey of **nearly 5,000 students and employers in 11 countries**—Australia, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (U.S.)—in collaboration with two market research firms, Dynata and Repdata. Our sample sizes enabled us to obtain results with an industry-standard range of error at a 95% confidence level.

“

The evidence is pretty clear, universities need a subtle shift... The real secret sauce? Do the traditional education, but pair it with digital skills to prepare your students to go into the workforce with the basic skills they'll need.

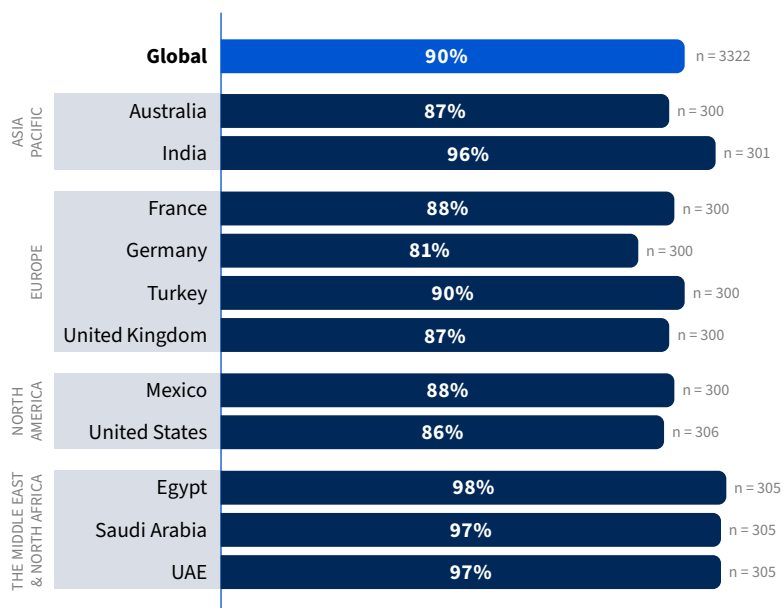**Michael Horn**
Coauthor of Choosing College[4]

Global perspectives:
industry micro-credentials

1. Students trust that an industry micro-credential will help them secure a job.

Ninety percent of students around the world either agree or strongly agree that earning a Professional Certificate will help them stand out to employers and secure a job when they graduate. **By supplementing current degree programs with industry micro-credentials that teach job skills like project management and data analysis, higher education institutions can attract students that are focused on employment outcomes.**

Figure 1: Standing out and getting a job (students)

Question: *Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)*

	Global	**90%**	n = 3322
ASIA PACIFIC	Australia	87%	n = 300
	India	96%	n = 301
EUROPE	France	88%	n = 300
	Germany	81%	n = 300
	Turkey	90%	n = 300
	United Kingdom	87%	n = 300
NORTH AMERICA	Mexico	88%	n = 300
	United States	86%	n = 306
THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	Egypt	98%	n = 305
	Saudi Arabia	97%	n = 305
	UAE	97%	n = 305

Additional insight:

Eighty-six percent of students globally also agree that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed in their job.
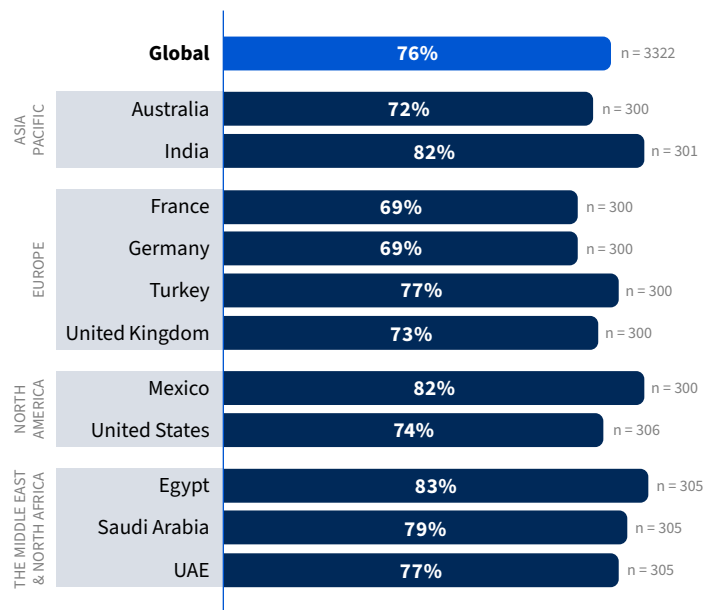
n=3322, see figure 34 in the Appendix for additional results

2. Students are more likely to enroll in a degree program that offers industry micro-credentials.

Supplementing current degree program offerings with Professional Certificates makes students, on average, 76% more likely to enroll in that program. In doing so, **higher education institutions can meet students' demand for job-role-based learning and boost their competitive standing in the process.**

Figure 2: Influence on choosing a university program (students)

Question: If a program included Professional Certificates as part of its curriculum, to what extent would this influence your decision to enroll in that program? (0%=not at all, 100%=very much)

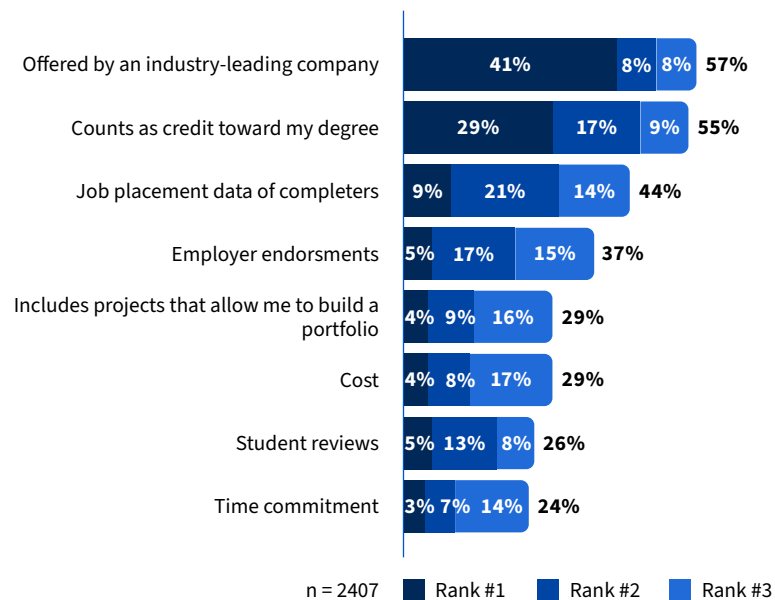| Region	Country	Value	n
	Global	**76%**	n = 3322
ASIA PACIFIC	Australia	72%	n = 300
	India	82%	n = 301
EUROPE	France	69%	n = 300
	Germany	69%	n = 300
	Turkey	77%	n = 300
	United Kingdom	73%	n = 300
NORTH AMERICA	Mexico	82%	n = 300
	United States	74%	n = 306
THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	Egypt	83%	n = 305
	Saudi Arabia	79%	n = 305
	UAE	77%	n = 305

Additionally, students want to take industry micro-credentials for credit as part of their degree program.

Certain factors also influence students' preference towards a Professional Certificate. Globally, more than half of students (55%) want to earn a Professional Certificate that counts as credit towards their degree. In Middle Eastern countries surveyed, 46% of students expressed wanting a certificate from an industry-leading company. **These preferences are crucial for higher education institutions to consider as they decide to offer Professional Certificates, particularly so they can attract more students.**

Figure 3: Key factors in deciding to earn a Professional Certificate (students)

Question: *What factors would you consider when deciding to earn a Professional Certificate? (Select the top 3 and rank them, with 1 being most important)*

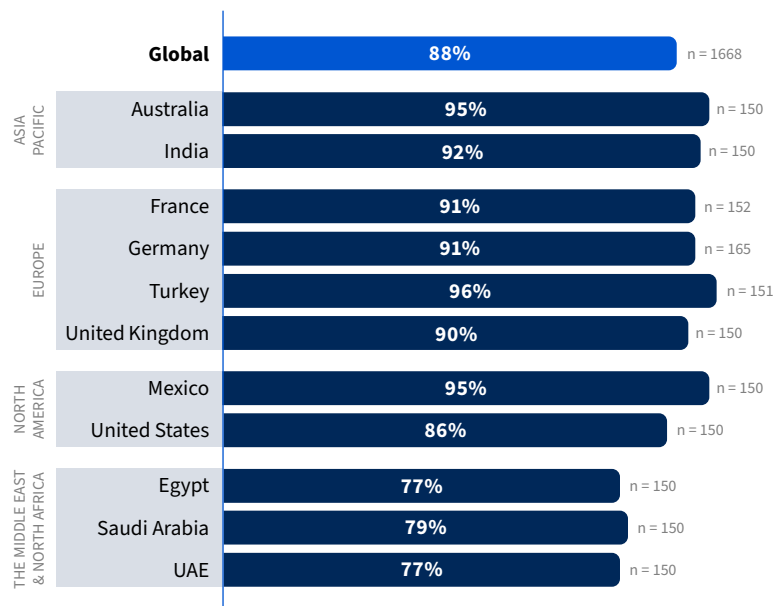|	Rank #1	Rank #2	Rank #3	Total
Offered by an industry-leading company	41%	8%	8%	57%
Counts as credit toward my degree	29%	17%	9%	55%
Job placement data of completers	9%	21%	14%	44%
Employer endorsments	5%	17%	15%	37%
Includes projects that allow me to build a portfolio	4%	9%	16%	29%
Cost	4%	8%	17%	29%
Student reviews	5%	13%	8%	26%
Time commitment	3%	7%	14%	24%

n = 2407

3. Employers believe that industry micro-credentials help a job candidate stand out.

Eighty-eight percent of employers believe that Professional Certificates will strengthen a candidate's job application. The survey results confirm that in addition to a degree, employers are looking for hard skills and core competencies like coding or database management. **Demonstrable job-based skills enhance the value of a degree for both students and employers globally. This is important for higher education leaders to focus on as they decide to enhance their programs with micro-credentials like Professional Certificates.**

Figure 4: Strengthening a candidate's job application (employers)

Question: *Earning a Professional Certificate strengthens a candidate's job application (Agree or Strongly Agree)*

Global	88%	n = 1668
ASIA PACIFIC Australia	95%	n = 150
India	92%	n = 150
EUROPE France	91%	n = 152
Germany	91%	n = 165
Turkey	96%	n = 151
United Kingdom	90%	n = 150
NORTH AMERICA Mexico	95%	n = 150
United States	86%	n = 150
THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA Egypt	77%	n = 150
Saudi Arabia	79%	n = 150
UAE	77%	n = 150

Additional insight:

Ninety-seven percent of employers are considering moving towards a skills-based hiring approach.

n=1668, see figure 35 in the Appendix for additional results

4. Employers are more likely to hire a graduate who has both a degree and industry micro-credential.

On average, employers are 72% more likely to hire a candidate who has a Professional Certificate. While skills-based hiring is on the rise, 37% of "middle-skills" jobs, defined as "[jobs] requiring some post-secondary education or training but less than a four year degree", still require a degree.[5] Employers around the globe have confirmed that recent graduates with both a degree and transferable hard-skills, like micro-credentials, are top candidates for the job. **University leaders can better prepare students for job outcomes by supplementing their highly valuable degrees with Professional Certificates.**

Figure 5: Influence of a Professional Certificate on hiring (employers)

Questions: *To what extent would a Professional Certificate influence your hiring decision? (0%=not at all, 100%=very much)*
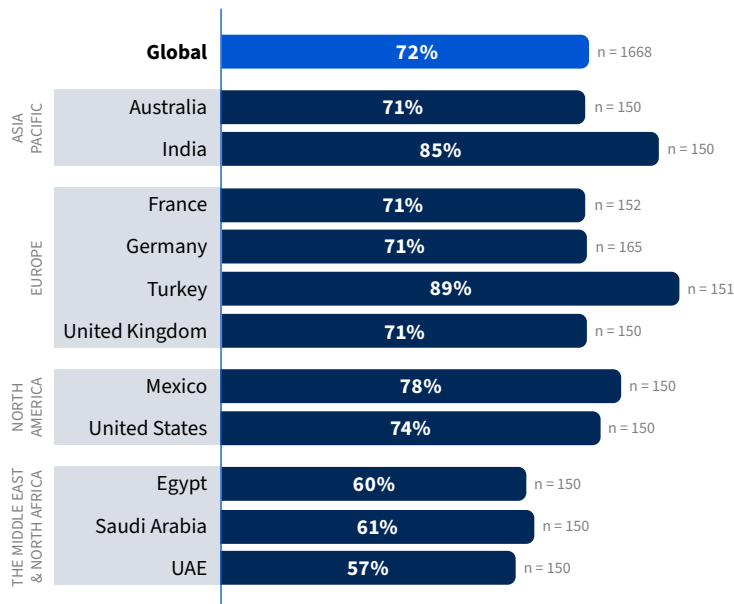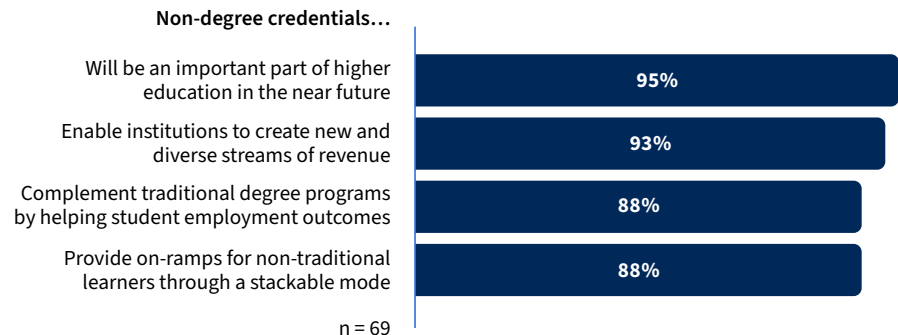
5. Higher education institutions are recognizing the demand from students and employers for industry micro-credentials.

Ninety-five percent of university leaders in the United States agree that industry micro-credentials will be an important part of higher education in the near future. Industry micro-credentials are uniquely positioned to increase and diversify higher education revenue streams, while providing students what they want.

Our survey in partnership with the University Professional and Continuing Education Association (UPCEA), a leading association for professional, continuing, and online education, shows that while 83% of institutional leaders agree that higher education is driven by job outcomes, only 56% of leaders agree that their institution has a process for evaluating how degree programs directly connect to employment outcomes. **Supplementing curriculum with industry micro-credentials is a way for higher education institutions to link learning with employment.**

Figure 6: Future of non-degree credentials in higher education (universities)

Question: Do you agree with the following statements about non-degree credentials? (Strongly Agree or Agree)

Non-degree credentials…

Will be an important part of higher education in the near future	95%
Enable institutions to create new and diverse streams of revenue	93%
Complement traditional degree programs by helping student employment outcomes	88%
Provide on-ramps for non-traditional learners through a stackable mode	88%

n = 69

Country perspectives:
industry micro-credentials

Introduction

This section explores the specific challenges and perceptions of industry micro-credentials in Australia, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As each country has different employment needs, the student and employer insights featured are contextualized with the diverse demographics, cultural norms, and technological realities of each country. More detailed country data is provided in the appendix at the end of the report.

Australia

STUDENTS

Eighty-seven percent of students agree that earning a Professional Certificate will help them get a job.

The unemployment rate among young Australians aged 15-24 increased four percentage points in 2020 to 12%, the highest unemployment rate since 1997.[6] While unemployment has slightly improved in the past two years, it is still a major challenge in Australia.[7] The pandemic has fueled students in Australia to prioritize employment upon graduating. Young people in Australia are eager to supplement their education with industry micro-credentials that will help them get hired.

Figure 7: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)

87% of students in Australia agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 7)

66% of students in Australia say that the most important factor in choosing a field of study is career outcome

n=300, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results
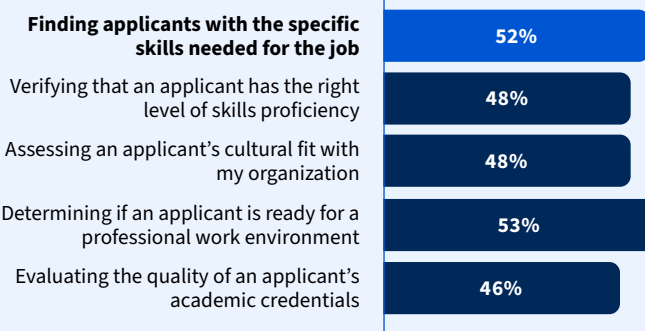
EMPLOYERS

Over half (52%) of employers agree that one of their top challenges is finding applicants who have the specific skills needed for the job.

In September 2022, the Australian prime minister gave $1.1 billion to the September Jobs and Skills Summit in hopes of combatting the worker shortage in the country.[8] More than half of the 20 largest employing occupations in the country are facing major skills shortages—including nurses, programmers, and construction managers.[9] Students in Australia are poised to help fill these shortages upon graduation and want to select their degree programs based on career outcomes first and foremost. Higher education institutions in Australia can help students fill positions by offering Professional Certificates to students that will provide valuable skills.

Figure 8: Top challenges when hiring graduates

Question: To what extent are the following factors very challenging or challenging when hiring recent graduates?

Finding applicants with the specific skills needed for the job	52%
Verifying that an applicant has the right level of skills proficiency	48%
Assessing an applicant's cultural fit with my organization	48%
Determining if an applicant is ready for a professional work environment	53%
Evaluating the quality of an applicant's academic credentials	46%

n = 150, see figure 36 in the Appendix for additional results

India

STUDENTS

Almost every student surveyed (96%) agrees that earning a Professional Certificate will help them secure the job that they desire.

This is particularly important in a country that has faced a serious unemployment crisis for the past eight years. Unemployment among people aged 20-24 was at an all-time high of 43.7% in June of 2022.[10] Students in India say that receiving a Professional Certificate during their schooling will help them secure and keep a job in precarious times. Higher education institutions in India can offer Professional Certificates that supplement degrees to attract more students and help improve overall unemployment rates in the country.

Figure 9: Standing out and getting a job

Question: *Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)*

96% of students in India strongly agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 9)

91% of students in India strongly agree that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed at their job
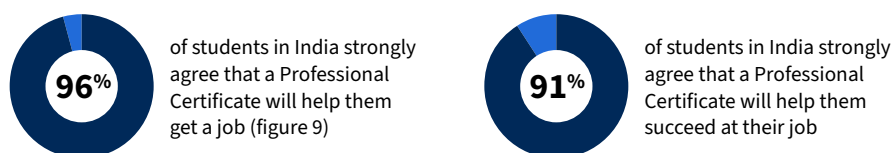
n=301, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results
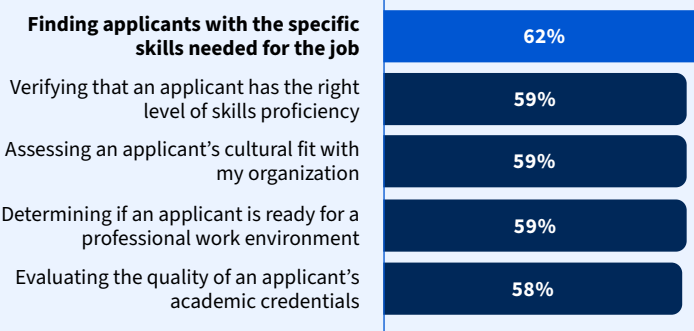
EMPLOYERS

Sixty-two percent of employers say that a major challenge in hiring is finding applicants who have the specific skills needed for the job.

News outlets in India[11] report that the skills gap in the country is contributing heavily to the unemployment crisis.[12] Employers are looking for more candidates with demonstrable skills in technology, engineering, and STEM.[13] Youth in India, who are ready to contribute to the job market, need affordable pathways to gain the skills to fill these roles. By enhancing their degree with Professional Certificates, students will be better prepared to enter the workforce after graduating.

Figure 10: Top challenges when hiring graduates

Question: *To what extent are the following factors very challenging or challenging when hiring recent graduates?*

Finding applicants with the specific skills needed for the job	62%
Verifying that an applicant has the right level of skills proficiency	59%
Assessing an applicant's cultural fit with my organization	59%
Determining if an applicant is ready for a professional work environment	59%
Evaluating the quality of an applicant's academic credentials	58%

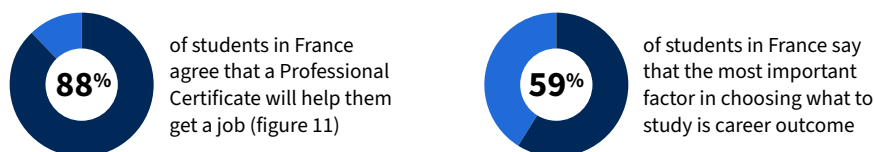n=150, see figure 36 in the Appendix for additional results

France

STUDENTS

Eighty-eight percent of students agree that obtaining a Professional Certificate would help them secure a job after graduation.

Europe is on track to experience a labor shortage of 3.9 million by 2050 due to population aging and growth.[14] France's working population specifically is projected to decline by 1.5 million by the year 2050, yet France will also have Europe's second highest number of job openings in the next decade.[15] A large proportion of job openings in France are expected to be in highly skilled, non-manual positions, including business administration, computer programming and information services.[16] Higher education institutions in France can ensure that students acquire these important skills by supplementing their degree programs with Professional Certificates.

Figure 11: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)

88% of students in France agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 11)

59% of students in France say that the most important factor in choosing what to study is career outcome

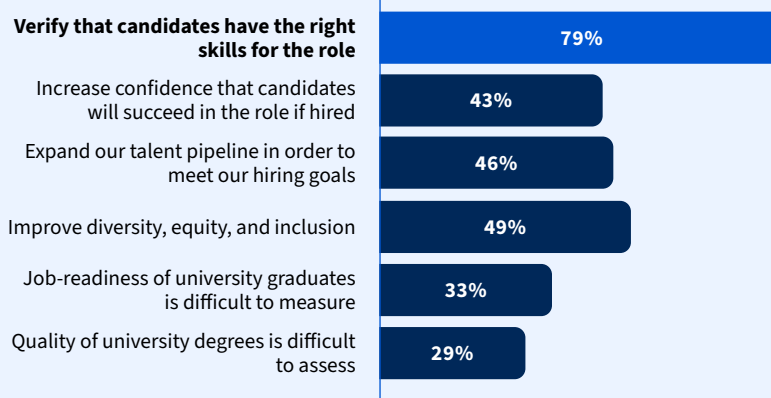n=300, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results

EMPLOYERS

Nearly 80% of employers report using skills-based hiring to assess whether candidates have the skills for the job.

In France, most sectors will see an increase in specialization in the coming decade.[17] Highly-skilled workers will become more in demand and there will also be a need for highly skilled leaders to manage them.[18] Students in France should prepare for this shift in the workforce by gaining Professional Certificates in highly skilled areas like UX design, data science, and machine learning during their studies. Higher education institutions can capitalize on this demand and offer Professional Certificates in order to draw in and prepare more students.

Figure 12: Motivations for skills-based hiring

Question: What are the main motivations for your organization's use or consideration of skills-based hiring practices? (Select all that apply)

Verify that candidates have the right skills for the role	79%
Increase confidence that candidates will succeed in the role if hired	43%
Expand our talent pipeline in order to meet our hiring goals	46%
Improve diversity, equity, and inclusion	49%
Job-readiness of university graduates is difficult to measure	33%
Quality of university degrees is difficult to assess	29%

n=138, see figure 37 in the Appendix for additional results

Germany

STUDENTS

Eighty-one percent of students agree that obtaining a Professional Certificate would help them secure a job after graduation.

In a McKinsey report on the future of the workforce in Germany, 73% of respondents said that they do not believe that the education system sufficiently teaches upcoming, jobs-based skills in the country.[19] Students in Germany want to supplement their education with Professional Certificates that prepare them for the influx of creative and digital jobs in the coming decade.[20] By offering Professional Certificates in a multitude of skills, university leaders in Germany can gain the confidence of students to prepare them for the workforce.

Figure 13: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)

81% of students in Germany agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 13)

70% of students in Germany strongly agree that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed at their job

n=300, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results
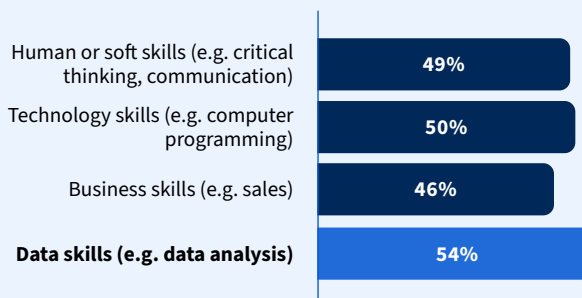
EMPLOYERS

Fifty-four percent of employers say that data skills are most difficult to find among recent college graduates.

The tech sector in Germany is entering a period of rapid growth. The need for students and workers to develop new tech skills is growing. By 2030, four million employees will have to switch to other occupational fields (about 10% of the workforce) due to digitization.[21] While jobs in retail, transport, and media are falling to the wayside, jobs in sustainability, tech, and cyber security are rapidly expanding. More than 6.5 million people will have to develop new technology skills to stay up to date in their field.[22] A 2021 survey showed that 73% of employers in Germany did not believe that the education system adequately equipped students with micro-credentials in data and technology skills.[23] Students in Germany can supplement their degrees with Professional Certificates focusing on front end development and computer science in order to help meet those needs.

Figure 14: Skills most difficult to find

Question: What types of skills are most difficult to find among recent university graduates? (Rank the top 2, with 1 being the most difficult)

Skill	%
Human or soft skills (e.g. critical thinking, communication)	49%
Technology skills (e.g. computer programming)	50%
Business skills (e.g. sales)	46%
Data skills (e.g. data analysis)	**54%**

n=165, see figure 38 in the Appendix for additional results

Turkey

STUDENTS

Nine out of ten students agree that obtaining a Professional Certificate will help them stand out to employers and get a job when they graduate.

Youth unemployment in the Middle East is currently the highest in the world,[24] and young people account for half of the region's population. In the next two decades, the region has an opportunity for tremendous growth as demographics change to favor many people who are now in school.[25] If university leaders offer Professional Certificates in valuable fields, they can attract more students and help prepare students to breathe new life into the job market.

Figure 15: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)
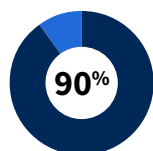
90% of students in Turkey agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 15)
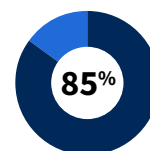
85% of students agree in Turkey that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed at their job

n=300, see figure 1 in global perspectives section for additional results
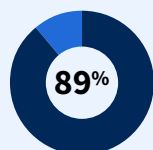
EMPLOYERS

When deciding between two comparable candidates, employers are 89% more likely to hire a candidate who has a Professional Certificate.

Sixty-five percent of employers in Turkey also say that technology skills are the hardest skills to find in recent college graduates. Out of approximately 29 million jobs in the Middle East, about 17% are at risk of being displaced by automation in less than ten years.[26] Jobs in retail, transportation, travel, and media are at the highest risk. If higher education institutions in Turkey enhance their degree offerings with Professional Certificates in technology areas, they will help students stand out to employers who are looking for these hard skills.

Figure 16: Influence of a Professional Certificate on hiring (employers)

Question: To what extent would a Professional Certificate influence your hiring decision? (0% = not at all, 100% = very much)

89% Employers in Turkey are 89% more likely to hire a candidate who has a Professional Certificate

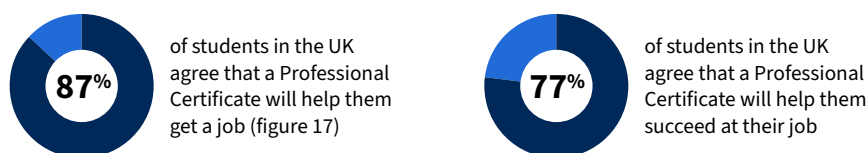n=151, see figure 5 in global perspectives section for additional results

United Kingdom

STUDENTS

Nearly 90% of students say that receiving a Professional Certificate will help them stand out to employers.

Since the pandemic, finding jobs has been particularly challenging for new graduates in the UK.[27] Many students are concerned about job prospects and keeping a job post graduation. According to KPMG and REC's UK Report on Jobs published in April 2021, the demand for permanent workers rose at the quickest rate in six years.[28] Labor supply remained static in April of 2021, demonstrating that many are reluctant to seek new roles amid fear of job insecurity. Higher education institutions in the UK can equip their students with highly valuable skills through Professional Certificates and prepare them to enter new roles after graduating.

Figure 17: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)

87% of students in the UK agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 17)

77% of students in the UK agree that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed at their job

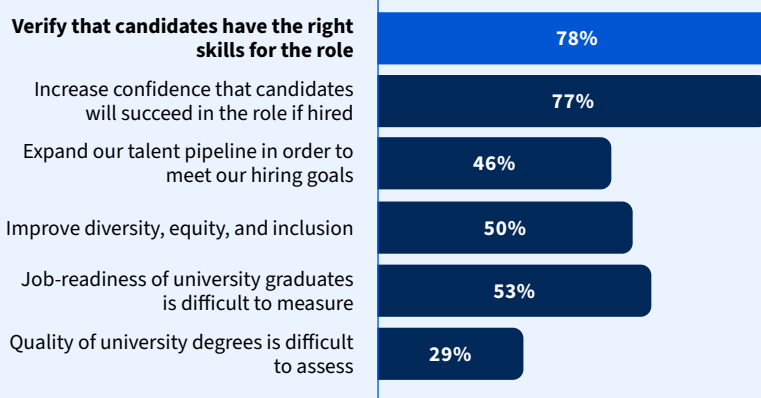n=300, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results

EMPLOYERS

Nearly 80% of employers said that one of their main motivations for using skills-based hiring is to verify that the candidate has the right skills for the job.

Demand for tech professionals in the UK increased 10% in the first six months of 2021—the first time the tech sector has grown in the country since the pandemic began.[29] Highly-skilled roles in blockchain, digital ethics, and cloud computing are in high demand.[30] Higher education institutions in the UK that offer Professional Certificates in these areas can help students position themselves for employment in these in-demand roles.

Figure 18: Motivations for skills-based hiring

Question: What are the main motivations for your organization's use or consideration of skills-based hiring practices? (Select all that apply)

Verify that candidates have the right skills for the role	78%
Increase confidence that candidates will succeed in the role if hired	77%
Expand our talent pipeline in order to meet our hiring goals	46%
Improve diversity, equity, and inclusion	50%
Job-readiness of university graduates is difficult to measure	53%
Quality of university degrees is difficult to assess	29%

n=138, see figure 38 in the Appendix for additional results

Mexico

STUDENTS

Students are, on average, 84% more likely to earn a Professional Certificate as part of their course of study: the highest percentage of all countries surveyed.

Mexico has become a leading nearshoring destination for North American software and IT companies. With more than 1 million unfilled tech jobs in the United States, many tech companies in Mexico are looking to re-deploy their employees to the U.S. for more tech job opportunities. Cities such as Tijuana and Guadalajara have emerged as burgeoning hubs for technology startups as well. Higher education institutions in Mexico can supplement their degree offerings with Professional Certificates in STEM to better prepare students for in-demand technology jobs.

Figure 19: Likelihood of earning a Professional Certificate

Question: How likely are you to earn a Professional Certificate as part of your university program?

84% — Mexican students are 84% likely to earn a Professional Certificate as part of their degree (figure 19)

88% — of students in Mexico agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job
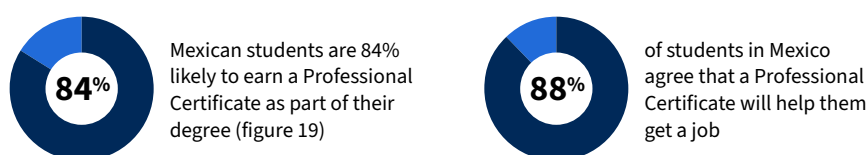
n=300, see figure 39 in the Appendix for additional results

EMPLOYERS

Ninety-two percent of employers are either already using or actively considering skills-based hiring as their main method of recruiting—more than any other country surveyed.

According to a 2021 LinkedIn report[34] Mexico produces an impressive amount of STEM professionals, with about 25% of all Mexican university grads majoring in STEM fields[35] About three million professionals in Mexico work in STEM and an additional 250,000 class of 2020-21 graduates earned degrees in STEM. Students in Mexico are seeking out more opportunities for careers in computer engineering and software after gaining the skills necessary to obtain fast-paced STEM jobs.
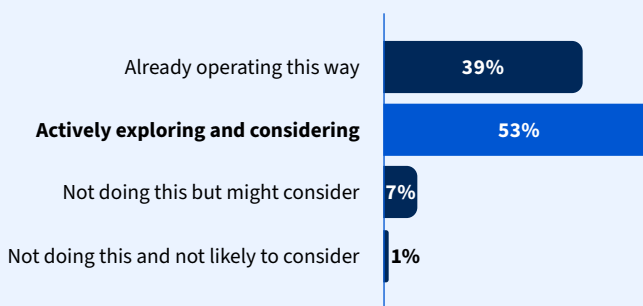
Figure 20: Moving towards skills-based hiring

Question: Which of the following best describes the extent to which your organization hires based on skills?

Already operating this way	39%
Actively exploring and considering	53%
Not doing this but might consider	7%
Not doing this and not likely to consider	1%

n=150, see figure 35 in the Appendix for additional results

United States

Figure 21: Influence on choosing a university program

Question: If a program included Professional Certificates as part of its curriculum, to what extent would this influence your decision to enroll in that program? (0% = not at all, 100% = very much)
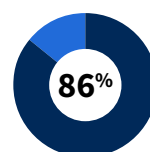
STUDENTS

Students are 74% more likely to enroll in a school that offers Professional Certificates as part of their university program.

A 2022 Cengage survey shows more than half (53%) of college graduates in America have not applied to entry-level jobs in their field because they felt unprepared.[36] 42% said they felt unqualified because they did not have the most critical skills listed for the job. Higher education institutions that supplement their curriculum with Professional Certificates may help students in the United States feel more prepared to apply to in-demand jobs.
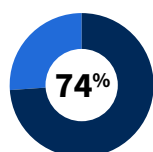
74% of students in the U.S. are more likely to choose a university program with a Professional Certificate (figure 21)

86% of students in the U.S. agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job

n=306, see figure 2 in the global perspectives section for additional results

EMPLOYERS

Eighty-six percent of employers agree that earning a Professional Certificate strengthens a candidate's job application.

The pandemic prompted a structural reset in how employers in the U.S. hire for jobs—shifting to prioritize hiring on the basis of demonstrated skills.[37] U.S. employers still highly value a college degree, but they are also seeking skills-based competency in their candidates. Our UPCEA research [38] data confirms that while growing enrollments in degree programs are still the top priority among university leaders, there is a strong growing belief that industry micro-credentials are a key to continuing to grow enrollment.

Figure 22: Strengthening a candidate's job application

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate strengthens a candidate's job application (Agree or Strongly Agree)
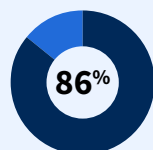
86% of employers in the U.S. believe that Professional Certificates will strengthen a candidate's job application.

n=150, see figure 4 in the global perspectives section for additional results

THE MIDDLE EAST &
NORTH AFRICA

Egypt

STUDENTS

Nearly all (98%) of students agree that earning a Professional Certificate would help them stand out to employers and get a job after graduation.

Egypt's economy benefits greatly from overseas financing that supplements military spending. Egypt's currency hit a record low in the fall of 2022.[39] Egypt's next generation faces the pressure of sustaining the economic, social, and political growth of their country.[40] To improve youth employment, universities in Egypt can help students gain skills that align with the needs of local industries, such as manufacturing and engineering.[41] As one of the main players fueling North Africa's economy, this growth in youth employment in Egypt will not only help the country, but also the entire region.

Figure 23: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)

98% of students in Egypt agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 23)

92% of students in Egypt agree that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed at their job

n=305, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results
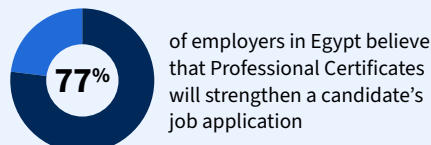
EMPLOYERS

More than three-quarters of employers (77%) say that a Professional Certificate would strengthen a candidate's job application.

Local industries in Egypt like manufacturing, which could greatly benefit from technological innovation, have great employment potential for college graduates.[42] If higher education institutions in Egypt offer Professional Certificates focused on skills like project management or data science, they can help students enter and be successful in the burgeoning industry.

Figure 24: Strengthening a candidate's job application

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate strengthens a candidate's job application (Agree or Strongly Agree)

77% of employers in Egypt believe that Professional Certificates will strengthen a candidate's job application

n=150, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results

Saudi Arabia

STUDENTS

Nearly every student (97%) agrees that earning a Professional Certificate would help them stand out to employers and get a job when graduating.

In 2020, the youth unemployment rate in Saudi Arabia increased to almost 30 percent.[43] In 2016, Saudi Arabia announced Vision 2030 to reduce dependence on oil and invest in key sectors such as technology, finance, and healthcare.[44] Saudi Arabia aims to create a more sustainable economy, increase employment, and improve quality of life. To accelerate this, the National eLearning Center launched FutureX[45] to prepare students and job seekers for this modern labor market. By prioritizing higher education that teaches critical STEM and sustainability skills, students in Saudi Arabia will be better prepared for the 2030 job market.

Figure 25: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)

97% of students in Saudi Arabia agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 25)

91% of students in Saudi Arabia agree that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed at their job

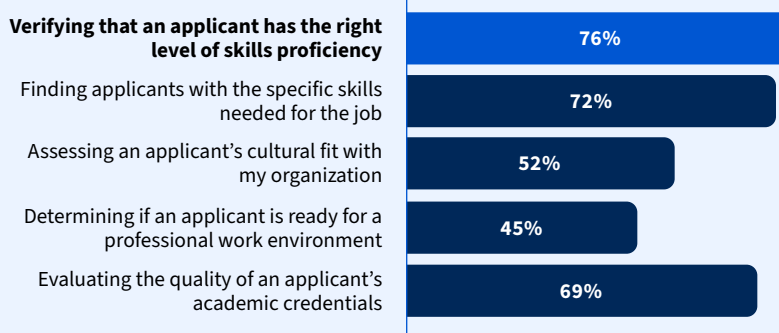n=305, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results

EMPLOYERS

Seventy-six percent of employers find it challenging to verify if job applicants have the skills needed for the job.

The job market in Saudi Arabia requires skills tailored towards sectors like healthcare and technology. As part of Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia is developing Taqat—a platform to bring together job seekers and employers to offer training and upskill Saudi workers.[46] Higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia that supplement degree offerings with industry micro-credentials can collaborate with the government to help students prepare for the Saudi job market.

Figure 26: Top challenges when hiring graduates

Question: To what extent are the following factors very challenging or challenging when hiring recent graduates?

Challenge	Percent
Verifying that an applicant has the right level of skills proficiency	76%
Finding applicants with the specific skills needed for the job	72%
Assessing an applicant's cultural fit with my organization	52%
Determining if an applicant is ready for a professional work environment	45%
Evaluating the quality of an applicant's academic credentials	69%

n=150, see figure 36 in the appendix for additional results

United Arab Emirates

Figure 27: Standing out and getting a job

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate will help me stand out to employers and get a job when I graduate. (Agree or Strongly Agree)
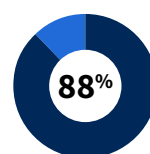
STUDENTS

Nearly every (97%) student agrees that earning a Professional Certificate would help them stand out to employers and get a job when graduating.

The pandemic hit the United Arab Emirates especially hard. A survey of Arab youth living in the UAE just after the pandemic began showed that 90% were struggling to find work after graduating from university.[47] However, a potential bright spot for the UAE job market is in tech—students and young employees have said that they were excited about the prospect of using new digital skills in the workplace[48] as technology continues to evolve in the job market.
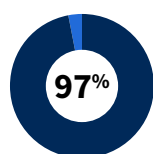
97% of students in the UAE agree that a Professional Certificate will help them get a job (figure 27)

88% of students in the UAE agree that a Professional Certificate will help them succeed at their job

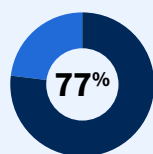n=305, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results.

Figure 28: Strengthening a candidate's job application

Question: Earning a Professional Certificate strengthens a candidate's job application (Agree or Strongly Agree)

EMPLOYERS

Seventy-seven percent of employers agree that a Professional Certificate would strengthen a candidate's job application.

The UAE aims to change its perception in the region as an oil-driven economy by investing heavily in the technology sector in the coming decade. In the first half of 2022, the Middle East region secured $1.7 billion in venture capital investments and the UAE specifically received 46 percent.[49] With this enormous capital available, job prospects in the region are expected to grow in the coming years. Higher education institutions can help students in the UAE take advantage of this by offering Professional Certificates in technology skills that will give them necessary skills to prepare for emerging technology jobs.

77% of employers in the UAE believe that Professional Certificates will strengthen a candidate's job application

n=150, see figure 1 in the global perspectives section for additional results

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> **"**
>
> **As a Dean, I am assured that Career Academy participants are obtaining skills that they desire and that are related to current job openings. The student response has been overwhelmingly positive.**
>
> **Mark S. Rosenbaum, Ph.D., Dean**
> College of Business at Hawaii Pacific University

Appendix

Methodology

In the summer and fall of 2022, Coursera conducted surveys of students and employers in countries across the globe in order to help higher education institutions better understand what students need to secure a job after graduating. In partnership with two market research firms, Dynata and Repdata, we secured results that provided detailed insights into the desires, needs, and challenges that many students and employers are facing globally, with the specific motivations and problems that are most pressing within the unique context of each country. In partnership with Dynata, we surveyed more than 2,400 students and 1,200 employers in Australia, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In partnership with Repdata, we surveyed more than 900 students and 450 employers in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Our sample sizes enabled us to obtain results with an industry-standard range of error at a 95% confidence level for both surveys.

Student Demographics

Figure 29: University experience

Question: Which of the following best describes your university experience?
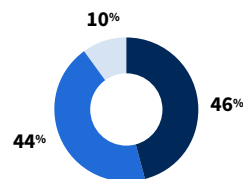
10%
46%
44%

6%
55%
39%

Percentages for Australia, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States, n=2407

Percentages for Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, n=915

■ Fully in-person   ■ Mix   ■ Fully online
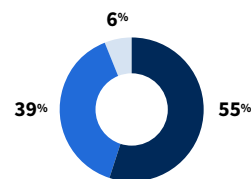
Figure 30: Gender

Question: With which of the following do you most identify?

2%
43%
55%

1%
60%
39%

Percentages for Australia, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States, n=2407

Percentages for Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, n=915

■ Male   ■ Female   ■ Non-binary

Figure 31: Generation

Question: With which of the
following do you most identify?

Current students by country

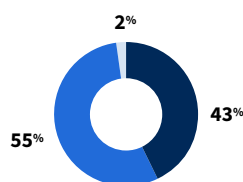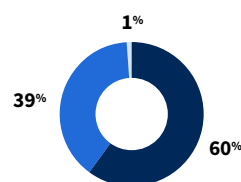|		First generation	Second generation	
ASIA PACIFIC	Australia	63%	37%	n = 300
	India	70%	30%	n = 301
EUROPE	France	63%	37%	n = 300
	Germany	67%	33%	n = 300
	Turkey	77%	23%	n = 300
	United Kingdom	67%	33%	n = 300
NORTH AMERICA	Mexico	64%	36%	n = 300
	United States	53%	47%	n = 306
THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	Egypt	71%	29%	n = 185
	Saudi Arabia	52%	48%	n = 183
	UAE	45%	55%	n = 171

■ First generation   ■ Second generation

Current graduates by country

		First generation	Second generation	
ASIA PACIFIC	Australia	62%	38%	n = 300
	India	61%	39%	n = 301
EUROPE	France	48%	52%	n = 300
	Germany	61%	39%	n = 300
	Turkey	68%	32%	n = 300
	United Kingdom	69%	31%	n = 300
NORTH AMERICA	Mexico	60%	40%	n = 300
	United States	52%	48%	n = 306
THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	Egypt	48%	52%	n = 120
	Saudi Arabia	41%	59%	n = 122
	UAE	54%	46%	n = 134

■ First generation   ■ Second generation

Employer Firmographics

Figure 32*: Industries represented*

Question: What industry does your company operate in?

Industry (Base=Total respondents)	Total % n=1218
Technology	**17**
Manufacturing	14
Financial services	11
Retail and consumer products	10
Health care	9
Professional services	9
Construction	6
Education	6
Utilities and/or energy	4
Automotive	3
Media and/or communications	3
Pharmaceuticals	2
Other	6

Australia, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States

Industry (Base=Total respondents)	Total % n=450
Construction	**14**
Technology	14
Retail and consumer products	13
Education	13
Manufacturing	12
Financial services	12
Health care	7
Professional services	5
Utilities and/or energy	4
Pharmaceuticals	3
Media and/or communications	2
Other	0
Automotive	0

Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates

Figure 33*: Categories of jobs*

Question: What categories of jobs do you hire for?

Category (Base=Total respondents)	Total % n=1218
Information technology (e.g. IT support specialist)	**56**
Data and AI (e.g. data analyst)	51
Business (e.g. financial analyst)	50
Engineering (e.g. software developer)	48
Project management (e.g. program manager)	45
Marketing (e.g. digital marketer)	38
Design (e.g. UX / UI designer)	35
Public relations and communications (e.g. PR associate)	33
Sales (e.g. sales representative)	30
Health care (e.g. nurse practitioner)	28
Other	5

Australia, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States

Category (Base=Total respondents)	Total % n=450
Sales (e.g. sales representative)	**47**
Marketing (e.g. digital marketer)	30
Information technology (e.g. IT support specialist)	19
Business (e.g. financial analyst)	18
Data and AI (e.g. data analyst)	16
Project management (e.g. program manager)	15
Health care (e.g. nurse practitioner)	11
Engineering (e.g. software developer)	11
Public relations and communications (e.g. PR associate)	10
Other	10
Design (e.g. UX / UI designer)	5

Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates

Additional Results

Figure 34: Impact on future job success (students)

Question: Once I'm hired, a Professional Certificate will help me succeed in my job. (Agree or Strongly Agree)
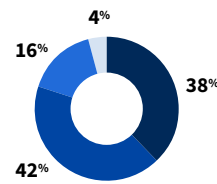
Percentages for Australia, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States, n=2407

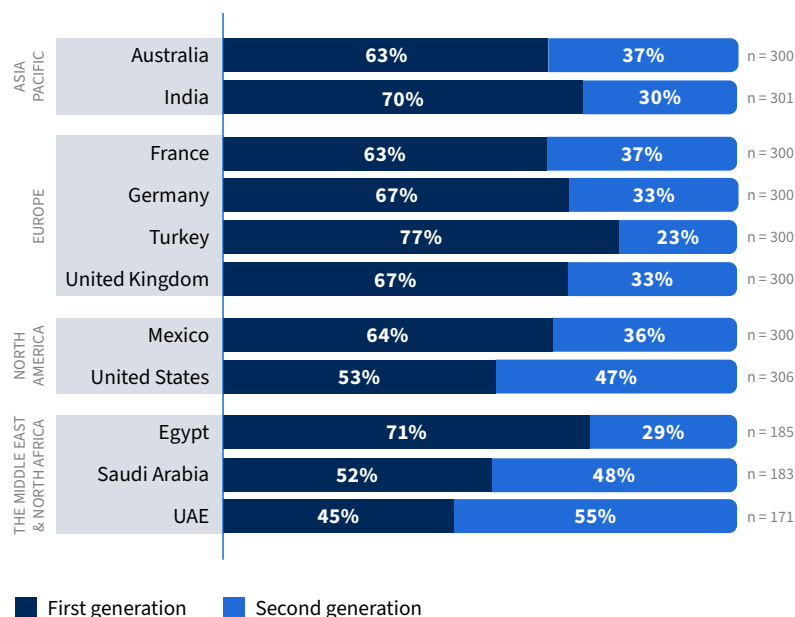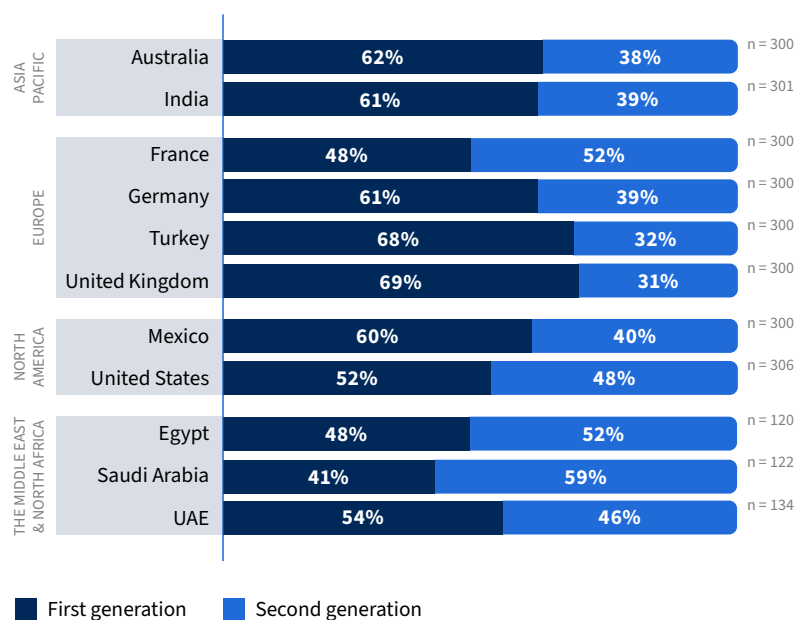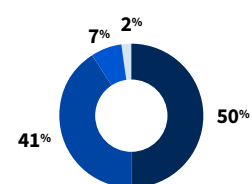Percentages for Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, n=915

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither ▫ Disagree

Figure 35: Moving towards skills-based hiring (employers)

Question: Which of the following best describes the extent to which your organization hires based on skills?

Region	Country	Already operating this way	Actively exploring and considering	Not doing this but might consider	Not doing this and not likely to consider	Not sure	n
ASIA PACIFIC	Australia	37%	42%	19%	1%	1%	n = 150
	India	35%	49%	9%	7%		n = 150
EUROPE	France	37%	28%	25%	7%	3%	n = 152
	Germany	38%	43%	16%	3		n = 165
	Turkey	22%	52%	7%	19%		n = 151
	United Kingdom	27%	43%	22%	7%	1%	n = 150
NORTH AMERICA	Mexico	39%	53%	7%	1%		n = 150
	United States	39%	34%	20%	5%	2%	n = 150
THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	Egypt	49%	44%	3	4	1%	n = 150
	Saudi Arabia	51%	45%	5%			n = 150
	UAE	49%	47%	3			n = 150

■ Already operating this way ■ Actively exploring and considering
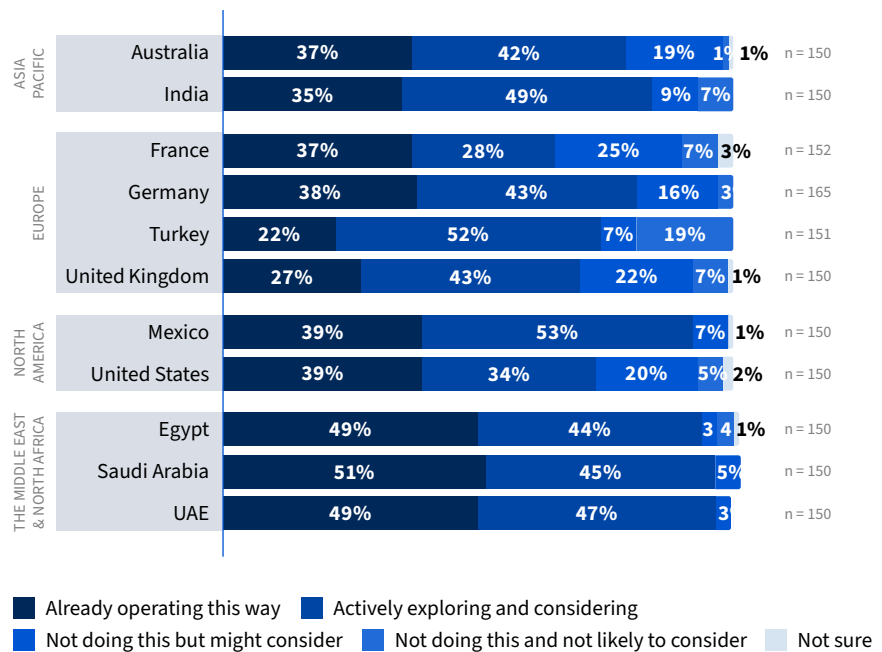■ Not doing this but might consider ■ Not doing this and not likely to consider ▫ Not sure

Figure 36: Top challenges when hiring graduates (employers)

Question: To what extent are the following factors very challenging or challenging when hiring recent graduates?

	ASIA PACIFIC		EUROPE				NORTH AMERICA		THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA		
	Australia	India	France	Germany	Turkey	United Kingdom	Mexico	United States	Egypt	Saudi Arabia	UAE
	n = 150	n = 150	n = 152	n = 165	n = 151	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150
Determining if an applicant is ready for a professional work environment	50	48	**53%**	**47%**	**27%**	**57%**	**51%**	**55%**	**65%**	**76%**	**73%**
Finding applicants with the specific skills needed for the job	**52%**	**62%**	40	36	12	48	33	53	61	72	70
Verifying that an applicant has the right level of skills proficiency	48	58	25	27	14	35	28	49	57	69	70
Assessing an applicant's cultural fit with my organization	48	59	21	29	13	31	25	38	45	45	51
Evaluating the quality of an applicant's academic credentials	46	58	18	29	9	25	20	36	42	52	43

Figure 37: Motivations for skills-based hiring practices (employers)

Question: What are the main motivations for your organization's use or consideration of skills-based hiring practices? (Select all that apply)

|	ASIA PACIFIC		EUROPE				NORTH AMERICA		THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA		
	Australia	India	France	Germany	Turkey	United Kingdom	Mexico	United States	Egypt	Saudi Arabia	UAE
	n = 147	n = 140	n = 138	n = 160	n = 123	n = 138	n = 148	n = 139	n = 149	n = 150	n = 150
Verify that candidates have the right skills for the role	46	**84%**	**79%**	**74%**	**85%**	**78%**	**81%**	**69%**	**68%**	59	**69%**
Expand our talent pipeline in order to meet our hiring goals	**61%**	66	43	60	76	77	68	67	57	**61%**	48
Improve diversity, equity, and inclusion	58	69	46	57	75	46	56	55	56	51	57
Quality of university degrees is difficult to assess	50	73	49	59	73	50	55	54	54	51	55
Increase confidence that candidates will succeed in the role if hired	35	61	33	48	36	53	24	48	48	49	54
Job-readiness of university graduates is difficult to measure	13	52	29	24	20	29	18	25	50	49	49

Figure 38: The skills most difficult to find (employers)

Question: What types of skills are most difficult to find among recent university graduates? (Rank the top 2, with 1 being the most difficult)

	ASIA PACIFIC		EUROPE				NORTH AMERICA		THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA		
	Australia	India	France	Germany	Turkey	United Kingdom	Mexico	United States	Egypt	Saudi Arabia	UAE
	n = 150	n = 150	n = 152	n = 165	n = 151	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150	n = 150
Human or soft skills (e.g. critical thinking, communication)	**52%**	50	**63%**	49	40	**68%**	**62%**	**65%**	**77%**	**72%**	**74%**
Technology skills (e.g. computer programming)	50	**63%**	40	50	**65%**	38	42	46	21	21	22
Business skills (e.g. sales)	37	43	51	46	45	53	39	44	57	59	62
Data skills (e.g. data analysis)	60	43	45	**54%**	50	41	55	41	39	43	35
Other	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	3	7	5	7

Figure 39: Likelihood of earning a Professional Certificate (students)

Question: How likely are you to earn a Professional Certificate as part of your university program? (0%=not likely, 100%=very likely)
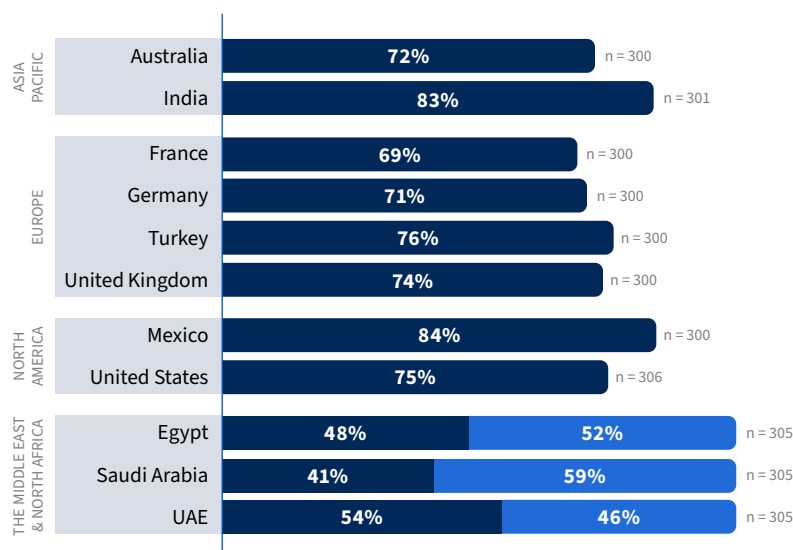
The percentages for the countries in the Middle East & North Africa represent the number of students who ranked the likelihood as a 6 or above on a 10 point scale, where 1=not at all and 10=very much.

■ 9-10   ■ 6-8

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