

What dream career did you have in mind when you chose your university course?

How did your thoughts about grad jobs impact your decisions?

Did you even know what student recruitment was?



Connecting courses to careers

The importance of graduate outcomes
in student decision making

A quick introduction



Lydia Derbyshire
HE Partnerships Manager

Unifrog in numbers

3000+

UK schools and colleges



125k+

Active **UK teachers**



2 million+

Active **UK students**

4,000

fewer students become
NEET each year thanks
to Unifrog



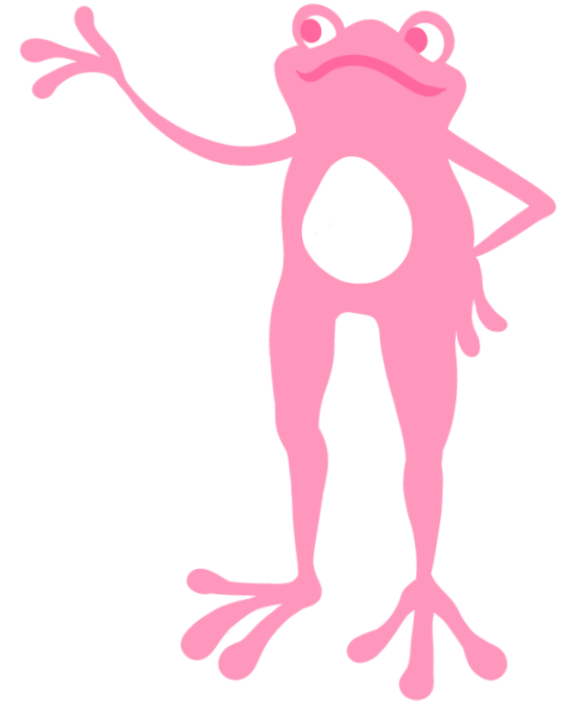


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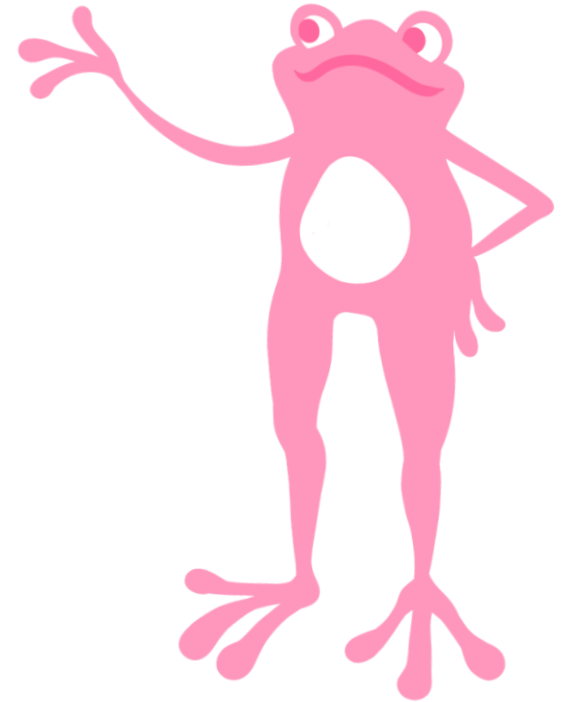
Today's session

- ★ **Understand** trends for the 2026 cohort



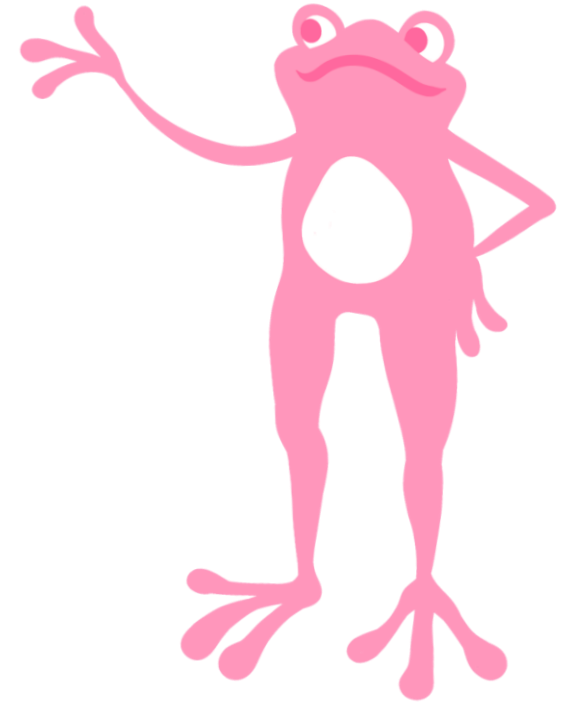
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- ★ **Explore** connections to career sector trends and LMI



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- ★ **Understand** trends for the 2026 cohort
- ★ **Explore** connections to career sector trends and LMI
- ★ **Apply** these insights to recruitment activity





What do we know about the 2026 cohort?

Make your predictions...

What's most important to the 2026 cohort?

Can you predict the common themes and popular subjects that 2026 entry students are talking about?

slido.com
#2115 824

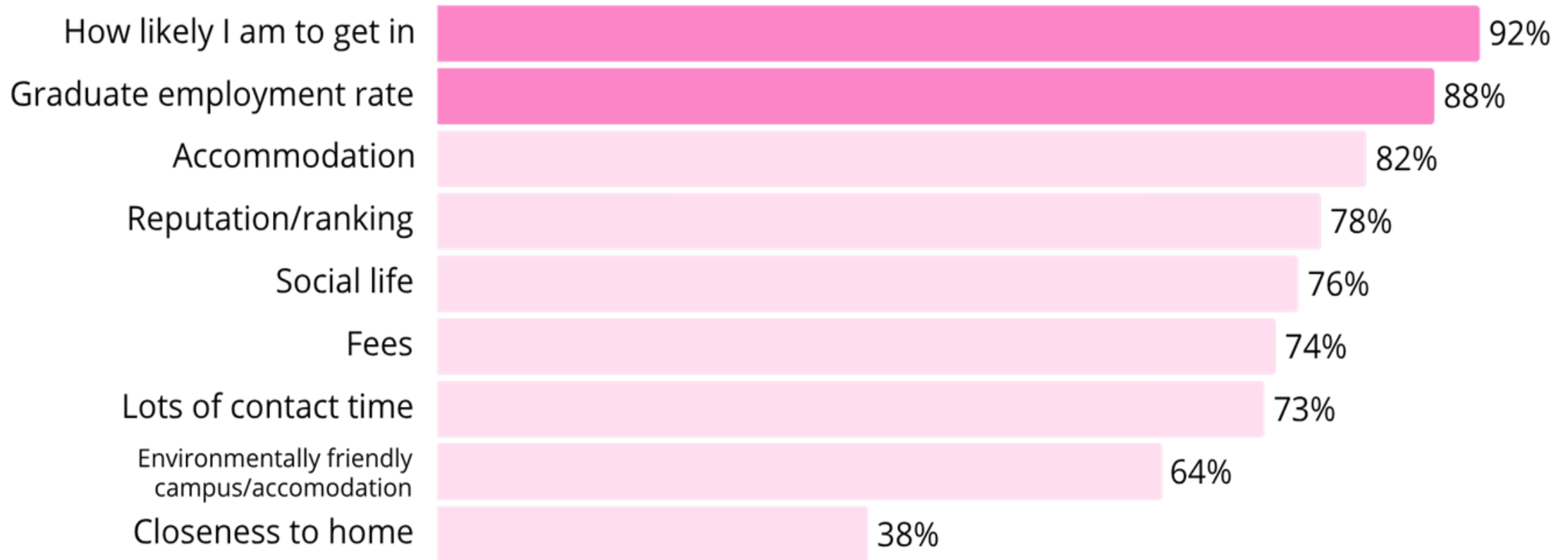


What do you think is most important to the 2026 cohort?



Key considerations for the 2026 cohort

Factors rated 'important' or 'very important' when choosing a university



Employment sits near the top

Graduate employment rate is one of the **top two factors** students consider when deciding their next steps.

49% of A-level students said their decision-making was largely influenced by career prospects.

Yet, university communications tend to place **less emphasis on career prospects** than on factors like social life, location, or reputation.

Prospects' "Early Careers" 2024 survey

Explaining the data

Unifrog's **UK university tool** is where students select their preferred courses and universities, placing them into a 'shortlist' of options.

Skills profile ✓ Quiz last taken 15 May 25	Activities ✗ Recorded at least 10	UK universities 261 shortlists
Quiz profile ✓ 4 of 4 quizzes complete	Skills ✗ Completed all 12	European universities 90 shortlists
UCAT practice ✓ Test last taken 5 Sep 25	Interactions ✗ Missing 6 Interaction types	Oxbridge 2 shortlists
Exploring	Academics ✗ No Classes selected	Apprenticeships 2 shortlists
Careers library		

Explaining the data

We look at how often subjects appear in students' shortlists to understand **popularity** and **predict** which subjects are likely to attract the most applications in the **2026 cycle**.

Skills profile

✓ Quiz last taken 15 May 25

>

Quiz profile

✓ 4 of 4 quizzes complete

>

UCAT practice

✓ Test last taken 5 Sep 25

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Exploring

Careers library

Activities

✗ Recorded at least 10

>

Skills

✗ Completed all 12

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Interactions

✗ Missing 6 Interaction types

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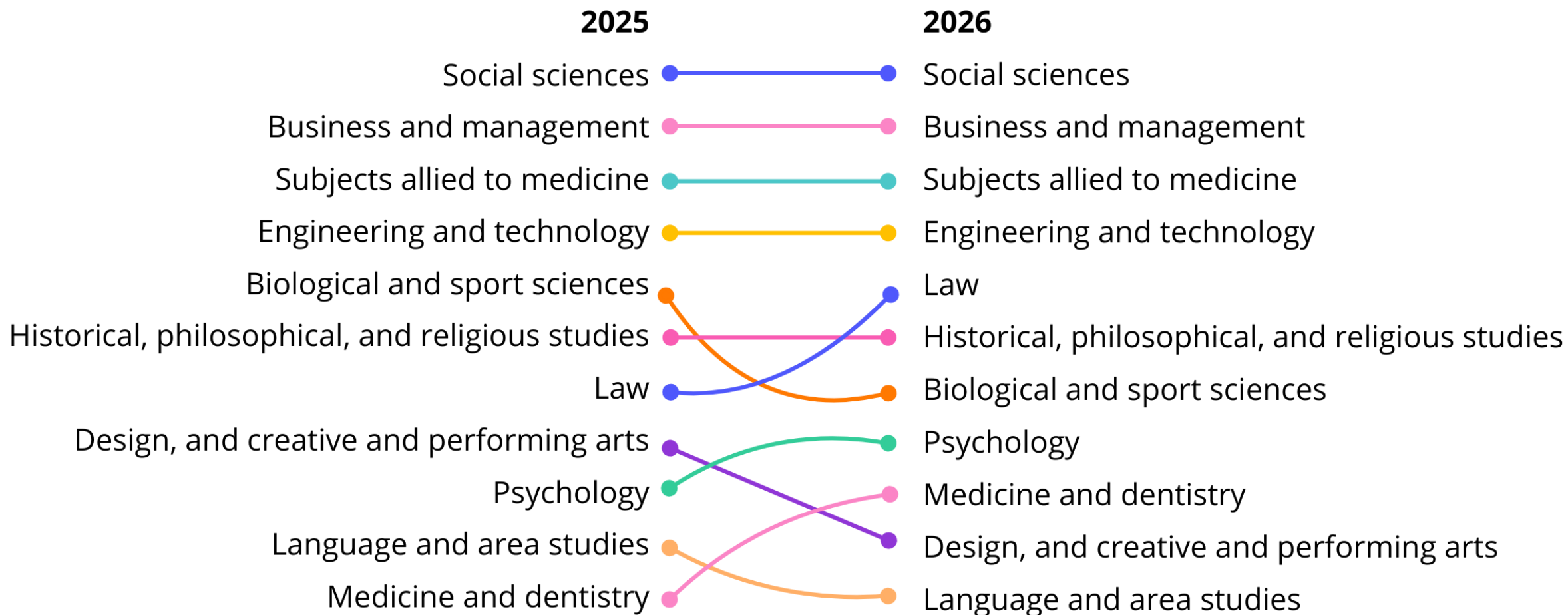
Apprenticeships

2 shortlists

>

Subject trends for the 2026 cohort

Top CAH1 subject shortlists on Unifrog



Subject trends for the 2026 cohort



The top five subjects
arguably share a **common**
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Social sciences also saw the **biggest increase** in shortlists between 2025/2026.

Subject trends for the 2026 cohort



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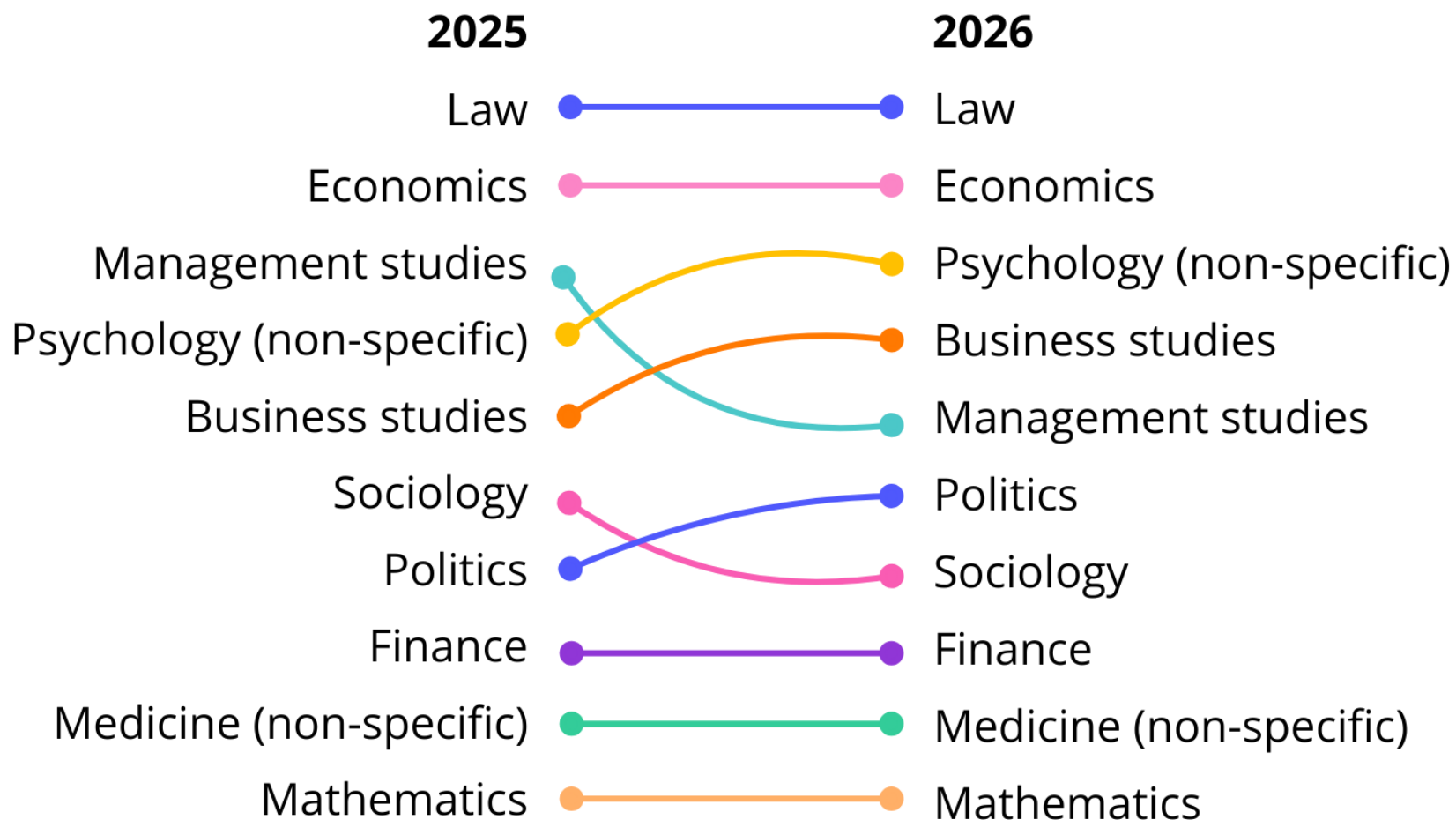
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Top 5 social science subjects on Unifrog

- 1 Economics
- 2 Politics
- 3 Criminology
- 4 International relations
- 5 Sociology

Breaking it down by subject

Top CAH3 subject shortlists on Unifrog





Connecting subjects to careers

Explaining the data

Subject and Career library guides are **short online guides** that help students understand what studying a subject or working in a career involves, and where it can lead.



1 Start 2 Longlist 3 Profile

Subjects library

Find the best subjects for you, then save your favourites here:



Building surveying and Construction

The design, planning, construction, and restoration of buildings.

[Read the guide >](#)



Materials science

The study of the structure, properties, and uses of new and existing materials.

[Read the guide >](#)



Criminology

Criminology is a social science that focuses on the study of crimes and their causes, effects, and social impact.

[Read the guide >](#)



1 Start 2 Longlist 3 Profile

Careers library

Find the best careers for you, then save your favourites here:



Barrister

Barristers give specialist legal advice and represent people in court. In some countries, there is no separation between this and the Solicitor role.

[Read the profile >](#)



Accounting technician

Accounting technicians manage the financial side of a company or charity.

[Read the profile >](#)



Security Service officer

Security Service officers are the UK's domestic version of intelligence officers – they conduct intelligence activities for the internal security of the country.

[Read the profile >](#)

Explaining the data

The following data is a direct comparison of the popularity of these resources, demonstrating the subjects and careers students are **showing most interest in**.



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Subject and career interest 2026

Top 10 Career library guides

	1	Psychologist
	2	Forensic psychologist
	3	CEO
	4	Investment banker
	5	Entrepreneur
	6	Solicitor
	7	Barrister
	8	Finance manager
	9	Psychotherapist
	10	Child psychologist

Top 10 Subject library guides

	1	Psychology
	2	Business and management
	3	Law and legal studies
	4	Criminology
	5	Finance
	6	Economics
	7	Marketing
	8	Politics and international relations
	9	Mathematics
	10	Biology and biological sciences

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Notable trends



Psychology and therapy increased in rank and is now the **most popular** Career sector for 2026 students.



Computers features in the top 10 for **IMD 1-3** students, but 21st for **IMD 4-10**.



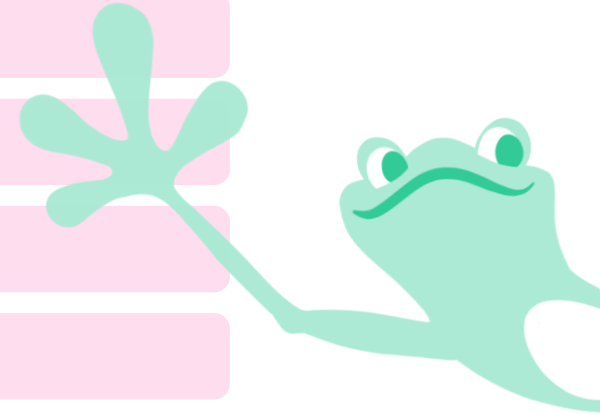
IMD 4-10 students are more interested in **Business management and Finance** careers than their **IMD 1-3** peers.

How does this stack up to LMI data?

6 out of the top 10 careers in government demand feature within the top 10 favoured Careers library guides amongst 2026 cycle students.

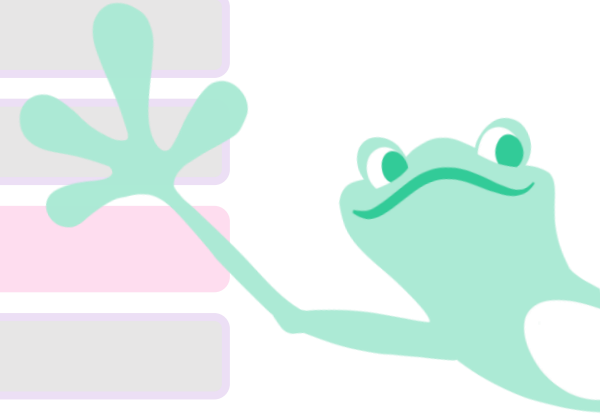
Top 10 in government demand professions

- 1 Business, media, and public service professionals
- 2 Caring personal service occupations
- 3 Elementary administrators and service occupations
- 4 Corporate managers and directors
- 5 Other managers and proprietors
- 6 Science, research, engineering, and technology professionals
- 7 Health professionals
- 8 Teaching and other educational professionals
- 9 Business and public service associate professionals
- 10 Administrative occupations



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Applying what you know

Connecting subjects and careers: **forensics**



Turn your curiosity into a career in forensics For students

Forensic investigation isn't just about crime scenes and fingerprints – it's a fascinating, multidisciplinary topic that shapes how we uncover facts and truth. Join Professor Claire Gwinnett from the University of Staffordshire as she reveals how studying forensic science will equip you with skills to investigate hidden evidence, contribute to research, and tackle challenges that matter globally. If you're curious about science, justice, or problem-solving, forensics could be an exciting career.

**Webinar: Turn your curiosity
into a career in forensics**

University of Staffordshire



415 sign-ups

Connecting subjects and careers: **business**



The future of work 2030: how to develop high impact “un-LLM-able” skills For students

Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT are radically changing how work is carried out in many industries, and having a dramatic impact on graduate recruitment. Join Professor Stephen Todd (UCL School of Management) to explore how you can develop high impact skills that AI can't replicate. He'll also share key ideas and ways of thinking from business, engineering, and art and design which can help you build the deep foundations you need to succeed in a post-LLM world.

**Webinar: The future of
work 2030**

UCL School of Management



302 sign-ups

Connecting subjects and careers: law



Where can a law degree take you? For students

A law degree opens doors far beyond the courtroom. Whether you're interested in practising as a solicitor or barrister, pursuing opportunities in business, government, or international organisations, or applying your skills in unexpected sectors, the possibilities are wide-ranging. Join Kirsty McDougall, a lecturer in law at the University of Southampton, for an insightful webinar exploring the diverse career paths available to law graduates.

**Webinar: Where can a
law degree take you?**
University of Southampton



391 sign-ups

Connecting subjects and careers: **psychology**



What's it really like to be a clinical psychologist? For students

Join the University of Hull for a rare opportunity to hear first-hand from a practising clinical psychologist about the training pathways, the highs and challenges of the job, and what makes this career so rewarding and fulfilling. You'll also discover Hull's fast-track training programme, which comprises a degree in psychology and a fully-funded doctorate that pays you an NHS salary whilst you train! Ideal if you're thinking about working in healthcare, forensics, or psychology.

**Webinar: What's it really like to
be a clinical psychologist?**

The University of Hull



381 sign-ups

Connecting subjects and careers: **healthcare**



Healthcare: master your application and find your dream role For students

Join this webinar from the University of Southampton to learn more about a career in healthcare. You'll learn how to prepare for a healthcare application, including tips for gaining work experience and the skills universities are looking for. We'll also explore the range of roles available across the healthcare profession, like occupational therapy, nursing, midwifery, and physiotherapy, to help you decide which one is the best fit for you.


**Webinar: Master your
application and find your
dream role**

University of Southampton



375 sign-ups

What did **students** have to say?



The amount of detail about the job and showing the side and **jobs** of forensics science **people likely forget about** or are not aware.


I enjoyed learning about the **alternative law careers** that some I did not expect, which was very interesting.

I found it really interesting and **opened up a career pathway I didn't know about before.**

I really enjoyed how in depth it was and how it gave me **more reassurance on what career paths** I could go down if I were to take a Criminology degree.

I enjoyed that the session fully explained what it means to be a biomedical scientist and **what it's like day to day** so I can understand more about the job.

I really enjoyed hearing about **the student successes**, as they were really inspirational and gave me an idea of how to **develop creative skills into a job.**



Discussion time!

How do you currently link to graduate careers in your recruitment comms/activity?

Group activity

Come up with an engaging title & one hour session for your subject, with a focus on careers.

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Healthcare: master your application find your dream role

You be the judge: the real-life challenges of sentencing

The future of work 2030: how to develop high impact “un-LLM-able” skills

Turn curiosity into a career in forensics

Biomedical sciences: the power to change lives

The green chemistry revolution: rethinking how we make (pretty much) everything

Key takeaways

- ★ Graduate employment rate remains a **top-two driver** of student decision-making

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- ★ Students want **course-specific career pathways**, not generic careers advice

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- ★ Graduate employment rate remains a **top-two driver** of student decision-making
- ★ Students want **course-specific career pathways**, not generic careers advice
- ★ Subject popularity is linked to **well-defined career opportunities**

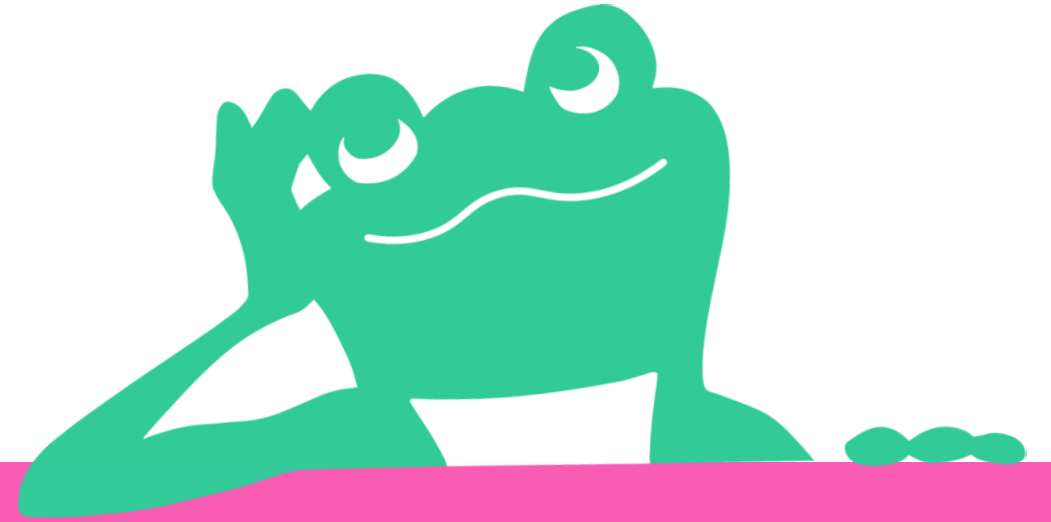
Something to consider...

How can you better embed graduate outcomes into recruitment activity?

Scan for all things **Unifrog**



<https://pitch.com/r/heloa-national-conference-2026-q34zcy>



Thanks for listening! Any questions?

www.unifrog.org/universities