

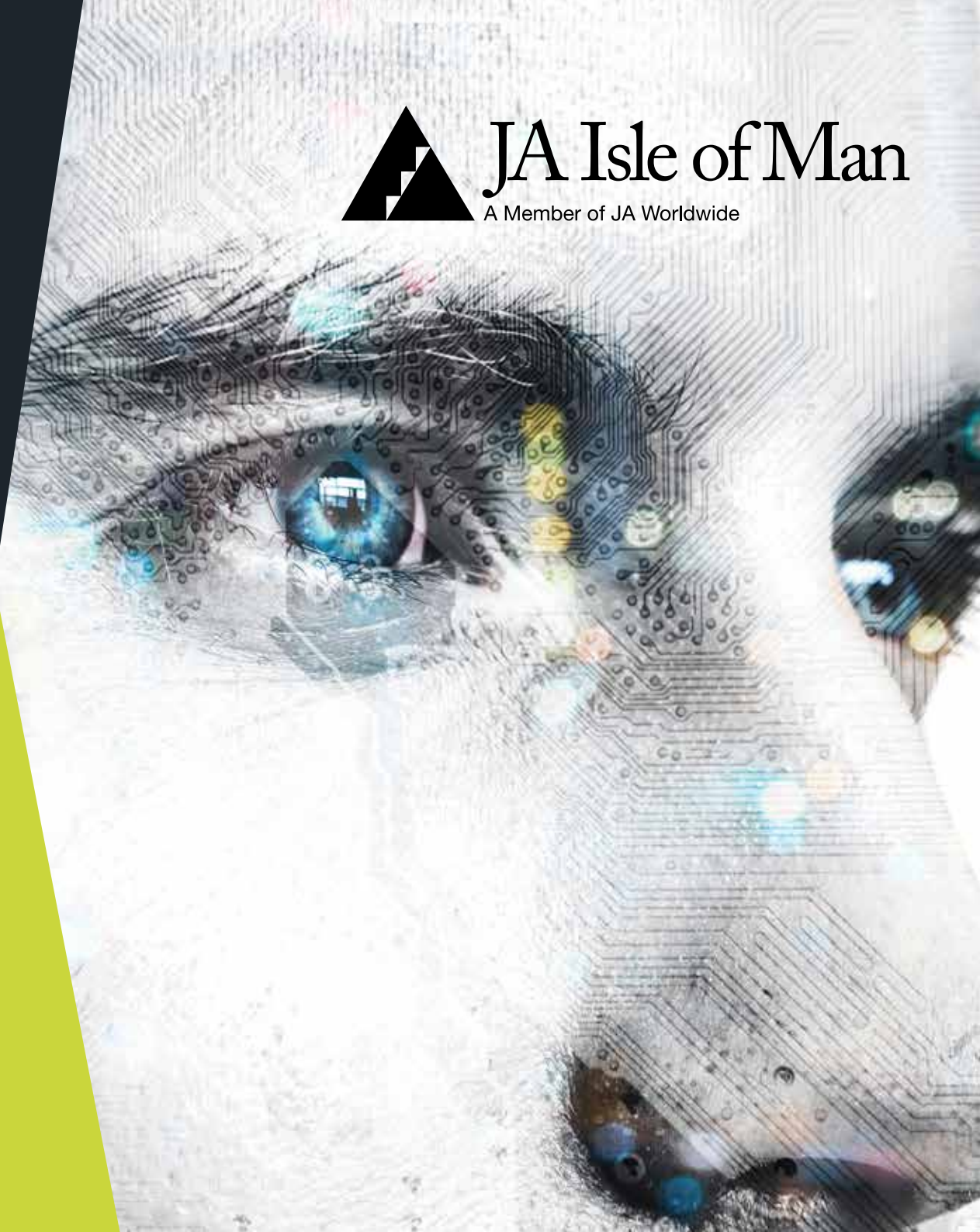
JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

believes in the boundless potential of young people



JA Isle of Man

A Member of JA Worldwide



Gen Z tells us what more can be done to help young people prepare for the world of work.

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Foreword



Sue Cook, CEO
JA Isle of Man

Prior to joining Junior Achievement in 2009, I worked in the recruitment industry for 20 years. During that time, I helped many young people secure their first role after leaving education.

I experienced first-hand how some young people would struggle during the interview process to articulate their skills, experience and suitability for a role. It was evident that they had the capability but without the necessary coaching and support, they would not have made it through the interview process.

I wanted to do more to help prepare young people for the world of work and this influenced my decision to take up the role of CEO with Junior Achievement.

In 2012, the board of JA Isle of Man approved a strategy to try to help reduce unemployment by providing careers education to every student from the age of 11. At that time the number of unemployed people aged 16 to 24 stood at 436 (Jan 2012)

Move forward to 2021; the number of unemployed people under the age of 24 is just 80 (July 2021).

Junior Achievement has come a long way since 2012, thanks to the support of local employers and more than 200 volunteers from business and the wider community. Our charity still has more work to do.

In an ever-changing world, we felt it was important to look at how we will shape our strategy for the next five years. To help facilitate this we have undertaken a valuable piece of research. This is due to be published in two parts.

Part one of the research has been carried out by a summer intern funded by the Department for Enterprise. They reached out to more than 300 young people aged 17-24, all of whom have been educated in the Isle of Man and have made the transition from full-time education to employment in the last six years. Known as Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012).

The aims of this research are:

- Help shape the future strategy of Junior Achievement
- Make recommendations to employers on how to adapt their working practices to attract future talent
- Listen and learn from the feedback of this generation to help support the next generation
- Identify any enhancements that will enable schools to support students in making the transition into the workplace

Although many business leaders and educators already understand what needs to be done to support the next generation, we hope that the insights we provide will inspire readers to go one step further in helping to support the work of Junior Achievement. Working together, we can help prepare this generation of young people to take on the unprecedented challenges of the future.

Demographics

305 Respondents // Age group 17-24

All respondents have been educated at one of the six high schools in the Isle of Man

Age Group: 17-24 year olds known as Gen Z, were chosen to provide a wider set of results. No one cohort had a percentile of more than 20%; 19-year olds were the largest cohort comprising 18% of total respondents, with 24-year olds being the smallest, comprising 6% of total respondents.

This survey is representative of 4% of the Islands population of 17-24 year olds (Isle of Man Government's Census 2016).



Executive Summary

In spring 2021, Junior Achievement held a meeting with the Department for Education, Sport and Culture to discuss the future of careers education and the continued work of our charity. The aim of that meeting was to look how we could better prepare the next generation for the world of work.

As a result, Junior Achievement chose to conduct an independent piece of research to establish if the current system provides sufficient help to young people in preparing them for the world of work.

More than 300 young people were involved in the research. Given the size of the population on the Isle of Man, we believed it to be a sufficient number of responses to provide meaningful results.

These are the main findings:

- A need for increased experiential learning outside of the classroom
- Raise awareness of employment opportunities on the Isle of Man
- A focus on improving communication as a soft skill
- More support for those students not wanting to go onto further education
- Co-ordinated and focused approach to businesses going into schools
- Gen Z value flexible working as one of the most important factors when looking for a job
- Employers need to engage and invest in young people whilst in education to attract talent
- Junior Achievement programmes work

The research finds that the Isle of Man has an able generation of young people who are highly motivated, well qualified and engaged with the realities of the working world. Despite this, many feel there are limited opportunities on the Isle of Man.

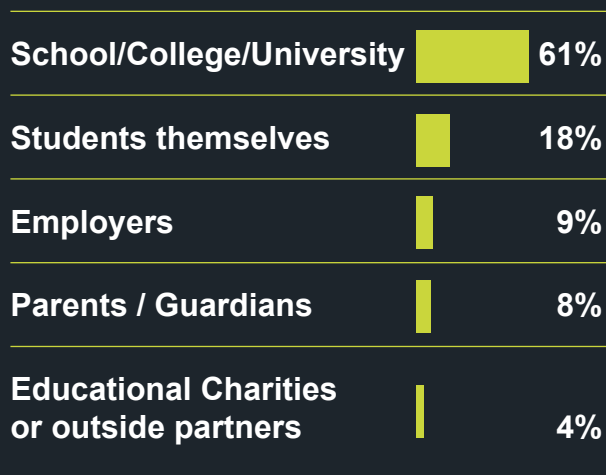
“I remember Junior Achievement coming into my school. I gained a lot of knowledge, especially about money management.

I am also grateful to Junior Achievement for my first mock interview with an employer. This gave me a lot of insight and confidence going forward”.

How Gen Z see the role of educational establishments

Gen Z indicated that they would have liked to have taken more accountability for their own career development but still relied heavily on educational establishments to prepare them for the world of work.

When we asked who was responsible for preparing them they stated:



80%

of respondents stated that careers education is as important as academic studies and should be added as a subject lesson on the school curriculum

95%

of respondents felt that Junior Achievement programmes helped them to understand the world of work

75%

of students who did not go on to University felt less supported than those who chose to go on to further education. They feel more needs to be done to redress the balance.

One respondent stated, 'I made the decision not to attend University, whilst there was a careers officer available; teachers put their focus on University with little support for those wanting to go into the world of work.'

I have no idea what I want to do and no idea where to start. I feel like I'm going to pick the wrong career and be stuck, or that I'll never find what I want to do.'



Desire to learn outside of the classroom

We asked respondents what they felt would be the most beneficial to young people in education to help them prepare for the world of work.

Each respondent participating in the online survey could make up to three choices.

| | | |
|---|---|------------|
| More opportunities for work experience |  | 85% |
| Mock interviews with Employers |  | 67% |
| Entrepreneurship education |  | 34% |
| One to one mentoring |  | 30% |
| Community Service / Volunteering |  | 28% |
| Field trips to businesses |  | 27% |
| Working on projects |  | 20% |

Why experiential learning is important

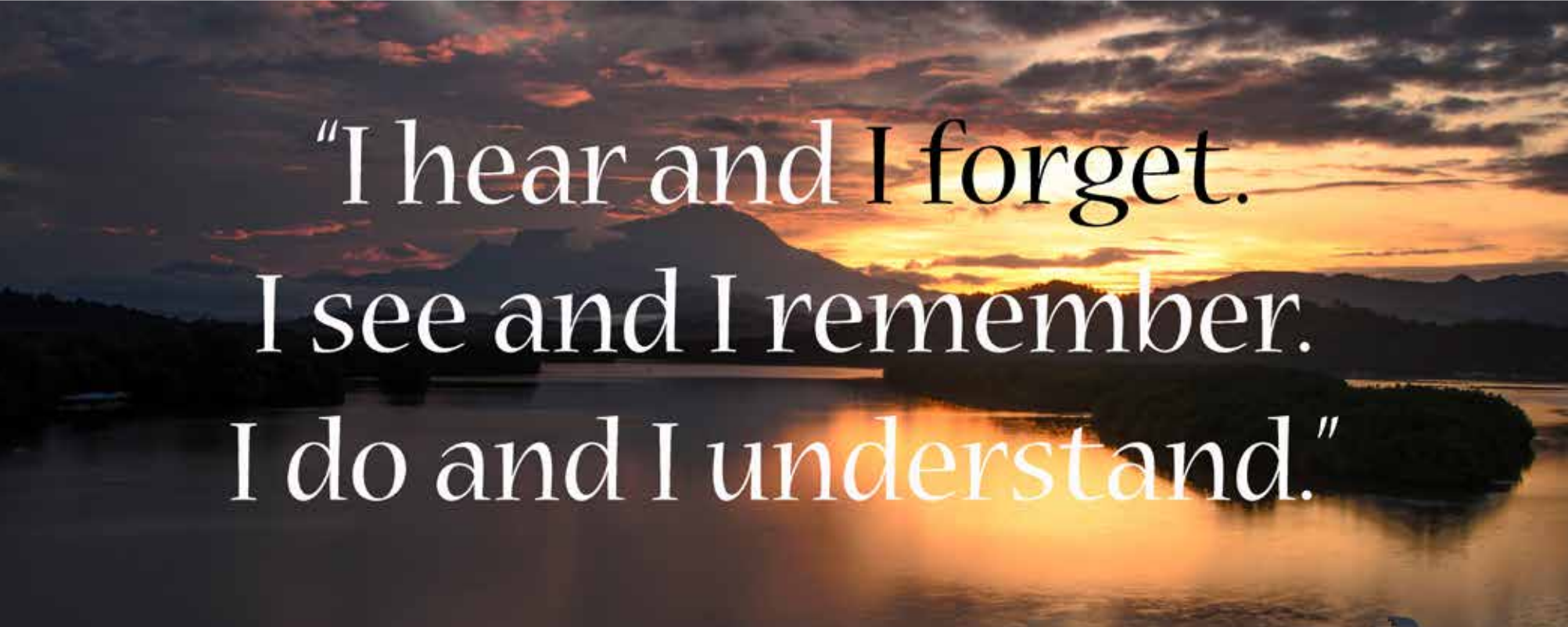
The results from the online survey show that experiential learning, such as work experience and mock interviews with employers, are the most popular methods in helping young people to connect with businesses and to understand the world of work.

Although it was not included in the on-line survey, a large majority of those people who participated in the face-to-face interviews also stated that they wanted to learn more about financial literacy as part of their future development, in particular mortgages and income tax.

The results of the on-line survey were consistent with the face-to-face interviews, with a desire to have more opportunities outside of traditional classroom based learning.

The significance of these findings is that Gen Z desire a future focused on more experiential-based careers education.

By engaging students in hands-on experiences and reflection, they are better able to connect theories and knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world situations.



“I hear and I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and I understand.”

Communication is the Key

When we asked respondents which is the most important skill to develop for the world of work, 70% stated that communication is key. 13% stated digital skills, 13% chose how to write a professional communication and 4% stated leadership skills.

Gen Z prefers to communicate using digital platforms. This removes the need to talk to one another and over time can erode their confidence.

Others reasons included feeling embarrassed to speak up and to voice their opinions, the pressure of social media and the lack of opportunity to talk.

When asked what could we do to improve their communications skills. The answer was simple 'find a way to keep us talking'.



Communication is the Key

These results highlight a generation who feel they are digitally able. They are confident that they have the basic technical and digital skills to perform most jobs. What they do not already know they feel they can learn on the job.

Overwhelming majority of 70% felt that communication is the most important skill a young person can develop in order to achieve a meaningful career in the future.

This sentiment was also echoed by the majority of young people who were interviewed face-to-face across various industries. When asked what they thought the most important skill for a young person to develop is, answers included:

- “Soft skills such as communication are extremely useful. No matter how good you are at your job, if you’re rude and abrasive it comes across as unprofessional”.
- “People skills and communication skills. Social media has definitely killed the art of conversation”
- “I think communication skills are the main thing that need to be pushed. You see it with work experience people who come in and are constantly on their phones or zoned out, which doesn’t come across well”.

Those surveyed feel communication is the number one skill required for most jobs and the one they are lacking. This has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Decreased social contacts, isolation and a greater focus on remote working has affected their confidence.



Recalling interactions with a Business Volunteer

Interaction with a Business Volunteer



■ Recall one or more interaction

■ No recollection

* A study by Education & Employers Taskforce found that young adults who can recall 'four or more employer contacts' are **five times** less likely to be not in education, employment or training

100% of those people surveyed stated that it was important for businesses to interact with students whilst in education.

There are examples with respondents citing a direct link between employer engagements in school and gaining employment once they had left education.

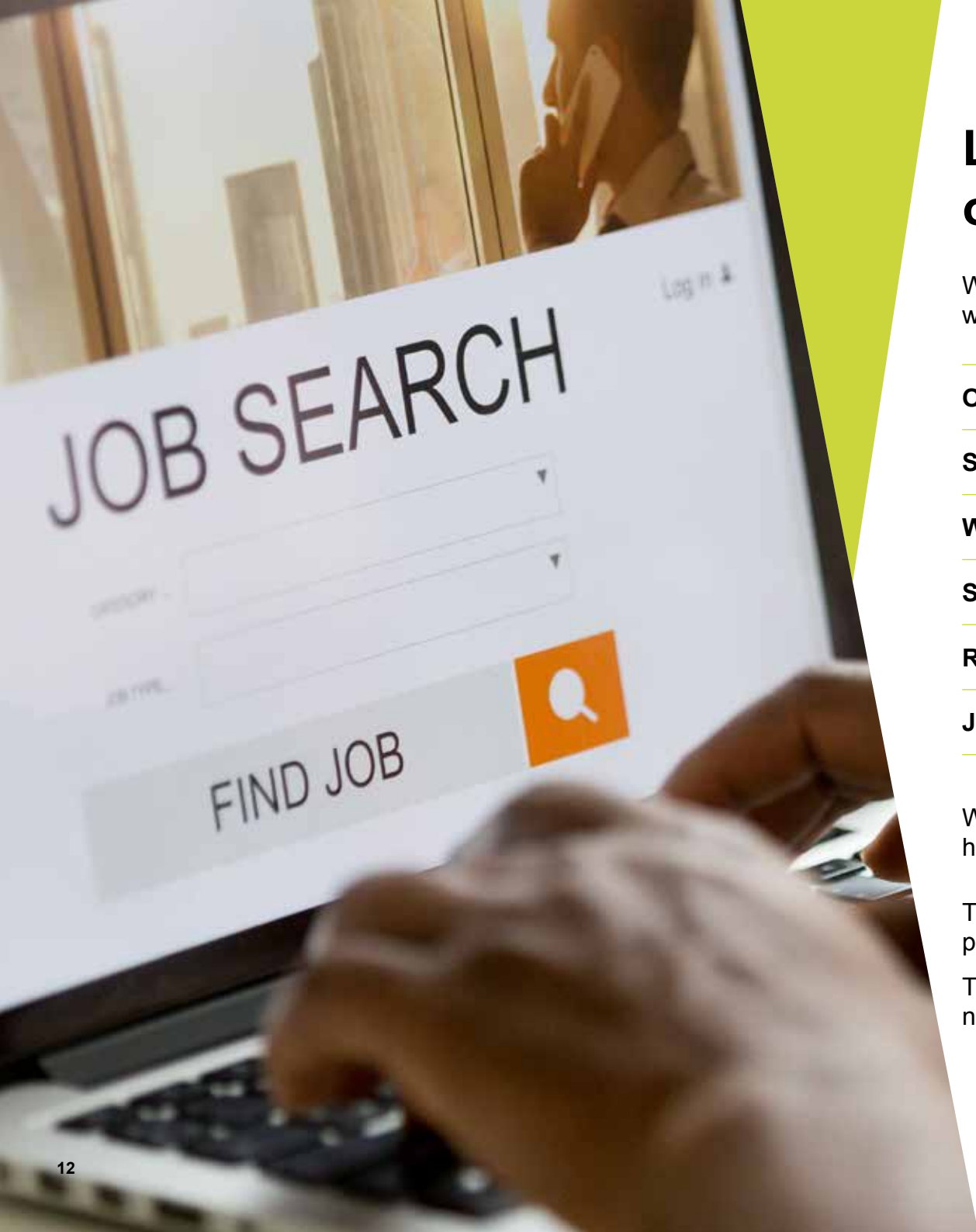
Other respondents have stated that there needs to be a more focused approach to informing young people about career choices on the Isle of Man, with some stating they did not find guest speakers in school assemblies the most useful way to learn about career choices.

It would have been more helpful to hear from a diverse range of guest speakers with informative sessions attended on a voluntary basis.

There is a perception that there are very limited career choices on the Isle of Man.

To allow young people to make more informed choices, they would benefit for earlier careers awareness possibly from Year 8 or 9.

As one respondent reflects: "I was unsure of what I wished to do as a career, in school it would be useful to understand all the different paths available and understand more about different jobs on the Isle of Man".



Looking for work on the Isle of Man

When we asked respondents to select which methods they would use to find a job. Online portals came out on top.

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|-----|
| Online portals | | 85% |
| Social media | | 69% |
| Word of mouth | | 65% |
| Speculative applications | | 60% |
| Recruitment agencies | | 58% |
| Job centre | | 58% |

We asked 'if you have had a job interview in the Isle of Man how would you rate your overall experience'.

The good news for employers is that 95% said they had a positive experience.

The same respondents stated that if the job description was not easy to understand, 80% would not apply for the vacancy.

Flexible working comes top of the list when looking for a job

39% of respondents stated that flexible working is on a par with pay when considering what attracts them to a job.

Staff benefits ranked 11% a commitment to corporate social responsibility 7%, home working 2% and paid holidays 2%.

Gen Z want a better work life balance.





GENERATION Z

**What Gen Z
wants from work
is different than
you might think**

Gen Z may be the first generation that fits work into their life and not the other way around. Workplace flexibility is the number one employee benefit they are looking for.

What Gen Z wants from work is different

Interestingly, despite common perception that Gen Z have a focus on environmental and sustainable business practices, when choosing an employer, the results of this survey suggest that young people in the Isle of Man have different priorities.

Only 7% of respondents chose a commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility as something that would attract them to an employer. Instead, the island's young people value flexibility and pay at an equal level, with exactly 111 respondents (40%) choosing either pay or flexibility as what they would value most in a job.

Flexibility doesn't just mean flexible hours. Gen Z is not satisfied with a one-size-fits-all career path. They are interested in flexible career paths that allow them to jump from department to department, or even from career to career if it benefits them.



This sentiment was reflected in the face-to-face interviews, with respondents saying:

“Flexibility and job enjoyment (are most important). CSR commitment wouldn't affect my decision on where to be employed, but it's a nice added bonus to work for a company that offsets some environmental damage”

“Flexible days are really important”

“Being able to have flexible working hours is really important - just as much as pay”

How optimistic are Gen Z about finding meaningful careers

We asked respondents how optimistic did they feel about finding a meaningful career.

34% indicated they felt extremely positive,

54% felt somewhat confident, whilst the rest did not feel at all confident.

It is positive news that 88% of people who took part in the survey feel somewhat optimistic about their future.

For those who did not feel as confident we asked them to explain why.

This is some of the feedback:

“On the Isle of Man it seems as though it is financial services or nothing for many young people, especially someone like myself who could not go onto higher education”.

“Feels as though because I didn’t get many appropriate GCSE’s I won’t be able to get a job that pays good and I that I enjoy. No matter my willingness and knowledge”.

“No guidance to fully pursue a meaningful career post-secondary has made me feel left behind”.

“Unsure of what I wish to do as a career, in school it would have been useful to understand all the different paths available and understand more about different jobs/careers”.

“It’s hard to know what I want especially as I didn’t go down the university route which was the only option anyone ever gave me”.



Conclusion

This research demonstrates that the majority of the respondents are reasonably optimistic about the future but have indicated that more could have been done to equip them with the confidence and knowledge needed for future success.

Their recommendations include providing support for those who do not want to go onto University, a better understanding of career opportunities on the Isle of Man and more chances for experiential learning.

The aim of these recommendations is to help young people to make informed choices through connecting with employers, regardless of whether they choose to stay on the Isle of Man.

Business professionals, teachers and nonprofits all have a role to play by sharing their valuable perspectives on the world of work. Nonprofit organisations can also uniquely support students both inside and outside of school, acting as a bridge to business.

The Isle of Man community – businesses, policymakers, non-profits – all have a responsibility to engage in formal education to help young people prepare for a life beyond.

This piece of research provides us with an opportunity to help outline the future of careers education on the Isle of Man.

By listening to what Gen Z have told us we can help shape the life of thousands of young people to help build a brighter and better future.

METHODOLOGY

We undertook both qualitative and quantitative research. The qualitative research was conducted through face-to-face and online interviews. These interviews were recorded in natural settings to encourage the best response.

The interviewer prepared a number of open-ended questions except in circumstances when we needed a direct answer. An example of this might be their age or which school they attended.

This qualitative research was supplemented with on-line quantitative research using survey monkey and social media platforms.

All the respondents were aged between 17-24, with some in full-time employment and others who are undertaking part-time employment whilst studying. No one cohort had a percentile of more than 20%; 19-year olds were the largest cohort comprising 18% of total respondents, with 24-year olds being the smallest, comprising 6% of total respondents.

All individuals who took part in the survey had been educated at one of the six high schools in the Isle of Man.

Respondents were weighted the same regardless of age and total cohort percentile. As per the Isle of Man Government's 2016 census – a total of 7,356 people were resident on the island aged 17-24 (Isle of Man Government, Economic Affairs, 2016). The total respondents in this study makes up around 4% of this total population. Whilst not representative of the island's age range in its entirety, the study aims to be as comprehensive as possible in gauging the thoughts and feelings of the island's young people towards educational experiences and how they apply/don't apply to the world of work.

The study was conducted by one primary researcher over the course of a 9 week period.

Thank you to all the people who participated in the survey. A special mention to the Isle of Man Department for Enterprise and Daniel Williams who conducted the research as part of their summer internship programme.





Junior Achievement Isle of Man

We are the Island's leading educational charity helping young people to develop skills for the workplace.

JA Isle of Man is a member of one of the world's largest youth-serving non-profits, JA Worldwide prepares young people for employment and entrepreneurship, delivering hands on, experiential learning in work readiness, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship.

Reaching more than 10 million young people last year, JA Worldwide is one of few organisations with the scale, experience, and passion to build a brighter future for the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs, makers, and managers. Building skill sets and changing mindsets. JA prepares young people for the future of work.

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