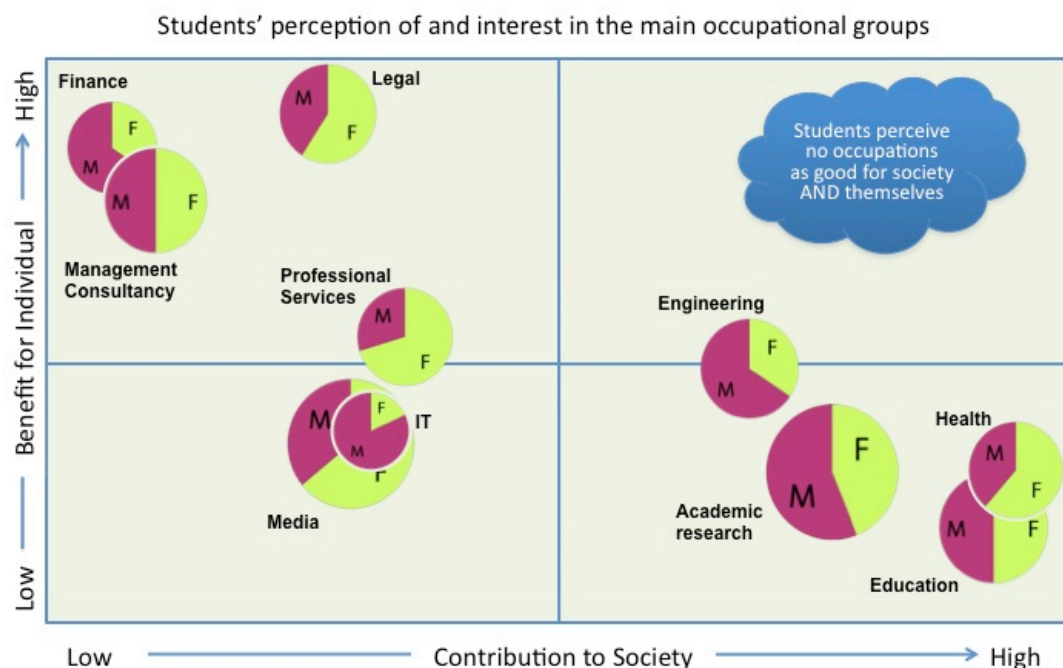


EMPLOYERS HOLD THE KEY TO UNLOCKING OXFORD UNDERGRADUATE POTENTIAL

A recent survey of 450 Oxford students shows that they think jobs are either good for society or for individuals, but not both. High-flying students decide where to apply based on these perceptions, ruling out some occupations without even applying, thinking they have to make compromises – even though some of their perceptions appear to lack foundation.

Employers in particular industries have begun to notice this, for example asking us why more women students do not apply to them from Oxford. We set out to understand students' perceptions of occupations, to see how accurate their perceptions are, to learn what influences these perceptions and to see if these answer the employers' question.

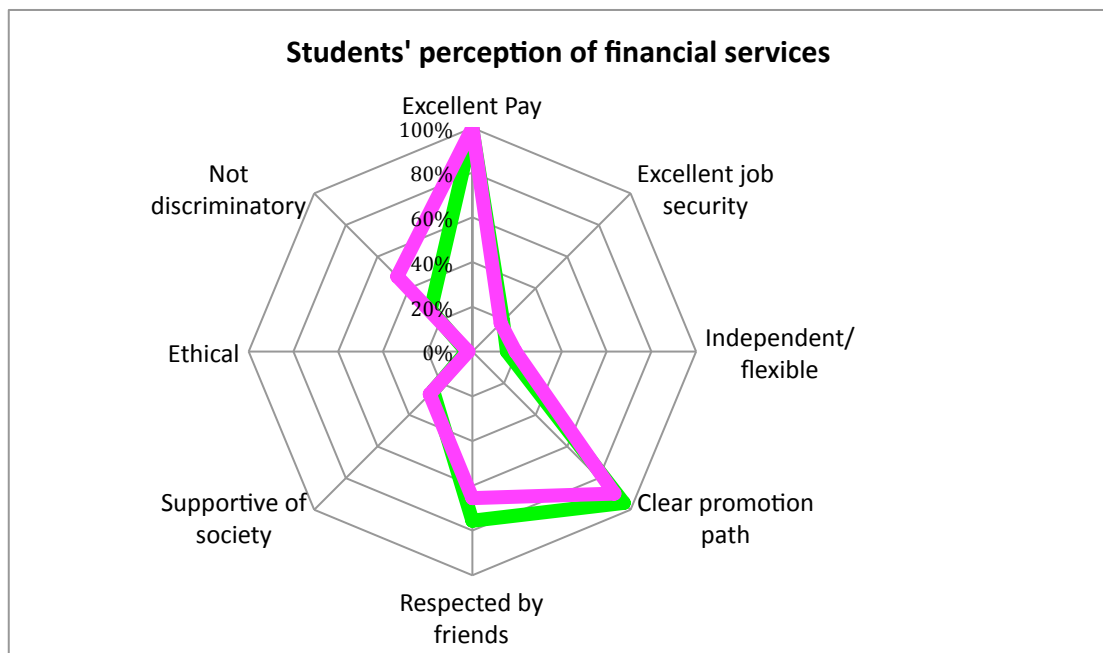
STUDENTS THINK NO OCCUPATION IS GOOD BOTH FOR THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY



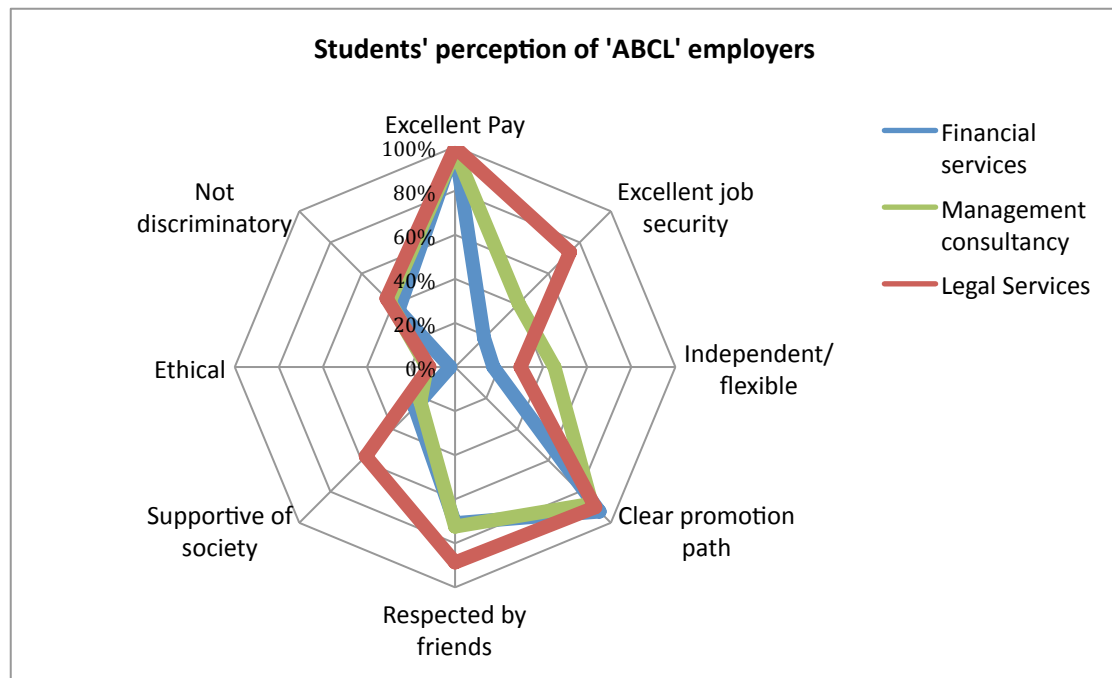
- We surveyed a randomised sample of undergraduates and postgraduates in Michaelmas Term (MT09) (October – December 2009). In this report, the term 'student' stands for undergraduate and postgraduate, unless specifically described otherwise.
- For every occupation, students perceive they must trade-off individual benefit and contribution to society – they perceive that to get a high individual benefit they have to work in a sector with low contribution to society, and vice versa
 - Individual benefits include pay levels and promotion prospects; contribution to society includes actual ethical behaviour, lack of discrimination and "supportive of society"

- High individual benefit/low society contribution sectors include Management Consulting, Finance and Law
- Low individual benefit/high social contribution sectors include Health care, Education and Academic Research

STUDENTS SEE THE CITY AS OFFERING EXCELLENT PAY AND PROMOTION BUT OF LIMITED BENEFIT TO SOCIETY

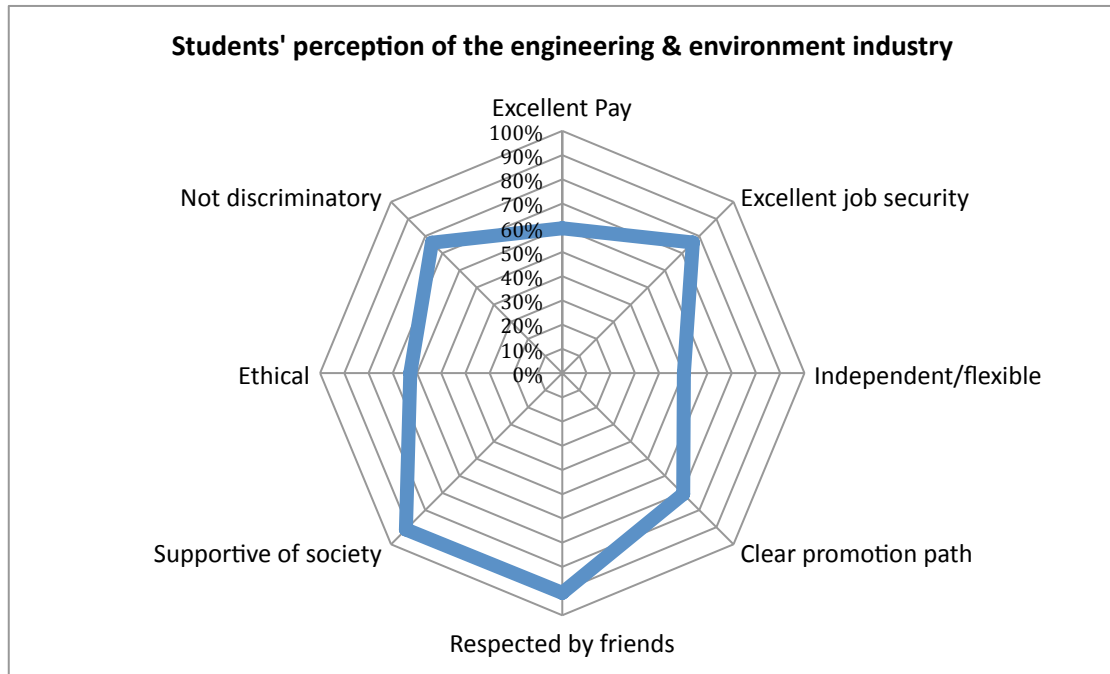


- The chart shows how up to 450 students recorded their perceptions of this industry against 8 measures. Measures on the right hand side are about individual benefit, on the left hand side are about contribution to society. On all measures, a higher score is better: shown by the coloured line being nearer the rim of the wheel
- Most women perceive discrimination in this industry: only 20% answered "Is very supportive of people like me; truly does not discriminate" but men and women have the same starting salaries, so is their perception about something else? Is this why only 1/3 of applicants to financial services are women?
- Almost no students perceived Financial Services as "*Demonstrably ethical*" and 75% thought the industry was "*Not supportive of society in general*"
- On pay, the students' perception is supported by initial starting salaries which are 34% higher than the overall average Oxford starting salary



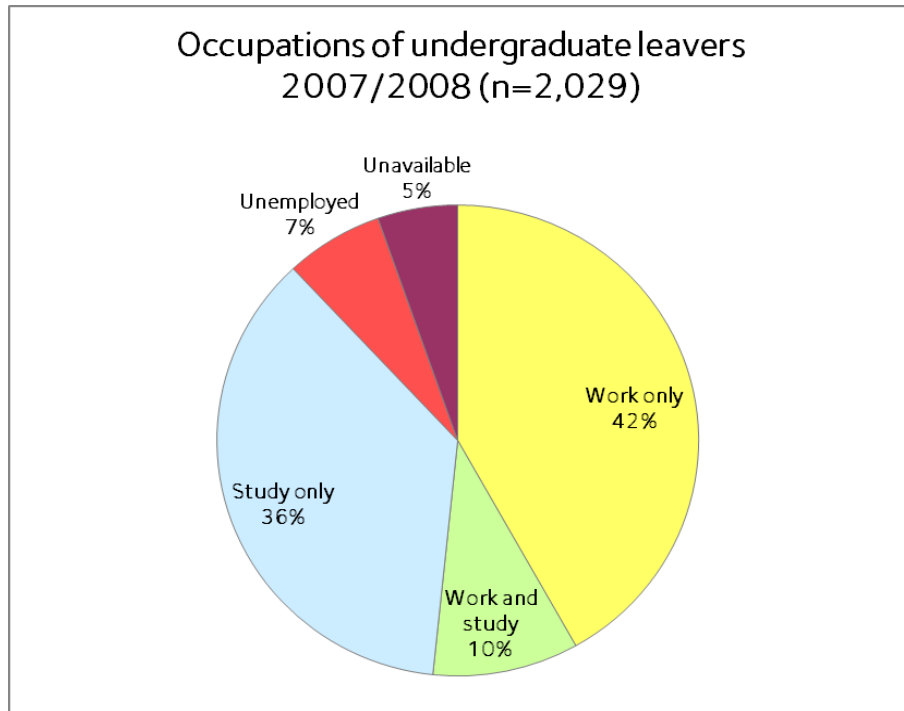
- Looking broadly at the City occupations of Accounting, Banking, Consulting and Law - the so-called ABCL
- Around 10% of all Oxford undergraduate students are employed in ABCL, six months after graduating (Source: Destination of Leaver from Higher Education (DLHE) survey 2007/08).
- As a group, students see ABCL offering excellent pay and promotion but the ethics are "*not always translated into reality*".
- Are some students self-selecting out of applying to this industry because they perceive low ethics in the industry and low independence (something they've been used to)?
- Law firms are seen as supportive of society by 60% of respondents, compared with 10%-15% for banks and consultancies – in the first chart, this put law firms closer to (but not in) the top right square, ie good for society and the individual

ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ARE SEEN AS MORE BALANCED OCCUPATIONS

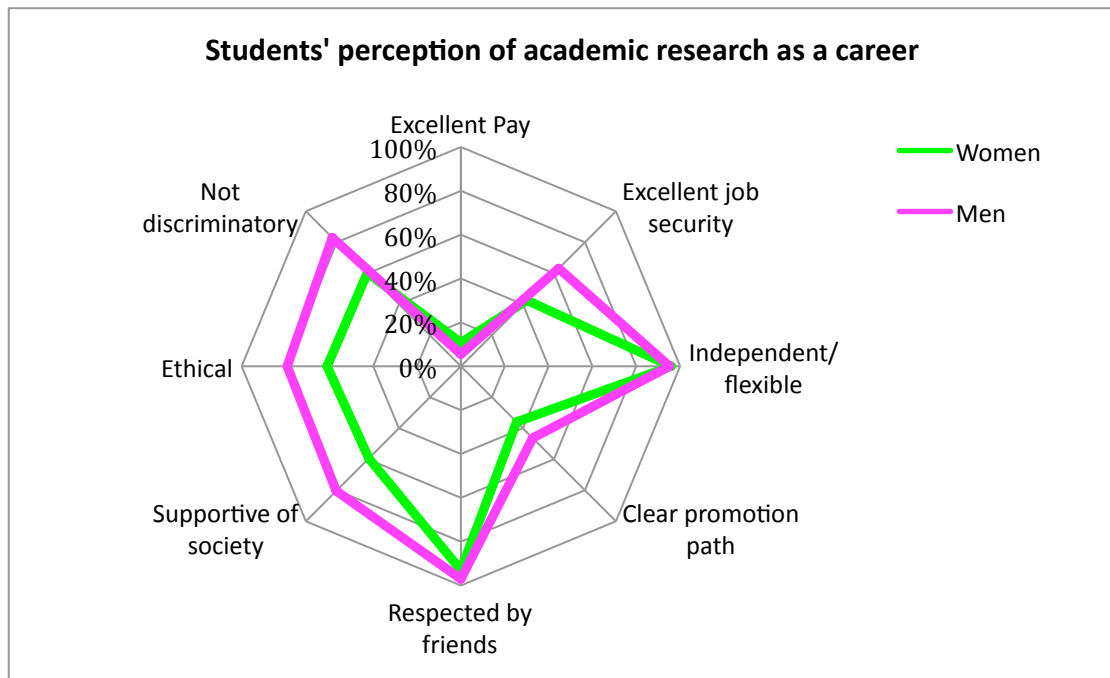


- Personal benefits such as pay, job security and promotion are rated highly by 60% of the students, and the contribution to society is also scored highly by 50%-90%
- This is a group that occasionally attracts the opprobrium of students as it includes oil and military equipment providers
- However, we note that the 2009 Oxford Careers Fair for Science and Engineering had the highest attendance – whereas in previous years the Law and Finance Fairs have topped the billing

ALMOST 2 IN 5 STUDENTS GO ONTO FURTHER STUDY – FOR THE INDEPENDENCE,
RESPECT AND CONTENT

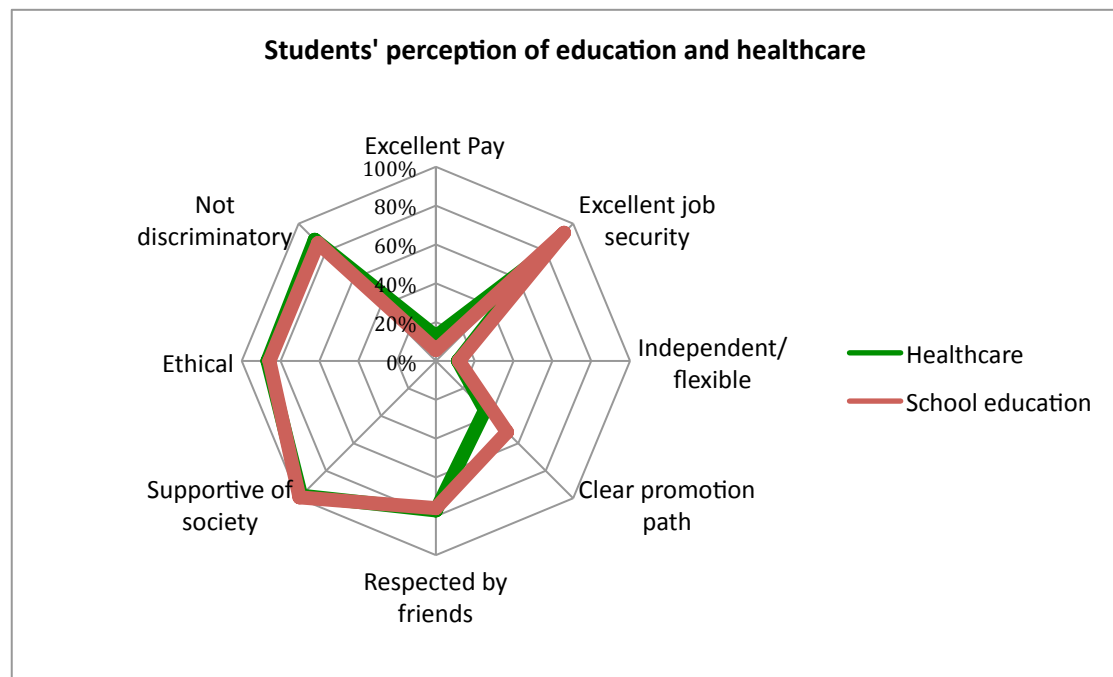


The single biggest destination for Oxford graduates is study or Academic Research – in 2007/08, 36% of undergraduates went to further study after graduating, compared with 21% from the 20 leading research universities (the Russell Group) and 16% from all UK universities



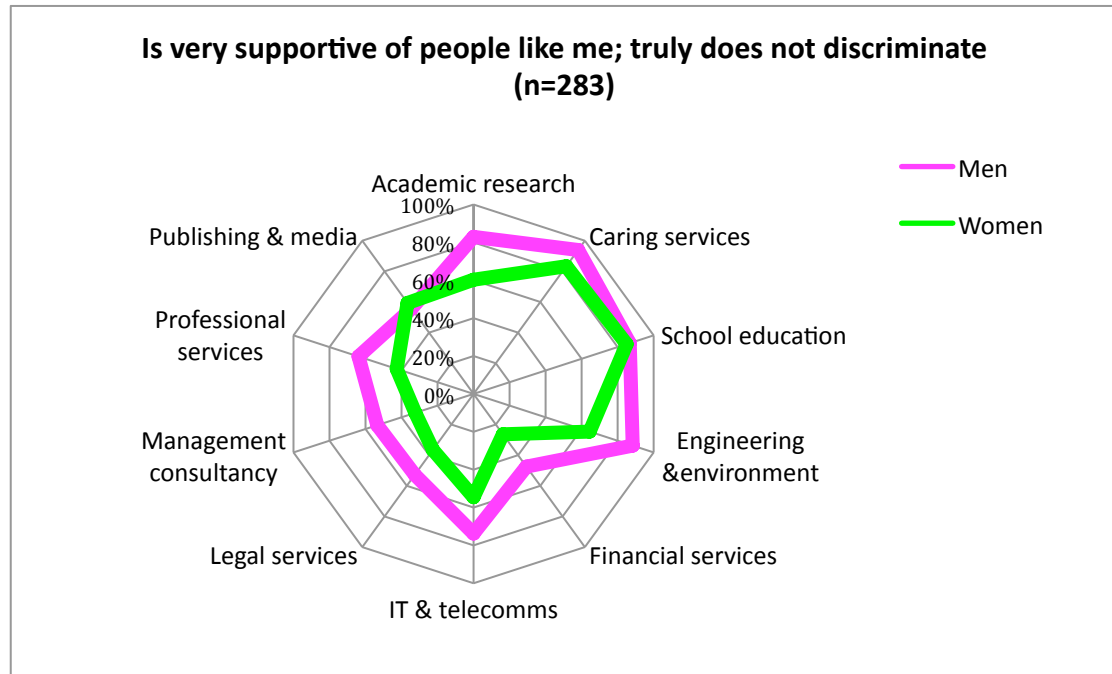
- Using the same analysis as before, students perceive Academic Research as offering
 - Complete independence and freedom, reasonable security and poor pay
 - With a reasonable contribution to society
- However men perceived academic research as a more attractive career choice than women do
 - 21% of male respondents said that Academic Research would be a 'dream job' compared with 14% of women; 62% of men said Academic Research would be 'good' or 'dream job' compared with 49% of women
 - More men than women perceive that Academic Research offers less discrimination, more job security, better ethics and support to society in general
- Students' perception on pay is misinformed – the starting salaries for graduates is close to the average for all Oxford leavers – with little difference between men and women's salaries
- Women's perceptions on discrimination are probably based on the evidence of their own tutors and faculty: in Oxford University, women make up only 10% of professors, 18% of readers and 27% of lecturers

EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE ARE SEEN AS SIMILAR – THOUGH STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON PAY SEEM UNINFORMED

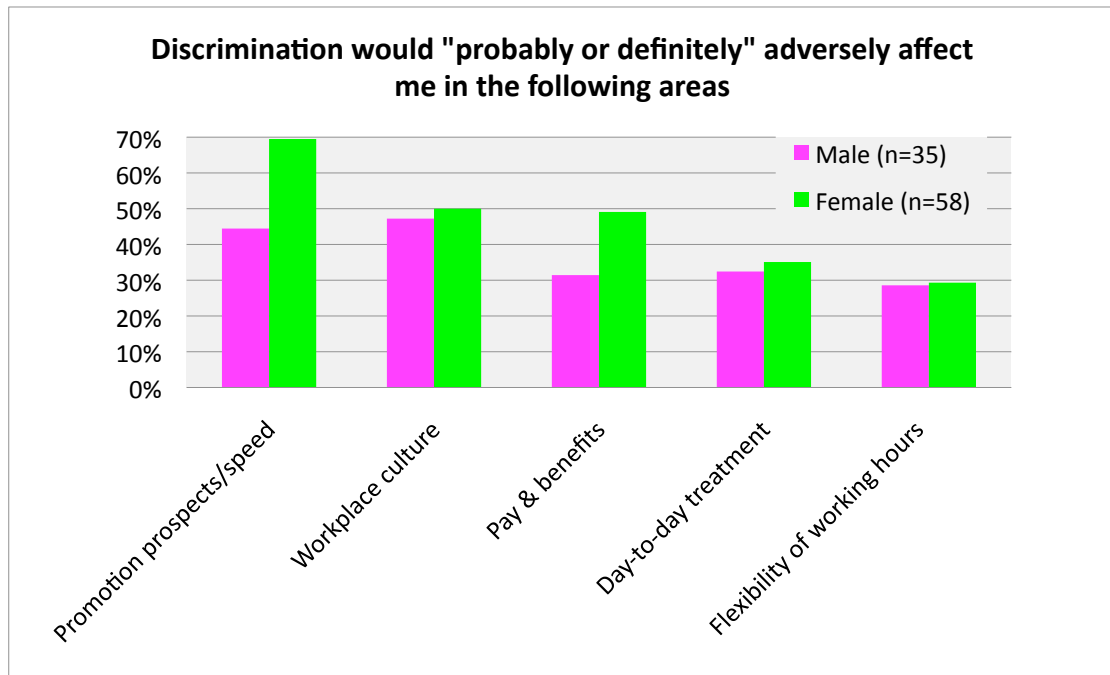


- Education (ie teaching) and Healthcare are perceived similarly to each other...
- ... and almost the same as Academic Research except students perceive there is almost no independence / flexibility and almost complete job security
- Perception on poor pay in Secondary Education may be correct, especially for men (since the overall average starting salaries for men are 18% more than women six months after graduating)
 - Female graduates earn £21.5K on average in teaching, 10% below the overall average for women of £23.8K
 - Male graduates earn £21.9K on average in teaching, but this is 22% below the overall average for men of £28.2K
- ...but perception in healthcare seems misplaced. Salaries in the healthcare are higher than many occupations
 - The DLHE survey reveals that starting salaries are 15% higher than the average for women and 10% higher than the average for men

MEN AND WOMEN FEEL THE SAME ABOUT EACH OCCUPATION EXCEPT MORE WOMEN THINK THERE IS DISCRIMINATION

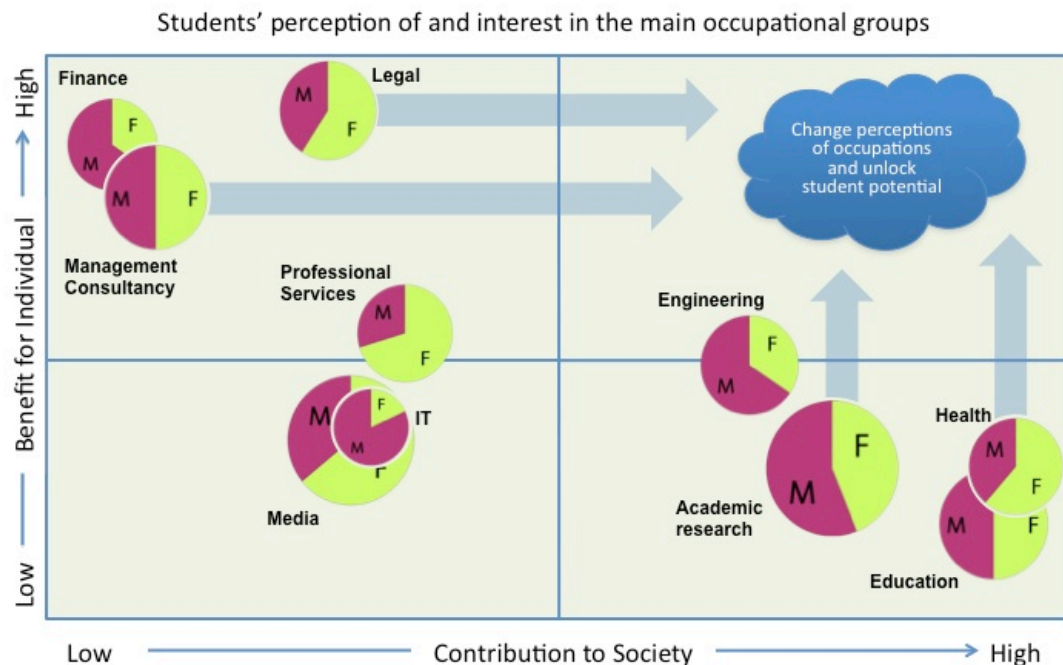


- In all occupations, except media and school education, 15%-20% more men feel there will be more support (the women's line is inside the men's on the chart above)
 - In Financial Services and Management Consultancy, less than 30% of women feel supported; for the Law the figure is 40%



- The “glass ceiling” is perceived to be real – fully 70% of women cited “promotion prospects and speed” as the number 1 adverse effect that they perceive discrimination would have on them
- In this era of the Equal Pay Act, it is dispiriting that 50% of women perceive they will be adversely affected by pay/benefits and workplace culture
- There is plenty of evidence from, for example, the Financial Services sector that women do earn less than men, confirming students’ perceptions
- Students’ perception of the glass ceiling appears accurate
 - Just 1 out of 21 partners at the London office of Booz & Co., a blue-chip management consultancy, is a woman
 - Only one-tenth of Oxford University’s full professors are women

HOW OXFORD CAREERS SERVICE CAN WORK WITH EMPLOYERS TO CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND INCREASE RECRUITMENT

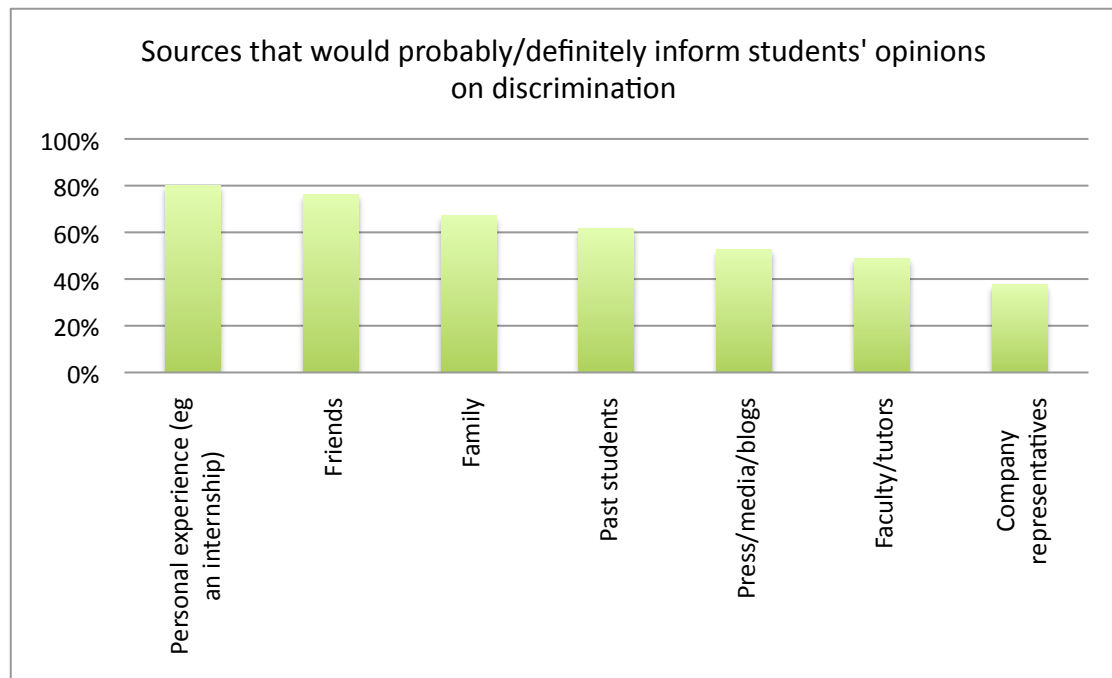


Size of circle is relative interest in working in each occupation; Split M (male) and F (Female)
Source: 450 students polled in randomised survey in MT09, Careers Service analysis

Our aim is to help employers unlock Oxford student potential so students have a more realistic and accurate view of all occupations and feel able to apply – in terms of the chart we aim to

- move those in the bottom right quadrant up, by demonstrating there is more benefit for the individual than is generally perceived – for example, salaries in health care and education are at or above average, even on leaving
- and by moving those in the top left across, by demonstrating their contribution to society – for examples lawyers need to have the highest level of ethics and integrity to maintain their work

Changes will have to be real: students form their views from their own actual experiences, their friends and family – company representatives have the least influence



- Work with employers to show that this is how they are perceived, particularly City firms and our own University. Feed these perceptions into their presentations and campaigns so they can adjust their behaviours and promotion
- Explain that students see through marketing and promotion campaigns to the reality they experience or learn about from friends and family – changes will have to be real
- Correct students' perceptions where the evidence supports this

Jonathan Black, Director, Oxford University, Careers Service & Kat Wall, VP (Women) OUSU

March 2010