

BI-ANNUAL LOCAL INTELLIGENCE REPORT

UK & Ireland

Recent Employer Interactions

- Company name: **OSTTRA - London**
 - **Key takeaway for students:** Commercial & CX Graduate Program available in London
- Company name: **Microsoft UK**
 - **Key takeaway for students:** Their core hiring priority is highly technical talent, especially Computer Science profiles with strong skills in AI/ML, advanced programming languages, systems design, and algorithmic foundations.
- Company name: **LVMH Beauty UK & Ireland**
 - **Key takeaway for students:** July 2026 Internships are now open.
- Company name: **Amazon**
 - **Key takeaway for students:** Amazon is opening a new fulfilment center in Hull this year, creating 2,000 jobs.

Hiring Signals & Market Sentiment (Local & Observed)

- Functions that are **actively hiring:**
 - Tech & IT (cybersecurity specialists, tech leadership, digital transformation, AI/data analytic, cloud), Finance & FinTech (corporate finance, tax, audit, compliance)
- Functions that are **paused or slowing down**
 - Graduate and early career roles, General admin functions, Public Sector
- Types of profiles most in demand
 - Digital and analytical skills (finance & data analytics), technical experts (cloud, data roles, cybersecurity), Business and Finance specialists, risk management, actuarial and compliance roles.
- Typical seniority level employers are open to:
 - **Mid- to Senior-Level:** Especially in tech, finance, and strategic functions
 - **Selective Entry-Level:** Some graduate opportunities persist, though lower than in past years; competition is tight.
 - **Senior Leadership & Strategic Roles:** Particularly in digital transformation, regulatory compliance, and business strategy.

Changes in Employer Behavior

- **UK:** Hiring activity is cautious, with reduced employer confidence due to economic conditions, even as specialist hiring continues.
 - UK recruiters acknowledge that time-to-hire has lengthened, partly due to compliance, internal reviews, and cautious hiring strategies amidst economic uncertainty.

- International recruitment faces some challenges, longer compliance checks and visa thresholds can slow down processes, and some companies remain hesitant due to processes and costs.
- International candidates with relevant skills remain in demand, particularly in tech, data, AI, consulting, and specialist professional services.
- **Ireland:** The Dublin jobs market remains resilient and competitive, with labour demand still above pre-pandemic levels even as overall postings have cooled.
 - Employers increasingly emphasise skills and flexibility.

Upcoming Opportunities & Pipeline

- UK
 - Cautious growth across IT & Digital roles.
 - Accounting, tax, compliance and advisory roles remain relatively active due to regulatory and business transformation needs.
 - Many of the UK's mid-sized technology companies plan to hire across levels in 2026.
 - Some large consultancies are moving past freezes and anticipating renewed hiring tied to data, cloud, and transformation projects.
 - In the UK there is demand for graduate-level workers in civil engineering, construction and social care, forecast to grow by 15% by 2030.
 - In a tight market, employers are more likely to convert interns who show strong technical skills or cultural fit, particularly in tech and professional services.
- IRELAND
 - Irish hiring trends show optimism for 2026 with potential growth in specialist roles and continued international interest.
 - AI, data, cybersecurity, and transformation talent will remain at the centre of this momentum.
 - Irish fintech leader, Fenergo, is set to drive a €100 million global expansion, including 300 new jobs in Dublin, predominantly in software engineering, AI engineering, and product leadership.
 - Cloud-based restaurant tech platform Toast has unveiled a three-year R&D investment plan for its Dublin office, creating around 120 new roles focused on AI and product innovation

Strategic Notes for Advisors & Career Team

- UK hiring is extremely cautious given economic and geopolitical landscape.
- Encourage graduates to consider opportunities outside London in the UK. Less competitive.
- Ireland provides easier access in terms of visa sponsorship (EU citizens have the right to work), though still competitive but less so than London.
- Major tech firms have their junior and operational roles in Dublin.
- Advise students to network within the company and seek referrals to support their applications.
- Support students in building and showcasing skills on their CVs – skilled based hiring drives recruitment especially in Ireland but also in the UK.
- Strong language skills can be a competitive advantage.

Red Flags & Risks

- Visa sponsorships impacts hiring.
- Highly competitive market with local and international talent in combination with the cautious job market makes things even more competitive.
- Visa Sponsorship policy is not always clear. It depends on the role. If in doubt it's advisable to apply.