STUDENT BULLETIN BOARD – AUGUST 2026

INDIA'S CAMPUS TALENT LANDSCAPE PIVOTS TO SKILL-BASED HIRING AS 86 PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS ADOPT AI IN RECRUITMENT: DELOITTE INDIA

Summary: Deloitte India reports that AI-driven recruitment and skills-based hiring are reshaping campus employment, with employers prioritising digital expertise, internships, adaptability and behavioural competencies.

Delhi, India – August 27, 2026: India's campus hiring market is becoming more strategic, technology-driven and skills-focused, as organisations invest more heavily in building future-ready talent pipelines. Deloitte India's Campus Workforce Trends 2026 report finds that employers are increasing campus hiring budgets, embedding AI deeper into recruitment and strengthening internship-to-hire programmes as they compete for talent with essential digital and analytical skills.

This shift reflects a broader move from a traditional campus hiring model to more structured and skills-focused targeted shortlisting and assessments. Organisations are investing earlier in the talent lifecycle, with 80 percent now maintaining dedicated campus hiring teams. Internships are increasingly being used as a predictor of long-term success, reflected in improving pre-placement offer (PPO) conversion rates across degree programmes. At the same time, the growing influence of AI is expanding the definition of campus-ready talent, and driving demand for emerging skills and evolving role requirements. The emphasis on better role fit and capability alignment is also translating into stronger retention outcomes, with infant attrition among hires from leading institutes declining from 11 percent to 15 percent over the past year.

"The campus market is becoming more selective and more differentiated. Critical roles in AI, data, digital risk and technology are attracting to attract premiums in the range of 20-25 percent. While compensation has risen moderately (between 2-6 percent across degrees) with substantial difference basis institute-tier. At the same time, gender diversity is now an explicit campus-hiring goal, with women representing 50 percent of the FY26 target mix. The opportunity is to widen access to critical skills while keeping quality, inclusion and long-term retention at the centre of hiring decisions.AI is reshaping demand for early-career talent: 35 percent of organisations report that AI adoption is creating new entry-level roles or skill requirements, up from 21 percent in FY25. With 86 percent of organisations reporting that AI or Agentic AI is transforming hiring processes, the conversation is shifting from how technology is changing recruitment to how it is changing the skills and roles organisations need. The message for campuses and employers is clear: sustained skilling, aligned to emerging roles, will determine both employability and value creation" - Dr. Neelesh Gupta, Partner, Deloitte India.

Key highlights of the survey report:

AI and skills-first hiring

AI is moving beyond automation to autonomous hiring workflows: 86 percent of organisations report that AI or Agentic AI is transforming recruitment processes, with AI increasingly embedded across screening, assessment and candidate evaluation.

Resume screening remains the most common AI use case
72 percent of organisations use AI for resume screening, followed by AI-based assessments (48 percent), candidate engagement (37 percent) and predictive hiring tools (33 percent). AI-led video interviewing is also emerging as a new screening tool.

AI is reshaping demand for early-career talent
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Demand for AI talent is strongest in technology-driven sectors
AI-aligned campus roles are most prevalent among IT and ITeS organisations (73 percent), followed by professional services (53 percent) and financial services (46 percent).

Skills premiums are increasingly concentrated in AI and data capabilities
AI and data skills (AI development, cybersecurity, data science and Industry 4.0) attract premiums of 20–25 percent, while analytical thinking and problem-solving command premiums of 10–15 percent. The skills premium is extending well beyond technology roles. Bioinformatics and biopharmaceutical capabilities attract premiums of 20–25 percent, while legal technology, M&A, digital health, sustainable finance, consumer analytics, industrial cybersecurity and smart-factory capabilities are emerging as differentiated domain pathways.

Employers are prioritising human capabilities alongside technical expertise
Learning agility, adaptability, collaboration and role-specific skills are becoming increasingly important in campus hiring decisions.

Compensation and talent differentiation

Compensation growth remains measured despite stronger hiring sentiment: Campus compensation across major degree categories grew at a CAGR of approximately 2–4 percent between FY22 and FY26, with select engineering disciplines recording growth of up to 5 percent.

Institute tier continues to be a major determinant of compensation outcomes
Median MBA compensation stood at INR27.4 lakh for Top 10 institutes versus INR8.4 lakh for Tier 3 institutes, while median B.Tech compensation was INR18.7 lakh compared with INR5.75 lakh (~3.3x differential for both). Internship compensation is even more stratified than starting salaries, with Top 10 MBA stipends approximately seven times more than Tier 3 levels. Engineering compensation growth: There has been an increase in engineering compensations in percentage terms over five years, although MBA graduates continue to command a 45–50 percent absolute pay premium, depending on institute tier.

Business Management as the most sought-after degree

Among the various MBA degrees, Business Management commands the highest pay package premium at 15 percent. The same for Engineering is dominated by Data Science and Artificial Intelligence Engineering at 9 percent. Mechanical Engineering and Agriculture Engineering are at discounts of 5–10 percent.

Skills are creating a second layer of pay differentiation
AI and data skills attract a 20–25 percent premium. The compensation narrative is therefore evolving from a single hierarchy-based progression depending on degree and institute tier to a three-part valuation model: Institute tier, role & specialisation and demonstrable critical skills.

Professional credentials create an additional premium
Chartered Accountant/Chartered Financial Analyst (CA/CFA) rank holders receive approximately 43.5 percent higher median compensation than non-rank holders. CA/CFA rank holders receive median TCC (Total Cost to Company) less LTI (Long Term Incentives) of INR20.95 lakh, versus INR14.60 lakh for non-rank holders.

Internships, PPOs and retention

Internships are becoming a stronger pathway to full-time employment: PPO conversion rates improved across all covered degree categories, reflecting greater emphasis on internship-led talent assessment.

Behavioural competencies are emerging as the strongest predictors of PPO conversion
Employers rank behavioural competencies (75 percent) and learning agility (72 percent) ahead of technical competencies, project delivery and assessments.

Improved talent matching is translating into stronger retention outcomes
Infant attrition among hires from Top 10 and Tier 1 institutes declined from 18 percent to 15 percent, while one-year attrition reduced from 23 percent to 19 percent.

Diversity and student preferences

Gender diversity continues to gain prominence in campus hiring strategies
Women account for 50 percent of the FY26 target hiring mix, up from 49 percent in FY25. Gender Diversity is explicitly identified as the second of three campus-shortlisting filters, after GPA and before assessments. LGBTQIA+ targets reduced to 15 percent in FY26 as compared to 17 percent in FY25. PWD remained constant at 10 percent across both the years.

Technology remains the most preferred sector for students
It retained the top position for the fifth consecutive year, followed by financial services. Bengaluru remains the city of choice for campus talent: The city retained its position as the most preferred placement location for the sixth consecutive year, while Delhi NCR moved to second place.

Employer value proposition (Campus value proposition for cadre management)
Employers are expanding the campus value proposition beyond compensation: Organisations are increasingly differentiating themselves through learning, well-being and flexibility offerings.

Learning and career development remain the most widely offered benefits: 59 percent of employers provide regular online learning modules, while 55 percent offer relocation assistance and 53 percent provide annual health and wellness benefits.

Flexibility is becoming a key attraction lever
42 percent of organisations now offer remote or hybrid working arrangements to early-career talent.

Difference between Top 10 and Tier 3 campus hiring trends
Top 10 campuses lead to Management Consultant, AI/Digital Product Manager and Data Scientist roles, while Tier 1–3 hiring progressively shifts towards Business Analyst, Software Engineer, Operations Analyst and Management Trainee positions. While Top 10 and Tier 1 campus get exposure to fast track career programmes, talent of Tier 2 and Tier 3 must rely heavily on experience, tenure, upskilling and subsequent role mobility.

About the survey

Deloitte India's Campus Workforce Trends 2026 is the sixth edition of its study on early-career talent landscape in India. Based on insights from companies and campuses. The survey covered 257 organisations across Manufacturing, Services, Pharma, Consumer, Financial Services and Technology sectors. It covered 505 campuses across MBA, Engineering (Graduate and Postgraduate), BBA, B.Com, B.Pharma, Hotel Management, Law and other Undergraduate degrees. The report examines campus value proposition, compensation trends, AI adoption, internship-to-hire programmes, diversity priorities, student preferences and early-career retention.

Source : https://www.deloitte.com/in/en/about/press-room/india-s-campus-talent-landscape-pivots-to-skill-based-hiring-as-86-percent-of-employers-adopt-ai-in-recruitment--deloitte-india.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

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