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One in three call centre workers is a graduate

A THIRD of call centre workers are graduates, say researchers.

A survey of UK-based call centres showed that 35 per cent of their agents are now educated to degree level - up from 25 per cent last year.

Two in five call centre bosses reported seeing a surge in applications from graduates, particularly over the past 12 months.

The survey, by Hays Contact Centres in conjunction with the Top 50 Call Centres for Customer Service Initiative, found that many graduates intend to develop a long-term career in the industry.

The soaring numbers of graduates seeking work in call centres shows the impact of the recession on the graduate jobs market.

Many firms are squeezing graduate training programmes while universities are turning out unprecedented numbers.

The Association of Graduate Recruiters, representing leading employers, suggests that nearly 70 graduates are chasing every vacancy.

Call centre starting salaries are usually £12,000 to £18,000. Some graduates can expect to move up to senior marketing or sales roles but others see it as a stop-gap.

Figures issued earlier this year by the Higher Education Statistics Agency showed that nearly 20,000 of last year's graduates - 10 per cent - were unemployed six months after leaving university - up from 8 per cent in 2008.

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