

# It pays to pursue arts & science

Head-hunters from various sectors are flocking to arts and science colleges to tap the vast and varied talent pool.

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Unlike engineering colleges where recruitment is focussed mainly on IT sector, the arts and science colleges in Chennai are witnessing a fresh wave of recruiters.

Besides the usual IT, BPO and retail industry; television channels, gaming companies, websites, e-publishers and pharmaceutical companies are making their presence felt in these campuses this year. Students of economics, commerce and computer science, English literature and others with a creative bent of mind are lapping up the offers.

At Stella Maris College for Women, Amazon, Facebook and Google are looking for students for their advertisement wing. "The websites, content creators and e-publishing companies come looking for literature students but are ready to take students across streams, if they are creative and have good communication skills," says Sarala Vasu, placement co-ordinator. Stella Maris has an alumni-run placement cell.

B.Com students have always been the most sought after. Some of the big names from the banking sector

such as HDFC, ING Vysya, Indian bank and insurance companies such as United India Insurance, Max New York Life are visiting campuses to recruit students for product sales and operations.

Students of HR from the Madras School of Social Work are being recruited as managers in a number of emerging sectors besides corporate houses. The media houses, medical tourism, hotel industry and public sectors are tapping the talent here. "The increasing human resource requirements as companies grow demand efficient managers," says Fathima Vasanth, principal, MSSW. "Many national and international organisations, embassies, and government departments such as social defence, disability rehabilitation also need the services of our graduates in social work," she adds.

One of the trends noticed is that the smaller companies are a bit wary about recruiting afresh with the economic slowdown. Another trend seen is that recruiters prefer undergraduate students as it is easy to train them than postgraduate students.

The placement officers of city's top



**FIRST STEPS:** A creative bent of mind and good communication skills can take you places.

PHOTO : R. RAVINDRAN

colleges, however, say that students get offers of Rs. 4 lakh per year and above for select job profiles as big players like Goldman Sachs, Deloitte and the IT majors are not restricting themselves to engineering colleges, but are instead scouting arts and science campuses too for prospective students.

Loyola College, this year, is permitting only recruiters who offer an annual pay package of more than Rs. 3 lakh. "Most recruiters insist that students do not have arrears and look out for those who perform well in group discussions and interviews. Some students who cannot cope up with the college environment in their initial years might have arrears and

therefore fall behind during recruitments," says G. Ramamurthy, placement officer.

"The average salary packages range from Rs. 10,000 to 12,000 per month for UG students and Rs. 15,000 to 25,000 for PG students across various disciplines," says Raja Hussain, Director, University Students Advisory Bureau, University of Madras.

The University of Madras has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with HCL under which colleges are adopted and HCL visits their campus, offers three-month training with a stipend of Rs. 5,000 and conducts examinations before absorbing the students. "The BPO industry has steadily moved up the value chain and expanded to new service lines. To be able to deliver, it is imperative to have a varied talent pool across disciplines," says Subrat Chakravarty, vice-president and HR Head, Business Services, HCL Technologies, on recruiting students with arts and science background.

The aversion towards BPOs seems to have come down, which seems to be a positive trend, say placement officers. "Students now understand that the BPO industry also fosters a career. The pre-placement talks have helped dispel the myth among students," says Franklin Daniel, placement officer, Madras Christian College.