

Media Release: ***New Graduate Jobs Data***

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Graduate Employment: A Wide Net Needed

As new bachelor degree graduates in 2011 again experienced slow uptake into the graduate labour market, attention focuses on the successful job search strategies of those who found full-time employment.

Recent research conducted by Graduate Careers Australia (GCA) shows that around 76 per cent of new bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment had found a job within four months of completing their studies. This is comparable with the 2010 figure and down from around 79 per cent in 2009 (see *Table 1a in GradStats*).

GCA Research Manager, Mr Bruce Guthrie, explained that these figures reflected the state of the broader economic environment at the time of the survey and had to be viewed in perspective.

“Three years after the global financial crisis we are still seeing its lingering effects as graduate recruiter activity in the labour market remains flat,” Mr Guthrie said.

“However, our research also shows that unemployment is not a long-term concern for graduates and it’s important to understand that getting a degree is not about the first job after university: it’s about the potential for huge personal growth and a life-time of advantage in the labour market,” he added.

The soft labour market conditions served to limit growth in graduate starting salaries, with the median starting salary for bachelor degree graduates aged less than 25 and in their first full-time employment in Australia growing just \$1,000, to \$50,000 (see *Table 3 in GradStats*).

New graduates who found full-time employment employed a number of strategies, with one-in-four graduates (26.4 per cent) in a full-time job having found that job via the internet. Graduates in the hunt for jobs are encouraged to cast a wide net, as an additional 14.5 per cent found their jobs via personal networks (family and friends), one-in-ten found their job via their university careers service, and the remainder used a variety of strategies including approaching employers directly.

Bachelor degree graduates from the fields of mining engineering, medicine and pharmacy achieved the best employment outcomes in 2010, with more than 97 per cent of graduates from these fields securing full-time employment within four months of graduation (see *Table 2 in GradStats*).

Dentistry graduates were again the highest earners, with a median starting salary of \$80,000 (see *Table 3 in GradStats*).

These figures come from the Australian Graduate Survey, which is an annual survey of graduates from Australian higher education institutions. More than 168,000 graduates responded in 2011.

Further information and comment

All figures are drawn from the preliminary reports *GradStats* and *GradFiles*. Members of the public can download copies of these reports free of charge at www.graduatecareers.com.au.

For comment please contact Bruce Guthrie, GCA Research Manager, on (02) 6367 5347.