

Media Release: Graduate Recruitment

Page 1 of 1

Embargoed until 11:30 pm, Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Economic slowdown impacts on 2012 graduate recruitment

The uncertain economic climate is continuing to affect the recruitment of new university graduates according to new figures from a national survey of graduate employers.

The research, conducted by Graduate Careers Australia (GCA), found that 12.5% of surveyed employers recruited no graduates in 2012, compared with 10.0% when the same survey was conducted in 2011. Cohort sizes also shrank in 2012, with 22.4% of employers indicating that they recruited more than 20 graduates. The comparable figure for 2011 was 32.5%.

Most surveyed employers blamed financial considerations for this decrease in hiring, with 51.2% citing economic conditions as the primary influencer of their graduate recruitment intake, and a further 14.8% naming budgetary constraints.

GCA Executive Director, Dr Noel Edge, stressed that the long-term outlook for university graduates remained favourable. "Although the graduate employment market is currently flat, with new graduates taking longer to find work than they would have five years ago, our research has consistently shown that unemployment is not a long-term concern for university graduates, who tend to achieve stronger outcomes than non-graduates," Dr Edge said.

When asked about the selection criteria they use when recruiting graduates, interpersonal and communication skills were ranked by employers as the most important. "While technical expertise is important, this shows that employers have a strong preference for workers that have the ability to communicate and get along with other people," Dr Edge said.

Surveyed employers felt that the relationship with their manager was the most crucial factor in terms of new graduate recruits leaving their organisation. A desire for greater professional development and the culture of the organisation were also important.

The Graduate Outlook Survey (GOS), now in its eighth year, is an annual investigation into recruitment practices and trends in the Australasian graduate labour market. A total of 584 employers responded to the 2012 survey.

For comment please contact David Carroll (Senior Research Associate) on (03) 9605 3713 or Jessica Arnott (Research Associate) on (03) 9605 3711.