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HKUST Releases 2001 Graduate Employment Survey

More than 96% of Year 2001 graduates from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) had found jobs, started businesses or pursued further studies by December 2001 amid an economic downturn, a survey has revealed.

Of the 1,744 respondents, 81% were engaged in full-time employment or business start-ups while 2.6% were working in temporary or part-time jobs. Graduates who pursued further studies increased slightly by 1.1% to 12.1%. The unemployment rate among graduates was 3.8%, an increase of 1.7% from the previous year. Of the 66 unemployed, 18 had declined job offers in search of better prospects.

Business continued to be the largest employment sector, drawing 68.5% of the graduates, down 5% from 2000. 13.3% joined manufacturing and related industries, while 9% were engaged in education, up 4% from the previous year. Slight increases were found in construction (4%), government (2.8%) and social services (2.4%). The mean gross monthly income of graduates was \$12,189, a decrease of 2.9%.

In terms of job nature, more graduates accepted positions in engineering (18.6%), accounting (13%) and administration (9.4%). Systems analysis and computer programming jobs continued to attract the largest number of graduates (20.2%) but saw a drop of 5.5% from the previous year. 14.8% of graduates joined marketing and sales, down 2.6%.

"Despite an ongoing economic downturn, the employment situation of HKUST's 2001 graduates remained satisfactory as a whole," said Dr Isaac Tam, Senior Student Counselor of the Student Affairs Office, which conducted the survey.

"Career training programs help sharpen graduates' job-seeking skills but it's more important to change their mindset. To succeed in the job market, they need to think positively and realistically. For instance, graduates may have to take jobs that are unrelated to their studies, or they may have to consider other locations for job opportunities," he said.

The survey covered 1,812 bachelor's degree recipients. The response rate was 96%.