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## Graduates' Careers Off to a Good Start

More than 99% of graduates from the Class of 2005 had found jobs, started businesses or begun further studies by December 2005, according to a survey conducted by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST).

Mean gross monthly income had increased to HK\$11,554, an increase of 8% over the previous year, with the highest individual monthly salary standing at \$53,000.

Of the 1,285 respondents, 79% had found full-time jobs or started a business; 17% were furthering their studies, while 3% were engaged in temporary or part-time work. The unemployment rate declined from 0.6% to 0.4%.

"With the stable growth of the economy, HKUST graduates are now in a much better position in the careers arena, and their starting pay is considerably higher, especially in the business and financial sectors. Fresh graduates from HKUST are often paid above-average salaries," said Dr Isaac Tam, Senior Student Counselor of the Student Affairs Office, which conducted the survey.

Banking and finance was the 'must-have' profession last year, hiring 9% of graduates who were earning a mean gross monthly income of \$14,555, some 20% higher than the previous year.

The most popular professions were engineering (17%), accounting (15%), sales/marketing (15%), system administration and programming (12%), and administration (11%).

Business is still the largest employment sector, drawing 67% of graduates, followed by manufacturing and industry (18%), education (8%), construction (3%), and government (3%).

"Apart from job-seeking skills, we offer students a variety of enrichment programs including internships, overseas exchange and early research opportunities. All these initiatives enhance students' all-round development and enable them to lead fulfilling lives," he added.

The survey also showed that a total of 219 graduates from the Class of 2005 were furthering their studies, with the number increasing slightly from 15% to 17%. A number of them have started their postgraduate studies at renowned overseas institutions such as the universities of Stanford, Harvard, Cambridge, and the London School of Economics and Political Sciences, etc.



