

How the class of 2021 fared

BETTER OUTLOOK FOR UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

Proportion of fresh graduates in the labour force who were:	2019	2020	2021
Employed	90.70%	3.6%	94.4%
Full-time permanent employment	82%	69.8%	84%
Freelancing	2%	15%	1.7%
Part-time/temporary employment	7.00%	2.3%*	8.7%*
Voluntary	4.60%	11%	5.7%
Involuntary	2.40%	11.3%	3%
Unemployed	9.30%	6.4%	5.6%
Unemployed but starting work soon	2.90%	2.5%	2.4%
Unemployed and still looking for a job	6.40%	3.9%	3.2%
Median gross monthly salary (Full-time permanent employment)	\$3,600	\$3,700	\$3,800

*Includes graduates on the SGUnited Traineeships Programme (16.9 percentage points in 2020 and 3.6 percentage points in 2021).
NOTE: Employment figures may not add up perfectly due to rounding differences.

JOB PROSPECTS BY FIELDS OF STUDY

Course cluster	Proportion of fresh graduates in the labour force who were:						Median gross monthly salary		
	Employed (%)			Full-time permanent employment (%)			Full-time permanent employment		
	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
Arts, design and media	87.3	92.3	92.6	62.4	5	69.3	\$3,200	\$3,300	\$3,500
Built environment	92.6	93.9	94.5	87.3	72.5	88.9	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,600
Business	94.6	3	97	88.8	76	88.7	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,723
Engineering	88.4	3.6	94	83.3	1.6	86.9	\$3,750	\$3,900	\$3,900
Health sciences	97.1	97.4	95.7	88.4	3.3	85.9	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,635
Humanities and social sciences	88	92.1	91.2	74.5	1.8	75.6	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,550
Information and digital technologies	95.4	94.8	97.8	92.7	7.3	93.7	\$4,400	\$4,760	\$5,000
Sciences	86.9	1.6	91.7	71.5	55.4	75.8	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,600
Overall	90.7	3.6	94.4	81.7	8	84	\$3,600	\$3,700	\$3,800

Source: JOINT AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITIES GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT SURVEY 2021 ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS



More fresh graduates find full-time jobs in 2021

Median pay rises to \$3,800; information and digital tech graduates get top pay of \$5,000

Amelia Teng
Education Correspondent

More university graduates secured full-time jobs last year, as Singapore's economy grew and recovered from a recession brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Results from the latest graduate employment survey showed that 84 per cent of fresh graduates in the labour force were in full-time permanent roles, compared with 69.8 per cent in 2020.

Overall employment rates and salaries among those who gradu-

ated from universities last year also both inched up, according to the poll results released yesterday. The median gross monthly salary among graduates in full-time permanent jobs climbed from \$3,700 in 2020 to \$3,800 last year. The figure was \$3,600 in 2019.

And 94.4 per cent of them found permanent, freelance or part-time jobs within six months of graduation last year, up from 93.6 per cent in 2020.

These findings come after the five polytechnics here released their set of outcomes for graduates last month, which also showed improvements in employment rates

and salaries last year compared with 2020.

The latest survey polled 11,200 fresh graduates of full-time programmes in the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore Management University (SMU) and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS). The graduates were asked about their employment status as of Nov 1.

The surveys for Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) and Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) are ongoing and the results will be released at a later date.

Singapore's economy grew by 7.2 per cent last year, rebounding from a recession as the country eased Covid-19 curbs, allowing for more economic activity and a

boost in demand for goods and services.

The economy contracted by 5.4 per cent in 2020.

Reflecting the rebound, the unemployment rate for university graduates went down from 6.4 per cent in 2020 to 5.6 per cent last year.

Fewer graduates – 8.7 per cent – were also in part-time or temporary work, compared with 22.3 per cent in 2020. These figures include those on the SGUnited Traineeships Programme, which was set up in 2020 to help fresh graduates boost their employability.

Several fields of study – information and digital technologies, built environment, business and engineering – continued to do well and recorded the highest proportions of graduates in full-

time permanent jobs.

Graduates from information and digital technologies in particular took home the top pay of \$5,000, up from \$4,760 last year and \$4,400 in 2020.

Mr Rafid Zuhayer Amin, who graduated from NUS last year with a mechanical engineering degree, landed a position in global healthcare company GSK's talent development programme after a four-month job search.

The 26-year-old, who specialised in robotics, applied for the role after seeing an e-mail about the programme that a career counsellor had sent him and his schoolmates. He is now a maintenance engineer.

"I was confident of my abilities, however, I had concerns about finding a job with the uncertainties presented by the pandemic. An-

other concern was my compatibility with the jobs offered. Thankfully, it all worked out and I am happy here," he said, adding that he enjoys finding the best engineering solutions that will improve lives.

The four autonomous universities – NUS, NTU, SMU and SUSS – also conducted a survey on graduates who typically require post-graduate practical training before they can practise their professions.

They include those in architecture, law and medicine. About 800 graduates took part, representing a response rate of 71.6 per cent.

The survey showed 98.1 per cent of them were employed after the completion of their practical training stint, a slight increase from 96.8 per cent in 2020.

The median gross monthly salary among these graduates with full-time permanent jobs grew from \$4,625 in 2020 to \$5,000 last year.

In Wednesday's joint statement, the six universities, including SIT and SUTD, said they have kept up with efforts to support graduates amid the pandemic, through extensive career guidance and job matching, and tapping industry partners to curate suitable job placement and apprenticeship opportunities.

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