

Fewer graduates found work 6 months after leaving university in 2023, but median salary up slightly: Survey

The median gross salary for fresh graduates in full-time permanent employment increased by 2.7% in 2023 – a smaller rise than the 10.5% jump seen between 2021 and 2022.



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SINGAPORE: The proportion of university graduates who found employment within six months of taking their final exams dropped to 89.6 per cent in 2023 from 93.8 per cent [the year before](#).

This is according to the results of the annual Joint Autonomous Universities Graduate Employment Survey released on Thursday (Feb 22).

The median gross monthly salary among fresh graduates in full-time permanent employment rose slightly, however, increasing by 2.7 per cent to S\$4,313 (US\$3,215) from S\$4,200 in 2022. The figure rose by 10.5 per cent between 2021 and 2022.

Of the 10,900 fresh graduates in the labour force polled in the 2023 survey, 84.1 per cent were in full-time permanent employment, down from 87.5 per cent in 2022.

Freelancers, meanwhile, accounted for 1.5 per cent of those in the labour force, a decrease from 1.8 per cent in 2022.

The figure for those in part-time or temporary employment was 4 per cent, down from 4.5 per cent in 2022.

About a quarter of those employed on a part-time or temporary basis – 1.1 per cent of all respondents in the labour force – were in involuntary part-time or temporary employment in 2023, compared to 0.8 per cent in 2022, according to the survey.

Of the remaining respondents in the labour force, 3.6 per cent were unemployed but commencing work soon or starting a business venture, while 6.8 per cent were unemployed and still looking for work.

The health sciences, information and digital technologies, and business clusters recorded the highest full-time permanent employment rates.

The survey was conducted by the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), the Singapore Management University (SMU) and the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS).

Singapore's two other autonomous universities – the Singapore University of Technology and Design and the Singapore Institute of Technology – will release the results of their own surveys separately at later dates.

All clusters recorded higher median gross monthly salaries for those in full-time permanent employment in 2023 except for the engineering and information and digital technologies clusters.

The median salary for the engineering cluster dropped to S\$4,500 last year from S\$4,600 in 2022 while the median salary for the information and digital technologies cluster dropped to S\$5,500 from S\$5,625

The built environment cluster saw the largest median salary increase, with the figure for the sector rising from S\$3,750 in 2022 to S\$4,000 in 2023.

A follow-up survey that polled close to 700 graduates in courses that typically require post-graduate practical training before graduates can practise in their professions also found a dip in employment figures.

The respondents were from the architecture class of 2020 and 2022 graduates who studied law, medicine, pharmacy and biomedical sciences and Chinese medicine.

The survey found that, of those in the labour force, 97.2 per cent were employed after the completion of their practical training, housemanships or first-year residency training, down slightly from 97.4 per cent in 2022.

There was, however, an uptick in those who secured full-time permanent employment, with the figure rising to 96.5 per cent from 95.1 per cent in 2022.

Another 0.2 per cent were freelancing, compared to 0.8 per cent in 2022.

The proportion in part-time or temporary employment was 0.6 per cent, a decrease from the 1.7 per cent in 2022. All respondents who were in part-time or temporary employment were in such employment voluntarily.

The median gross monthly salary of those in full-time permanent employment was S\$6,000 in 2023, up from S\$5,500 in 2022.

Source: CNA/fh(kg)