

Fewer fresh Singapore graduates in 2025 found full-time work, but pay held steady: survey

GRADUATES fresh out of local universities saw a further drop in employment, especially among those who found full-time roles, though salaries held steady.

Results from the latest graduate employment survey, which were released on Thursday (Mar 5), showed that 74.4 per cent of graduates secured full-time positions in 2025, down from 79.4 per cent in 2024.

Overall, a higher proportion of graduates entered the labour force, from 90.7 per cent in 2024 to 92.2 per cent in 2025. This refers to those who are either working or unemployed but actively looking for a job.

Among those who did find full-time jobs, the median gross monthly salary stayed at S\$4,500 in 2025, the same as in 2024.

A higher proportion of graduates applied for jobs but did not get any offers in 2025, rising to 8.5 per cent, from 5.7 per cent in 2024 and 4.1 per cent in 2023. At the same time, more graduates took on part-time or temporary employment, with 7.2 per cent doing so in 2025, from 6 per cent in 2024 and 4.1 per cent in 2023.

The joint statement from the six local universities said the number of job vacancies has moderated from the post-pandemic peak, driven by reduced churn and slower hiring.

“This reflects a more cautious hiring sentiment amid broader economic uncertainty and geopolitical developments. While there continues to be entry-level job opportunities, some outward-oriented sectors, such as information and communications, saw more subdued hiring compared to previous years,” said the statement.

It added that the survey reflects graduate employment outcomes six months after graduation, and generally improve beyond the six-month mark, based on past cohorts.

Based on labour market data from the Ministry of Manpower, about four in 10 entry-level vacancies for fresh graduates are in growth sectors such as financial and insurance services, and professional services, and in occupations such as financial compliance officers, risk analysts and auditors, the statement said.

Starting this year, the survey’s results reflect whether graduates have secured employment or not, instead of the previous employed-

unemployed split.

This change started with the latest graduate employment survey by the five polytechnics released earlier on Jan 15.

Those who have secured employment include graduates who are already working – full-time, freelance or part-time – as well as those who have accepted a job offer and will start later, or are actively taking steps to start a business.

In past iterations, the “employed” category captured only those who were already in a job at the point of the survey, while those due to start jobs later or setting up businesses were counted as unemployed.

The latest results also for the first time gave more details about graduates who have not secured work. This group falls into three categories: those who received but rejected job offers, those who applied but did not receive any offers, and those who did not look for full-time work.

Some 14,400 graduates from full-time programmes at the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University, the Singapore University of Technology and Design, the Singapore Institute of Technology, and the Singapore University of Social Sciences took part in this survey, representing a response rate of 73.7 per cent.

They were surveyed by the six universities on their employment status as at Nov 1, 2025, about six months after the completion of their final examinations.

Health sciences, built environment, and information and digital technologies were the three course clusters that continued to record the highest full-time permanent employment rates for graduates in 2025, ranging from about 78 to 89 per cent.

Graduates of information and digital technologies courses continued to take home the highest monthly pay at S\$5,500 in 2025, the same as in 2024.

Graduates who need help in their job search can reach out to their universities for career coaching and attend career fairs. They may also tap resources from Workforce Singapore or NTUC’s Employment and Employability Institute, or explore the Graduate Industry Traineeships and GRIT@Gov Programmes launched in October 2025. THE STRAITS TIMES