



**Press Release** *Strictly embargoed until 00.01hrs Wednesday 1st July 2009.*

# Latest research shows Britain's top employers have cut graduate jobs for the 'Class of 2009' by a quarter

A new update on the graduate job market, published today (Wednesday 1st July 2009), confirms the worst fears of final year university students who have just completed their degrees – vacancies for those graduating this summer have been reduced significantly because of the continuing recession in the UK.

**The Graduate Market in 2009** – a study of graduate vacancies at Britain's one hundred leading employers carried out by **High Fliers Research** in **June 2009** – shows that this year's intake of new graduates has been cut by 28% and that more than 5,500 vacancies have been cancelled or left unfilled.

Almost two-thirds of employers have now downgraded their graduate recruitment targets for 2009. Cuts have taken place in almost every employment sector but the situation is worst in the City where there are 56% fewer entry-level jobs in investment banking this year. The only area where graduate vacancies have increased noticeably is the Armed Forces which is set to take on 11% more recruits than in 2008.

The research also shows that application levels have increased sharply with employers receiving an average of 45 applications for each graduate vacancy – a third more than in 2008. Applications for public sector roles have jumped by 40% and engineering & industrial employers have attracted almost twice as many applicants per graduate position as last year.

Highlights from *The Graduate Market in 2009* update include:

- The UK's leading graduate employers have **reduced their recruitment targets** for 2009 by **28%** since the latest graduate recruitment round began in September 2008.
- During the 2009 recruitment round, the country's top employers planned to hire almost **20,000 new graduates** – but at least **5,500 posts have been cut or left unfilled**.
- Almost **two-thirds** of employers have now **downgraded their graduate recruitment** targets this year and half of these have cut at least 50 places from their graduate schemes.
- The hardest hit sectors in 2009 include **investment banking** (entry-level vacancies have been cut by 56% in 2009), **IT & telecommunications** (where vacancies have dropped by 51%) and **engineering & industrial employers** (graduate vacancies have been reduced by 41%).

*/ over ...*

- The **Armed Forces** is the only employment area which has shown any significant growth – recruitment for the Army, RAF and Royal Navy has been stepped up 10% this year.
- The sectors that have recruited the **most graduates** in 2009 are **accountancy** (over 3,200 graduate jobs) and the **public sector** (more than 1,800 positions); the smallest graduate employers are those in chemicals & pharmaceuticals (0.3% of total) and the consumer goods manufacturers (1.0% of total).
- This is the second consecutive year that opportunities for graduates have been declined – vacancies dropped by **6.7%** in **2008** and this year's reduced recruitment targets means that the total number of graduate jobs available has fallen by a further **13.5%** in 2009.
- On average, the UK's top employers have received 45 applications for each of their graduate vacancies this year, almost a third more than the average of 35 applicants per vacancy in 2008.
- Competition has been toughest for graduate jobs in **investment banking**, where employers received an average of more than 100 applications per graduate position, despite an overall drop in application numbers to the sector.
- Other highly competitive employment areas for graduates include **retailing** (an average of 87 applications per vacancy), **energy & oil companies** (83 applications per vacancy) and **IT & telecommunications** (67 applications per vacancy).
- Applications for graduate jobs in the **public sector** jumped by more than 40% but fewer finalists applied for entry-level positions in **banking & finance** or **consulting**.
- The career areas with the lowest number of applicants per vacancy are the **accountancy & professional services** firms (an average of 15 applications per graduate training place) and the **Armed Forces** (an average of 2 applications per vacancy).
- Looking ahead to 2010, **half of leading employers** believe that they will hire **a similar level of graduates to this year**, a fifth believe their intake will increase but almost a quarter warn of further reductions in their recruitment.
- In total, Britain's top employers have recruited 14,370 graduates to start work later this year. The original recruitment target for 2009 was 19,951 vacancies and these same organisations hired 16,614 graduates in 2008.

Managing director of High Fliers Research, **Martin Birchall** commented:

“With a record number of students graduating from UK universities this summer, these substantial cuts in graduate recruitment at Britain's best-known and most sought-after employers couldn't have come at a worse time. The ‘Class of 2009’ are facing one of the toughest job markets of the last two decades and there is now the very real prospect that tens of thousands of new graduates will be left unemployed after leaving university this year.

Many top employers have received a record number of applications for their 2009 graduate vacancies and almost all have now either filled their places or have closed off their application process. For graduates looking for work in the coming months, the chances of landing a last-minute place with a major national or international employer now seem very slim.”

**Notes to Editors:**

1. **The Graduate Market in 2009** is produced by **High Fliers Research Ltd**, an independent market research company that specialises in researching the graduate recruitment market. The company's regular research programme includes *The UK Graduate Careers Survey* of final year university students and the annual poll to find *The UK Top 100 Graduate Employers*.
2. The **employers** included in this study are drawn from *The UK Top 100 Graduate Employers 2008*, which is based on a poll of more than 15,000 final year university students to find "Which employer offers the best opportunities for graduates?":

<i>Accenture</i>	<i>Cancer Research UK</i>	<i>HBOS</i>	<i>npower</i>
<i>Addleshaw Goddard</i>	<i>Citi</i>	<i>Herbert Smith</i>	<i>Oliver Wyman</i>
<i>Airbus</i>	<i>Civil Service</i>	<i>HSBC</i>	<i>Oxfam</i>
<i>Aldi</i>	<i>Clifford Chance</i>	<i>IBM</i>	<i>Penguin Group</i>
<i>Allen &amp; Overy</i>	<i>CMS Cameron McKenna</i>	<i>Innocent Drinks</i>	<i>Pfizer</i>
<i>Arcadia Group</i>	<i>Co-Op Group</i>	<i>J.P. Morgan</i>	<i>Police</i>
<i>Army</i>	<i>Corus</i>	<i>John Lewis</i>	<i>PricewaterhouseCoopers</i>
<i>Arup</i>	<i>Credit Suisse</i>	<i>KPMG</i>	<i>Procter &amp; Gamble</i>
<i>ASDA</i>	<i>Data Connection</i>	<i>Lehman Brothers</i>	<i>QinetiQ</i>
<i>AstraZeneca</i>	<i>Deloitte</i>	<i>Linklaters</i>	<i>RAF</i>
<i>Atkins</i>	<i>Deutsche Bank</i>	<i>Lloyds TSB</i>	<i>Rolls-Royce</i>
<i>BAE Systems</i>	<i>DLA Piper</i>	<i>L'Oreal</i>	<i>RBS Group</i>
<i>Bain and Company</i>	<i>E.ON</i>	<i>Local Government NGDP</i>	<i>Royal Navy</i>
<i>Bank of America</i>	<i>Ernst &amp; Young</i>	<i>Lovells</i>	<i>Sainsbury's</i>
<i>Barclays</i>	<i>Eversheds</i>	<i>Marks and Spencer</i>	<i>Shell</i>
<i>Barclays Capital</i>	<i>ExxonMobil</i>	<i>Mars</i>	<i>Sky</i>
<i>BBC</i>	<i>Faber Maunsell</i>	<i>McDonald's Restaurants</i>	<i>Slaughter and May</i>
<i>Bloomberg</i>	<i>Foreign Office</i>	<i>McKinsey &amp; Company</i>	<i>Teach First</i>
<i>BNP Paribas</i>	<i>Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer</i>	<i>Merrill Lynch</i>	<i>Tesco</i>
<i>Boots</i>	<i>Fujitsu Services</i>	<i>The Met Office</i>	<i>Thomson Reuters</i>
<i>Boston Consulting Group</i>	<i>GCHQ</i>	<i>MI5 – The Security Service</i>	<i>Transport for London</i>
<i>BP</i>	<i>GlaxoSmithKline</i>	<i>Microsoft</i>	<i>UBS</i>
<i>British Airways</i>	<i>Goldman Sachs</i>	<i>Ministry of Defence</i>	<i>Unilever</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>Google</i>	<i>Morgan Stanley</i>	<i>Watson Wyatt</i>
<i>Cadbury</i>	<i>Grant Thornton</i>	<i>NHS</i>	<i>WPP</i>

3. **For further information or additional comments**, please contact **Martin Birchall**, Managing Director, High Fliers Research Ltd, King's Gate, 1 Bravingtons Walk, London N1 9AE  
Telephone: 020 7428 9000 Mobile: 07774 471628 Email: [martin.birchall@highfliers.co.uk](mailto:martin.birchall@highfliers.co.uk)