



Press Release *Strictly embargoed until 00.01hrs Wednesday 4th July 2012.*

Latest research shows an increase in graduate jobs at Britain's top employers for the 'Class of 2012'

A new update on the graduate job market, published today (Wednesday 4th July 2012), reveals that despite the uncertain economic outlook, there will be more graduate vacancies available for university-leavers in 2012 – making it the third consecutive year that the number of graduate jobs has increased.

The Graduate Market in 2012 – a study of graduate vacancies and starting salaries at Britain's one hundred leading employers conducted by **High Fliers Research** in June 2012 – shows that employers are set to take on **0.9%** more graduates in 2012 than they did last year. Graduate vacancies rose by 2.8% in 2011 and by 12.6% in 2010.

Although there remains a recruitment freeze at many Government departments and agencies, graduate vacancies in the public sector are expected to increase by a fifth this year – in part because of the expansion of the Teach First scheme which has hired 1,000 graduates for the first time in 2012. There are also more opportunities in five other sectors – engineering & industrial companies, retailers, IT & telecommunication firms and oil & energy companies – which together have created more than 600 additional entry-level positions this year.

But the report also highlights that employers have received an unprecedented number of applications for this year's vacancies and, as a result, many of the best-known organisations have already completed their graduate recruitment for 2012 or have closed-off applications early. Applications to the UK's leading employers have jumped by over 25% since 2009 – this year recruiters have already handled an average of 52 applications for each graduate position available, an 11% increase on application levels in 2011.

Highlights from *The Graduate Market in 2012* update include:

- The UK's leading graduate employers **have increased their vacancies** by **0.9%** in 2012, compared with the number of graduates recruited in 2011. This means that graduate opportunities for university-leavers have now increased for three years running – vacancies increased by **2.8%** in 2011 and **12.6%** in 2010 but fell by 17.8% in 2009 and 6.7% in 2008.
- Despite the widespread recruitment freeze at Government departments & agencies, **public sector employers** have expanded their graduate intake by 20.8% in 2012, an increase of almost 400 additional roles year-on-year. There are also a substantial number of extra graduate jobs available at **engineering & industrial companies** (up 20.2% compared to 2011), **IT & telecommunications firms** (up 39.1%), **oil & energy companies** (up 18.1%) & **retailers** (up 7.9%).

- Employers in nine of fourteen key industries and employment areas are recruiting fewer graduates in 2012. Recruitment targets at the top **consulting firms, investment banks and law firms** have been reduced and graduate vacancies at the leading **accounting & professional services** firms appear to have peaked after three consecutive years of significant increases.
- The sectors that are taking on most graduates in 2012 are the **accounting & professional services firms** (more than 3,900 positions), **investment banks** (more than 2,400 positions), **public sector employers** (more than 2,200 positions) and **engineering & industrial companies** (more than 1,300 positions).
- **Applications** to employers **have increased by 11%** in 2012 and recruiters have received an average of **52 applications** for each of their graduate vacancies this year. Applications levels are now more than 25% higher than three years ago, partly because of the large number of graduates from previous years who failed to find work at the end of their studies and are competing alongside the ‘Class of 2012’ for this year’s entry-level positions.
- Competition has been toughest for graduate jobs at **consumer goods** manufacturers, **banking & finance** employers, the leading **retailers** and **investment banks** where employers received at least 80 applications per graduate position.
- The sector with the lowest number of applicants per vacancy is **accountancy & professional services** – an average of 24 applications per graduate training place in 2012.
- Faced with ever-increasing numbers of graduate applications, **seven out of ten** employers now require applicants for their graduate positions to have **at least a 2.1 degree** and a quarter specify that candidates should have a minimum UCAS tariff, based on their A-level results.
- **Starting salaries** at the UK’s leading graduate employers in 2012 are expected to remain **unchanged for a third consecutive year** – at a median of **£29,000**. Graduate starting salaries increased by 7.4% in 2010 and 5.9% in 2009.
- The most generous salaries are those on offer from **investment banks** (average of £45,000), **law firms** (average of £38,000) and **oil & energy** companies (average of £32,500). The **public sector** (average of £22,200) and **retailers** (average of £24,000) have the lowest graduate pay rates for 2012.
- Despite three years of increasing vacancies, graduate recruitment at the UK’s leading employers **remains below pre-recession levels**. The total number of graduate jobs on offer in 2012 across all the organisations featured within the research is still 11% below that recorded in 2007. By contrast, an extra **50,000 new graduates** are expected to leave university in the summer of 2012, compared with the numbers who graduated five years ago.

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

“With a record number of students graduating from UK universities over the next few weeks, it’s good news that Britain’s best-known and most sought-after employers are defying the recession and have increased their graduate recruitment for the third year running.

But university-leavers from the ‘Class of 2012’ are still facing considerable competition to land a good graduate job this summer. Employers have already received an unprecedented number of applications for this year’s graduate vacancies and organisations in several of the most popular career sectors have now filled all their places for 2012 or have closed-off their applications early.”

Notes to Editors:

1. *The Graduate Market in 2012* is produced by **High Fliers Research**, an independent market research company which specialises in researching graduate recruitment at UK universities. The company's regular research programme includes *The UK Graduate Careers Survey* of over 17,000 final year university students annually and the poll to find *The UK's Top 100 Graduate Employers*.
2. The **employers** included in this study are drawn from *The UK's Top 100 Graduate Employers 2011* which is based on a poll of 17,851 final year university students to find "Which employer offers the best opportunities for graduates?":

<i>Accenture</i>	<i>Cancer Research</i>	<i>IBM</i>	<i>Oxfam</i>
<i>Airbus</i>	<i>Centrica</i>	<i>J.P. Morgan</i>	<i>Penguin</i>
<i>Aldi</i>	<i>Citi</i>	<i>Jaguar Landrover</i>	<i>Police</i>
<i>Allen & Overy</i>	<i>Civil Service</i>	<i>John Lewis</i>	<i>Procter & Gamble</i>
<i>Apple</i>	<i>Clifford Chance</i>	<i>KPMG</i>	<i>PwC</i>
<i>Arcadia Group</i>	<i>The Co-Operative Group</i>	<i>Kraft</i>	<i>RAF</i>
<i>Army</i>	<i>Credit Suisse</i>	<i>L'Oréal</i>	<i>Rolls-Royce</i>
<i>Arup</i>	<i>Deloitte</i>	<i>Lidl</i>	<i>Royal Bank of Scotland</i>
<i>Asda</i>	<i>Deutsche Bank</i>	<i>Linklaters</i>	<i>Royal Navy</i>
<i>AstraZeneca</i>	<i>Diageo</i>	<i>Lloyds Banking Group</i>	<i>RWE npower</i>
<i>Atkins</i>	<i>DLA Piper</i>	<i>Local Government</i>	<i>Saatchi & Saatchi</i>
<i>BAE Systems</i>	<i>Dstl</i>	<i>Marks & Spencer</i>	<i>Sainsbury's</i>
<i>Bain & Company</i>	<i>E.ON</i>	<i>Mars</i>	<i>Santander</i>
<i>Baker & McKenzie</i>	<i>EDF Energy</i>	<i>McDonald's Restaurants</i>	<i>Savills</i>
<i>Balfour Beatty</i>	<i>Ernst & Young</i>	<i>McKinsey & Company</i>	<i>Shell</i>
<i>Bank of America Merrill Lynch</i>	<i>ExxonMobil</i>	<i>MI5</i>	<i>Simmons & Simmons</i>
<i>Bank of England</i>	<i>Foreign Office</i>	<i>Microsoft</i>	<i>Sky</i>
<i>Barclays</i>	<i>Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer</i>	<i>Ministry of Defence</i>	<i>Slaughter and May</i>
<i>Barclays Capital</i>	<i>GlaxoSmithKline</i>	<i>Morgan Stanley</i>	<i>Sony</i>
<i>BBC</i>	<i>Goldman Sachs</i>	<i>National Grid</i>	<i>Teach First</i>
<i>Bloomberg</i>	<i>Google</i>	<i>Nestlé</i>	<i>Tesco</i>
<i>Boots</i>	<i>Grant Thornton</i>	<i>Network Rail</i>	<i>Transport for London</i>
<i>Boston Consulting Group</i>	<i>Herbert Smith</i>	<i>NHS</i>	<i>UBS</i>
<i>BP</i>	<i>Hogan Lovells</i>	<i>nucleargraduates</i>	<i>Unilever</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>HSBC</i>	<i>Oliver Wyman</i>	<i>WPP</i>

3. **Martin Birchall**, Managing Director of High Fliers Research is available for interview.
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