



Press Release *Strictly embargoed until 00.01hrs Monday 12th January 2015.*

New research shows a big increase in graduate jobs and better starting salaries at Britain's top employers in 2015

A major new report on the graduate job market, published today (Monday 12th January 2015), reveals that graduate recruitment at Britain's top employers is set to reach its highest level for more than a decade this year and that university students graduating in the summer of 2015 – including the first undergraduates to have paid tuition fees of up to £9,000-a-year for their degrees – will be paid higher graduate salaries when they start work.

The Graduate Market in 2015 – a study of graduate vacancies and starting salaries at the country's one hundred leading employers, conducted by **High Fliers Research** in December 2014 – confirms that employers increased their graduate recruitment by 7.9% in 2014 and are set to expand their vacancies for university-leavers by a further 8.1% in 2015. More than a quarter of graduate vacancies were cut in 2008 and 2009 at the beginning of the recession and recruitment dipped again in 2012, before returning to growth in 2013.

Employers in nine out of thirteen major employment areas are preparing to take on more new graduates in 2015, with the biggest increases in recruitment at public sector employers, accounting & professional services firms, banking & finance firms, retailers and the Armed Forces, which together expect to recruit more than 1,200 extra graduates.

The median starting salary at the country's leading employers will increase to £30,000 for this year's new graduates. Graduate pay rose for the first time in five years in 2014 – the median starting salary had previously remained unchanged at £29,000 for four years running.

The research also highlights that graduate employers are providing an unprecedented number of paid work experience places in 2015 for university students and recent graduates, through an extensive programme of paid internships, vacation work experience and industrial placements.

Highlights from **The Graduate Market in 2015** report include:

- The number of graduates hired by the UK's leading employers **rose by 7.9%** in 2014, the largest annual rise in graduate recruitment for four years.
- Recruitment would have been even higher in 2014 but last-minute increases in employers' vacancy targets and a rise in graduates turning down or reneging on job offers meant that more than **700 graduate positions were left unfilled** last year.
- Employers plan to expand their graduate recruitment even further in 2015, with **8.1% more entry-level vacancies** than in 2014, the third consecutive year that graduate vacancies have increased.

- Graduate employers in nine out of thirteen key industries and business sectors are expecting to take on **more new graduates** this year than in 2014.
- The largest growth in graduate vacancies is at **public sector employers, accounting & professional services firms, banking & finance firms, retailers** and the **Armed Forces**.
- The largest individual recruiters of graduates in 2015 will be **Teach First** (2,060 vacancies), **PwC** (1,570 vacancies) and **Deloitte** (1,100 vacancies).
- Graduate starting salaries at the UK's leading graduate employers are expected to **increase for the second year running** in 2015, reaching a median of **£30,000** for the first time.
- Over a quarter of top graduate programmes will pay new recruits **more than £35,000** when they start work and four organisations are offering salaries in excess of £45,000 to this year's graduates.
- The most generous salaries in 2014 are those on offer from **investment banks** (median of £45,000), **law firms** (median of £40,000), **banking & finance firms** (median of £36,500) and **oil & energy companies** (median of £32,500).
- The highest published graduate starting salaries for 2014 are at the retailer **Aldi** (£42,000) and the **European Commission** (£41,500).
- There is little evidence that graduate starting salaries are rising in reaction to the introduction of **higher university tuition fees** – most organisations who have increased their graduate pay in 2014 or 2015 have done so in order to compete effectively with other graduate employers.
- Over four-fifths of the UK's leading graduate employers are offering **paid work experience** for students and graduates this year – an unprecedented **13,049 paid placements** are available.
- Two thirds of employers are providing **paid vacation internships** for penultimate year students and three-fifths offer **industrial placements** for undergraduates (typically lasting 6-12 months as part of a university degree course).
- Recruiters have confirmed that a **third** of this year's entry-level positions will be filled by graduates who have **already worked for their organisations**, either through paid internships, industrial placements or vacation work.
- **Three-quarters** of the graduate vacancies advertised this year by City investment banks and **half** the training contracts offered by the leading law firms are likely to be filled by graduates who have already completed work experience with the employer.
- Nearly **half the recruiters** who took part in the research repeated their warnings from previous years – that graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are **unlikely to be successful** during the selection process for graduate programmes.

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

“It's great news that students leaving university this summer who've paid higher tuition fees for their degrees will be emerging into the most buoyant graduate job market for over a decade, with a wider choice of graduate vacancies at the country's most sought-after employers and better starting salaries.

And there are a record number of opportunities too for first and second year students to get paid work experience this year – Britain's top employers will be providing more than 13,000 paid internships, vacation work or course-based placements in 2015.”

Notes to Editors:

1. *The Graduate Market in 2015* is produced by **High Fliers Research**, the independent market research company which has specialised in researching graduate recruitment at UK universities since 1994.
2. The **employers** included in *The Graduate Market in 2015* research are the one hundred organisations which final year university students from the UK's leading universities believe offer the best opportunities for graduates:

<i>Accenture</i>	<i>Centrica</i>	<i>Grant Thornton</i>	<i>NHS</i>
<i>Airbus</i>	<i>Channel Four</i>	<i>Herbert Smith Freehills</i>	<i>Norton Rose Fulbright</i>
<i>Aldi</i>	<i>Citi</i>	<i>Hogan Lovells</i>	<i>Oxfam</i>
<i>Allen & Overy</i>	<i>Civil Service</i>	<i>HSBC</i>	<i>Penguin</i>
<i>Apple</i>	<i>Clifford Chance</i>	<i>IBM</i>	<i>Police</i>
<i>Arcadia Group</i>	<i>Credit Suisse</i>	<i>J.P. Morgan</i>	<i>Procter & Gamble</i>
<i>Army</i>	<i>Deloitte</i>	<i>Jaguar Land Rover</i>	<i>PwC</i>
<i>Arup</i>	<i>Deutsche Bank</i>	<i>John Lewis Partnership</i>	<i>RAF</i>
<i>Asda</i>	<i>Department for International Development</i>	<i>KPMG</i>	<i>Red Bull</i>
<i>Atkins</i>	<i>Diageo</i>	<i>L'Oréal</i>	<i>Rolls-Royce</i>
<i>BAE Systems</i>	<i>DLA Piper</i>	<i>Lidl</i>	<i>Royal Bank of Scotland Group</i>
<i>Bain</i>	<i>Dyson</i>	<i>Linklaters</i>	<i>Royal Navy</i>
<i>Baker & McKenzie</i>	<i>E.ON</i>	<i>Lloyds Banking Group</i>	<i>Sainsbury's</i>
<i>Bank of America Merrill Lynch</i>	<i>EDF Energy</i>	<i>Lloyds'</i>	<i>Santander</i>
<i>Barclays</i>	<i>European Commission</i>	<i>M&S</i>	<i>Savills</i>
<i>BBC</i>	<i>ExxonMobil</i>	<i>Mars</i>	<i>Shell</i>
<i>BlackRock</i>	<i>EY</i>	<i>McDonald's</i>	<i>Siemens</i>
<i>Bloomberg</i>	<i>Foreign & Commonwealth Office</i>	<i>McKinsey & Company</i>	<i>Sky</i>
<i>Boots</i>	<i>Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer</i>	<i>MI5 - The Security Service</i>	<i>Slaughter and May</i>
<i>Boston Consulting Group</i>	<i>Frontline</i>	<i>Microsoft</i>	<i>Teach First</i>
<i>BP</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>Mondelēz International</i>	<i>Tesco</i>
<i>British Airways</i>	<i>GlaxoSmithKline</i>	<i>Morgan Stanley</i>	<i>Transport for London</i>
<i>British Sugar</i>	<i>Goldman Sachs</i>	<i>Morrisons</i>	<i>UBS</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>Google</i>	<i>Nestle</i>	<i>Unilever</i>
<i>Cancer Research UK</i>		<i>Newton Europe</i>	<i>WPP</i>
		<i>NGDP for Local Government</i>	

3. **Martin Birchall**, Managing Director of High Fliers Research is available for interview.
Telephone: 020 7428 9000 Mobile: 07774 471628 Email: martin.birchall@highfliers.co.uk