90% of grads found jobs within 6 months

DESPITE the recession, nine out of 10 students who graduated from the three local universities last year found jobs within six months of graduation, according to Ministry of Education (MOE) statistics released yesterday.

And there was even better news for those in teaching, nursing and dental surgery, with graduates posting a 100 per cent employment rate in those sectors.

The MOE’s Graduate Employment Survey, conducted annually, looked at those who graduated from the National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU) and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) last year and what fraction landed a job within six months.

It also looked at the mean salary across faculties.

Apart from teaching graduates from NTU’s National Institute of Education, and nursing and dental surgery graduates from NUS, those from NUS’ business administration (accountancy) programmes, and SMU’s economics and accountancy programmes were also largely recession-proof.

But last year’s economic gloom did affect salaries, with average wages last year lower than those in 2008.

In 2008, SMU economics graduates with cum laude and higher qualifications landed average monthly salaries of $4,164. The same group last year started at an average of just $3,606.

At NTU, teachers made the most, with starting salaries from $3,030 to $3,109, followed by aerospace engineering graduates with a mean monthly salary of $3,066.

At NUS, business administration honours graduates made the most, with an average of $3,389 a month.

NUS applied science graduates were, however, at the other end of the spectrum, with a mean monthly salary of $2,393.