GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT SURVEY 2009

Good news, but there is a downside

Almost all found jobs within six months; still average pay was lower for some

SINGAPORE — The good news is that almost all the fresh graduates from the three local universities found jobs within six months of graduating last year.

The overall employment rate for graduates from the Singapore Management University (SMU), the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) was 92 per cent.

But the downside was that average monthly salaries — compared to what their predecessors were offered — dipped for those who entered the job market last November.

And while economics graduates with cum laude and higher qualifications from the SMU were the top earners in 2008 with a monthly starting salary of $4,164, they started with $3,606 last year.

It was the graduates from SMU’s Information Systems Management course — with cum laude and higher — who earned the highest mean monthly salary of $3,754, according to figures from the latest Graduate Employment Survey posted on the Ministry of Education (MOE) website.

Graduates from the NUS Business Administration with Honours course followed closely with a mean monthly salary of $3,389, down from $3,971 the previous year.

This is the second survey of its kind by the MOE, which collated results from surveys by the three universities.

It looked at those who graduated last year and who got jobs within six months.

Those who picked teaching as a career also did well and were placed among the top earners, and their starting salaries remained mostly unchanged.

Those who had Arts (with Education) qualifications from the National Institute of Education made an average of $3,109 a month, a slight dip from 2008’s $3,207.

They also enjoyed 100 per cent employment rate.

However, graduates from NUS’s Applied Science course were at the other end of the scale with a mean monthly salary of $2,393.

That was slightly lower than graduates from NTU’s Art, Design and Media course, whose mean monthly salary was $2,431.

The employment rate of graduates from the SMU is the highest, with 97 per cent.

In a sign the economy has improved, about 91 per cent of graduates from the NUS and about 89 per cent from the NTU also found jobs within six months.