

For immediate release

## **A quarter of graduates dissatisfied with their first job: Lower-than-expected salary and benefits given as top reason**

*Those dissatisfied with salary received an average of HK\$12,470 per month, HK\$2,500 less than their peers*

**Hong Kong – 22 February 2018** – A quarter of tertiary graduates are not satisfied with their first job, according to the latest jobsDB Survey on the Employment Status of Hong Kong's Tertiary Students 2017. Amongst those who feel dissatisfied, insufficient salary and benefits is the main reason for their disappointment (29%), while 17% cite a lack of career development opportunities and feel that employers fail to provide adequate on-the-job training.

The survey canvassed the opinion of 638 local graduates and undergraduates from various disciplines. It revealed that while fresh graduates are getting an average monthly salary of HK\$14,978 in their first job - slightly higher than HK\$14,685 in 2016 - the average salary of those who are dissatisfied with their first job is HK\$12,470, down from HK\$13,348 in 2016, indicating that not all tertiary graduates are feeling the benefit of the increase to average salaries in their first job.

In addition, only 37% of respondents expect to receive a monthly salary of over HK\$16,000, compared to 48% in 2016, reflecting that graduates and undergraduates are becoming increasingly cautious about the salary expectations for their first job.

### **Conservative planning after graduation**

This conservative attitude is also reflected in respondents' five-year plans after graduation. In the 2016 survey, buying property was students' number one target (29%); this has now dropped to number three (14%) in the list of priorities for this year's respondents. Top of the list now is reaching management level (19%), followed by achieving short-term savings targets (14%).

The top three industries undergraduates wish to enter are accounting (18%), advertising/PR/marketing services (8%) and the civil service (7%). For students still searching for a role, salary and benefits were the most important elements when choosing jobs (23%), followed by career development and on-the-job training (16%), and room to develop their interests (14%).

Meanwhile, 17% of students plan to continue their studies, an increase from the 12% who planned to do the same in 2016. Despite an increase in countries offering working holiday visas for Hong Kong nationals, only 8% of respondents plan to apply for these programmes, a similar level to 2016, indicating that students are taking a more down-to-earth approach with their prospects.

The survey also found that while almost all of the respondents (99%) indicate their willingness to work overtime, over half (57%) of them would not be willing to do so for more than 6 hours per week. This could be a reflection that although Hong Kong tertiary students understand that working overtime is a common practice for the local workforce, they still hope to maintain a positive work-life balance.

### **Increased pessimism despite economic progress**

The 2017 survey reveals that, although the labour market in Hong Kong is thriving and unemployment rates continue to remain low, 37% of respondents feel pessimistic about their prospects – an increase from 29% in 2016. Keen competition in the industry (18%), a lack of confidence in their capabilities (14%) and concerns over job openings (14%) are the key reasons for this pessimism.

Nearly a quarter (23%) of respondents think that interview performance is critical to securing a job, followed by field of study (17%). This may be a reflection of the high levels of tertiary education and vast numbers of graduates in the city, making academic background no longer the primary factor of securing a job from a student's perspective. Instead the sincerity, personality and capability demonstrated in an interview are becoming key to successfully winning employers' trust.

### **About jobsDB**

At jobsDB, we believe in an open and inclusive world for all. Here, opportunities and possibilities are plenty: A fresh start. A new career. A welcome change. These are just a few of the things we help people explore.

As a leading job portal with substantial positions across Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand, we are Asia's preferred destination for job seekers. With a team of 800 talented individuals, we've a strong local presence in every country we're in.

With our understanding and insights on each market, as well as our passion for technology, we provide candidates the best opportunities and deliver exceptional value to hirers.

### **About SEEK Asia**

JobStreet.com and jobsDB are part of SEEK Asia, which is the leading online employment market place in Asia. SEEK Asia covers 7 countries namely Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

SEEK Asia is the extension of the Australian Securities Exchange listed company called SEEK. The company's purpose is to help improve people's lives through a better career. SEEK Asia's database consist of over 500,000 corporate hirers and over 24 million candidates.

Issued on behalf of the jobsDB Group (Hong Kong) by LEWIS.

For further information please contact:

Silvia Wu  
LEWIS  
+852 3944 5015  
[silvia.wu@teamlewis.com](mailto:silvia.wu@teamlewis.com)

Laura Chan  
jobsDB  
+852 3909 9914  
[laurachan@jobsdb.com](mailto:laurachan@jobsdb.com)

Rex Chong  
LEWIS  
+852 3944 5019  
[rex.chong@teamlewis.com](mailto:rex.chong@teamlewis.com)