

News

Female graduates demand smaller salaries than men

Gabriella Jozwiak

22 Jan 2014



Female graduates request lower starting salaries than male graduates when looking for their first job, a vacancy website has found.

Analysis of salary requests made by almost 500,000 graduate job seekers between 2003 and 2013 on Graduate-jobs.com revealed the trend has remained the same for the past ten years.

The difference between the wage expectations of males and females in 2013 was £1,438. On average, men requested £20,219 a year while women asked for £18,781.

This gap has risen since 2003, when the gap was £999 – £18,506 for men and £17,507 for women.

HR Lounge CEO and HR Society president Angela O'Connor said she was disappointed by the findings.

“It’s really sad that in 2014 we are still looking at surveys that show women are undervaluing themselves in the employment market and that organisations are allowing this to happen,” she said.

“There is also a great deal yet to be done to raise the confidence level of young women so that they see themselves as equally valuable in the employment market.

“We all bear a responsibility for making greater moves forward in this area, as employers, educators, parents, politicians and as HR professionals.”

O'Connor added that organisations needed audit pay and benefits to ensure they rewarded people based on merits and skills rather than gender.

Graduate-jobs.com CEO Gerry Wyatt suggested the disparity was caused by more males choosing careers in industries with higher wage rates than women.

“In general we're still seeing more men than women go into sectors that pay higher salaries,” he said.

“Women must ensure they are not undervaluing themselves when searching for a career. There are many employers looking for career-driven women in sectors primarily populated by men, such as banking, engineering, telecoms, IT and sales.

“The advice for both male and female graduates is that although setting realistic salary expectations is a way to stand out to recruiters, the most important thing is the quality of the graduate – their academic achievements, their extracurricular activities and their work experience.”

Office for National Statistics figures published in December 2013 showed the gender pay gap based on median gross hourly earnings for full-time employees increased to 10% from 9.5% in 2012.