



Graduates here are increasingly less keen on jobs in the banking and financial sector following the economic crisis, according to a study.

Singapore Airlines (SIA) was the preferred private-sector destination of entry-level graduates seeking to land a job.

The percentage of respondents who picked the airline as an employer of choice also increased slightly - from 42.2 per cent last year to 42.4 per cent this year.

Among the choice companies, all financial institutions have fallen out of the top five positions this year, and Barclays is the only bank which has risen in the rankings - from 11th to 9th position.

The study by recruitment specialist JobsFactory says that even though banking and financial services is still the most popular industry among entry-level graduates, the percentage of respondents who voted for it has shrunk by 10.8 per cent, compared to last year.

"Most banks have not hired aggressively in the past year, and some even retrenched staff to cut costs. The effects of the economic crisis have most probably diminished the appeal of the financial industry considerably," says JobsFactory director Lim Der Shing.

Only four banks remained in the top 10 choices - Citigroup, Barclays Capital Global Services, Deutsche Bank and DBS Bank. Last year, six banks were among the top 10, and three were even among the top five employers.

Last year's entrants to the top 10 private employers of choice, Apple and Google, continued to rise up the rankings to the second and third position this year, respectively. ExxonMobil and DBS Bank occupy the next two positions.

The choice of SIA suggests brand consciousness, says Mr Lim. "Such a result indicates the strength and resilience of a strong brand, considering how tough this year has been for SIA, with the downturn and competition from budget airlines eating into its bottom line.

The company still resonates with fresh graduates and students."

Among government and related sectors, the Singapore Tourism Board topped the rankings again, followed by Nanyang Technological University and the Economic Development Board.

The average expected monthly basic salary for entry-level graduates is \$2,805, a 5.6 per cent increase from \$2,655 last year. Among top graduates, salary expectations have risen even more, by 6.4 per cent, from \$2,767 last year to \$2,944 this year.

The online project surveyed 3,010 entry-level graduates.

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