

Students opt for training schemes

LONDON, UK: A Level results revealed, but university isn't the only route to a great business career...

More students who are receiving their A Level results today are considering entering the workplace straight away on training schemes rather than going to university, says PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC).

Applications to PwC's A Level entry scheme, HEADstart, have doubled since 2008, and are up 25% on last year.

James Chalmers, board partner, strategy and talent, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP said:

"We've no doubt that interest in schemes like ours is only going to grow over the next twelve months, following students' recent experiences of budget cuts, rising debts and fewer places.

"A Level entry training schemes are particularly well-suited to those who have a clear career in mind when they leave school. By combining formal study with on the job experience and personal coaching, trainees put everything they learn in their studies straight into action. They are earning while studying towards a professional accounting or tax qualification, getting great work experience and a head start in their career."

The HEADstart scheme received over 800 applications this year for 60 vacancies - up 25% on last year and double the number of applications received in 2008. This translates to 13 applicants for every post, suggesting that talented students are seeing structured learning and development opportunities with good career prospects as a viable alternative to university, to kick start their career.

Applicants require 280 UCAS points or equivalent. Trainees work in either assurance or tax and study for industry recognised qualifications in accountancy (ACCA) or tax (ATT).

Notes to editors:

1. To interview A level entry employees nationwide (UK only), contact Elizabeth Faulkner on 07877 758 609.
2. Students can join one of two PwC HEADstart schemes: The HEADstart Assurance Generalist route leads to a Chartered Certified Accountancy qualification within four years, working with a variety of clients and projects *en route*. Those joining the HEADstart Tax (Specialist) route will work towards a tax qualification while providing client and PwC team support. On both schemes, study leave is provided to attend formal study at college, alongside a personal coach to review performance, and on the job experience.

3. PwC recruits between 50-70 roles for the scheme as part of the firms overall student recruitment programme.
4. The salary for A Level joiners is dependent on role and location but they are in the range of £16-20 000 plus benefits.
5. The application process involves an online application, online and assessment centre tests, a telephone interview and a final interview with a senior member of staff.
6. HEADstart is a part of PwC's overall student and graduate recruitment programme, which offers 1100 jobs this year at graduate and intern levels nationwide.
7. Further details can be found at www.pwc.com/uk/en/careers/student/head-start.jhtml.

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