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# Guys get \$50k for starters

**Torny Miller**

Male university graduates can now expect to earn a clean \$50,000 in their first year on the job.

But their female counterparts still have a way to go before they reach the magic \$50,000 starting point, with new figures from Graduate Careers Australia finding the median starting salary for women who have just graduated with a bachelor degree is \$48,000.

Overall, the median annual starting salary for people graduating with a bachelor degree last year was \$49,000 – an increase of 2 per cent on 2009.

GCA's Graeme Bryant said the marginal increase was likely due to employers continuing to be cautious after the global financial crisis.

Dental graduates had the highest kick-off salary, earning a median of \$75,000, followed by optometrists on \$70,000 and engineers on \$56,000.

Mark Sixty from education provider Upskilled said the prospect of healthy starting salaries was propelling more people into higher education.

There was a 15.7 per cent increase in the number of people undertaking vocational education and training (VET) courses last year in the hope of upgrading their job skills or to kickstart a new career, he said.

The courses were used by many as a bridge into university.

He said some people who did not go to university or who had been in the workforce for a few years felt they had "missed the boat" with tertiary education, but there were options available.