

# Too Many Top Grades Make Recruiting Graduates Impossible, Say Employers

Submitted by: i-to-i

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## ACADEMIC SUCCESS IS NOT ENOUGH, SAY GRADUATE EMPLOYERS

UK employers are having trouble recruiting good graduate workers because too many students are being awarded top grades, a new report revealed today.

Research from gap year travel specialist i-to-i found two thirds of employers say it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between job applicants because of the abundance of good degrees and high 'A'-level results.

In a poll of 500 employers, more than half (51 per cent) said they thought it was becoming easier to attain 'good' qualifications, whilst a similar number (45 per cent) said they found it difficult to find graduate employees with the skills they required.

The survey comes just days after UCAS announced that a record number of students (404,668) had found places on higher education courses, a rise of 7.8 per cent compared to 2004. This year also saw 'A'-level and AS-level results rise dramatically with the percentage of pupils achieving the equivalent of five A\*-C ranges from 35.8 to 79.2.

i-to-i founder Deirdre Bounds says: "With more and more people gaining top grades, employers are looking for other ways to identify the best workers. Whereas in the past academic success alone might have been the key to landing a top job, our research found 90 per cent of employers feel this isn't enough.

"In spite of top-up fees we are still seeing numbers of our gap year placements steadily growing at i-to-i. And judging by our research, this can only be a good thing for employers. More than half of employers (54 per cent) said they found graduates who had taken a gap year more rounded interviewees than those straight from university, while seven in ten said they would be impressed by a candidate who had undertaken volunteer work."

i-to-i also found:

- Nearly three quarters (70 per cent) of employers said they found graduates often lacked non-academic skills in the workplace such as team-work and initiative.
- More than half (56 per cent) said they'd be impressed with a candidate who had travelled independently
- One in five (21 per cent) said they were disappointed by the standard of graduates applying to their companies
- And a cynical 54 per cent said there were too many graduates competing for the same jobs.

Bounds adds: “There are hundreds of meaningful projects available for pre-university students and graduates taking time out. So my advice is, if you want to get ahead, get a gap!”

i-to-i offers 500 worthwhile projects for people of all ages in 27 countries around the world. To find out more call 0870 333 2332 or visit [www.i-to-i.com](http://www.i-to-i.com)

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Research conducted by Continental Research, questioning managers and senior managers in 500 UK businesses.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

1. i-to-i is a volunteer travel and TEFL training organisation based in Leeds, UK; Denver, USA; Melbourne, Australia and and Co. Waterford, Ireland. Each year it sends around 4,000 volunteers to work on 500 projects in 27 countries worldwide and trains a further 10,000 people to teach English as a foreign language.

2. i-to-i is a founding member of the Year Out Group, associate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office 'Know Before You Go' Campaign, member of the Federation of International Youth Travel Organisations and has training accreditation from the Open and Distance Learning Quality Council.