

Women graduates beating men to the jobs

Women graduates are finding it easier than men to get jobs in the recession, according to new statistics.

One in ten men (10.3 per cent) were still unemployed six months after graduating, compared to 6.5 per cent of women, according to statistics published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

The statistics show there were 3,405 more men unemployed in 2007/08, the last year for which figures are available, than there were in 2006/07 (9,530 compared to 6,125).

The figures also show that 67,875 women were in full-time paid employment, against 47,400 men. However, men were more likely to be in further study – 16.2 per cent compared to 15.1 per cent.

The figures come as a study by the Prince's Trust and the University of Sheffield found that one in five young people who are due to collect their GCSE results next week could be on the dole by the time they are 21, if trends are in line with the 1980s recession.

Universities minister David Lammy said: "Employment rates for graduates continue to be higher than for those with lower qualifications and with research showing that there are jobs available with growth in some



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areas, graduates should remain positive about their prospects."

Shadow universities minister David Willetts said: "This just shows how difficult the jobs market has become for young men graduating from university.

"Young people are fast becoming the victims of this recession, with high unemployment rates after graduation and many school leavers this year facing the prospect

of being turned away from universities due to a shortage of places.

"The Government didn't use the boom years to prepare the country for tougher economic times and now Britain's young people, and young men in particular, are paying the price."

Other research yesterday found that youngsters on overseas gap-year projects are trying to extend their placements because of the high level of unemployment in the United Kingdom.

Projects Abroad said it was receiving a growing number of requests from young people who did not want to return home at the end of their year because of the grim prospects of finding jobs.

More than 130 requests have been made this year on behalf of youngsters working in third-world countries.

The firm's founder and chairman, Dr Peter Slowe, said: "In nearly 20 years of operation, we have never seen young people basically not wanting to come back home. This is a new phenomenon."

Projects Abroad is the largest commercial gap-year company in Britain, operating in countries including Romania, Ghana, Brazil, Mexico and India.

