

Don't Wait Until You Graduate!

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The Career Development Association of Australia (CDAA) is urging higher education students to start gaining employable skills before graduating.

This push comes after the study '[Has the graduate job market been swamped](#)' was released by the National Institute of Labour Studies showing job prospects for graduates continue to decline.

The most recent data indicates that just 67 per cent of graduates were in full-time employment 4-6 months after completing study, while university enrolments numbers continuing to rise.

"In a tough labour market with growing numbers of graduates, it's clear the new reality is that a degree alone does not get you a job," CDAA Vice-President Wanda Hayes said.

"University students now need to do more than just study, with employers having the luxury in this competitive market to select from a wide field of graduates."

CDAA believes future research should focus more on what attributes and experience the employed graduates have to help secure them a job.

"We know that graduate employment numbers have been steadily declining since 2009, so the question now is what do those graduates have the others don't," Ms Hayes said.

Ms Hayes said CDAA members who work with university students have identified that graduates who start gaining experience while studying seem more likely to get jobs.

"This experience could include work on real-life projects, as well as internships and placements, or part-time work to demonstrate an ability to take direction and work as a time," she said.

"Involvement in extra-curricular activities also helps to show your interests beyond study and an ability to create work life balance."

CDAA also recommends that university students seek advice from their on-campus career specialists for guidance in gaining employable skills and experience.

The Career Development Association of Australia (CDAA) commenced as the Australian Association of Career Counsellors in 1989, and is Australia's largest cross-sectoral association of career development professionals working in a diverse range of roles, delivering services in industry, government, education, employment programs and community organisations. The primary purpose of the CDAA is to support its members by leading, building and growing the career development profession.

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