

# GRADUATE CAREERS AUSTRALIA

AAGE Conference  
November 2007

# Project Background

To date there have been no large scale, systematic, national, and university approved attempts made to obtain the views of a representative sample of students about their perceptions and expectations prior to them completing their university education.

## *University and Beyond 2007*

- funding provided by the Department of Education, Science and Training.

We started with a number of key questions:

- Are there gaps between employer and student perceptions
- Are there differences between different student cohorts:
  - Discipline
  - Domestic/International
  - Location
- Are there true generational differences, or are some of the differences better described as “life stage” differences

# Presentation Outline

Methodology

Respondent Characteristics

Attraction

Compensation

Retention

Gen Y – Myth or Reality?

Key 'take-home' thoughts from today

# GCA Data Sets

- **Australian Graduate Survey (AGS)**
  - Outcomes of Graduates
- **Graduate Outlook Survey (GOS)**
  - Graduate recruiters' current practices and expectations
  - In 2007, cross over questions between U&B and GOS
- **University and Beyond (U&B)**
- Can paint the entire “graduate recruitment picture”

# Methodology

- Question set was developed
  - Literature Review
  - Internal consultation
  - External consultation
  - Focus groups
- Students segmented into 5 groups
  - Traditional students
  - Non traditional students
  - Non traditional movers
  - Non traditional stayers
  - Continuing study

# Methodology

- Online survey only
  - Programmed and hosted externally
  - Survey conducted in conjunction with 18 institutions
- Promotion through:
  - National Postcard distribution
  - University Careers Services e-mail / posters / postcards
  - GCA and GO interfaces
- Monster Incentives
- 9 weeks in field

# Methodology

- Population was all students currently enrolled in a higher education institution in Australia (around 950,000)
- Over 32,000 responses received

## Who were the students?

# Student Characteristics

- Slight female bias
  - 66 per cent females
- Median age: 22 years old
- Generations:
  - 79 per cent Gen Y
  - 15 per cent Gen X
  - 6 per cent Baby Boomers
- Nearly two-thirds live in a capital city

# Student Characteristics

- 87 per cent domestic students
- 77 per cent undergraduate students
- Fields of education
  - 27.6 per cent Management and Commerce
  - 21.0 per cent Society and Culture
  - 6.6 per cent Engineering & Related Technologies
- Representative of student population
  - DEST 2005 student population

# Student Characteristics

- On average they have 3 e-mail addresses
  - Just over a third have their primary e-mail account with Hotmail
  - Another 27% university account
- They spend
  - 30 minutes a day reading the newspaper or a magazine
  - 30 minutes a day listening to the radio
  - 1 hour a day watching TV
  - 2 hours a day on the Internet

# Student Characteristics

## How do students find out more about a graduate employer?

	Best method	Other Methods	Total
Their employer website	30.6%	44.3%	74.9%
Approaching the employer directly	20.0%	34.1%	54.1%
Employment websites	13.6%	45.7%	59.3%
A graduate recruitment handbook	12.7%	37.9%	50.6%
University careers service	11.1%	37.2%	48.3%
Don't know	8.0%	2.2%	10.2%
Other	3.3%	5.2%	8.5%
Other websites (e.g. MySpace, blogs etc.)	0.6%	8.3%	8.9%
None	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%

NB: Baby Boomers less likely than other groups to search for an employers website – more likely to approach an employer directly, or go via an employment website

# Student Characteristics

Following university, how confident are you of getting *any job?*

	U&B	Employers
Not at all confident/Not very confident	8.6%	3.2%
Confident	28.2%	24.4%
Quite Confident/Very confident	63.2%	71.9%
Unsure/Don't know	0.0%	0.5%
Total	100%	100%

# Student Characteristics

Following university, how confident are you of getting  
*a job in your field?*

	U&B	Employers
Not at all confident/Not very confident	18.9%	3.7%
Confident	33.9%	28.3%
Quite Confident/Very confident	47.2%	67.6%
Unsure/Don't know	0.0%	0.5%
Total	100%	100%

# Student Characteristics

Following university, how confident are you of getting *your preferred job?*

	U&B	Employers
Not at all confident/Not very confident	39.0%	11.8%
Confident	36.5%	32.1%
Quite Confident /Very confident	24.5%	55.7%
Unsure/Don't know	0.0%	0.5%
Total	100%	100%

# Attraction: Culture

It is important to have: Agree/Strongly Agree	<i>What you think:</i>	<i>What you think:</i>	<i>Students: Overall</i>	<i>Students: Overall</i>	<i>Engin. Students:</i>	<i>Account. Students:</i>
	%	Rank	%	Rank	Rank	Rank
Good training opportunities / developing new skills	97	2	95	1	1	1
Interesting & challenging work	96	3	95	1	2	3
Personal life and career balance / work flexibility	94	4	93	3	3	4
Good people to report to	92	5	90	4	5	5
Opportunities for advancement	98	1	89	5	4	2
Working with people I get on well with	78	6	88	6	6	6

Job Security

Making a contribution to society

Working for an ethically responsible, or environmentally sound company is imperative

Potential for above average financial rewards

Potential for international travel

# Attraction:

## Non Cash Benefits

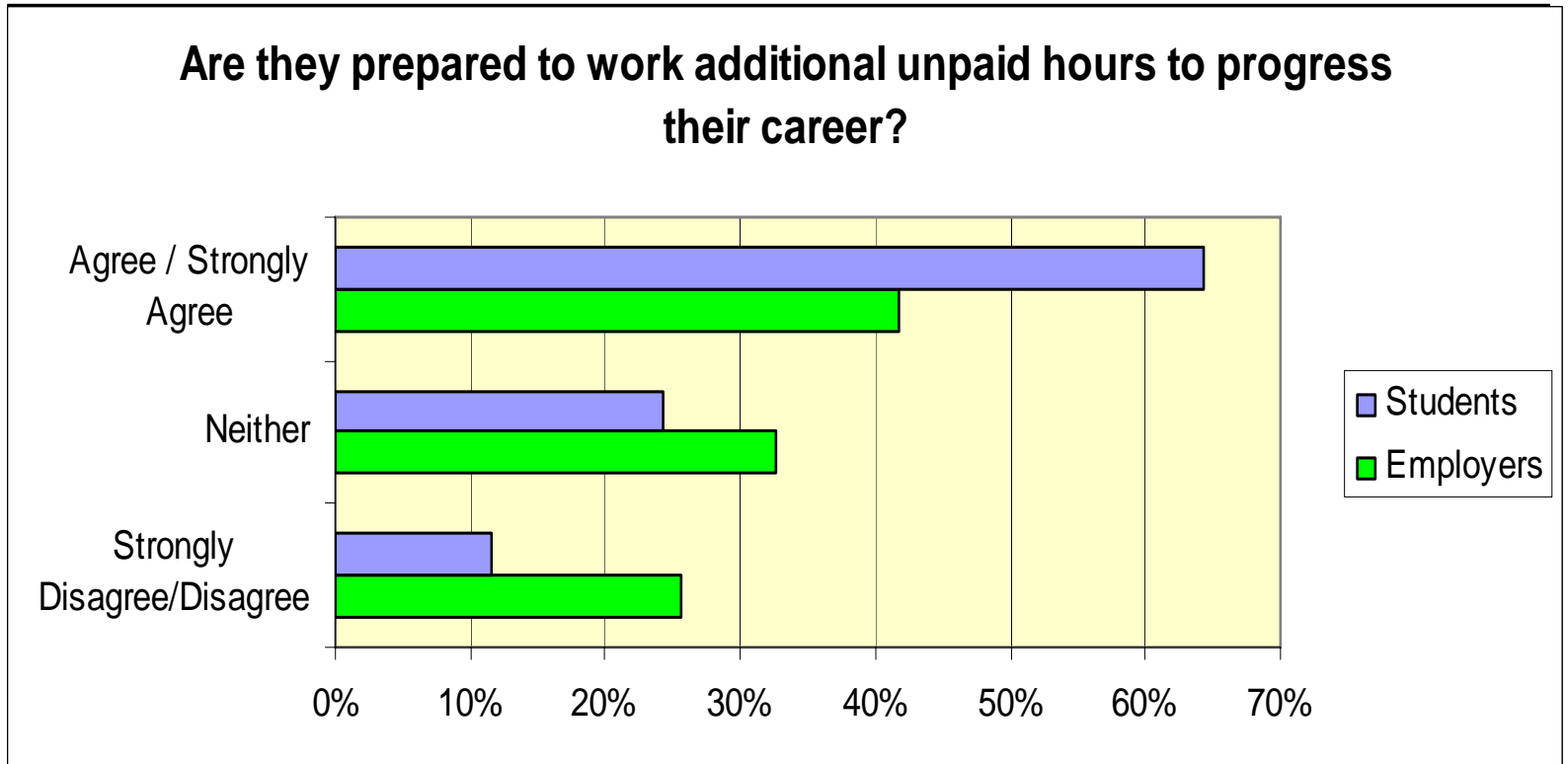
Attractive Benefits an employer could offer:	<i>What you think:</i> %	<i>What you think:</i> Rank	<i>Students Overall:</i> %	<i>Students Overall:</i> Rank	<i>Engineering / Accounting:</i> %	<i>Rank</i>
Company-paid training and development	75%	1	76%	1	E – 80% A – 76%	1 1
Performance related bonus	46%	2			E-60% A-63%	2 2
Additional leave through rostered days off (rdo) or time in lieu	42%	3	56%	2	E – 55% A – 52%	3 3
Superannuation	14%	8	54%	3		
Mobile Phone	21%	7	18%	8		

Interesting variations: Performance-related bonuses rank

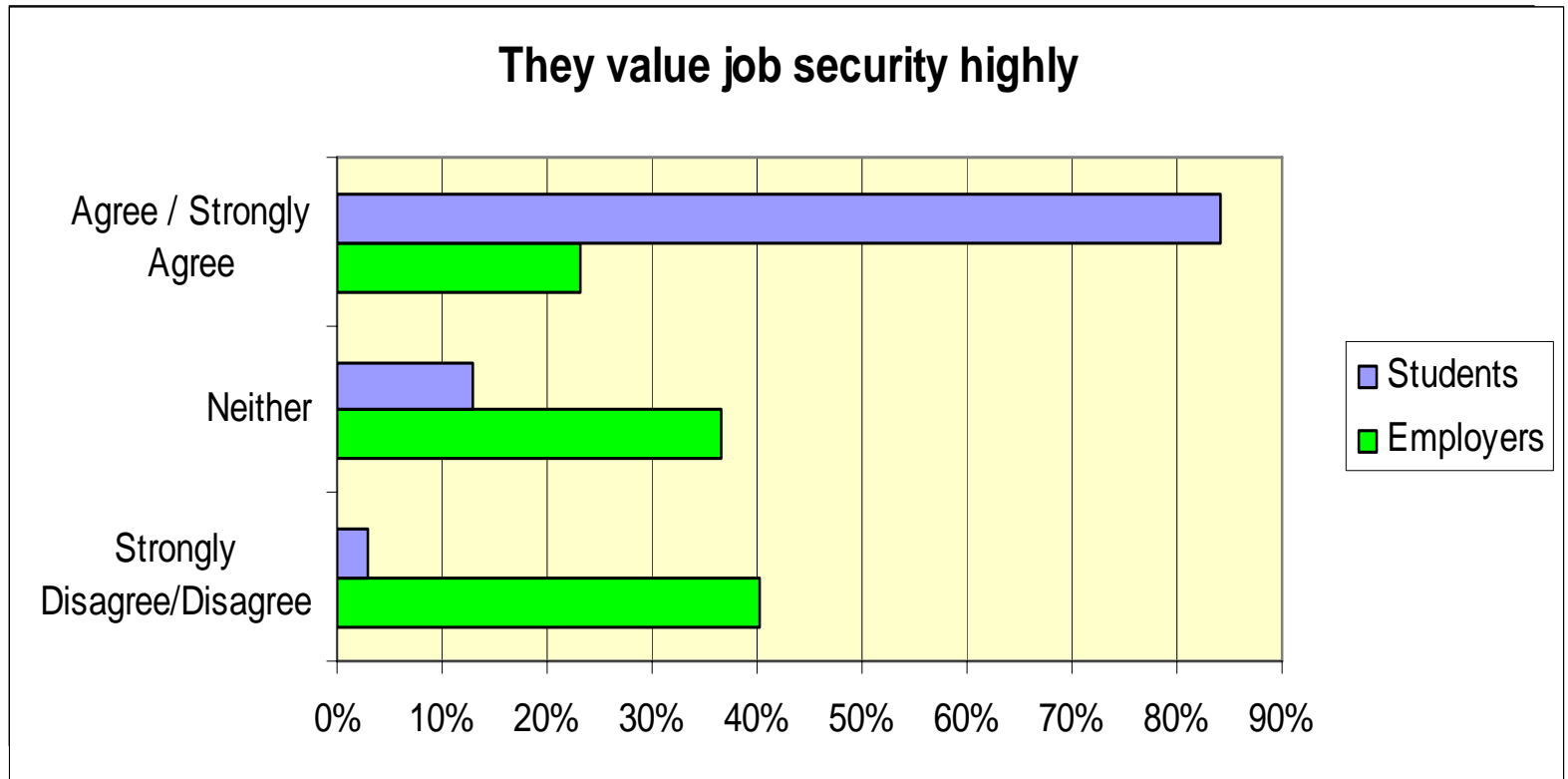
- 5<sup>th</sup> for Arts/Humanities/Social Science students
- 7<sup>th</sup> for Education students

Final report will also look at the benefits students most expect to receive, as well as those that are most attractive

# Compensation: additional unpaid hours



# Compensation: job security



# Compensation:

## Importance of different factors

- Questions asked in both GOS and U&B
- Agree/Strongly Agree responses listed here

“Ongoing training and development is more important than salary at this stage of my/their career”:

- Employers: 30%
- Students: 53%
  
- Gen Y: 56%
- Gen X: 43%
- Baby Boomers: 38%

# Compensation:

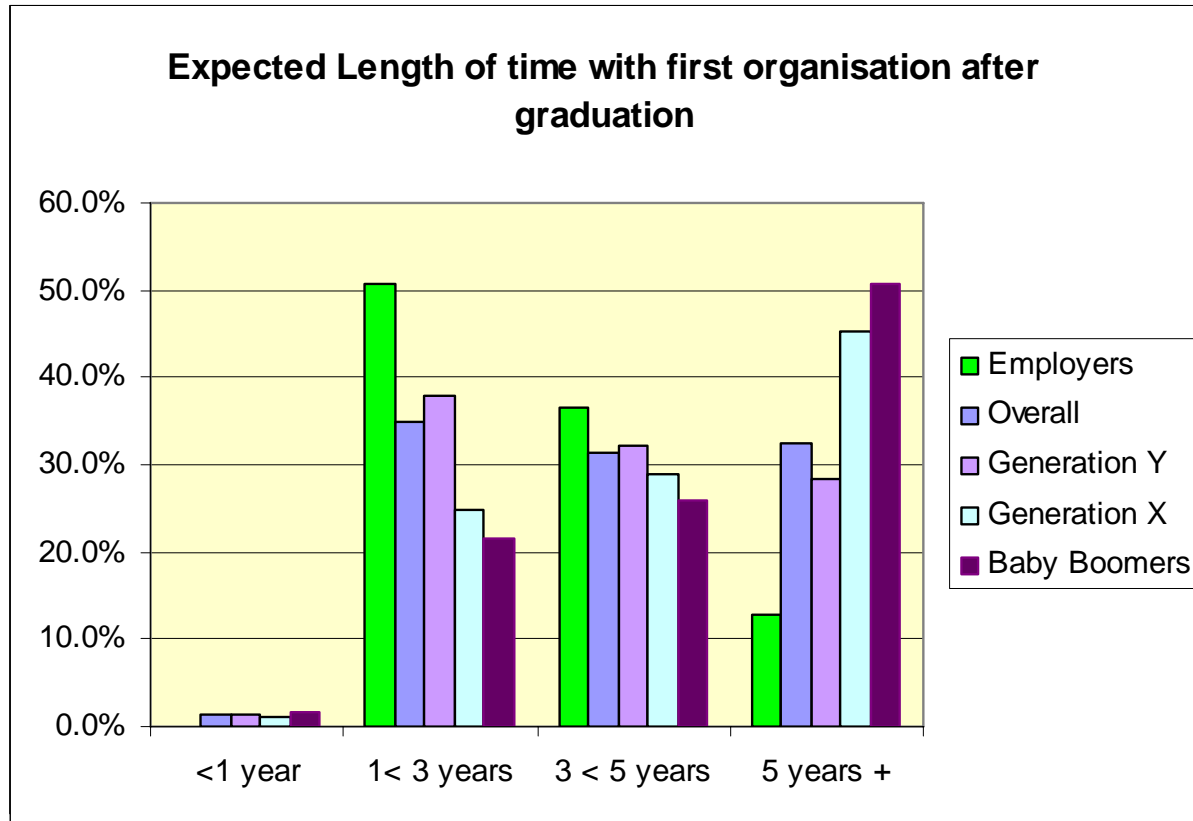
## Importance of different factors

- “Salary would be the primary factor in my/their decision”:
  - Employers: 52%
  - Students: 33%
  
  - Gen Y: 31%
  - Gen X: 39%
  - Baby Boomers: 46%
- “Salary would at least need to be comparable to other offers”:
  - Employers: 90%
  - Students: 84%

Final report will also look at whether students would “trade” salary for other benefits

# Retention

## Length of Service: by generation type



Expected changes in first five years of 'preferred' job:

• "Change to a completely different job or career"

- 9% overall
- Gen Y - 8%
- Gen X - 13%
- Baby Boomers - 20%

# Gen Y – myths or realities?

The not-so-surprising .....

Most attractive non-cash Benefit	Gen Y: Rank	Gen Y: %	Gen X: Rank	Gen X: %	Baby Boomer: Rank	Baby-boomer: %
Company-paid training and development	1	77%	1	70%	1	68%
Additional leave through rostered days off (rdo) or time in lieu	2	58%	2	53%	3	45%
Superannuation	3	55%	3	53%	2	61%

# Gen Y – myths or realities?

## Culture Factors

The not-so-surprising .....

Importance of Following Factors: Agree/Strongly Agree:	Students Overall: %	Students Overall: Rank	Gen Y: %	Gen X: %	Baby Boomers: %
Good training opportunities / developing new skills	95	1	95	95	94
Interesting & challenging work	95	1	94	97	98
Working with people I get on well with	88	6	87	87	86
Good people to report to	90	4	90	91	91

# Gen Y – myths or realities?

## Culture Factors

The surprising .....

Importance of Following Factors: Agree/Strongly Agree:	Gen Y: %	Gen X: %	Baby Boomers: %
Opportunities for Advancement	91	85	74
Personal life and career balance / work flexibility	92	95	90
Making a contribution to society is important	80	86	91
Working for an ethically responsible, or environmentally sound company, is imperative	77	81	85

# Gen Y – myths or realities?

The surprising .....

- Importance of Career:
  - “A successful career is the most important goal of their/my life”
    - Employers: 28% agree/strongly agree
    - Students Overall: 45% agree/strongly agree
    - Much higher for accounting/economics/business studies students: 58%
  - Generational differences:
    - Baby boomers: 33%
    - Gen X: 40%
    - Gen Y: 46%

# Other Areas to be covered

- Further analysis by:
  - Disciplines
  - Domestic/international status
  - Regional/metro etc
- Many other questions asked – not covered today
  - How important do they believe “generic” graduate attributes such as interpersonal skills, leadership, emotional intelligence are to an employer?
  - Would they “trade” salary for other benefits
- Section of survey devoted to use of career services and other information sources:
  - Provide valuable feedback to universities

# Key “take-home” messages:

- A number of different mediums should be used to attract potential employees to your organisation – your website should not be the only attraction strategy.
- There are some real “gaps” between employer perceptions and student expectations/perceptions:
  - Importance of career
  - Willingness to “put in” extra unpaid hours
  - Job security/job retention
- Leads to asking “why” is retention an issue:
  - Importance of corporate culture
- Early indications are:
  - that some “generational” differences may, in fact, be “life stage” differences
  - that some “wants and desires” attributed to Gen Y are, in fact, common across all generations
  - May be some new strategies that can be used for “Non Traditional Students”, “Non Traditional Movers”, or International Students
- Not all students are the same, and you should take care not to classify them by generational type, gender, discipline area etc

- Snapshot report available by end of year  
Full report available early in 2008
  - Contact us on (03) 9349 4300
- Visit our website:  
[www.graduatecareers.com.au](http://www.graduatecareers.com.au)

# Questions and discussion