

GradStats

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The Graduate
Careers Council of
Australia's
Graduate

Destination Survey (GDS) is a study of the activities of new university graduates around four months after the completion of their qualifications. In the 2000 GDS, new graduates who completed the requirements for their qualifications in the calendar year 1999 were surveyed regarding their major activities, including full-time study, full- or part-time employment, seeking employment, or their unavailability for work or study.

GradStats gives a summary of the destinations of Australian-resident bachelor degree graduates (figures for overseas residents are discussed in the full GDS report). Overall, 61.2 per cent of this group responded to the survey.

Graduates in 2000: Work, Study, Salaries and Course Satisfaction – Main Points

- Of bachelor degree graduates who were available for full-time employment in 2000, 83.6 per cent were in full-time employment within four months of completing their degrees in 1999. A further 9.7 per cent were working on a part-time or casual basis while continuing to seek full-time employment.
- Some 6.7 per cent were not working and still looking for full-time employment at the time of the survey.
- These figures represent a notable improvement on the results of the 1999 Graduate Destination Survey. In 1999, 80.8 per cent were in full-time employment, 11.2 per cent were working on a part-time or casual basis while seeking full-time employment, and 8.0 per cent were not working and looking for full-time employment.
- Almost a quarter of respondents (24.2 per cent) were undertaking further full-time study after completing their qualification. Males (25.2 per cent) were more likely than females (23.6 per cent) to have continued in full-time study.
- The median annual starting salary for bachelor degree graduates in their first full-time employment was \$33,000. This was 84.2 per cent of average earnings, up from 81.6 per cent in 1999, 80.6 per cent in 1998, and 81.2 per cent in 1997.
- Males earned a starting salary of \$34,000 (up from \$32,500) and females earned \$32,000 (up from \$30,000).
- Overall satisfaction with courses as measured by the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) remains at a high level, with 89 per cent of graduates expressing broad satisfaction with their courses.

The results of the 2000 Graduate Destination Survey (GDS), show that 83.6 per cent of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment were in full-time employment within four months of completing their qualifications (see Table 1a). A further 9.7 per cent were working on a part-time or casual basis while continuing to seek full-time employment, while only 6.7 per cent were not working and still looking for full-time employment at the time of the survey.

This represents a strong improvement in employment prospects compared with the 1999 GDS which saw 80.8 per cent in full-time employment, 11.2 per cent working on a part-time or casual basis while continuing to seek full-time employment, and 8.0 per cent not working and looking for full-time employment (see Table 1a).

Following gradual improvements in employment levels since the last recession, graduate employment is now at its highest level since 1990. Figure 1 shows how employment levels have recovered in recent

years, though employment remains below the levels experienced in the late 1980s.

Generally, between one fifth and one quarter of respondents elect to continue in further full-time study. In 2000, 24.2 per cent did so, up from 23.7 per cent in 1999 and 22.0 per cent in 1998 (see Table 1). These figures include those proceeding to honours years and higher degrees.

The increase is consistent with the longer term trend towards more graduates undertaking postgraduate study.

A further 5.9 per cent of respondents were in part-time or casual work and were not seeking full-time employment (6.6 per cent in 1999), while 0.6 per cent were not working and seeking part-time or casual employment only (0.7 per cent in 1999).

Of those graduates seeking full-time employment, males (84.5 per cent – see Table 1a) were slightly more likely to have found it by the time of the survey than their female colleagues (83.0 per cent).

Table 1: Activities of bachelor degree graduates, by sex, 1998-2000 (%).

	Available for full-time employment (see Table 1a)	In full-time study	In part-time or casual employment, not seeking full-time employment	Not working, seeking part-time or casual employment only	Unavailable for full-time study or full-time employment	Total cases	Total %
Males							
1998	71.5	22.6	3.3	0.4	2.2	23,784	100
1999	68.1	24.8	3.3	0.5	3.4	23,303	100
2000	68.0	25.2	3.1	0.3	3.3	21,794	100
Females							
1998	64.4	21.7	9.0	1.0	3.8	37,369	100
1999	63.2	23.0	8.6	0.9	4.3	36,584	100
2000	63.8	23.6	7.7	0.8	4.2	34,921	100
Persons							
1998	67.1	22.0	6.8	0.8	3.2	61,192	100
1999	65.1	23.7	6.6	0.7	3.9	59,926	100
2000	65.4	24.2	5.9	0.6	3.9	56,773	100

Total persons might not equal males plus females as some respondents did not identify sex.

Table 1a: Breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, 1998-2000 (%).

	In full-time employment	Seeking full-time employment, not working	Seeking full-time employment, working part-time or casual	Total seeking full-time employment	Total %†	Total cases	*Had full-time employment before May in final year of study and still with that employer at time of GDS
Males							
1998	80.8	9.9	9.3	19.2	100	17,009	22.8
1999	82.0	9.0	9.0	18.0	100	15,860	22.9
2000	84.5	7.6	7.9	15.5	100	14,839	20.6
Females							
1998	78.7	8.1	13.2	21.3	100	24,059	17.5
1999	80.0	7.3	12.7	20.0	100	23,124	16.3
2000	83.0	6.1	10.9	17.0	100	22,272	14.0
Persons							
1998	79.6	8.8	11.6	20.4	100	41,093	19.7
1999	80.8	8.0	11.2	19.2	100	39,003	19.0
2000	83.6	6.7	9.7	16.4	100	37,138	16.7

Total persons might not equal males plus females as some respondents did not identify sex. † Total % may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. * Base figure is that group in full-time employment.

While females were slightly more likely than males to have been seeking full-time employment (17.0 per cent as opposed to 15.5 per cent), they were less likely than males (6.1 per cent compared with 7.6 per cent) to have been without work while seeking full-time employment.

Females were far more likely than males (10.9 per cent compared with 7.9 per cent) to have been in part-time or casual employment while seeking a full-time position.

This difference (regularly seen in GDS figures) is a reflection of females' numerical dominance in fields of study such as teaching and nursing, in which there are strong opportunities for professional part-time employment.

Males (25.2 per cent) were slightly more likely than females (23.6 per cent) to have undertaken further full-time study in 2000 (see Table 1).

Table 1a shows that 16.7 per cent of those in full-time employment at the time of the survey already had that full-time employment in their final year of study. Some of these

respondents might have had that employment for a greater period of their study.

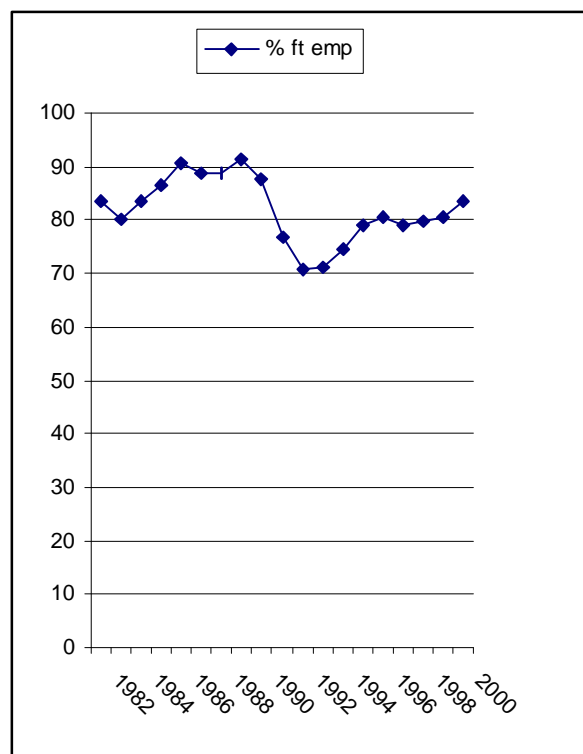


Figure 1: Percentage of bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment of those available for full-time employment, 1982-2000.

Table 2: Breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, by field of study, 2000 (%).

	In full-time employment	Seeking full-time employment, not working	Seeking full-time employment, working part-time or casual	Total seeking full-time employment	Total % †	Total cases	*Had full-time employment before May in final year of study and still with that employer at time of GDS
Agriculture	79.1	9.1	11.8	20.9	100	703	14.6
Architecture	86.4	6.8	6.8	13.6	100	499	12.8
Building	89.7	5.3	5.0	10.3	100	302	36.9
Urb & Reg Plann	85.0	7.5	7.5	15.0	100	133	8.8
Humanities	76.0	9.6	14.4	24.0	100	3,519	17.9
Languages	71.2	12.4	16.5	28.8	100	364	18.5
Vis/Perf Arts	62.8	13.9	23.4	37.2	100	1,254	4.7
Social Sciences	71.6	10.0	18.4	28.4	100	662	21.1
Psychology	71.9	10.7	17.4	28.1	100	919	16.8
Social Work	79.3	7.7	13.0	20.7	100	517	8.3
Business Studies	83.9	6.6	9.4	16.1	100	4,996	20.6
Accounting	91.9	5.3	2.8	8.1	100	3,086	23.3
Economics	86.1	7.6	6.3	13.9	100	635	15.9
Education, Initial	82.4	3.8	13.8	17.6	100	3,378	9.2
Education, Post/Oth	86.8	2.4	10.8	13.2	100	1,223	49.8
Aeronautical Eng	95.0	2.5	2.5	5.0	100	119	10.6
Chemical Eng	88.5	5.1	6.4	11.5	100	156	2.9
Civil Engineering	92.9	5.4	1.7	7.1	100	519	17.0
Electrical Eng	93.9	3.8	2.4	6.1	100	293	19.6
Electron/Comp Eng	91.9	5.2	2.9	8.1	100	384	13.6
Mechanical Eng	86.0	10.5	3.4	14.0	100	437	21.8
Mining Engineering	84.9	8.2	6.8	15.1	100	73	6.5
Other Engineering	83.1	11.4	5.6	16.9	100	360	19.1
Surveying	97.6	2.4	0.0	2.4	100	85	31.3
Dentistry	95.9	0.8	3.3	4.1	100	122	0.0
Health, Other	86.1	5.9	7.9	13.9	100	1,284	18.3
Nursing, Initial	95.1	1.3	3.5	4.9	100	2,199	3.7
Nursing, Post-initial	94.9	0.7	4.4	5.1	100	566	39.3
Pharmacy	97.6	1.2	1.2	2.4	100	84	1.2
Medicine	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100	837	0.1
Rehabilitation	88.7	3.1	8.2	11.3	100	904	1.0
Law	92.9	3.5	3.6	7.1	100	975	14.2
Law, Other	85.6	5.7	8.6	14.4	100	557	48.0
Computer Science	88.2	7.6	4.2	11.8	100	1,749	18.1
Life Sciences	68.0	12.6	19.4	32.0	100	2,367	9.1
Mathematics	83.5	8.5	8.1	16.5	100	236	11.2
Chemistry	73.7	14.0	12.3	26.3	100	236	15.5
Physics	78.8	11.5	9.6	21.2	100	104	13.4
Geology	77.6	13.0	9.3	22.4	100	161	8.0
Veterinary Science	93.6	4.3	2.1	6.4	100	141	0.0
Total %	83.6	6.7	9.7	16.4	100		16.7
Total N	31,056	2,478	3,604	6,082		37,138	5,176

† Total % may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. * Base figure is group in full-time employment.

Table 2 shows breakdowns of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment by field of study. It should be noted that labour market factors peculiar to some fields of study can affect the proportions in and seeking employment, especially in a survey such as this, which takes place around four months after the completion of degree requirements.

For example, medical graduates, of whom 100.0 per cent were in full-time employment, always have high proportions in this category due to the requirement that they serve an internship in a public hospital for a period after graduation.

Other fields with high proportions in full-time employment at the time of the survey were pharmacy and surveying (97.6 per cent), dentistry (95.9 per cent), initial nursing education (95.1 per cent), and aeronautical engineering (95.0 per cent).

The overall improvement in employment prospects can be seen in most fields of study. Increases in the percentage seeking full-time work were small and were restricted to a small number of fields.

Respondents in visual and performing arts (23.4 per cent), life sciences (19.4 per cent) and social sciences (18.4 per cent) were the most likely to have been working on a part-time or casual basis while seeking full-time employment.

Those from chemistry (14.0 per cent), visual and performing arts (13.9 per cent) geology (13.0 per cent), life sciences (12.6 per cent) and languages (12.4 per cent) were the most likely to have been without work while seeking full-time employment.

Post-initial nursing education at bachelor degree level generally covers hospital-trained nurses upgrading their qualifications to degree level. Many graduates were already in their full-time employment while studying (39.3 per cent in 2000 – see Table 2). Respondents from

'education, post/other' (49.8 per cent) and 'law, other' (48.0 per cent) were also very likely to have been in full-time employment in their final year of study and still with that employer at the time of the survey. Like post-initial nursing education, 'education, post/other' graduates are generally people in full-time employment and with three-year training who are upgrading their qualifications to four-year degree level.

Graduate Starting Salaries

In 2000, the median graduate starting salary for bachelor degree graduates in their first full-time employment was \$33,000. This was 84.2 per cent of average weekly earnings (which were \$39,200 at the time) which was up from 81.6 per cent in 1999 and represents the highest level recorded since 1991.

Table 3: Annual rate of average weekly earnings (AWE) and median graduate starting salaries (GSS), and relativity, 1977-2000 (\$,000).

	AWE	GSS	GSS % AWE
1977	9.6	9.6	100.0
1979	11.3	10.9	96.5
1980	12.5	11.8	94.4
1981	14.1	13.2	93.6
1982	16.5	14.9	90.3
1983	17.8	15.9	89.3
1984	19.6	17.2	87.8
1985	20.5	18.2	88.8
1986	22.1	19.8	89.6
1987	23.3	20.9	89.7
1988	24.9	23.0	92.4
1989	26.8	24.0	89.6
1990	28.7	24.9	86.8
1991	30.0	25.3	84.3
1992	31.1	25.7	82.6
1993	31.8	25.5	80.2
1994	32.5	26.0	80.0
1995	33.9	27.0	79.6
1996	34.8	28.0	80.5
1997	35.7	29.0	81.2
1998	37.2	30.0	80.6
1999	38.0	31.0	81.6
2000	39.2	33.0	84.2

Table 4: Median starting salaries of bachelor degree graduates in first full-time employment and aged less than 25, 2000 (\$,000). Numbers in cells are shown below related salary figures.

	Aust. Govt	State Govt	Total Govt	Prof. Pract.	Ind./ Com.	Sch- ools	Tert. Ed.	Total Ed.	TOTAL	Males	Fe- males
Humanities	30.9	30.6	30.8	30.0	29.0	35.1	32.0	35.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
	76	64	156	19	510	103	23	126	937	197	740
Psychology	33.8	34.0	34.0	*	30.1	35.7	33.0	34.7	32.4	34.2	32.0
	32	41	80	*	167	18	14	32	313	53	260
Social Work	*	34.0	34.0	*	32.0	*	*	*	33.1	*	33.1
	*	56	66	*	42	*	*	*	127	*	121
Oth. Soc. Sci.	31.8	31.5	31.8	23.5	29.3	*	*	32.5	30.0	33.0	30.0
	25	74	113	19	120	*	*	18	303	75	228
Accounting	30.0	33.2	31.0	30.0	32.0	*	*	*	30.0	30.3	30.0
	56	46	107	570	338	*	*	*	1071	481	590
Economics, Bus.	33.0	32.0	32.2	30.0	31.0	29.5	30.0	30.0	31.0	32.0	30.0
	148	91	264	79	1419	10	11	21	1957	799	1158
Law	32.0	32.5	32.3	30.0	39.0	*	*	*	32.2	33.0	32.0
	45	45	92	209	45	*	*	*	369	120	249
Education	*	33.4	35.3	*	30.0	35.0	29.3	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0
	*	13	26	*	54	1394	10	1404	1518	258	1260
Physical Sci.	35.1	32.0	33.4	*	32.9	*	*	*	32.8	34.5	32.2
	20	11	33	*	84	*	*	*	134	60	74
Biological Sci.	33.0	33.0	33.0	30.0	30.0	35.0	33.0	34.0	31.0	30.0	31.0
	53	123	195	18	365	21	52	73	740	225	515
Mathematics	*	*	33.6	*	38.0	*	*	*	38.0	38.7	36.0
	*	*	15	*	68	*	*	*	90	48	42
Computer Sci.	38.0	36.5	37.8	33.0	37.0	*	36.2	36.0	37.0	37.0	37.0
	45	22	71	13	528	*	18	21	662	474	188
Agricultural Sci.	*	32.0	32.0	*	30.0	*	*	*	30.0	30.0	30.0
	*	64	77	*	144	*	*	*	250	123	127
Earth Sciences	*	32.1	33.1	*	34.0	*	*	*	33.6	33.0	34.9
	*	10	16	*	61	*	*	*	91	57	34
Veterinary Sci.	*	*	*	32.5	*	*	*	*	33.0	34.0	32.5
	*	*	*	52	*	*	*	*	80	25	55
Engineering	41.0	36.0	36.5	35.3	38.0	*	*	*	37.0	37.0	38.0
	47	80	147	159	496	*	*	*	883	713	170
Arch. & Bldg	*	33.5	35.0	25.0	32.8	*	*	*	31.0	33.0	29.6
	*	13	52	62	106	*	*	*	252	142	110
Medicine	45.0	45.0	45.0	*	46.5	*	*	*	45.0	45.0	45.0
	14	197	211	*	14	*	*	*	266	110	156
Paramedical St.	34.1	32.0	32.0	31.1	32.0	34.0	33.0	34.0	32.0	33.6	32.0
	70	1003	1090	30	524	22	11	33	1815	220	1595
Dentistry	*	42.0	42.0	50.0	*	*	*	*	50.0	48.0	50.0
	*	17	19	16	*	*	*	*	47	27	20
Pharmacy	*	29.6	29.6	*	24.0	*	*	*	25.0	30.0	25.0
	*	14	14	*	38	*	*	*	59	13	46
Optometry	*	*	*	*	40.0	*	*	*	40.0	42.0	38.5
	*	*	*	*	26	*	*	*	27	12	15
Art & Design	*	*	30.0	*	28.0	34.0	32.5	34.0	28.0	30.0	28.0
	*	*	15	*	212	20	10	30	301	87	214
All Fields	33.6	33.0	33.0	30.5	32.0	35.0	33.0	35.0	33.0	34.5	32.0
	673	1997	2863	1271	5364	1610	178	1788	12292	4325	7967
Males	36.0	35.0	35.0	32.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	34.5	34.5	
	253	467	801	575	2290	267	50	317	4325	4325	
Females	33.0	32.0	32.2	30.0	30.0	35.0	32.0	35.0	32.0		32.0
	420	1530	2062	696	3074	1343	128	1471	7967		7967

* There were no, or fewer than ten, cases in cells marked with an asterisk.

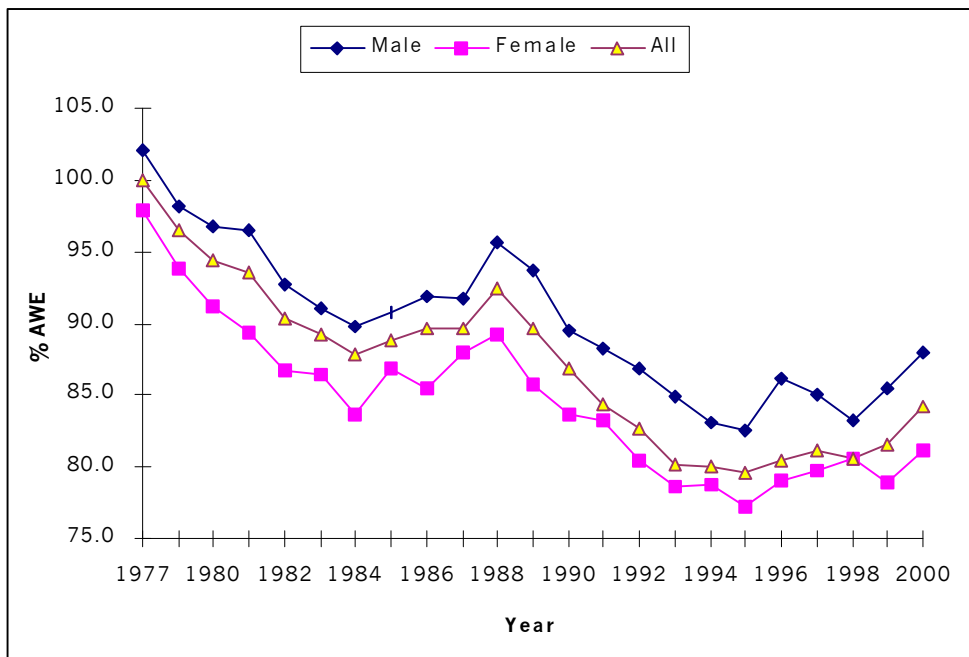


Figure 2: Male, female and all graduates' median starting salaries relative to the annual rate of average weekly earnings, 1977-2000.

Nevertheless, graduate starting salaries as a percentage of average weekly earnings still remain well below levels experienced during the 1980s (see Table 3 and Figure 2).

New male graduates earned 88.0 per cent of average earnings, up markedly from 86.5 per cent in 1999 and 83.3 per cent in 1998. Salaries for females rose slightly, to 81.2 per cent from 78.9 per cent in 1999 and 80.6 per cent in 1998.

In dollar terms, the starting salary for all graduates again rose by \$2,000 (or 6.4 per cent). Salaries for males rose by \$2,000 (6.1 per cent) while for females they also rose by \$2,000 (6.7 per cent).

The largest rise was for dentistry where the median salary rose from \$42,300 to \$50,000. There were also above average rises in psychology, law, mathematics, and architecture and building. Salaries fell by \$1,400 for earth sciences graduates.

For many fields of study there was negligible difference between salaries for males and females. In a handful of fields, females earned higher salaries than their male counterparts (biological sciences,

earth sciences, engineering and dentistry). On the other hand, males earned markedly more than females in the fields of 'other social sciences', pharmacy, and optometry.

The overall salary for females was 92.3 per cent of males' earnings, as it was in 1999. This figure was down from 96.8 per cent in 1998 and 95.0 per cent in 1997.

Differences in starting salaries between males and females can be partly explained in terms of the differing enrolment profiles of male and female students.

Males tend to have enrolled in the more highly paying fields of study while females tended to come from the middle and lower paying fields. An examination of the top six ranked fields in terms of starting salaries (listed in Table 4; dentistry, medicine, optometry, mathematics, engineering, and computer science) shows that they account for 32.0 per cent of male respondents but only 7.4 per cent of females.

Most fields of study have shown a high degree of consistency over the years covered by GDS data. When ranked in terms of starting salaries, medicine,

Table 5: Fields of study ranked according to level of starting salary, 1996-2000.

	96	97	98	99	00
Dentistry	=1	1	1	2	1
Medicine	=1	2	2	1	2
Optometry	=2	3	3	3	3
Mathematics	=4	7	8	6	4
Engineering	3	5	=4	4	=5
Computer Sci.	=4	6	5	=5	=5
Education	6	=8	7	=7	6
Earth Sci.	=2	4	=4	=5	7
Social Work	7	=8	9	9	8
Vet. Sci.	=4	=8	6	8	9
Physical Sci.	5	9	=10	=7	10
Psychology	=10	=10	12	13	11
Law	11	=10	=13	=11	12
Paramedical	8	=10	=10	10	13
Econ., Bus.	=10	=10	11	=11	=14
Biological Sci.	9	=10	=13	=11	=14
Arch. & Bldg	=12	=13	15	=14	=14
Accounting	=10	=10	=13	=12	=15
Agric. Sci	=12	11	=13	=12	=15
Humanities	13	12	14	=14	=15
Oth. Soc. Sci.	=12	=13	=13	=14	=15
Art & Design	14	14	16	15	16
Pharmacy	15	15	17	16	17

dentistry, optometry, engineering, and computer science have maintained a high ranking throughout that period (see Table 5).

Other fields of study such as law, architecture and pharmacy always have a relatively low ranking, and this is due to the further training requirements these graduates must meet for professional registration during their first employment.

There was \$25,000 difference between the top and bottom ranked fields compared with \$19,000 in 1999 and \$20,000 in 1998. The middle rankings were not so widely separated. For example there was only \$5,000 difference between the sixth and 15th ranked fields.

Graduate Satisfaction

As measured by the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ), bachelor degree graduates' overall satisfaction with their courses has been slowly rising since 1995. Broad satisfaction remained at a high level, 89 per cent, the same as last year. Dissatisfaction has been low over the period 1995 to 2000.

The broad satisfaction figure represents the percentage of respondents answering '3', '4' and '5' on a five-point scale (with the 5th point indicating highest satisfaction). The dissatisfaction measure is made up of responses '1' and '2'.

The satisfaction figure represents the percentage of respondents answering '4' or '5' on the 5 point scale. This measure rose from 67 per cent to 68 per cent between 1999 and 2000.

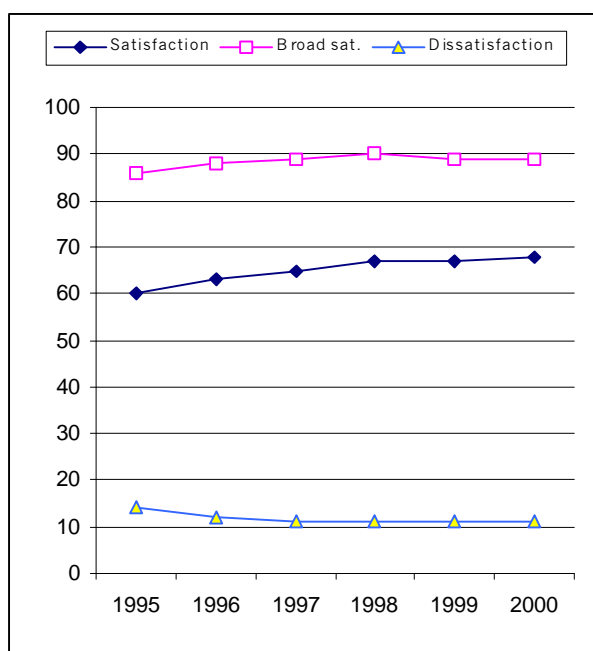


Figure 5: Level of satisfaction with course, bachelor degree graduates, 1995-2000 (preliminary).

Further details about graduate destinations, starting salaries and the CEQ can be found in the forthcoming reports *Graduate Destination Survey 2000*, and *Graduate Starting Salaries, 2000*, and *Course Experience Questionnaire, 2000*. To order copies, please call the GCCA on (03) 8344 9333, fax (03) 9347 7298, or write to GCCA, PO Box 28, Parkville, 3052.

For further information on graduate employment, graduate destination statistics and the GCCA, visit the **Gradlink** website at www.gradlink.edu.au.