

Media Release: New Postgraduates in Employment



Postgraduates: Strong Earnings and Employment

According to Graduate Careers Australia's (GCA) newly released *Postgraduate Destinations 2013* report, 92.4 per cent of new postgraduates were in some form of employment shortly after completing their degrees (see *Table E1a in the related spreadsheet*). The report is based on GCA's 2013 Australian Graduate Survey (AGS).

Almost one-in-ten (9.7 per cent) were working on a part-time basis while continuing to seek full-time employment with 82.7 per cent in full-time employment, adding to the total of 92.4 per cent. A further 7.5 per cent of recent postgraduates were without work and seeking a full-time position at the time of the AGS. This figure is up slightly from 6.3 per cent in 2012 and 6.6 per cent in 2011 but notably higher than 3.6 per cent in 2006 (see *Table E1a in the related spreadsheet*).

Postgraduate studies continue to play an important role in the education and training of Australians. Between 1999 and 2012, the number of people completing postgraduate awards increased by 124 per cent. In 2012, more than a third of completing domestic higher education students had studied at a postgraduate level.

GCA Executive Director, Dr Noel Edge, said "Postgraduate study meets a variety of student needs, from updating old skills and re-skilling to adding vocational qualifications to a generalist degree in order to stand out from the increasing number of bachelor degree graduates in the Australian workforce."

The median reported salary for all postgraduates was \$79,000 (\$85,000 for males and \$72,000 for females (see *Table 9 in the report*)). Differences in salaries for males and females at this high level of aggregation are generally a result of factors such as differing field of education enrolment patterns, and differing types of employer and occupation.

In the wider Australian workforce, Australian Bureau of Statistics data gathered at around the same time as the AGS was conducted suggest that postgraduates had an unemployment rate of between 2.6 and 3.5 per cent, compared to 7.8 per cent for those with no post-secondary qualifications and 5.7 per cent for the entire workforce.

Media Backgrounder: New Postgraduates in Employment



Postgraduates: Strong Earnings and Employment

A new report examining the employment and study outcomes of recent postgraduates was released by Graduate Careers Australia (GCA) today. The report, *Postgraduate Destinations 2013*, is based on the annual Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) of new graduates from Australian institutions of higher education. Graduates are surveyed approximately four months after they complete their course of study. In 2013, responses from almost 139,000 higher education graduates, including over 52,000 postgraduates, were collected and analysed for this report.

This Media Backgrounder provides a summary of some of the key findings. Some of the Tables referenced below are only found in the supplementary tables and figures distributed in a spreadsheet with the report.

At the time of the 2013 AGS:

- In 2013, 7.5 per cent of postgraduates available for full-time employment were without work and still seeking a full-time position at the time of the survey (6.3 per cent in 2012). A further 9.7 per cent were in part-time work while seeking a full-time position (9.2 per cent in 2012) (*see Table E1a*).
- Three-quarters of postgraduates surveyed (74.8 per cent) were available for full-time employment (this means either in, or seeking, a full-time position), which is relatively unchanged from 75.9 per cent in 2012 (*see Table E1*).
- The vast majority of those available for full-time employment were in a full-time position at the time of the survey (82.7 per cent). This represents a slight fall 84.5 per cent in 2012 but is notably down from 89.9 per cent in 2006 and 2008 (*see Table E1a*).

Postgraduate Salaries

- The overall median salary for all postgraduates was \$79,000, an increase of \$4,000 from the 2012 figure of \$75,000 (*see Table 9*). The median salary for:
 - postgraduate diploma/certificate graduates was \$72,000 (up \$2,000 from 2012)
 - coursework masters graduates was \$80,000 (up \$1,000 from 2012)
 - research masters/PhD graduates was \$80,000 (up \$4,000 from 2012)
- The median annual salary for postgraduates in their first full-time employment (*see Table 10*) was:
 - \$62,500 for postgraduate diploma/certificate graduates
 - \$63,000 for coursework masters graduates
 - \$74,900 for research masters/PhD graduates.

- Across the three postgraduate award levels, males reported higher median annual salaries than females (*see Table 9*):
 - Male postgraduates at the postgraduate diploma/certificate level reported a median salary \$13,000 higher than female postgraduates (\$82,000 compared with \$69,000).
 - Male postgraduates at the coursework masters level reported a median salary \$15,000 higher than female postgraduates (\$90,000 compared with \$75,000).
 - Male postgraduates at the research masters/PhD level reported a median salary \$1,700 higher than female postgraduates (\$80,000 compared with \$78,300).

But note should again be take of the caveat that differences in salaries for males and females at this high level of aggregation are generally a result of factors such as differing field of education enrolment patterns, differing employer and occupation choices and not, in most cases, a result of discrimination in the workplace.

Across the three postgraduate award levels, there were notable differences in median salaries between postgraduates in their first full-time employment compared with all postgraduates at that level (*see Table 10*):

- Postgraduate diploma/certificate graduates in their first full-time employment earned a median salary \$9,500 less than other postgraduates at that award level (\$62,500 compared with \$72,000).
- Coursework masters graduates in their first full-time employment earned a median salary \$17,000 less than other postgraduates at that award level (\$63,000 compared with \$80,000).
- Research masters/PhD graduates in their first full-time employment earned a median salary \$5,100 less than other postgraduates at that award level (\$74,900 compared with \$80,000).

Postgraduate Employment Outcomes

- Of the postgraduates available for full-time employment in 2013, 82.7 per cent were in full-time employment at the time of the AGS, approximately four months after completing their studies (*see Table E1a*).
 - Of postgraduate diploma/certificate graduates available for full-time employment, 84.5 per cent had secured a full-time position by the time of the AGS (down from 86.2 per cent in 2012 – *see Table E2a*).
 - Of coursework masters graduates available for full-time employment, 82.1 per cent had found a full-time position by the time of the AGS (down from 83.4 per cent in 2012 – *see Table E3a*).
 - Of research masters/PhD graduates available for full-time employment, 78.7 per cent had secured full-time employment by the time of the AGS (down from 82.7 per cent in 2012 – *see Table E4a*).