

Beyond Graduation 2010

The report of the Beyond Graduation Survey



Acknowledgements

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Graeme Bryant (Senior Research Associate) was the project director of the 2010 Beyond Graduation Survey.

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Introduction

Welcome to *Beyond Graduation 2010*, the second annual report into the activities, outcomes and experiences of Australian higher education graduates three years after the completion of their studies. This report is based on the 2010 Beyond Graduation Survey (BGS), which was conducted by Graduate Careers Australia (GCA) in collaboration with 31 Australian higher education institutions (see Table A1). Graduates who completed a course of study at an Australian higher education institution in 2006 and provided a response to the 2007 Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) were invited by email to complete an online survey concerning their experiences since course completion. A total of 10,111 usable responses to the 2010 BGS were received. The sample of secured responses was found to be representative of the 2008 graduate population in terms of sex ratio, age structure and broad field of education studied. As such, the survey data were analysed unweighted.

The BGS questionnaire addressed graduates' employment and further study activities, and gave them an opportunity to provide a retrospective assessment of their course experience. The main focus of the questionnaire was graduates' activities on 30 April 2010, although graduates were asked a reduced set of questions about their activities on 30 April in 2009 and 2008. Data on graduates' personal characteristics and activities in 2007 were imputed into the data file from the 2007 AGS.

The focus of this report is Australian domestic bachelor degree graduates, which represents the largest group of respondents. Summary outcomes figures for Australian domestic postgraduates are presented in the final section of this report. Respondent characteristics are presented in Table A2.

Graduate Destinations

At the time of the 2007 AGS, 79.6 per cent of male graduates and 74.0 per cent of female graduates reported that they considered themselves to be available for full-time employment—that is, in or seeking full-time employment (see Table 1). By 2010, the proportion of male graduates available for full-time employment had increased to 87.7 per cent, which reflected a decrease in graduates in further full-time study or in part-time or casual employment. Conversely, the proportion of female graduates available for full-time employment increased by only 2.3 percentage points between 2007 and 2010. In contrast to their male counterparts, the proportion of female graduates in part-time or casual employment, or unavailable for study or any employment increased in the years after course completion. Females were consistently more likely than males to be undertaking full-time study.

Of the graduates who were available for full-time employment, the proportion who had secured full-time employment increased considerably in the first year after course completion (see Table 2). At the time of the 2007 AGS, 85.0 per cent of male graduates and 82.8 per cent of female graduates were in full-time employment, although by 2008 this had increased to 94.6 per cent and 92.4 per cent respectively. The proportion of unemployed graduates increased between 2008 and 2010, likely due to the economic downturn stemming from the late-2000s financial crisis. Graduate unemployment rates remained low throughout this period, with just 3.6 per cent of male graduates and 3.0 per cent of females graduates seeking full-time employment and not working in 2010.

T1: Main activity of bachelor degree graduates, by sex, 2007-10 (%)

	Available for full-time employment (see Table 2)	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 any employment	TOTAL	TOTAL number
Males							
2007	79.6	13.8	4.1	0.0	2.6	100	1,773
2008	85.8	9.4	3.6	0.2	1.0	100	1,633
2009	86.4	8.6	3.7	0.1	1.3	100	1,668
2010	87.7	8.3	2.7	0.3	1.0	100	1,783
Females							
2007	74.0	14.7	8.1	0.0	3.3	100	3,593
2008	75.3	10.5	10.8	0.2	3.2	100	3,419
2009	75.9	10.2	10.1	0.4	3.4	100	3,475
2010	76.3	9.6	10.0	0.4	3.7	100	3,651
Total							
2007	75.8	14.4	6.7	0.0	3.0	100	5,366
2008	78.7	10.2	8.4	0.2	2.5	100	5,052
2009	79.3	9.6	8.0	0.3	2.7	100	5,143
2010	80.1	9.1	7.6	0.4	2.8	100	5,434

T2: Bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, by sex and employment status, 2007-10 (%)

	In full-time employment	Seeking full-time employment, working part time or casual	Seeking full-time employment, not working	Total seeking full-time employment	TOTAL	TOTAL number
Males						
2007	85.0	9.1	5.9	15.0	100	1,411
2008	94.6	3.2	2.2	5.4	100	1,401
2009	93.6	3.2	3.2	6.4	100	1,441
2010	92.8	3.6	3.6	7.2	100	1,564
Females						
2007	82.8	12.5	4.7	17.2	100	2,658
2008	92.4	5.9	1.6	7.5	100	2,575
2009	93.1	4.4	2.4	6.8	100	2,639
2010	92.4	4.5	3.0	7.5	100	2,787
Total						
2007	83.6	11.3	5.1	16.4	100	4,069
2008	93.2	5.0	1.8	6.8	100	3,976
2009	93.3	4.0	2.7	6.7	100	4,080
2010	92.6	4.2	3.3	7.5	100	4,351

Industry of employment

The industries employing bachelor degree graduates did not change considerably in the years following course completion (see Table 3). Full-time employed male graduates were most likely to be in professional, scientific and technical services, followed by public administration and safety, and education and training. Female graduates were most likely to be employed in the healthcare and social assistance industry, although the proportion of graduates employed in this industry fell from 26.5 per cent in 2007 to 21.7 per cent in 2010. Education and training, and professional, scientific and technical services were also relatively common employment industries for female graduates.

T3: Employing industries, bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment, 2007 and 2010 (%)

	Males		Females		Total	
	2007	2010	2007	2010	2007	2010
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.4
Mining	3.3	2.9	1.1	1.6	1.9	2.1
Manufacturing	6.2	5.3	2.9	3.3	4.1	4.0
Electricity, gas and water supply	2.3	2.2	0.9	1.0	1.4	1.4
Construction	2.5	1.8	0.5	0.9	1.2	1.2
Wholesale trade	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7
Retail trade	3.6	4.6	4.1	5.0	3.9	4.9
Accommodation and food services	1.6	1.7	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.1
Transport, postal and warehousing	2.1	2.3	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.5
Information media and telecommunications	5.4	4.0	3.0	3.2	3.9	3.5
Financial and insurance services	7.5	8.1	4.3	4.1	5.4	5.5
Rental, hiring and real estate services	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
Professional, scientific and technical services	23.8	22.3	18.3	17.1	20.2	18.9
Administrative and support services	1.1	1.4	2.4	2.4	1.9	2.0
Public administration and safety	13.7	15.2	10.5	12.1	11.7	13.2
Education and training	11.5	13.5	17.3	19.4	15.3	17.3
Healthcare and social assistance	10.8	9.4	26.5	21.7	21.0	17.3
Arts and recreation services	1.1	1.8	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.7
Other services	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.4

Occupation

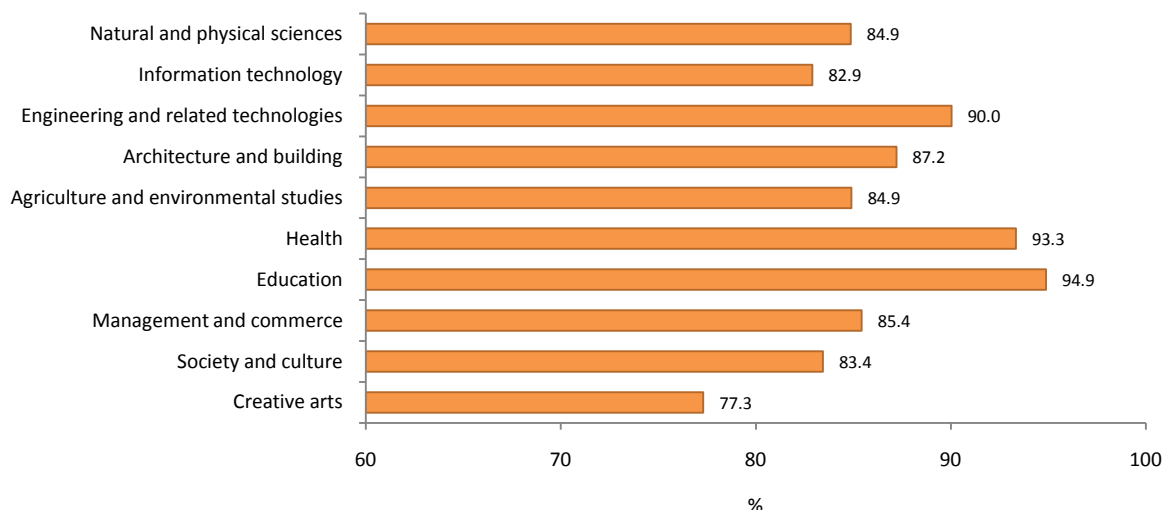
While the industries employing graduates did not change greatly in the years immediately following course completion, the occupations held by graduates in full-time employment did vary over this period. As shown in Table 4, the proportion of graduates employed in managerial and professional occupations increased notably between 2007 and 2010, resulting in a shift away from other ‘lower-skilled’ occupations. By 2010, male graduates were much more likely than their female counterparts to be employed in a managerial capacity, while female graduates were somewhat more likely to be employed in a professional role. Female graduates were also more likely than male graduates to be employed in a clerical or administrative role three years after the completion of their studies.

T4: Broad occupation types, bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment, 2007 and 2010 (%)

	Males		Females		Total	
	2007	2010	2007	2010	2007	2010
Managers	8.3	15.0	5.1	9.0	6.2	11.1
Professionals	67.0	71.4	70.9	75.3	69.5	73.9
Technicians and trades workers	5.3	3.4	1.9	2.0	3.1	2.5
Community and personal service workers	6.7	2.4	5.7	3.1	6.1	2.9
Clerical and administrative workers	8.6	5.9	13.7	9.3	11.9	8.1
Other occupations	4.2	1.8	2.7	1.3	3.2	1.5

Relevance of work to long-term career goals

Being in full-time employment, even if in a managerial or professional capacity, does not necessarily mean that a graduate is in employment related to their long-term career goals. To investigate this potential disparity between employment and relevant employment, full-time employed graduates were asked to indicate whether they considered themselves to be in employment related to their long-term career goals at the time of the 2010 BGS (see Figure 1).



F1: Graduates in employment related to their long-term career goals, bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment, by broad field of education, 2010 (%)

Encouragingly, the majority of full-time employed graduates from each of the fields of education under examination indicated that they were in employment related to their long-term career goals around three years after the completion of their studies. Graduates who completed degrees in education (94.9 per cent), health (93.3 per cent), and engineering and related technologies (90.0 per cent) were the most likely to be in employment related to their long-term career goals, while creative arts graduates were, by a wide margin, the least likely to be so employed (77.3 per cent).

Average weekly working hours

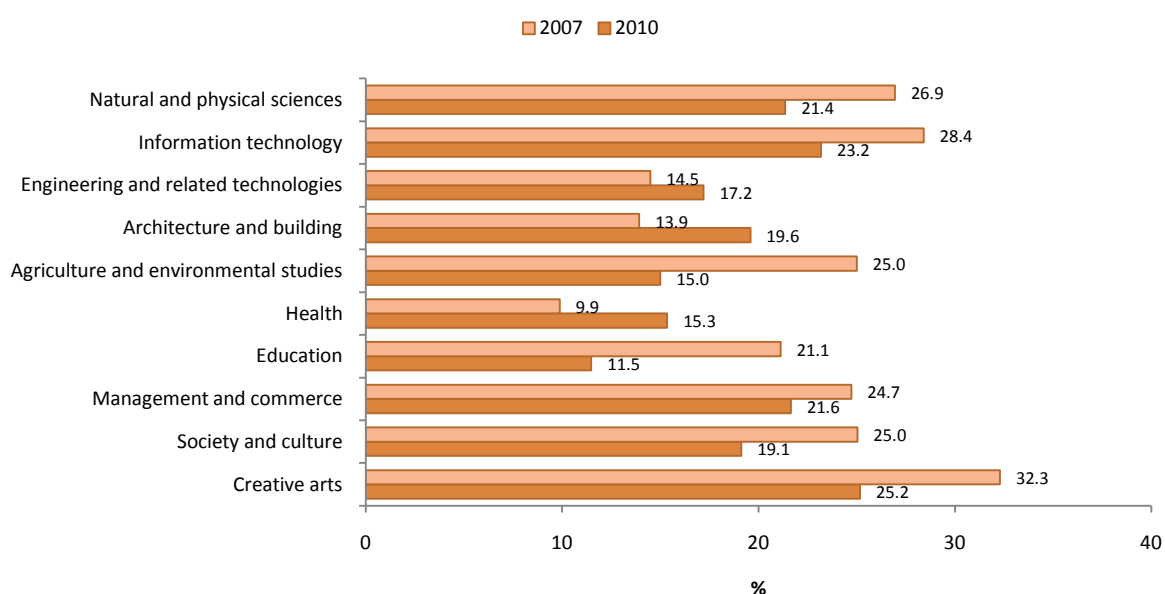
Average weekly working hours for full-time employed bachelor degree graduates in 2007 and 2010 are presented in Table 5, split by field of education and sex. At an overall level, male graduates tended to work longer hours than female graduates, although much variation in working hours was observed between different fields of education. Graduates from the field of engineering and related technologies tended to work the longest hours in both time periods. In spite of the shift towards more skilled occupations between 2007 and 2010, average weekly working hours increased by just 1.4 hours for male graduates and 0.5 hours for female graduates over this period.

T5: Average weekly working hours for full-time employed bachelor degree graduates, by broad field of education and sex, 2007 and 2010 (hours)

	Males		Females		Total	
	2007	2010	2007	2010	2007	2010
Natural and physical sciences	42.8	42.0	39.5	40.4	40.7	41.0
Information technology	40.4	41.3	38.8	41.6	40.1	41.3
Engineering and related technologies	42.8	44.0	41.9	41.6	42.6	43.4
Architecture and building	40.8	42.0	39.3	39.0	39.9	40.3
Agriculture and environmental studies	42.3	41.7	37.4	38.8	39.6	40.0
Health	41.4	42.5	40.4	40.1	40.6	40.6
Education	41.8	42.6	40.8	41.0	41.1	41.3
Management and commerce	41.4	43.3	40.5	41.1	40.8	41.9
Society and culture	41.5	43.9	39.5	40.4	40.0	41.3
Creative arts	38.9	40.4	38.8	40.5	38.9	40.5
Total	41.5	42.9	40.1	40.6	40.6	41.4

Employment seeking behaviour

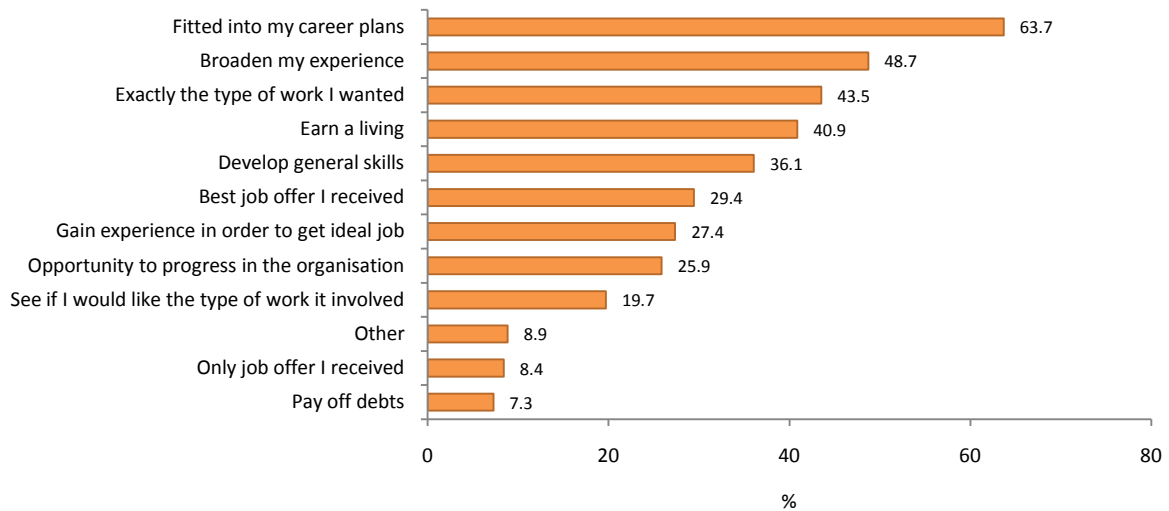
In addition to asking about their current employment, full-time employed bachelor degree graduates were asked whether they were actively seeking alternative employment at the time of the survey (see Figure 2). As expected, the 2010 figures broadly mirror those presented in Figure 1 concerning whether graduates considered themselves to be in employment related to their long-term career goals. At the time of the 2007 AGS, health graduates were the least likely to be seeking alternate employment, while creative arts graduates were the most likely. Three years later, creative arts graduates were still the most likely to be seeking alternate employment, while education graduates were the least likely. The fields of health, architecture and building, and engineering and related technologies were the only ones in which a greater proportion of graduates were seeking alternate employment three years after course completion than at the time of the 2007 AGS.



F2: Graduates seeking work, bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment, by broad field of education, 2007 and 2010 (%)

Reasons for taking current job

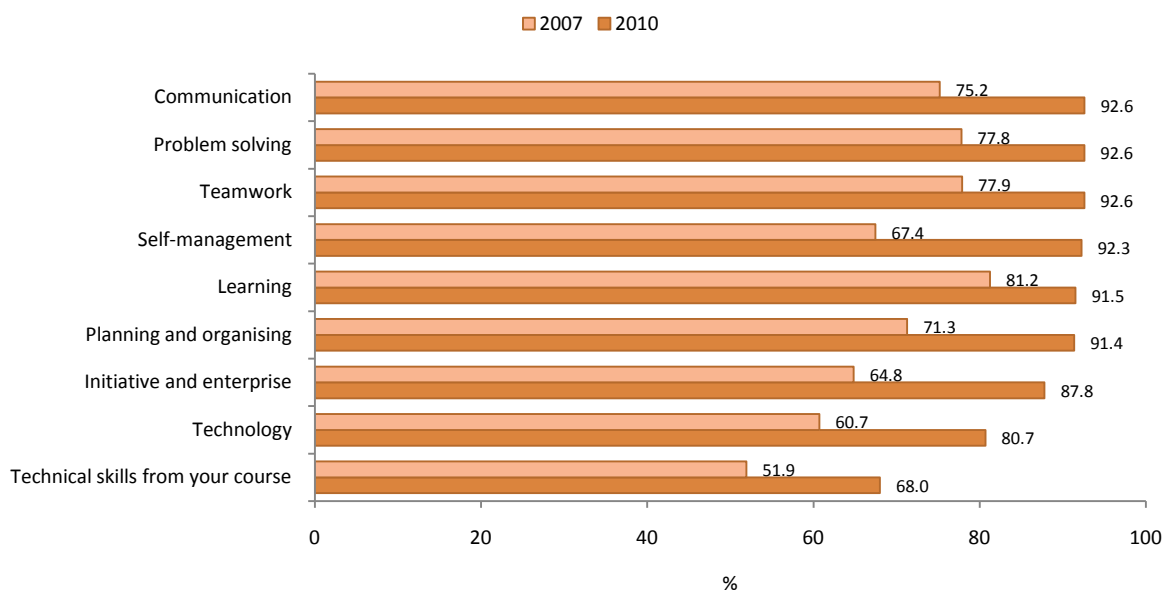
Full-time employed bachelor degree graduates were presented with a list of twelve possible reasons for why they took the job in which they were employed at the time of the 2010 BGS. Graduates were permitted to select as many or as few of these reasons as they felt were applicable to them (see Figure 3). Around two-thirds of graduates indicated that they took their current job because they believed that it fitted into their career plans (63.7 per cent), while nearly half indicated that they took the job to broaden their experience (48.7 per cent). Conversely, only a small proportion of graduates took their jobs specifically to pay off debts (7.3 per cent) or because it was the only job offer that they received (8.4 per cent). Many graduates appeared to consider their long-term career path when accepting the job they held in 2010, with 36.1 per cent indicating that they took the job in order to develop general skills and 27.4 per cent indicating that they took the job in order to gain experience that would allow them to get their 'ideal' job sometime in future.



F3: Reasons for taking current job, bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment, 2010 (%)

Employability skills

In order to gain an understanding of the impact that three years of additional employment and life experience had on their perceptions of their employability skills, full-time employed bachelor degree graduates were asked to provide a self-rating of their employability skills immediately after course completion and again three years later. Nine aspects were investigated using a five-point response format with categories *very poor*, *below average*, *average*, *above average* and *excellent*. The proportion of graduates who rated their skills as being either *above average* or *excellent* (i.e., they considered their skills as being better than average) are presented in Figure 4.



F4: Self-rated employability skills, above average/excellent, bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment, by broad field of education, 2007 and 2010 (%)

It should be noted that, unlike the majority of time-series comparisons presented in this report, these figures are not based on true longitudinal data captured at two distinct points in time. Because employability skills are not an area of investigation in the AGS, graduates who completed the BGS were asked to retrospectively evaluate their employability skills in 2007.

Upon course completion in 2007, most full-time employed bachelor degree graduates considered themselves as having better than average learning skills (81.2 per cent), teamwork skills (77.9 per cent), problem solving skills (77.8 per cent) and communication skills (75.2 per cent). On the other hand, only slightly more than half of these graduates felt that their technical skills acquired from their course were better than average (51.9 per cent). By 2010, an even greater majority of graduates rated their employability skills as being better than average, with 'technical skills from your course' the only skill that saw less than 80 per cent of graduates provide such a rating (68.0 per cent). It is evident from these figures that a great many graduates who completed the 2010 BGS felt that their employability skills had improved notably since the completion of their studies, with especially large increases observed for self-management (24.9 percentage points) and initiative and enterprise (23 percentage points).

Graduates in part-time employment

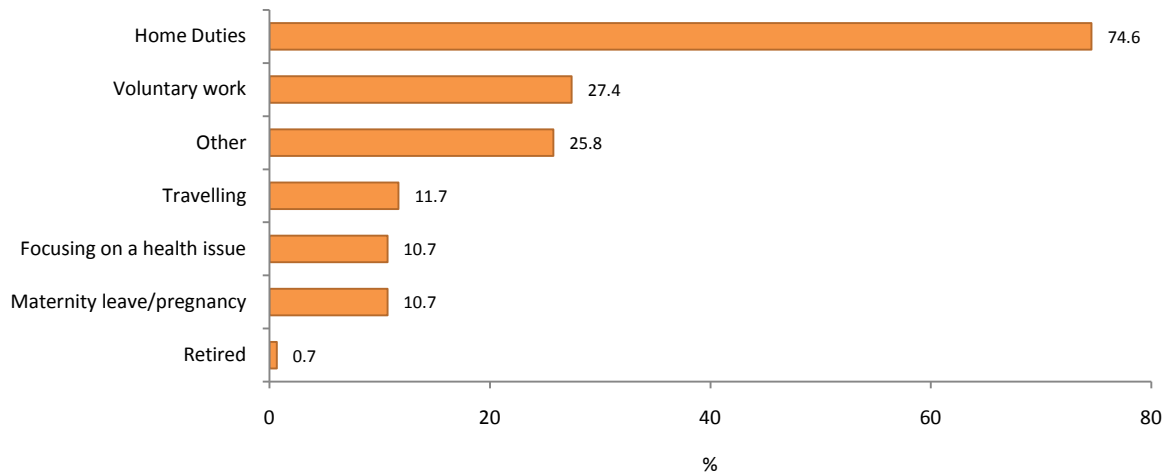
Because the vast majority of employed graduates were in full-time employment at the time of the survey, this report has thus far focused predominantly on full-time employed graduates. In order to present a comprehensive picture of graduate employment three years after course completion, the activities of part-time employed bachelor degree graduates are discussed in this section.

As shown in Table 6, graduates employed part-time immediately after course completion were typically in 'lower-skilled' occupations, with only around four-in-ten of these graduates employed in managerial or professional roles. By contrast, around three-quarters of full-time employed graduates were employed in managerial or professional roles immediately after course completion (see Table 4). Three years later, around two-thirds of part-time employed graduates were in professional employment (65.8 per cent of males and 64.9 per cent of females), although part-time employed graduates were still less likely than their full-time employed counterparts to hold a managerial role.

T6: Broad occupation types, bachelor degree graduates in part-time employment, 2007 and 2010 (%)

	Males		Females		Total	
	2007	2010	2007	2010	2007	2010
Managers	3.5	5.0	2.4	3.3	2.7	3.6
Professionals	36.9	65.8	40.5	64.9	39.7	65.0
Technicians and trades workers	5.7	3.1	2.6	2.9	3.4	2.9
Community and personal service workers	13.1	5.6	14.1	9.5	13.9	8.7
Clerical and administrative workers	12.7	11.2	14.8	11.6	14.3	11.5
Other occupations	28.0	9.3	25.4	7.8	26.1	8.1

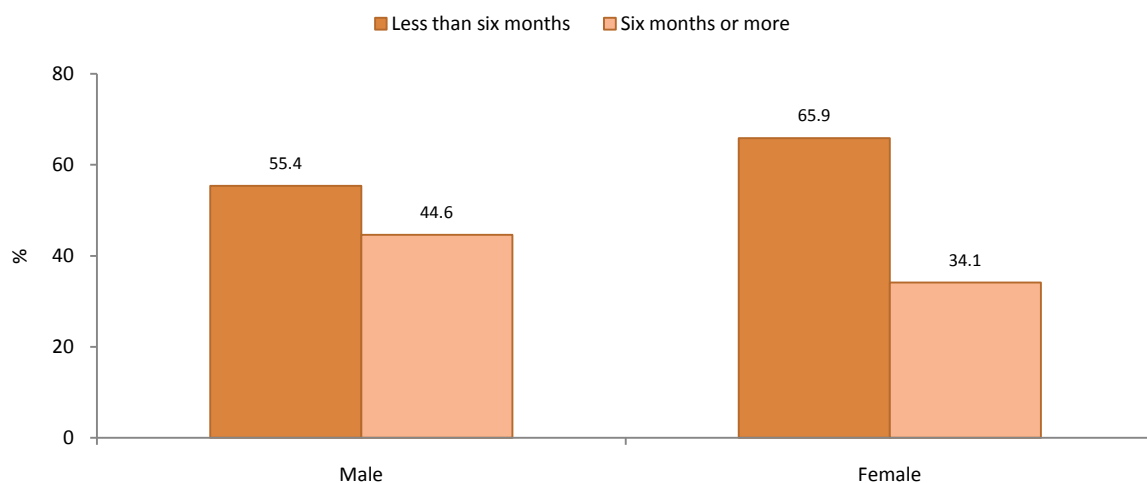
Part-time employed bachelor degree graduates were given the opportunity to indicate what, if anything, they were doing in addition to part-time employment (see Figure 5). By a considerable margin, the most common activity undertaken by graduates in addition to part-time work was home duties (74.6 per cent), followed by voluntary work (27.4 per cent). Less than one per cent of respondents were working part-time following retirement from their primary career.



F 5: Additional activities, bachelor degree graduates in part-time employment, 2010 (%)

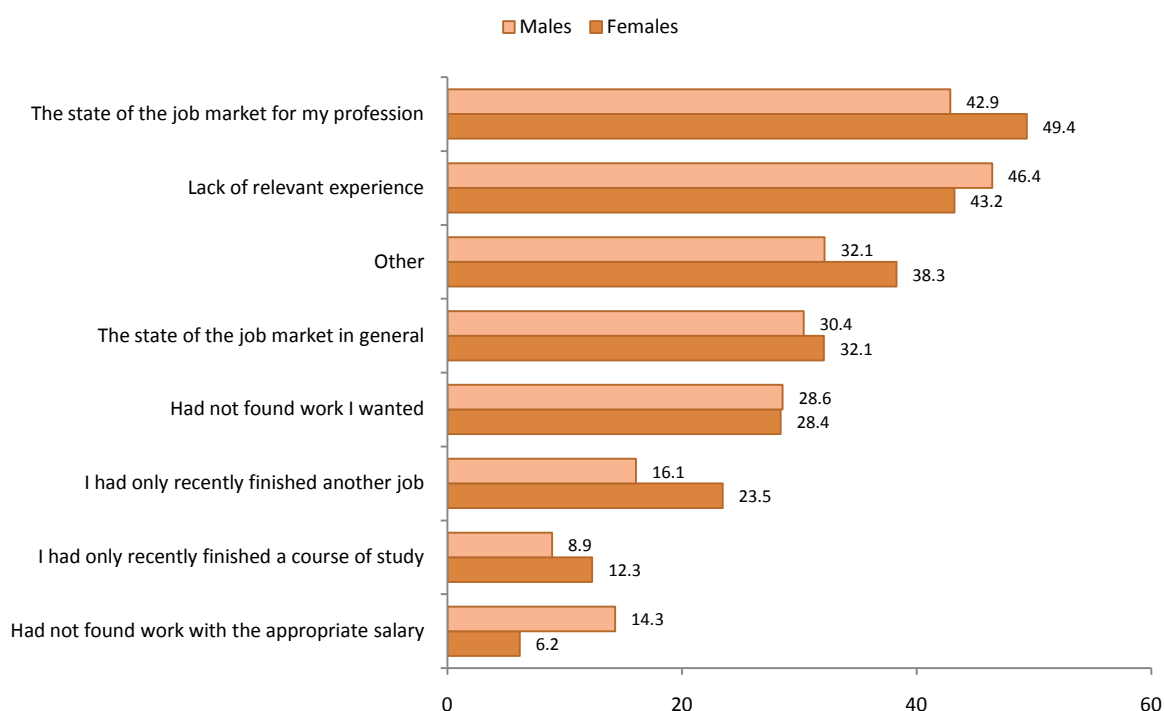
Unemployed graduates

Only a small proportion of bachelor degree graduates were unemployed at the time of the 2010 BGS. Of those graduates who identified that they were available for full-time employment, only 3.6 per cent of males and 3.0 per cent of females were unemployed and looking for work (see Table 2). As shown in Figure 6, female graduates were less likely than male graduates to be unemployed for an extended period of time. Overall, 34.1 per cent of unemployed female graduates indicated that they had been seeking work for six months or more, compared with 44.6 per cent of male graduates.



F6: Time spent looking for work, unemployed bachelor degree graduates, by sex, 2010 (%)

In addition, unemployed bachelor degree graduates were asked to indicate why they felt that they were unemployed. Again, graduates were permitted to select as many or as few of these reasons as they felt were applicable to them (see Figure 7). Generally speaking, the reasons given by male and female graduates were largely similar. Overall, 49.4 per cent of females and 42.9 per cent of males felt that they were unemployed because of the state of the labour market for their respective professions, while 46.4 per cent of males and 43.2 per cent of females believed that they were unemployed due to a lack of relevant experience. While only 6.2 per cent of females felt that they were unemployed because they had not found work with an appropriate salary, this reason was nominated by 14.3 per cent of male graduates.

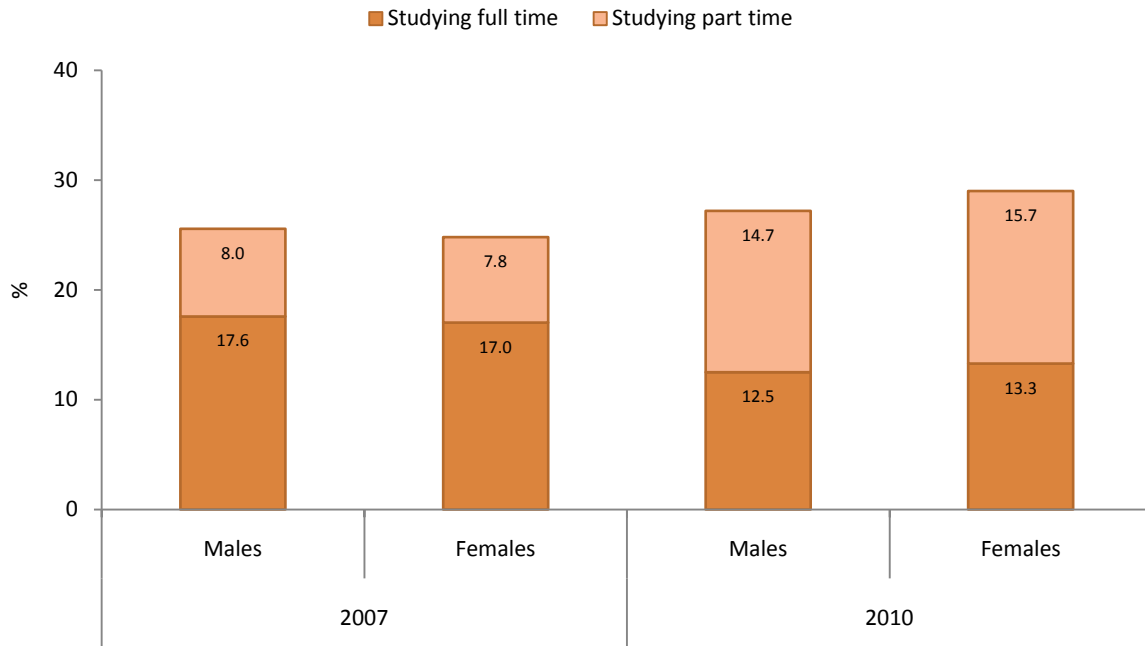


F7: Reasons for being unemployed, unemployed bachelor degree graduates, by sex, 2010 (%)

Graduates in further study

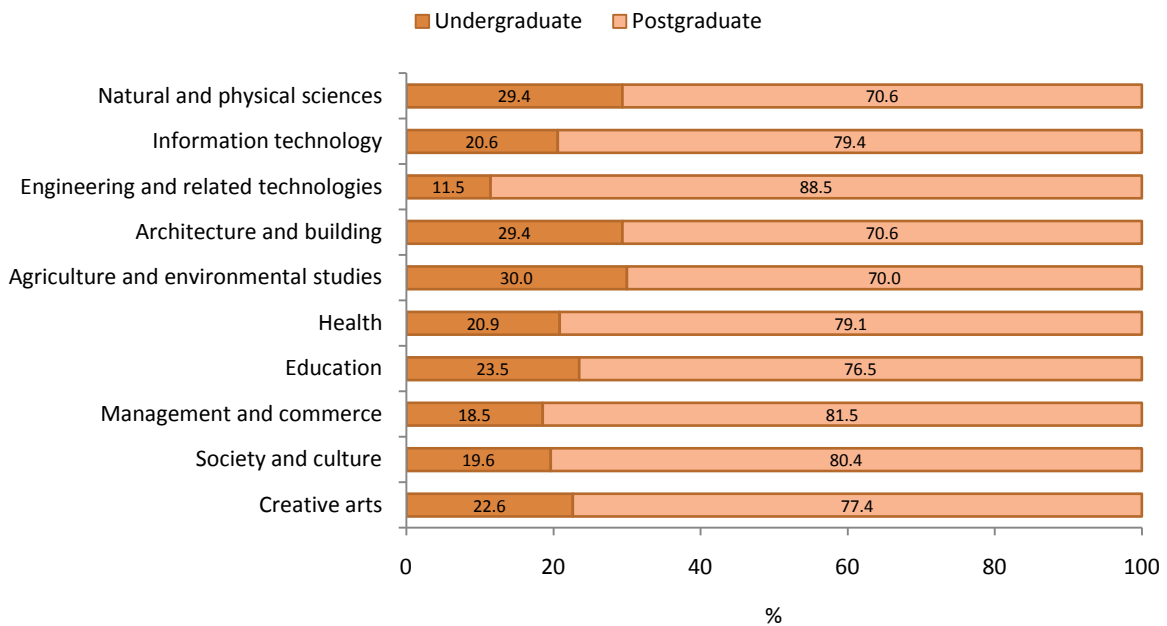
For many graduates, the completion of a course of study in 2006 did not represent the end of their learning journey. As shown in Figure 8, 25.6 per cent of male bachelor degree graduates and 24.8 per cent of female bachelor degree graduates were engaged in some type of further study at the time of the 2007 AGS. At this point, graduates were more likely to be undertaking full-time study, with 17.6 per cent of male graduates and 17.0 per cent of female graduates so engaged.¹ Three years later, the proportion of graduates in further study had increased slightly, with 27.2 per cent of male graduates and 29.0 per cent of female graduates so engaged at the time of the 2010 BGS; however graduates in further study three years after course completion were much more likely to be studying part time than those graduates in further study immediately after course completion.

¹ These figures may not reconcile with those presented in Table 1 due to different calculation methods.



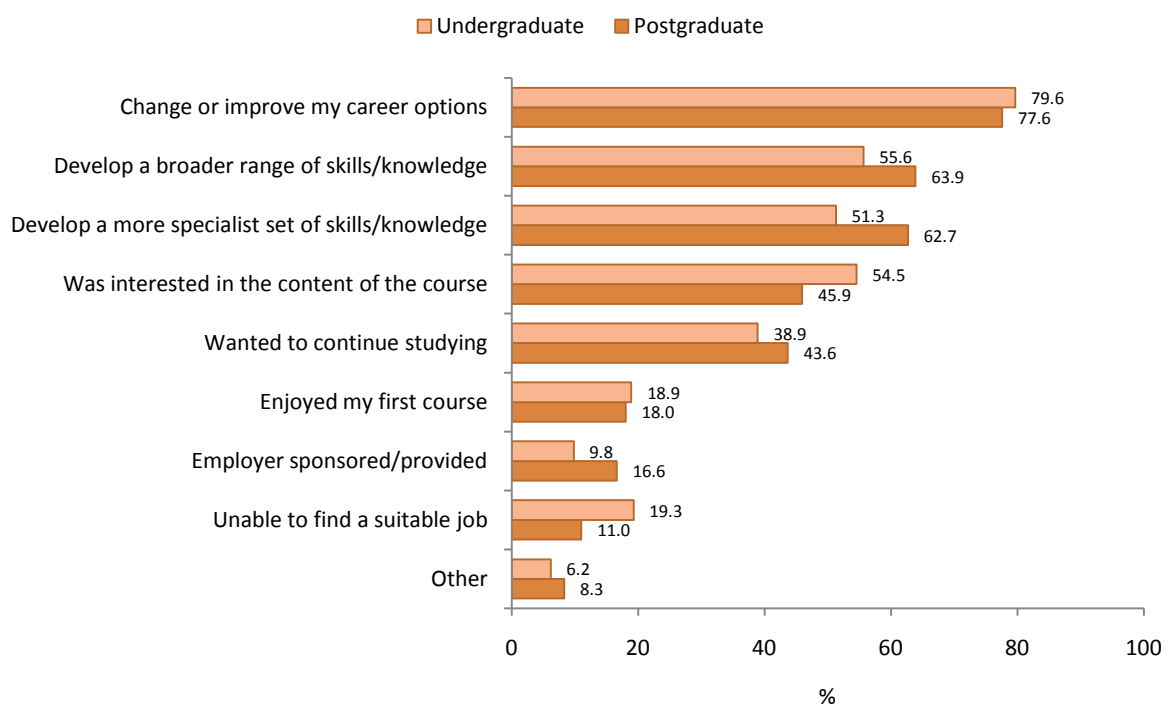
F8: Graduates in further study, bachelor degree graduates, by sex, 2007 and 2010 (%)

Examining those bachelor degree graduates who were in further study three years after course completion, it can be seen from Figure 9 that the majority of graduates from all fields of study were undertaking postgraduate study. Graduates from the field of engineering and related technologies were the most likely to be undertaking postgraduate study at the time of the 2010 BGS.



F9: Level of further study, bachelor degree graduates, by broad field of education, 2010 (%)

In order to gain an understanding of why they return to study, bachelor degree graduates were presented with a list of nine potential reasons for doing so and were instructed to select all that they felt applied to their circumstances (see Figure 10). Bachelor degree graduates returning to study, whether to undergraduate or postgraduate study, were most likely to indicate that they were doing so in order to change or improve their career options (79.6 per cent and 77.6 per cent respectively). Graduates returning to postgraduate study were also likely to indicate that they were doing so in order to develop a broader range of skills and knowledge (63.9 per cent) and to develop a more specialist set of skills and knowledge (62.7 per cent). Bachelor degree graduates returning to further undergraduate study were notably more likely than their counterparts returning to postgraduate study to indicate that they were doing so because they were interested in the content of the course (54.5 per cent compared with 45.9 per cent) or because they were unable to find a suitable job (19.3 per cent compared with 11.0 per cent).



F10: Reasons for undertaking further study, bachelor degree graduates, by level of further study, 2010 (%)

Graduate Salaries

An overview of the median annual salaries of bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment is presented in Table 7. When interpreting these figures, it is important to bear in mind that graduate salary levels may potentially be influenced by myriad economic forces, and do not necessarily reflect the quality of graduates in terms of their academic results or employability skills. It is also important to note that the figures presented are not intended as a cost-benefit analysis of undertaking a higher education in a particular field of study. In line with standard AGS practice, full-time salaries below \$15,000 and above the 99th percentile have been excluded as outliers.

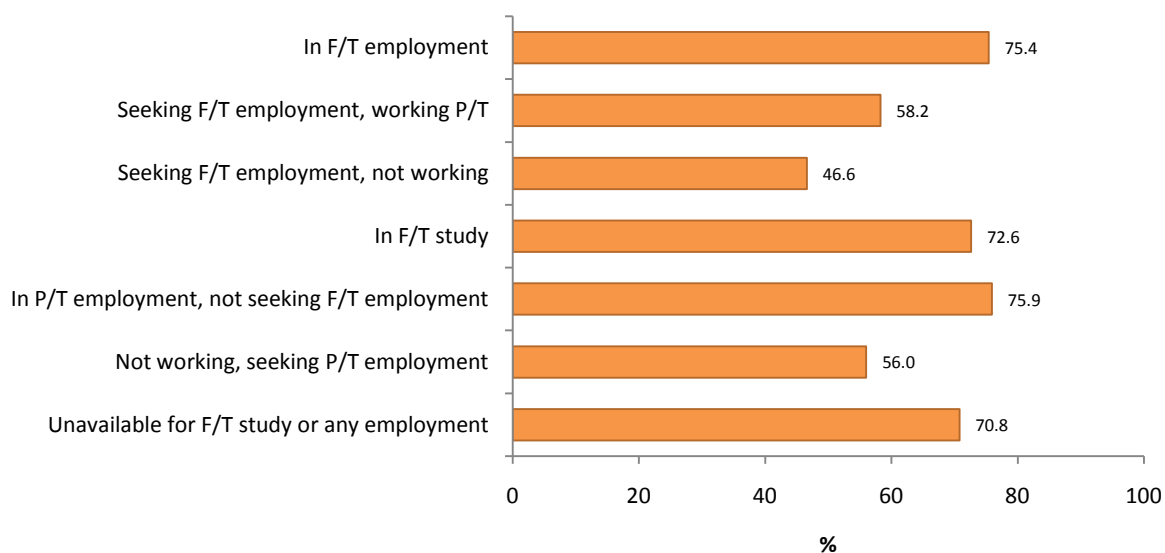
T7: Median salary, bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment, by sex and broad field of education, 2007-10 (\$'000)

	2007		2008		2009		2010		Growth
	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	%
Males									
Natural and physical sciences	48.4	70	52.0	83	55.0	90	62.0	99	28.1
Information technology	45.0	125	55.0	131	63.0	126	65.0	137	44.4
Engineering and related technologies	52.7	203	60.0	202	66.0	199	72.0	206	36.6
Architecture and building	45.5	24	56.5	26	55.5	28	64.0	30	40.7
Agriculture and environmental studies	47.8	17	50.0	19	57.0	18	65.0	19	36.0
Health	51.0	94	60.0	93	65.0	92	72.0	102	41.2
Education	47.0	76	54.0	77	58.0	76	60.0	83	27.7
Management and commerce	45.0	254	55.0	263	60.0	272	66.0	279	46.7
Society and culture	50.0	173	52.3	184	60.0	190	65.0	202	30.0
Creative arts	40.0	47	42.0	53	48.0	46	53.6	56	34.0
Total	48.0	1,083	55.0	1,131	60.0	1,137	65.0	1,213	35.4
Females									
Natural and physical sciences	41.0	111	49.8	136	53.0	155	58.0	165	41.5
Information technology	45.5	30	50.0	38	60.0	39	64.5	38	41.8
Engineering and related technologies	51.5	61	57.0	64	65.0	65	69.5	68	35.0
Architecture and building	40.0	38	45.0	44	49.0	48	50.5	47	26.3
Agriculture and environmental studies	41.0	23	50.0	26	52.0	23	54.5	26	32.9
Health	43.0	452	52.0	392	57.0	391	60.0	400	39.5
Education	45.0	260	51.0	250	55.0	261	58.0	254	28.9
Management and commerce	42.0	424	50.0	411	55.0	428	61.4	442	46.2
Society and culture	43.1	430	50.0	494	55.0	516	59.4	542	37.8
Creative arts	35.0	123	40.6	180	47.0	185	51.7	182	47.7
Total	43.0	1,952	50.0	2,035	55.0	2,111	60.0	2,164	39.5
Total									
Natural and physical sciences	42.5	181	50.0	219	54.0	245	59.0	264	38.8
Information technology	45.0	155	55.0	169	60.0	165	65.0	175	44.4
Engineering and related technologies	52.0	264	60.0	266	65.0	264	70.2	274	35.0
Architecture and building	43.0	62	49.0	70	52.3	76	55.0	77	27.9
Agriculture and environmental studies	45.0	40	50.0	45	55.0	41	60.0	45	33.3
Health	45.0	546	53.0	485	58.0	483	62.0	502	37.8
Education	46.0	336	52.0	327	55.0	337	59.0	337	28.3
Management and commerce	43.0	678	52.0	674	58.0	700	63.5	721	47.7
Society and culture	45.0	603	50.0	678	55.0	706	60.0	744	33.3
Creative arts	36.0	170	42.0	233	47.0	231	52.0	238	44.4
Total	45.0	3,035	51.0	3,166	56.0	3,248	60.8	3,377	35.1

At an overall level, full-time employed bachelor degree graduates earned a median salary of \$60,800 at the time of the 2010 BGS, representing an increase of 35.1 per cent in the three years following the completion of their studies (up from \$45,000 in 2007). (By comparison, the level of consumer price inflation over this period was just 9.3 per cent.) Graduates from the field of engineering and related technologies enjoyed the highest median salary for the period 2007 to 2010, increasing from \$52,000 to \$70,200 over this period. Creative arts graduates consistently earned the lowest median salary out of any field of education, but enjoyed a fairly high rate of median salary growth between 2007 and 2010 (44.4 per cent). The highest median salary growth rate was recorded by management and commerce graduates, increasing by 47.7 per cent from \$43,000 to \$63,500. Males earned higher median salaries than females in all fields of education three years after course completion, with the largest gender pay gap observed for architecture and building graduates (\$13,500).

Course Review

As part of the 2010 BGS, bachelor degree graduates were invited to provide an indication of their likelihood of studying the same degree again if they were given the (hypothetical) opportunity to choose whether or not to repeat the course of study that led to the qualification that they completed in 2006. The five-point response format consisted of categories labelled *very unlikely*, *unlikely*, *neither unlikely or likely*, *likely* and *very likely*. As shown in Figure 11, graduates who were unemployed and seeking full-time employment at the time of the survey were the least likely to repeat the same degree, with only 46.6 per cent of graduates indicating that they were either *likely* or *very likely* to do so if given the opportunity. Graduates who were working part-time and seeking full-time employment (58.2 per cent), and not working and seeking part-time employment (56.0 per cent) were also much less likely than their peers to want to repeat the same degree.



F11: Likelihood of bachelor degree graduates studying the same degree again if given the choice, likely/very likely, by labour market status, 2010 (%)

Postgraduate Destinations

Up to this point, this report has focused largely on the destinations and earnings of bachelor degree graduates. This section provides a brief overview of the destinations and earnings of domestic postgraduates, who constitute approximately 30 per cent of respondents to the 2010 BGS.

As shown in Table 8, 93.3 per cent of male postgraduates and 79.5 per cent of female postgraduates indicated that they were available for full-time employment at the time of the 2007 AGS. In contrast to bachelor degree graduates, who were more likely to be available for full-time employment three years after course completion (see Table 1), postgraduates were slightly less likely to be available for full-time employment in 2010. This appears to be due largely to an increase in the proportion of postgraduates who were in part-time or casual employment and not seeking full-time employment.

T8: Main activity of postgraduates, by sex, 2007-10 (%)

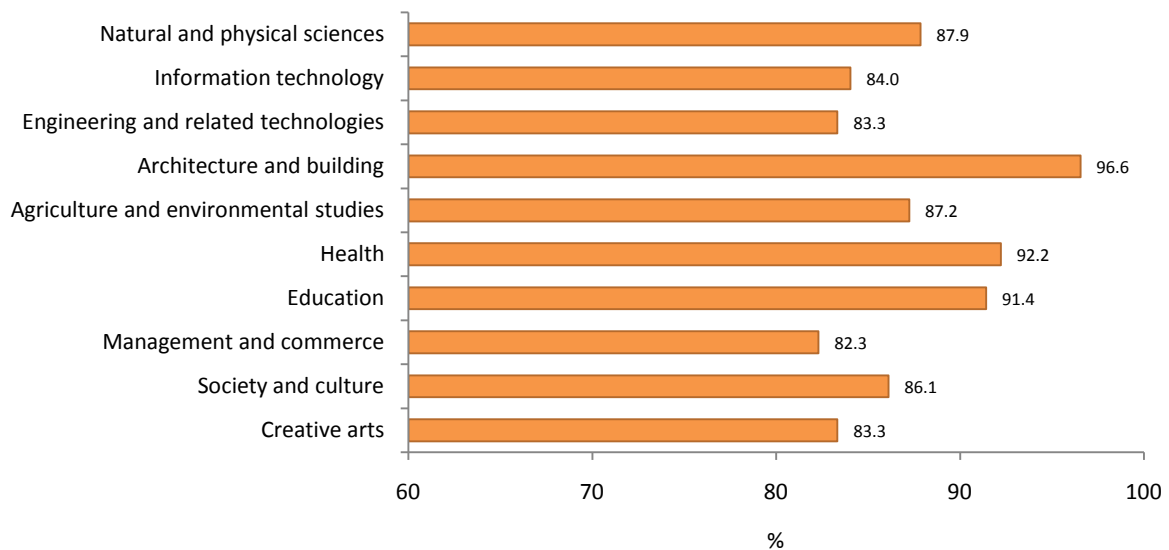
	Available for full-time employment (see Table 2)	In full-time study	In part-time or casual employment, not seeking full-time employment	Not working, seeking part-time or casual employment only	Unavailable for full-time study or any employment	TOTAL	TOTAL number
Males							
2007	93.3	2.8	2.3	0.0	1.6	100	1,126
2008	91.8	1.8	4.7	0.2	1.5	100	1,076
2009	91.5	1.8	4.3	0.3	2.1	100	1,099
2010	92.0	1.7	4.2	0.2	2.0	100	1,148
Females							
2007	79.5	4.2	13.2	0.0	3.1	100	1,503
2008	73.9	2.4	19.5	0.5	3.7	100	1,491
2009	73.7	2.4	20.1	0.4	3.4	100	1,510
2010	74.7	2.4	17.5	0.5	4.9	100	1,553
Total							
2007	85.4	3.6	8.6	0.0	2.4	100	2,629
2008	81.4	2.1	13.3	0.4	2.8	100	2,567
2009	81.2	2.1	13.4	0.3	2.9	100	2,609
2010	82.0	2.1	11.8	0.4	3.7	100	2,701

T9: Postgraduates available for full-time employment, by sex and employment status, 2007-10 (%)

	In full-time employment	Seeking full-time employment, working part time or casual	Seeking full-time employment, not working	Total seeking full-time employment	TOTAL	TOTAL number
Males						
2007	92.5	4.0	3.5	7.5	100	1,050
2008	95.3	2.2	2.4	4.6	100	988
2009	95.4	2.3	2.3	4.6	100	1,006
2010	94.8	2.3	2.9	5.2	100	1,056
Females						
2007	91.0	6.3	2.8	9.1	100	1,195
2008	95.9	3.4	0.7	4.1	100	1,102
2009	95.1	3.0	1.9	4.9	100	1,113
2010	93.7	3.9	2.4	6.3	100	1,160
Total						
2007	91.7	5.2	3.1	8.3	100	2,245
2008	95.6	2.8	1.5	4.3	100	2,090
2009	95.3	2.6	2.1	4.7	100	2,119
2010	94.2	3.1	2.7	5.8	100	2,216

Of the postgraduates who were available for full-time employment, a very high proportion had already secured full-time employment at the time of the 2007 AGS. As shown in Table 9, 92.5 per cent of male postgraduates and 91.0 per cent of female postgraduates were in full-time employment in 2007, which had increased to 94.8 per cent and 93.7 per cent respectively by 2010. (Employment rates peaked for postgraduates in 2009 for males and 2008 for females.) Unemployment rates were consistently lower for postgraduates than for bachelor degree graduates. It should be noted that postgraduates are typically older than bachelor degree graduates and therefore tend to have more extensive work experience. This would likely contribute to their superior labour market outcomes.

Full-time employed postgraduates were asked to indicate if they considered themselves to be in employment related to their long-term career goals (see Figure 12). As with bachelor degree graduates (see Figure 1), the majority of full-time employed postgraduates from each of the fields of education under examination indicated that they were in employment related to their long-term career goals three years after course completion. Postgraduates from the fields of architecture and building (96.6 per cent), health (92.2 per cent) and education (91.4 per cent) were the most likely to be in employment related to their long-term career goals, while postgraduates from the fields of management and commerce (82.3 per cent), creative arts (83.3 per cent), engineering and related technologies (83.3 per cent), and information technology (84.0 per cent) were least likely. Notably, a much greater proportion of bachelor degree graduates than postgraduates from the field of engineering and related technologies indicated that they were in employment related to their long-term career goals (6.7 percentage points). The opposite was true with regard to the fields of architecture and building (9.4 percentage points) and creative arts (6.0 percentage points).



F12: Graduates in employment related to their long-term career goals, postgraduates in full-time employment, by broad field of education, 2010 (%)

Full-time employed postgraduates earned a median salary of \$82,000 at the time of the 2010 BGS, representing an increase of 26.2 per cent in the three years following course completion (*cf.* 35.1 per cent for bachelor degree graduates), at which point their median salary was \$65,000 (see Table 10). Postgraduates from the field of management and commerce consistently enjoyed the highest median salary over this period, increasing from \$80,000 in 2007 to \$97,000 in 2010. Postgraduates from the field of engineering and related technologies also enjoyed high earnings while those from the fields of creative arts and education earned the lowest median salaries, although by 2010 their median salaries were both \$70,000 following relatively strong salary growth (37.3 per cent and 27.3 per cent respectively). Information technology postgraduates experienced the lowest growth in their median salaries over the period from 2007 to 2010 (8.8 per cent). Male creative arts postgraduates earned a very high median salary in 2010 (\$111,500); however this figure should be treated with caution because of the small sample size on which it is based ($n = 10$).

T10: Median salary, postgraduates in full-time employment, by sex and broad field of education, 2007-10 (\$'000)

	2007		2008		2009		2010		Growth
	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	%
Males									
Natural and physical sciences	61.4	39	75.0	39	76.0	42	80.5	42	31.1
Information technology	70.8	59	74.5	62	79.5	64	80.0	70	13.0
Engineering and related technologies	81.5	71	82.5	68	90.0	66	97.0	77	19.0
Architecture and building	61.5	12	95.0	13	94.0	12	94.0	14	52.8
Agriculture and environmental studies	59.0	16	66.5	20	72.0	19	77.2	20	30.8
Health	78.0	76	85.0	67	88.0	67	95.0	70	21.8
Education	58.0	95	63.5	74	66.0	76	74.5	78	28.4
Management and commerce	88.0	347	95.0	330	100.0	334	105.0	345	19.3
Society and culture	65.0	99	74.0	95	82.0	96	83.5	108	28.5
Creative arts	46.3	12	†	†	†	†	111.5	10	140.8
Total	75.0	826	85.0	776	90.0	785	95.0	834	26.7
Females									
Natural and physical sciences	58.4	52	62.0	51	67.0	50	68.3	48	17.0
Information technology	†	†	61.0	12	67.5	11	80.0	13	†
Engineering and related technologies	62.0	15	†	†	†	†	75.5	10	21.8
Architecture and building	†	†	56.0	13	58.7	10	65.8	14	†
Agriculture and environmental studies	61.0	27	65.0	28	68.0	27	75.0	25	23.0
Health	60.0	169	70.0	139	74.5	148	78.0	153	30.0
Education	52.6	204	65.0	172	67.0	184	70.0	188	33.1
Management and commerce	68.0	240	72.0	240	80.0	229	84.0	244	23.5
Society and culture	57.0	181	65.0	181	68.0	184	74.0	185	29.8
Creative arts	52.0	38	59.0	40	66.0	37	69.5	38	33.7
Total	60.0	944	68.0	884	70.0	889	75.0	918	25.0
Total									
Natural and physical sciences	60.0	91	68.5	90	72.0	92	75.0	90	25.0
Information technology	73.5	68	72.5	74	79.0	75	80.0	83	8.8
Engineering and related technologies	74.0	86	80.0	76	85.0	75	92.0	87	24.3
Architecture and building	52.0	21	65.0	26	70.5	22	74.5	28	43.3
Agriculture and environmental studies	60.0	43	65.0	48	70.0	46	76.0	45	26.7
Health	63.3	245	73.0	206	76.0	215	82.4	223	30.2
Education	55.0	299	65.0	246	67.0	260	70.0	266	27.3
Management and commerce	80.0	587	85.0	570	90.0	563	97.0	589	21.3
Society and culture	60.0	280	68.0	276	70.0	280	75.0	293	25.0
Creative arts	51.0	50	62.5	48	66.5	46	70.0	48	37.3
Total	65.0	1,770	74.0	1,660	78.0	1,674	82.0	1,752	26.2

Further Research

This summary report has only scratched the surface of graduate outcomes in the early years after course completion. The BGS gathered a wealth of data concerning the outcomes and experiences of recent higher education graduates, much of which cannot be reported here due to report length and resource constraints. To address this, GCA is planning to release a series of white papers that delve into aspects of the graduate experience in greater detail than is possible here. Any readers who wish to propose a topic for further investigation are invited to contact GCA at the address listed on page i at the start of this report. Feedback on the content of this report is also most welcome.

The report of the 2011 Beyond Graduation Survey will be published in early 2012.

A1: Higher education institutions that participated in the 2010 BGS

Australian Catholic University
Australian College of Physical Education
Australian College of Theology
Charles Darwin University
CQUniversity
Deakin University
Edith Cowan University
Flinders University
James Cook University
La Trobe University
Macquarie University
Monash University
Murdoch University
Queensland University of Technology
RMIT University
Southern Cross University
Swinburne University
University of Ballarat
University of New England
University of New South Wales
University of Newcastle
University of Notre Dame Australia
University of Queensland
University of South Australia
University of Southern Queensland
University of Sydney
University of Tasmania
University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Western Australia
University of Western Sydney
Victoria University

A2: 2010 BGS respondent characteristics

	Bachelor degree		Postgraduate	
	n	%	n	%
Broad field of education[†]				
Natural and physical sciences	563	10.0	145	5.2
Information technology	255	4.5	122	4.4
Engineering and related technologies	363	6.5	132	4.7
Architecture and building	120	2.1	42	1.5
Agriculture and environmental studies	83	1.5	60	2.1
Health	822	14.7	386	13.8
Education	562	10.0	477	17.0
Management and commerce	992	17.7	806	28.7
Society and culture	1,374	24.5	531	18.9
Creative arts	475	8.5	103	3.7
Means of financing study[†]				
HECS paid upfront	1,650	30.2	405	15.1
HECS deferred some or all	3,555	65.0	584	21.8
International fee-paying student	65	1.2	115	4.3
Australian fee-paying student	197	3.6	1,317	49.3
APA or RTS research student	0	0.0	253	9.5
Main attendance type[†]				
Mainly full time	4,517	81.0	1,000	35.9
Mainly part time	1,062	19.0	1,782	64.1
Main attendance mode[†]				
Internal (on campus)	4,604	82.3	1,632	58.7
External (off campus)	455	8.1	927	33.3
Mixed mode (internal and external)	532	9.5	222	8.0
Paid work during final year of study[†]				
Yes	4,500	83.8	2,361	88.2
No	869	16.2	317	11.8
Sex[‡]				
Male	1,824	32.5	1,172	41.8
Female	3,771	67.2	1,612	57.5
Unknown	14	0.2	20	0.7
Age group[‡]				
Under 25	3,581	64.0	217	7.8
25 and over	2,015	36.0	2,566	92.2
Main language spoken at home[‡]				
English	4,947	88.7	2,356	84.6
Other	632	11.3	430	15.4
Disability identification[‡]				
Yes	185	3.3	98	3.5
No	5,417	96.7	2,686	96.5

[†] These characteristics relate to the course of study completed in 2006.

[‡] At the time of the 2007 AGS.



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