



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 *2002 GDS*, new graduates who completed the requirements for their qualifications in the calendar year 2001 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, 60.7 per cent of this group responded to the survey.

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

Graduates in 2002:

Work, Study, Salaries and Course Satisfaction — Main Points

- Of bachelor degree graduates who were available for full-time employment in 2002, 81.3% per cent (83.0 per cent in 2001) were in full-time employment within four months of completing their degrees. A further 11.2 per cent (10.0 per cent last year) were working on a part-time or casual basis while continuing to seek full-time employment.
- An additional 7.5 per cent (7.0 per cent last year) were not working and still looking for full-time employment at the time of the survey.
- These figures represent a slight fall in employment prospects for new graduates in 2002 after a period of improvement and consolidation between 1999 and 2001.
- Almost a quarter of respondents (24.1 per cent) were undertaking further full-time study after completing their qualification. Males (25.2 per cent) were more likely than females (23.4 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 \$35,500. This was 82.7 per cent of average earnings, down from 85.8 per cent last year and 84.2 per cent in 2000 but up on 81.6 per cent in 1999.
- Males earned a starting salary of \$37,000 (up from \$36,000) and females earned \$35,000 (up from \$34,000).
- 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 2002 Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) show that 81.3 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 11.2 per cent were working on a part-time or casual basis while continuing to seek full-time employment. Only 7.5 per cent were not working and still looking for full-time employment at the time of the survey.

These results represent a slight fall in employment prospects for new bachelor degree graduates after a period of improvement and consolidation which saw employment figures rise from 80.8 per cent in 1999 to 83.6 per cent in 2001 (see Table 1a).

Generally, between one-fifth and one-quarter of respondents elect to continue in further

full-time study. In 2002, 24.1 per cent did so, up from 23.4 per cent last year and in line with 24.2 per cent in 2000 (see Table 1). These figures include those proceeding to honours years and higher degrees.

A further 6.0 per cent of respondents were in part-time or casual work and were not seeking full-time employment (6.0 per cent in 2001), while 0.6 per cent were not working and seeking part-time or casual employment only (0.6 per cent in 2001). These figures have remained fairly stable over the last five years.

Of those graduates seeking full-time employment, males (81.2 per cent — see Table 1a) were as likely as females (81.3 per cent) to have found it by the time of the survey. Previous years have seen a slightly larger difference, in favour of males.

Table 1: Activities of bachelor degree graduates, by sex, 2000-2002 (%).

	Available for full-time employment (see Table 1a)	In full-time study	In part-time or casual employment, but 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							
2000	68.0	25.2	3.1	0.3	3.3	21,794	100
2001	68.8	24.7	3.7	0.3	2.5	22,056	100
2002	67.6	25.2	3.3	0.4	3.5	22,894	100
Females							
2000	63.8	23.6	7.7	0.8	4.2	34,921	100
2001	65.8	22.7	7.5	0.8	3.3	35,732	100
2002	64.1	23.4	7.6	0.8	4.1	36,389	100
Persons							
2000	65.4	24.2	5.9	0.6	3.9	56,773	100
2001	67.0	23.4	6.0	0.6	2.9	57,937	100
2002	65.4	24.1	6.0	0.6	3.9	59,629	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, 2000-2002 (%).

	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							
2000	84.5	7.6	7.9	15.5	100	14,839	20.6
2001	83.2	8.5	8.3	16.8	100	15,170	19.5
2002	81.2	9.3	9.5	18.8	100	15,477	19.7
Females							
2000	83.0	6.1	10.9	17.0	100	22,272	14.0
2001	82.9	6.1	11.0	17.1	100	23,516	12.8
2002	81.3	6.4	12.3	18.7	100	23,320	12.8
Persons							
2000	83.6	6.7	9.7	16.4	100	37,138	16.7
2001	83.0	7.0	10.0	17.0	100	38,794	15.4
2002	81.3	7.5	11.2	18.7	100	39,018	15.5

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

† Total % may not add to 100 due to rounding. * Base figure is that group in full-time employment.

Of particular note is the rise in the percentage of males seeking full-time employment (15.5 per cent in 2000, 16.8 per cent in 2001, 18.8 per cent in 2002). Females were as likely as males to have been seeking full-time employment at the time of the survey (18.7 per cent as opposed to 18.8 per cent), but were less likely than males (6.4 per cent compared with 9.3 per cent) to have been without any work while seeking full-time employment.

Females were much more likely than males (12.3 per cent compared with 9.5 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 likely to be 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 (23.4 per cent) to have undertaken further full-time study in 2002 (see Table 1).

Figure 1 shows how employment levels have fluctuated slightly in recent years, with prospects remaining below the levels experienced in the mid-to-late 1980s.

Table 1a shows that 15.5 per cent of those in full-time employment at the time of the survey already had that full-time position in their final year of study. A proportion of these respondents would have been in that full-time employment for a greater period of their study.

Table 2 shows a breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment by field of study. 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.

Figure 1: Percentage of bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment of those available for full-time employment, 1982-2002.

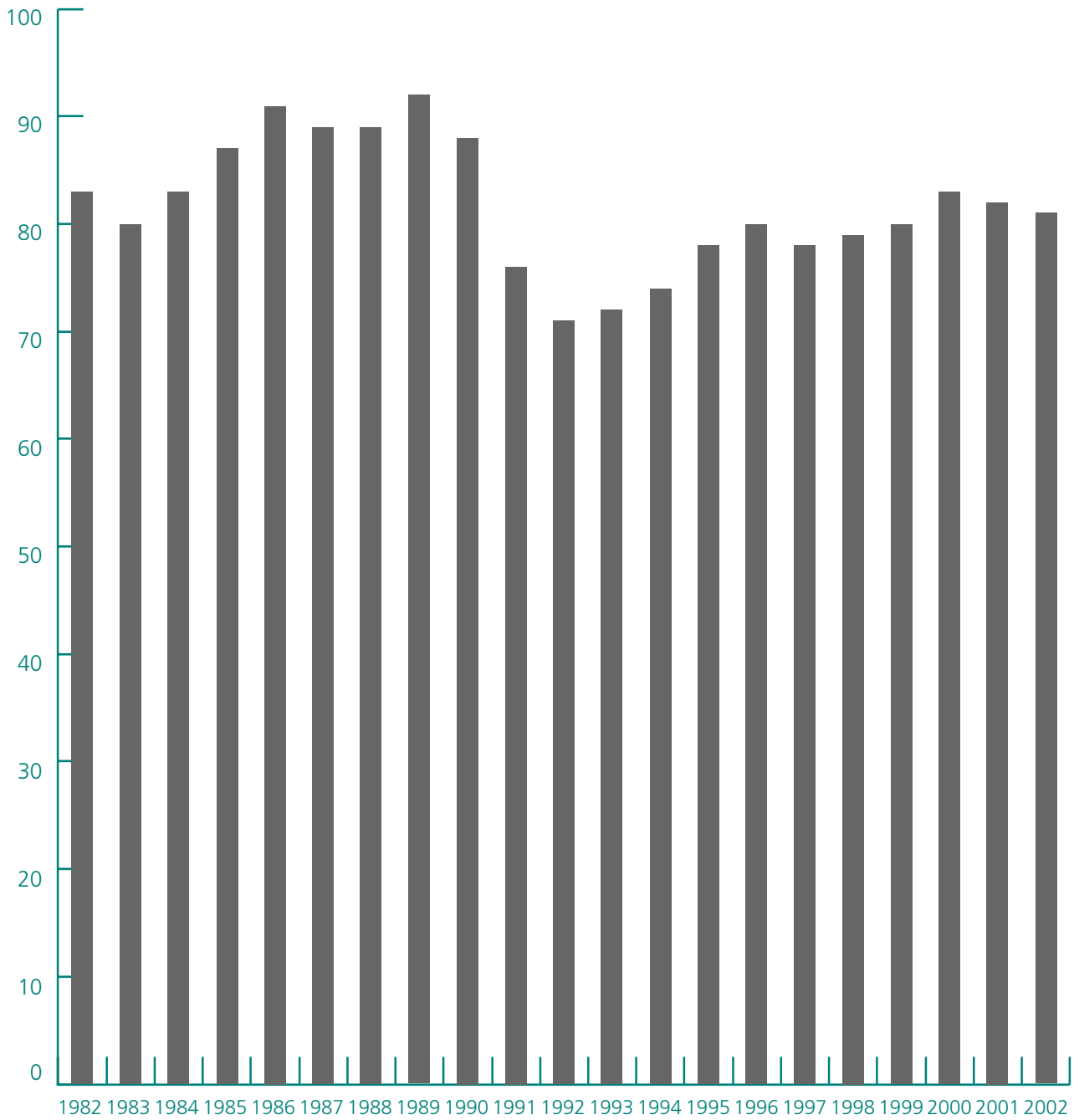


Table 2: Breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, by field of study, 2002 (%).

	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	74.4	10.7	14.9	25.6	100	844	14.2
Architecture	84.5	4.7	10.8	15.5	100	361	15.7
Building	87.6	4.5	7.9	12.4	100	331	27.9
Urb & Reg Plann	93.8	3.1	3.1	6.2	100	129	13.2
Humanities	67.1	13.1	19.8	32.9	100	2,928	17.4
Languages	71.3	11.6	17.0	28.7	100	558	15.3
Vis/Perf Arts	56.9	17.1	26.0	43.1	100	1,050	6.4
Social Sciences	71.2	10.7	18.1	28.8	100	392	25.4
Psychology	65.4	14.1	20.5	34.6	100	874	17.5
Social Work	77.2	7.8	15.0	22.8	100	847	12.5
Business Studies	78.9	8.3	12.9	21.1	100	5,570	22.4
Accounting	90.7	5.9	3.4	9.3	100	2,476	29.4
Economics	86.7	6.6	6.6	13.3	100	497	16.0
Education, Initial	83.2	2.9	13.8	16.8	100	4,595	11.6
Education Post/Oth	82.3	5.0	12.8	17.7	100	141	10.3
Aeronautical Eng	82.9	11.4	5.7	17.1	100	123	7.8
Chemical Eng	89.2	7.8	3.0	10.8	100	166	2.0
Civil Engineering	91.1	7.1	1.8	8.9	100	553	8.9
Electrical Eng	83.3	11.0	5.6	16.7	100	372	15.5
Electron/Comp Eng	74.7	16.4	9.0	25.3	100	379	14.1
Mechanical Eng	81.5	9.2	9.2	18.5	100	466	13.9
Mining Engineering	90.9	5.2	3.9	9.1	100	77	1.4
Other Engineering	83.5	9.6	6.9	16.5	100	448	12.3
Surveying	92.6	4.6	2.8	7.4	100	108	23.0
Dentistry	97.5	0.0	2.5	2.5	100	119	0.9
Health, Other	78.9	7.2	13.9	21.1	100	1,268	19.1
Nursing, Initial	97.4	0.8	1.8	2.6	100	2,193	5.5
Nursing, Post-initial	97.2	0.3	2.5	2.8	100	322	7.0
Pharmacy	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100	331	1.5
Medicine	98.6	0.6	0.8	1.4	100	997	1.3
Rehabilitation	92.4	2.1	5.5	7.6	100	963	1.1
Law	92.7	4.4	3.0	7.3	100	914	13.3
Law, Other	95.5	1.4	3.1	4.5	100	2,400	24.3
Computer Science	70.5	16.4	13.1	29.5	100	2,244	21.7
Life Sciences	69.6	11.4	19.0	30.4	100	2,181	9.0
Mathematics	72.6	16.0	11.4	27.4	100	175	15.7
Chemistry	77.0	10.9	12.0	23.0	100	183	12.8
Physics	59.8	18.0	22.1	40.2	100	122	12.3
Geology	75.3	6.5	18.2	24.7	100	170	6.3
Veterinary Science	96.7	2.6	0.7	3.3	100	151	0.7
Total %	81.3	7.5	11.2	18.7	100		15.5
Total N	31,715	2,941	4,362	7,303		39,018	

† Total % may not add to 100 due to rounding. * Base figure is group in full-time employment.

For example, medical graduates, of whom 98.6 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 (100 per cent), dentistry (97.5 per cent), initial nursing education (97.4 per cent), and post-initial nursing education (97.2 per cent).

Respondents in visual and performing arts, physics, psychology, humanities, life sciences and computer science were most likely to have been seeking full-time employment at the time of the *GDS*.

While the national employment figure fell slightly (1.7 percentage points) between 2001 and 2002, some fields of study experienced a notable improvement, including surveying (up by 6.9 percentage points), urban and regional planning (up by 6.7 percentage points), aeronautical engineering (up by 5.6 percentage points), and mining engineering (up by 5.0 percentage points).

Several other fields also enjoyed improved employment prospects.

However, the percentage of respondents in full-time employment fell markedly in some fields between 2001 and 2002.

In particular, physics fell by 18.0 percentage points, electronic and computer engineering fell by 14.4 percentage points, and computer science fell by 10.5 percentage points.

Respondents from visual and performing arts (26.0 per cent), physics (22.1 per cent), and psychology (20.5 per cent) were the most likely to have been working on a part-time or casual basis while seeking full-time employment.

Those from physics (18.0 per cent), visual and performing arts (17.1 per cent), and computer science and electronic and computer engineering (both 16.4 per cent) were the most likely to have been without work while seeking full-time employment.

Table 3: Annual rate of average weekly earnings (AWE) and median graduate starting salaries (GSS), and relativity, 1977-2002 (\$,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
2001	40.8	35.0	85.8
2002	42.9	35.5	82.7

*Data from 1978 were incompatible with those from other years, and have been excluded from this analysis.

Many graduates were already in their full-time employment while studying. Respondents from accounting (29.4 per cent) and building (27.9 per cent) were most 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.

Table 4: Median starting salaries of bachelor degree graduates in first full-time employment and aged less than 25, 2002 (\$,000). Figures shown below salary figures indicate number of responses.

	Aust. Govt	State Govt	Total Govt	Prof. Pract.	Ind./ Com.	Schools	Tert. Ed.	Total Ed.	Total	Males	Females
Humanities	35.0 67	33.0 90	34.1 174	32.8 72	30.0 512	38.0 75	32.5 26	37.5 101	32.0 913	33.0 197	32.0 716
Psychology	35.0 23	34.2 33	35.0 60	33.0 10	31.0 103			33.5 12	34.0 200	35.0 35	33.0 165
Social Work		36.6 76	36.2 94		32.9 66				35.0 184	37.0 16	35.0 168
Social Sciences		42.0 97	42.0 110		30.0 63	39.0 23		39.0 26	38.8 212	41.0 71	37.5 141
Accounting	35.5 19	35.0 41	35.0 64	33.0 518	35.0 260				34.0 860	35.0 365	33.0 495
Economics, Business	37.0 113	34.7 135	35.0 267	32.0 238	34.0 1,353		34.0 28	33.5 35	34.0 1,963	35.0 777	33.0 1,186
Law	36.0 41	35.0 44	35.4 87	38.0 337	38.0 81				37.0 517	37.0 178	37.0 339
Education		37.0 63	37.0 72		30.0 51	38.0 1,379		38.0 1,380	38.0 1,528	38.0 222	37.6 1,306
Physical Science		35.5 13	36.0 21		37.0 58			35.5 10	36.0 102	37.2 54	35.0 48
Biological Science	36.0 49	35.0 141	35.2 205	35.0 45	32.3 324	37.2 37	36.0 71	37.0 108	34.8 714	35.0 208	34.6 506
Mathematics	36.0 12		35.9 15		37.5 39				37.0 65	37.3 36	35.9 29
Computer Science	40.0 39	37.0 45	38.0 90	35.0 24	40.0 477		38.9 25	39.0 29	39.0 641	39.8 454	38.0 187
Agricultural Science	34.1 14	33.6 45	34.5 66		30.9 156				32.0 248	32.0 125	32.0 123
Earth Sciences		36.0 15	36.0 26	36.1 12	38.5 54				36.3 95	37.2 58	36.1 37
Veterinary Science				34.7 67					34.6 70	35.0 25	34.6 45
Engineering	41.2 68	38.0 121	39.9 216	38.0 249	41.0 503			40.0 13	40.0 1,002	40.0 772	40.0 230
Arch. & Bldg		39.2 10	37.5 33	28.0 99	33.0 104				32.0 239	34.0 133	30.0 106
Medicine		45.0 210	45.0 219						45.0 231	45.0 110	45.0 121
Paramedical St.	35.0 55	35.0 1,161	35.0 1,235	34.0 63	35.0 614	37.6 24	38.0 10	37.9 34	35.0 1,982	36.0 238	35.0 1,744
Dentistry		51.2 21	51.6 22	55.0 23					52.0 47	56.5 20	50.7 27
Pharmacy		29.3 67	29.3 69		25.0 158				26.0 237	25.0 70	26.0 167
Optometry					44.0 41				43.0 49	46.0 13	42.0 36
Art & Design			37.0 21		28.0 174	38.6 21		38.4 25	30.0 244	30.0 66	29.0 178
All Fields	37.0 555	36.0 2,439	36.0 3,167	35.0 1,799	34.9 5,202	38.0 1,598	36.0 199	38.0 1,797	35.5 12,343	37.0 4,243	35.0 8,100
Males	39.3 219	38.0 558	38.0 852	35.5 795	37.0 2,167	38.5 250	37.8 66	38.1 316	37.0 4,243		
Females	35.4 336	35.0 1,881	35.0 2,315	34.0 1,004	33.0 3,035	38.0 1,348	35.0 133	38.0 1,481	35.0 8,100		

* Empty cells indicate that there were no cases, or fewer than ten, in the data.

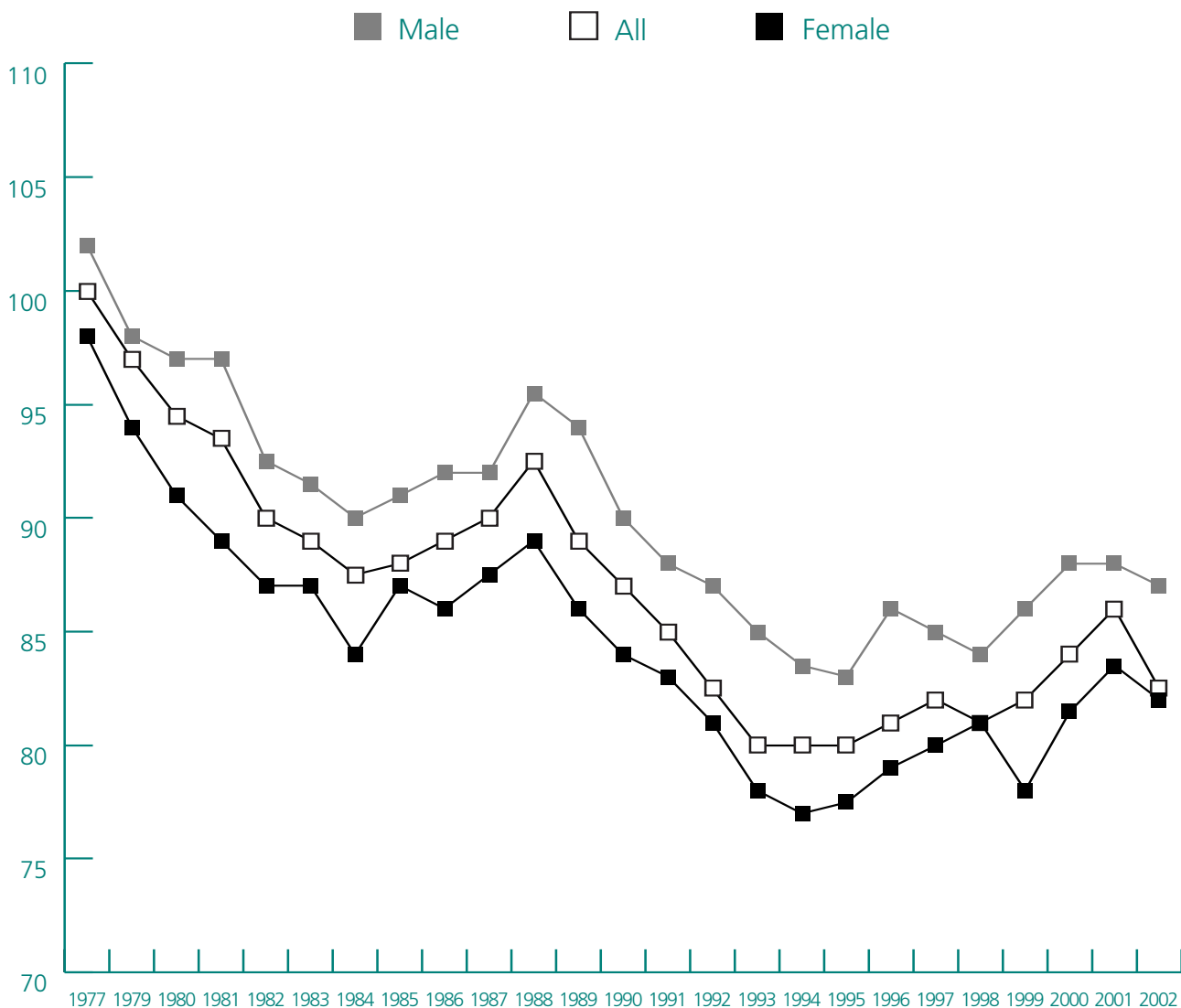
Graduate Starting Salaries

In 2002, the median graduate starting salary for bachelor degree graduates in their first full-time employment was \$35,500. This was 82.7 per cent of the annual rate of average

weekly earnings (\$42,900 at the time), which was down from 85.8 per cent in 2001 and 84.2 per cent in 2000.

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

Figure 2: Male, female and all graduates' median starting salaries relative to the annual rate of average weekly earnings, 1977-2002.



New male graduates earned \$37,000, which was 86.2 per cent of average earnings, down from 88.2 per cent last year, but up on 85.5 per cent in 1999 and 83.3 per cent in 1998. Salaries for females (\$35,000) were 81.6 per cent of average earnings down from 83.3 per cent in 2001 but up on 81.2 per cent in 2000 and 78.9 per cent in 1999.

In dollar terms, the starting salary for all graduates rose by \$500 (or 1.4 per cent). Salaries for males rose by \$1,000 (2.8 per cent) while for females they also rose by \$1,000 (2.9 per cent).

At \$52,000, dentistry graduates earned the highest median salary, which was up markedly from \$46,400 last year and from \$50,000 in the 2000 GDS. There are relatively few dentistry graduates, and this adds volatility to the annual figures.

The largest rises between 2001 and 2002 were for social sciences (up \$6,000 from \$32,800) and dentistry (up \$5,600 from \$46,400). The large rise in the former is an anomaly due to increased numbers in police studies being surveyed and figures this year are not strictly comparable with those for previous years.

For many fields of study there was a small, or negligible, difference between salaries for males and females. This was usually in favour of the male graduates. In one field only (pharmacy) was there a difference in favour of females. On the other hand, males earned markedly more than females in the fields of dentistry, architecture and building and optometry. Figures for optometry can be volatile due to small numbers of graduates and should be treated with caution in this context.

The overall salary for females was 94.6 per cent of males' earnings (94.4 per cent in 2001, 92.3 per cent in 2000 and 1999).

This figure is 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 and employment 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 five ranked fields in terms of starting salaries (listed in Tables 4 and 5; dentistry, medicine, optometry, engineering, and computer science) shows that they account for 32.3 per cent of male respondents but only 7.4 per cent of females.

Table 5: Fields of study ranked according to level of starting salary, 1998-2002.

	98	99	00	01	02
Dentistry	1	2	1	1	1
Medicine	2	1	2	2	2
Optometry	3	3	3	3	3
Engineering	=4	4	=5	=4	4
Computer Sci.	5	=5	=5	=4	5
Social Sciences	=13	=14	=15	=12	6
Education	7	=7	6	=6	7
Mathematics	8	6	4	5	=8
Law	=13	=11	12	=6	=8
Earth Sci.	=4	=5	7	7	9
Physical Sci.	=10	=7	10	=8	10
Social Work	9	9	8	=8	=11
Paramedical	=10	10	13	11	=11
Biological Sci.	=13	=11	=14	=12	12
Vet. Sci.	6	8	9	9	13
Accounting	=13	=12	=15	10	=14
Psychology	12	13	11	=12	=14
Econ., Bus.	11	=11	=14	13	=14
Humanities	14	=14	=15	14	=15
Agric. Sci	=13	=12	=15	=15	=15
Arch. & Bldg	15	=14	=14	=15	=15
Art & Design	16	15	16	=15	16
Pharmacy	17	16	17	16	17

Even when they graduate in the same field, differing employment options taken by males and females (for example, in terms of hours worked or the type of employer) can have an effect of salaries.

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, dentistry, medicine, optometry, engineering and computer science have maintained a high ranking in recent years (see Table 5).

The fields of architecture and pharmacy always have a relatively low ranking, due to the further training requirements these graduates must meet for professional registration. They go on to higher salaries in subsequent years.

Of note in 2002 is the big jump for social sciences due to the additional police studies responses.

There was \$26,000 difference between the top and bottom ranked fields. The middle

rankings were not so widely separated. For example there was only \$4,000 difference between the sixth and 12th ranked fields.

Graduate Satisfaction

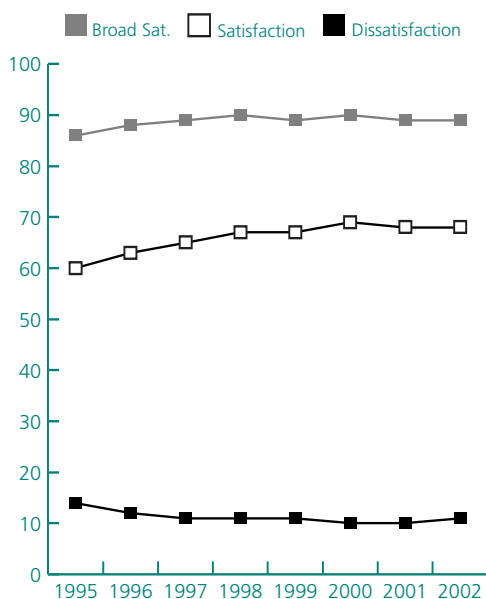
The *Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)* has been used to measure graduates' satisfaction with their study experiences since 1993.

Broad satisfaction remained at a high level, 89 per cent, in 2002 (see Figure 3). Dissatisfaction has been low over the same period.

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 five-point scale. This measure rose from 67 per cent in 1999 to 68 per cent in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Figure 3: Level of satisfaction with course, bachelor degree graduates, 1995-2002 (preliminary).



Further details about graduate destinations, starting salaries and the CEQ can be found in the forthcoming reports Graduate Destination Survey 2002, Graduate Starting Salaries, 2002, Postgrad 2002 and Course Experience Questionnaire, 2002.

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