

Graduate Careers Australia's (GCA) annual Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) is a study of the activities of new higher education graduates around four months after the completion of their qualifications. In the 2007 AGS, new graduates who

completed the requirements for awards in the calendar year 2006 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 preliminary data concerning the destinations of Australian resident bachelor degree graduates (figures for overseas residents are discussed in the full *Graduate Destinations, 2007* report, to be published in 2008). Overall, 62.8 per

cent of the Australian resident graduates who were surveyed responded to the AGS.

For further information on graduate employment, graduate destination statistics and GCA, visit www.graduatecareers.com.au.

Graduates in 2007:

Work, Study, Salaries and Course Satisfaction – Key Points

- Of bachelor degree graduates who were available for full-time employment in 2007 (see Table 1a);
 - 84.5 per cent were in full-time employment within four months of completing their degrees (up from 82.4 per cent last year);
 - 10.5 per cent were working on a part-time or casual basis while continuing to seek full-time employment (down from 12.2 per cent last year); and
 - 5.0 per cent were not working and still looking for full-time employment at the time of the survey (5.5 per cent last year).
- These are the strongest employment figures for new graduates since 1990. After figures fell from the previous highest point in 2000 and levelled out between 2003 and 2004, the AGS has shown a continued improvement in employment prospects for new graduates since 2005. For the last four years there has been a drop in the percentage of those not working while seeking full-time employment.
- One-fifth of respondents (20.0 per cent – down from 20.3 per cent last year), were undertaking further full-time study after completing their bachelor qualifications (see Table 1).
- The median annual starting salary for new Australian resident bachelor degree graduates aged less than 25 and in their first full-time employment in Australia was \$43,000 (\$40,800 last year). This was 80.1 per cent of the annual rate of male average weekly earnings (\$53,700 at the time of the AGS), up from 79.7 per cent in 2006 (see Table 3).
- Males started work on a median salary of \$45,000 (up from \$42,000 last year) and females earned \$42,000 (up from \$40,000 last year) (see Table 4).
- Overall satisfaction with courses as measured by the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) remains at a high level, with 89.8 per cent of graduates expressing broad satisfaction with their courses (see Figure 3).



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The results of the 2007 AGS show that, of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, 84.5 per cent were in full-time employment at the time of the survey, with a further 10.5 per cent working on a part-time or casual basis while continuing to seek full-time employment (see Table 1a).

An additional 5.0 per cent were not working and still looking for full-time employment four months after completing their qualifications.

These are the strongest employment figures for new graduates since 1990¹. After figures fell from the previous highest point in 2000 and levelled out between 2003 and 2004, the AGS has shown a continued improvement in employment prospects for new graduates since 2005. For the last four years there has been a drop in the percentage of those not working while seeking full-time employment (from 7.8 per cent in 2003).

Generally, between one-fifth and one-quarter of respondents elect to continue in further full-time study. In 2007, 20.0 per cent did so, down only slightly from 20.3 per cent in the previous year² (see Table 1). A fall in this figure is often associated with a strengthening labour market.

In addition to those available for full-time employment, a further 8.1 per cent of respondents were in part-time or casual work and were not seeking full-time employment (8.3 per cent in 2006), while 0.5 per cent were not working and seeking part-time or casual employment only (also 0.5 per cent in 2006). These figures have remained relatively stable in recent years.

Of those graduates seeking full-time employment, females (83.9 per cent — see Table 1a) were slightly less likely than males (85.6 per cent) to have found work by the time of the survey.

Females were less likely than males (4.6 per cent compared with 5.8 per cent) to have been without any work while seeking full-time employment and they were more likely (11.6 per cent) to have been working on a part-time or casual basis while seeking full-time employment than males (8.6 per cent). This difference (regularly seen in these figures) is likely to be a reflection of females' numerical dominance in fields of education such as teaching and nursing, in which there are greater opportunities for professional part-time employment.

Males (21.1 per cent) were slightly more likely than females (19.3 per cent) to have undertaken further full-time study in 2007 (see Table 1).

Of those seeking full-time employment, Table 1a and Figure 1 demonstrate that graduates were more likely to have been working on a part-time or casual basis than to have been without any work at all. There has been a notable difference between these two groups in recent years (seen in Figure 1).

Table 1a indicates that 12.3 per cent of those in full-time employment at the time of the survey already had that full-time position early (before 1 May) in their final year of study (12.9 per cent in 2006). As in previous years, males were more likely than females to have had their position before 1 May in their final year of study. This figure can vary across institution type, field of education and mode of attendance with many of these respondents having studied on a part-time basis.

Table 1b shows employment figures for various bachelor degree sub-groups. Figures for some groups need to be interpreted with caution because small numbers of respondents are involved. For example, graduates with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background have a slightly better employment figure than that for all graduates (86.4 per cent compared with 84.5 per cent) but with only 302 responses from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander graduates, the figure should be viewed with caution.

Graduates from a non-English speaking background seemed to be taking longer to find full-time employment compared with the total group of graduates (79.0 per cent compared with 84.5 per cent).

¹ See GCA's *Graduate Destinations, 2006* report, Table 5.

² These figures include those proceeding to honours years, other awards, and higher degrees.

Table 1: Activities of bachelor degree graduates, by sex, 2005-07 (%).

	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 any employment	Total %†	Total cases
Males							
2005	69.8	23.6	3.8	0.4	2.4	100	24,659
2006	68.8	21.2	5.5	0.3	4.3	100	24,904
2007	69.3	21.1	5.1	0.3	4.2	100	24,145
Females							
2005	66.1	21.8	8.0	0.8	3.4	100	41,056
2006	65.0	19.8	10.0	0.6	4.6	100	41,780
2007	65.5	19.3	9.8	0.6	4.8	100	40,876
Persons*							
2005	67.4	22.5	6.4	0.6	3.1	100	65,738
2006	66.4	20.3	8.3	0.5	4.5	100	66,702
2007	66.9	20.0	8.1	0.5	4.5	100	65,110

*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.

Table 1a: Breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, by sex, 2005-07 (%).

	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 AGS
Males							
2005	81.4	8.2	10.4	18.6	100	17,214	17.9
2006	83.0	6.4	10.6	17.0	100	17,119	16.0
2007	85.6	5.8	8.6	14.4	100	16,736	15.5
Females							
2005	80.5	6.1	13.4	19.5	100	27,121	12.2
2006	81.9	4.9	13.2	18.1	100	27,154	10.9
2007	83.9	4.6	11.6	16.1	100	26,733	10.3
Persons*							
2005	80.9	6.9	12.3	19.1	100	44,347	14.4
2006	82.4	5.5	12.2	17.6	100	44,286	12.9
2007	84.5	5.0	10.5	15.5	100	43,549	12.3

* 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.

** Percentages based on the group of bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment.

Table 1b: Breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, by various cohorts, 2007 (%)†.

	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
Total	84.5	5.0	10.5	15.5	100	43,549
Aged less than 25	83.9	4.9	11.1	16.1	100	28,056
Graduates with a disability	77.2	9.7	13.1	22.8	100	1,103
Graduates with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background	86.4	5.3	8.3	13.6	100	302
Graduates from a non-English speaking background	79.0	9.0	12.0	21.0	100	6,428
Studied mainly full-time	83.7	5.3	11.0	16.3	100	35,254
Studied mainly part-time	87.5	4.1	8.4	12.5	100	7,741
Studied mainly internally (on-campus)	84.0	5.2	10.8	16.0	100	36,200
Studied mainly externally (distance)	89.2	3.5	7.3	10.8	100	3,630
Studied mixed mode (internal & distance)	84.5	4.9	10.6	15.5	100	3,656
Surveyed as at October 31 2006	80.7	6.2	13.2	19.3	100	6,972
Surveyed as at April 30 2007	85.2	4.8	10.0	14.8	100	36,346
Double/combined degree	87.2	4.4	8.4	12.8	100	5,872
Single degree	84.0	5.2	10.8	16.0	100	37,285
Regional resident	83.9	4.9	11.2	16.1	100	10,560
Capital city resident	84.3	5.2	10.5	15.7	100	30,132

† Total % may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. Total cases of sub-groups in this table may not equal the overall total due to non-response to some questions.



As these figures can be affected by other variables, some caution is required when comparing these preliminary summary results. Those who had studied on a mainly part-time basis were more likely to have been in full-time employment at the time of the survey (87.5 per cent) than those who had studied mainly full-time (83.7 per cent). However, part-time students often have full-time employment while studying and this gives them an artificial 'advantage' in terms of such unadjusted employment figures (see earlier discussion regarding those who had a full-time position before 1 May in their final year of study). Similarly, graduates who studied externally (or by distance - usually part-time students) have seemingly better full-time employment figures than those who studied internally. These cohorts will be discussed in greater detail in the report *Graduate Destinations, 2007*.

Graduates with a combined or double degree have better employment figures (87.2 per cent) than those with a single degree (84.0 per cent). Further analysis examining these two groups in the forthcoming report will add context to the figures shown here.

Graduates were almost equally likely to be in full-time employment whether they gave a residential postcode in a capital city or regional area. As with the groups discussed above, further analysis in the forthcoming report will add useful perspective to the figures shown in Table 1b.

The annual survey is split into two rounds, with graduates who qualify in the first six months of the calendar year surveyed as at 31 October and those who qualify in the second six months of the calendar year surveyed in the following April. Table 1b suggests that October round respondents take longer to find full-time employment than their April round colleagues. Again, further analysis is needed in order to give some detail to this apparently anomalous difference. It could be the case that graduates of some fields of

education are more likely to be included in the October round or perhaps graduate employers are not as active late in the year when this smaller group of graduates comes onto the labour market.

Table 2 shows a breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment by field of education. Labour market factors peculiar to some fields of education 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 98.2 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. Similarly, pharmacy graduates (99.4 per cent in full-time employment) are required to undertake a 12 month period of supervised employment as pharmacists in order to gain professional registration.

Other fields with high proportions in full-time employment at the time of the survey were mining engineering (98.7 per cent), post-initial nursing education (98.0 per cent), civil engineering (97.8 per cent), initial nursing education (97.4 per cent) and dentistry (95.3 per cent).

Respondents in visual and performing arts, life sciences, social sciences, humanities and languages were the most likely to have been seeking full-time employment at the time of the AGS. The graduates of some fields of education can sometimes take longer to find full-time employment than those from other fields and this is reflected in the employment figures reported by GCA. Additionally, not all employment reported by graduates will necessarily be in the area in which the graduates trained.

For the graduates of some fields such as the visual and performing arts, employment opportunities in the occupations for which they trained can be limited and it might be the case that some prefer to work on a part-time basis or not at all while seeking relevant employment.

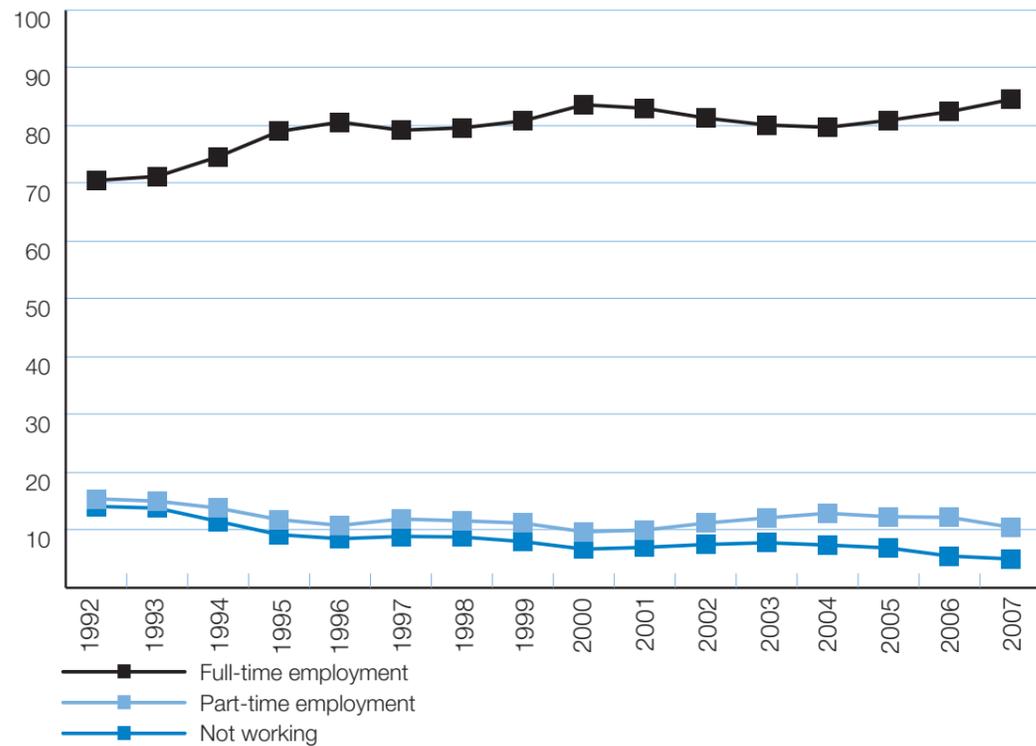


Figure 1: Bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment; percentage in full-time employment, percentage working part-time while seeking full-time employment, and percentage not working while seeking full-time employment (1992-2007).

Table 2: Breakdown of bachelor degree graduates available for full-time employment, by field of education, 2007 (%).

	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 AGS
Agriculture	78.5	8.0	13.6	21.5	100	803	14.9
Architecture	94.3	2.5	3.1	5.7	100	510	13.5
Building	91.2	3.0	5.8	8.8	100	434	24.5
Urban\Regional Planning	93.6	2.3	4.1	6.4	100	172	11.8
Humanities	75.1	8.3	16.6	24.9	100	3,620	14.0
Languages	75.9	8.6	15.5	24.1	100	631	9.4
Visual\Perform. Arts	66.3	10.6	23.1	33.7	100	1,378	5.8
Social Sciences	73.9	8.2	17.9	26.1	100	380	12.5
Psychology	78.9	5.7	15.4	21.1	100	1,265	12.3
Social Work	88.2	4.7	7.1	11.8	100	987	13.0
Business Studies	85.1	4.9	9.9	14.9	100	6,451	18.4
Accounting	86.4	5.4	8.2	13.6	100	3,159	23.8
Economics	87.5	6.1	6.3	12.5	100	489	8.4
Education - Initial	80.2	3.3	16.5	19.8	100	5,445	8.1
Education - Post\Other	89.3	3.6	7.1	10.7	100	56	38.0
Aero. Eng	92.1	3.9	3.9	7.9	100	178	6.1
Chemical Eng	86.2	6.2	7.6	13.8	100	225	2.6
Civil Eng	97.8	1.0	1.2	2.2	100	502	10.8
Electrical Eng	89.9	7.2	2.8	10.1	100	387	11.8
Electron/Comp Eng	86.9	7.2	5.9	13.1	100	540	12.2
Mechanical Eng	91.7	5.3	3.0	8.3	100	527	8.9
Mining Eng	98.7	0.0	1.3	1.3	100	78	3.9
Other Eng	91.8	4.0	4.2	8.2	100	473	9.9
Surveying	94.2	0.7	5.0	5.8	100	139	16.0
Dentistry	95.3	0.0	4.7	4.7	100	127	0.0
Health Other	85.0	4.1	10.8	15.0	100	1,785	13.8
Nursing (Initial)	97.4	0.8	1.8	2.6	100	2,759	3.3
Nursing (Post-initial)	98.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	100	306	3.7
Pharmacy	99.4	0.6	0.0	0.6	100	509	1.4
Medicine	98.2	0.7	1.1	1.8	100	1,018	0.9
Rehabilitation	93.9	1.9	4.3	6.1	100	1,189	0.4
Law	91.8	4.3	3.9	8.2	100	1,337	16.7
Law Other	87.1	3.9	8.9	12.9	100	583	25.6
Computer Science	83.0	7.9	9.1	17.0	100	2,010	19.4
Life Sciences	72.7	8.5	18.8	27.3	100	2,143	7.6
Mathematics	80.8	7.5	11.7	19.2	100	240	6.7
Chemistry	83.0	6.0	11.0	17.0	100	182	6.6
Physical Sciences	78.1	11.0	11.0	21.9	100	146	13.2
Geology	86.0	4.8	9.1	14.0	100	186	5.6
Veterinary Science	94.0	2.0	4.0	6.0	100	200	0.0
Total %	84.5	5.0	10.5	15.5	100	43,549	12.3
Total N	36,805	2,193	4,551	6,744		43,549	4,522

† Total % may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

* Percentages based on the group of bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment.



While the national graduate employment figure rose by 2.1 percentage points (from 82.4 per cent to 84.5 per cent) between 2006 and 2007, some fields of education experienced more notable improvements, including social work (up by 7.1 percentage points), psychology (up by 6.8 percentage points), and physical sciences, architecture, computer science and visual and performing arts (all up by more than four percentage points).

However, the percentage of respondents in full-time employment at the time of the AGS fell markedly in some fields between 2006 and 2007. In particular, mathematics fell by 4.9 percentage points after a notable rise between 2005 and 2006.

Respondents from visual and performing arts (23.1 per cent) were the most likely to have been working on a part-time or casual basis while seeking full-time employment.

Those from physical sciences (11.0 per cent), and visual and performing arts (10.6 per cent) were the most likely to have been without work while seeking full-time employment.

As discussed previously, many graduates already had their full-time employment early in their final year of study. Respondents from post-initial education (38.0 per cent), 'law, other'³ (25.6 per cent), building (24.5 per cent) and accounting (23.8 per cent) were the 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.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures for May 2006⁴ show that, in the population as a whole (aged 15-64), 2.4 per cent of bachelor degree graduates were unemployed (down from 2.8 per cent in 2005 and 2.9 per cent in 2004). The comparative figure for the total population (with or without non-school qualifications) was 5.0 per cent and 7.3 per cent for persons with no post-secondary qualifications. AGS employment figures differ from ABS figures in that the AGS separates those in part-time employment from those in full-time employment while the ABS includes those with any work at all in the 'employed' category.

³ Law-related courses and those beyond initial legal training
⁴ Education and Work, May 2006, 6227.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Graduate Starting Salaries

In 2007, the median annual starting salary for new Australian resident bachelor degree graduates aged less than 25 and in their first full-time employment in Australia was \$43,000 (up from \$40,800 last year). This was 80.1 per cent of the annual rate of male average weekly earnings (\$53,700 at the time of the AGS), up from 79.7 per cent in 2006 but down from 2005's 81.8 per cent and down markedly from 85.8 per cent in 2001 (see Table 3).

Average weekly earnings for males are used as a constant for year-to-year analysis of change, and not in a prescriptive manner. This is discussed in the full Graduate Salaries reports.

Table 3: Annual rate of male average weekly earnings (MAWE) and median starting salaries for bachelor degree graduates aged less than 25 and in first full-time employment (GSS), 1977-2007 (\$,000).

	MAWE \$	GSS \$	MAWE GSS %
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
2003	45.1	37.0	82.0
2004	46.6	38.0	81.6
2005	48.9	40.0	81.8
2006	51.2	40.8	79.7
2007	53.7	43.0	80.1

* 1978 data were excluded as figures were not compatible.

Table 4: Median starting salaries for bachelor degree graduates aged less than 25 and in first full-time employment, 2007 (\$,000). (Figures shown below salary figures indicate related number of responses.)*

	Aust. Govt	State Govt	Public Health	Total Govt	Prof. Pract.	Ind./ Com.	Scho- ols	Tert. Ed.	Total Ed.	Total	Males	Fe- males
Accounting	45.3	40.6		45.0	40.0	40.0			46.0	40.0	41.0	40.0
	28	10		52	544	425			11	1,056	488	568
Agricultural Science		41.9		41.7		40.0				40.0	40.0	41.0
		16		37		149				219	100	119
Architecture & Building				49.0	36.0	42.0				40.0	43.0	38.0
				49	153	156				362	174	188
Art & Design				42.3	29.4	32.0	42.0		44.3	35.0	36.0	34.0
				12	10	239	51		56	348	90	258
Biological Sciences	45.0	42.0	43.0	42.5	45.3	40.0	45.0	44.8	45.0	41.0	41.0	41.0
	15	28	53	117	44	379	49	50	99	711	231	480
Computer Science	47.7	44.1		46.1	45.0	42.0	45.0	45.5	45.0	43.2	43.0	45.0
	42	12		79	36	453	18	10	28	623	491	132
Dentistry			54.0	58.0	74.0					68.0	67.5	68.0
			21	25	19					47	18	29
Earth Sciences				46.1	50.0	53.0				50.0	51.5	47.0
				19	17	96				138	89	49
Economics, Business	45.5	42.7	40.0	45.0	41.0	40.0	39.0	42.0	41.0	40.0	42.0	40.0
	119	55	15	232	256	1,732	29	32	61	2,458	1,012	1,446
Education		43.0		43.0		36.2	46.0		46.0	46.0	46.0	46.0
		18		29		56	1,274		1,280	1,414	259	1,155
Engineering	49.5	47.8		48.3	50.0	50.0			46.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
	63	24		116	429	734			13	1,305	1,054	251
Humanities	45.3	42.0	45.0	44.0	42.9	35.0	46.0	43.5	45.1	38.0	40.0	37.9
	77	59	11	193	74	707	81	34	115	1,205	260	945
Law	45.3	43.9		45.0	45.0	45.0				45.0	45.0	44.0
	46	18		104	282	97				501	165	336
Mathematics				48.7	46.9	46.9	46.1		45.2	46.0	46.0	46.1
				11	14	48	15		17	98	53	45
Medicine			52.0	52.0		36.0				51.0	53.0	50.0
			280	281		21				311	120	191
Optometry					59.0	60.0				56.5		55.0
					12	24				42		33
Paramedical Studies	44.5	46.7	43.0	43.0	45.0	42.0	43.5	43.0	43.0	43.0	45.0	43.0
	14	25	1,414	1,475	181	536	26	24	50	2,364	317	2,047
Pharmacy (pre-reg)			42.6	42.6		32.0				34.0	34.7	33.5
			81	83		222				309	106	203
Physical Sciences	50.0			48.5		41.1			46.0	42.9	44.0	41.0
	11			16		74			15	112	67	45
Psychology	45.5	44.7	44.5	45.0	36.3	40.0	46.1	46.0	46.1	42.0	43.3	42.0
	26	23	26	87	22	175	21	15	36	393	70	323
Social Sciences		38.0		42.8		36.0	45.0		45.0	39.4	42.0	38.0
		15		61		90	14		16	198	47	151
Social Work		44.0	45.0	45.0		39.5				44.0	45.0	44.0
		14	47	79		18				207	14	193
Veterinary Science					40.0					40.0	40.0	40.0
					80					88	20	68
All Fields	46.1	43.0	44.0	44.0	43.0	40.0	46.0	44.0	46.0	43.0	45.0	42.0
	494	339	1,984	3,164	2,191	6,437	1,604	213	1,817	14,509	5,254	9,255
Males	48.0	45.0	46.0	46.5	45.0	42.5	46.0	45.0	46.0	45.0		
	225	99	327	785	1,050	2,833	306	68	374	5,254		
Females	45.3	42.8	43.2	43.7	41.0	39.0	46.0	43.5	46.0	42.0		
	269	240	1,657	2,379	1,141	3,604	1,298	145	1,443	9,255		

* Salaries based on fewer than 10 cases not shown. 'Total Government', 'Total Education' and 'Total' columns include cases not shown in related constituent columns.



Graduate starting salaries as a percentage of male average weekly earnings remain below levels experienced during the 1970s and 1980s (see Table 3 and Figure 2).

In 2007, new male graduates earned \$45,000, which was 83.8 per cent of male average earnings, up from 82.0 per cent in 2006 and 81.8 per cent in 2005 but still down notably from a recent high point of 88.2 per cent in 2001. Salaries for females (\$42,000) were 78.2 per cent of average earnings. This relativity was virtually unchanged from 2006 (78.1 per cent of average earnings) and down from 79.8 per cent in 2005 and from a recent high of 83.3 per cent in 2001.

In dollar terms, the 2007 starting salary for all graduates rose by \$2,200 from \$40,800 (or 5.4 per cent) in 2006. Salaries for males rose by \$3,000 from \$42,000 (or 7.1 per cent) while for females they increased by \$2,000 from \$40,000 (or 5.0 per cent).

At \$68,000, the starting salary for dentistry graduates was unchanged from 2006, but remained the highest for this group of graduates (see Table 4). They were followed by graduates from optometry (\$56,500) and medicine (\$51,000).

Graduates in a number of fields must meet additional training requirements in order to gain professional registration and this can sometimes result in relatively low starting salaries. As an example, pharmacy graduates (pre-registration) earned low starting salaries (\$34,000) due to the further on-the-job training requirements they must meet for professional registration. Additional research⁵ has shown that their salaries grow very strongly upon registration.

Graduates in the art and design field earned \$35,000, but these graduates can take longer to find relevant full-time employment in areas in which they were trained, due to the small number of available positions.

The largest rises between 2006 and 2007 were for optometry (up \$5,300 from \$51,200), earth sciences (up \$5,000 from \$45,000) and engineering (up \$4,000 from \$46,000).

Between 1999 and 2005, salaries for females as a percentage of males' salaries grew from 92.3 per cent to 97.5 per cent. This trend ended in 2006 when the overall salary for females was 95.2 per cent of males' earnings and in 2007 this relativity fell to 93.3 per cent.

Females earned slightly higher starting salaries than males in computer science (104.7 per cent of males' salaries) and agricultural science (102.5 per cent). Their earnings were roughly the equivalent of their male colleagues' salaries in dentistry, mathematics, biological sciences, education, engineering and veterinary science.

However, females earned markedly less than males in the fields of architecture and building (88.4 per cent of males' earnings), social sciences (90.5 per cent), and earth sciences (91.3 per cent). Females also earned less than 95 per cent of males' salaries in the fields of physical sciences, medicine, art and design and humanities.

Over the years, GCA research has suggested that differences in starting salaries between males and females can be partly explained in terms of the differing enrolment profiles of male and female students. Male respondents have tended to be in the fields of education more highly ranked according to starting salary while females have tended to come from the middle ranked fields. Salary increases in recent years in female dominated fields such as education and paramedical studies (which includes nurses) have occasionally resulted in changes to the rankings of such fields. This has seen higher paid female dominated fields balancing the higher paid male dominated fields such as engineering and computer science to bring a closer level of parity between salaries for males and females.

An examination of the fields in the top five ranks in terms of starting salaries (see Tables 4 and 5; dentistry, optometry, medicine, earth sciences, engineering, education and mathematics) shows that this is not the case for 2007 as only 18.9 per cent of female respondents are within these fields, as opposed to 30.5 per cent of males. The fields occupying ranks six to ten (which include female dominated paramedical studies) account for 29.7 per cent of females and 20.1 per cent of males.

This obviously does not represent anything but a surface analysis and there are many factors at work in these differences. When males and females have studied in the same field, different factors in terms of employment, such as occupation, type of employer or the hours worked, can also have an effect on earnings. Additionally, some fields of education used in this analysis are aggregations of smaller, related, but relatively heterogeneous fields, and this can lead to earnings differences within the aggregated field.

Most fields of education have shown a high degree of consistency over the years covered by AGS data. For example, when ranked in terms of starting salaries in 2007, the top four fields (dentistry, optometry, medicine and engineering) have essentially remained unchanged since 2003 (see Table 5).

Reflecting the current strength of mining and related industries, the earth sciences field has moved from eighth rank in 2003 to equal fourth this year. Between 2006 and 2007, mathematics moved from seventh to equal fifth and law moved from equal eighth to sixth.

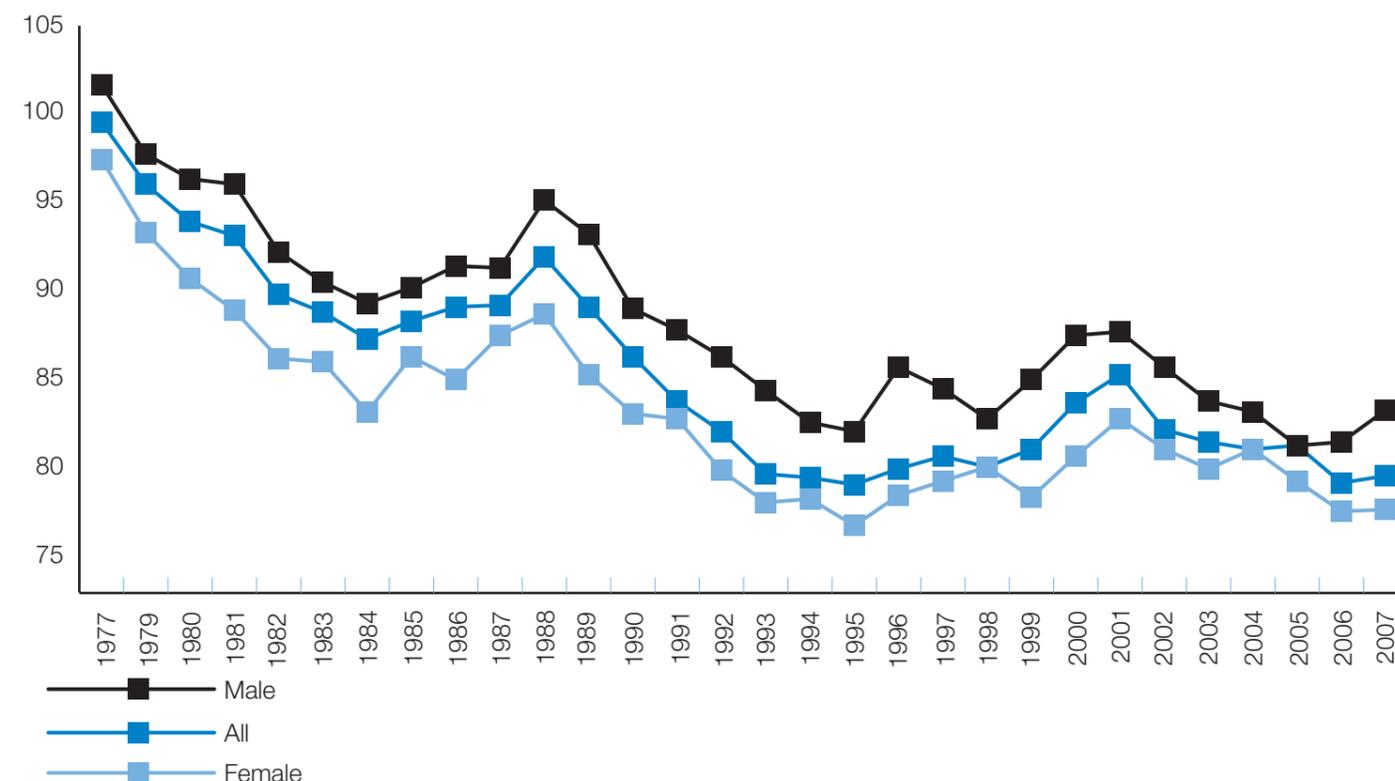


Figure 2: Male, female and all graduates' median starting salaries relative to the annual rate of male average weekly earnings, 1977-2007.

Table 5: Fields of education ranked according to level of starting salary, 2003-07 (= denotes equal ranking).

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Dentistry	1	1	1	1	1
Optometry	2	=2	2	2	2
Medicine	3	=2	3	3	3
Earth Sciences	=8	6	=7	5	=4
Engineering	4	3	4	4	=4
Education	5	=4	5	6	=5
Mathematics	7	=4	6	7	=5
Law	=8	5	=7	=8	6
Social Work	10	8	=7	=8	7
Computer Science	9	=7	8	=8	8
Paramedical Studies	11	=7	=7	9	9
Physical Sciences	6	=9	9	=10	10
Psychology	=13	=9	10	=10	11
Biological Sciences	=13	=10	=11	=10	12
Accounting	=14	=11	14	=14	=13
Agricultural Science	16	=11	=13	11	=13
Architecture & Building	=15	12	=13	12	=13
Economics, Business	=13	=11	12	=10	=13
Veterinary Science	12	=10	=11	13	=13
Social Sciences	=14	13	15	15	14
Humanities	=15	=11	16	=14	15
Art & Design	17	14	17	16	16
Pharmacy (pre-reg)	18	15	18	17	17

⁵ Conducted by GCA for the Committee of Heads of Schools of Pharmacy in Australia and New Zealand

Graduate Satisfaction

The Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) has been in use since 1993 and is an instrument developed to measure graduates' satisfaction with their study experiences. Broad satisfaction remained at a high level, 89.8 per cent (preliminary), in 2007 (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 has moved from 67 per cent in 1999 to 70.9 per cent in 2007.

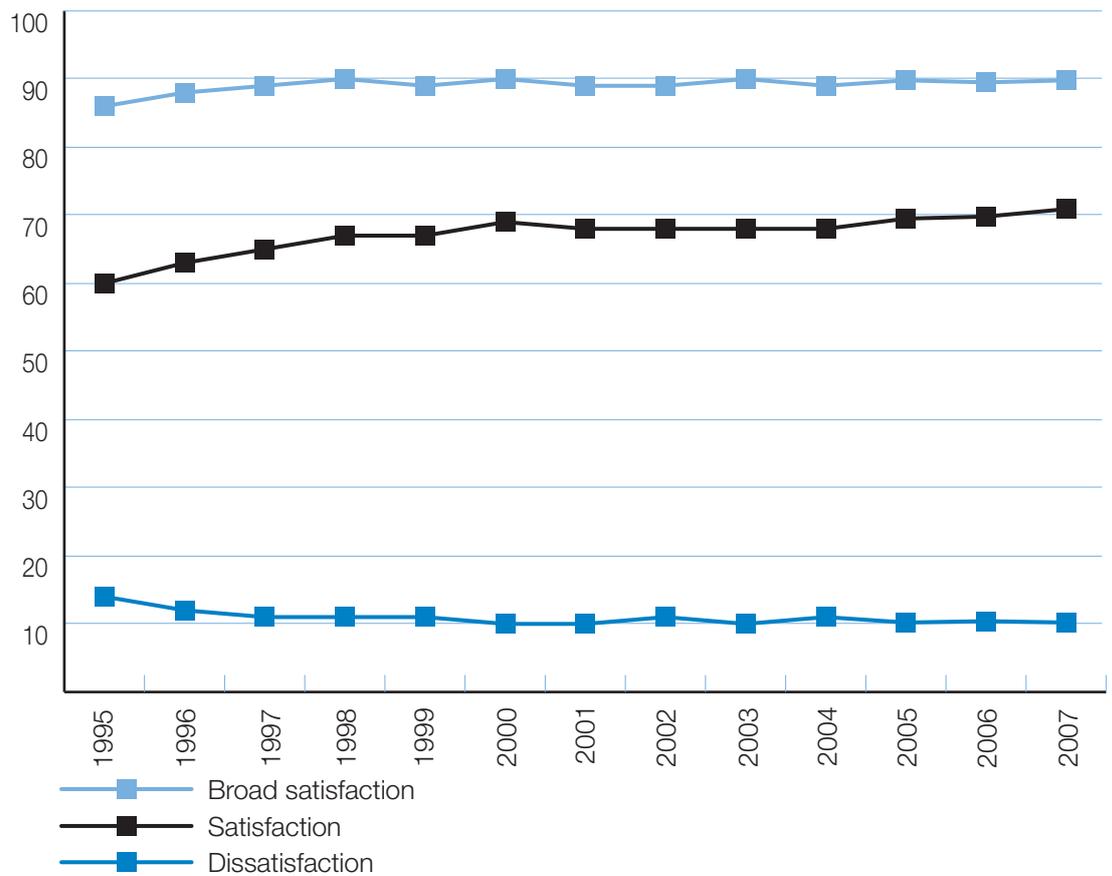


Figure 3: Levels of satisfaction with course, bachelor degree graduates, 1995-2007 (preliminary).