

GradStats

November 2017

EMPLOYMENT AND SALARY OUTCOMES OF HIGHER EDUCATION GRADUATES FROM 2016

Coming
soon: 2017
survey
results
update

Graduate Careers Australia's (GCA) annual Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) was a study of the activities of new higher education graduates around four months after the completion of their qualifications. Every year since 1976, new graduates who completed the requirements for awards in the preceding year were surveyed regarding their major activities, including labour market engagement, further full-time study, or their unavailability for work or study.

With the cessation of Government funding, the AGS concluded after the 2015 survey, with the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT – www.qilt.edu.au) suite of surveys replacing it.

Over the years, *GradStats*¹ has given a summary of national AGS data concerning the destinations of Australian resident bachelor degree graduates. This edition will endeavour to provide a summary link between the last AGS figures and the first related QILT results. Figures for 2016 quoted in this publication largely come from the QILT Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) 2016 National Report (which can be downloaded from www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/graduate-employment).

It must be noted that there are a number of ways in which QILT departs from AGS methods and data analysis, and comparisons of results between the two surveys need to be read with that in mind. The 2016 GOS report notes that

The 2016 GOS was primarily conducted as a national online survey among 96 higher education institutions [and a] ... total of 104,208 valid survey responses were collected across all study levels, representing a response rate of 39.7 per cent.

¹ Previous editions of *GradStats* can be downloaded from www.graduatecareers.com.au/Research/ResearchReports

Overview

The 2016 GOS report saw a slight improvement in the short-term employment prospects of new graduates compared with the 2015 AGS report.

- 70.9 per cent were in full-time employment** at the time of the GOS compared with 68.8 per cent at the time of the 2015 AGS (see Fig. 1). This is up from 68.1 per cent in the 2014 AGS but down from 71.3 per cent in 2013 (see Fig. 2)
- The full-time employment figure for males (see Fig. 1) was 70.1 per cent in 2016 (68.4 per cent in 2015) while for females it was 71.5 per cent (69.1 per cent in 2015).
- The overall employment rate for undergraduates was 86.4 per cent in 2016.** This refers to graduates who had any employment (whether full or part time – see Fig. 1).
- Middle- to longer-term employment prospects** for undergraduates remain strong. QILT's follow-up longitudinal GOS (GOS-L) showed that three years after reporting a full-time employment rate of 70.9 per cent in 2013, **by 2016 this had grown to 88.4 per cent.** GCA's Beyond Graduation Survey (BGS) showed similar improvements in employment figures three years out.
- Bachelor degree graduates in the wider Australian workforce** (aged 15-74) had (at the time of the 2016 GOS) an **unemployment rate of just 3.1 per cent** compared with an overall rate of 5.6 per cent and 8.2 per cent for those with no post-school qualifications (see Fig. 3).
- The **median annual salary** for new Australian resident bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment in Australia was **\$57,900 in 2016**, up from \$54,000 in 2015 (see Table 3).
- Just over one-fifth of respondents** (21.6 per cent, up from 19.7 per cent in 2015), were **undertaking further full-time study** (see Fig. 5).
- Overall satisfaction with courses** as measured by the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) remains at an elevated level, with **80.6 per cent of graduates** expressing satisfaction with their courses (see Fig. 6).
- Just over half of the **graduates who found full-time employment** in 2014 or 2015 learned of their job first through one of three strategies (see Table 4): searching **advertisements on the internet** (26.9 per cent), talking to **family or friends** (14.2 per cent) and visiting university or college **careers services** (11.7 per cent).
- Overall, **84 per cent of employers were highly satisfied** with the performance of their new recruits.

Full-time employment

The results of the 2016 GOS show that 70.9 per cent of all new bachelor degree graduates seeking full-time employment had found a position by the time of the survey – four months after course completion. This was up slightly from the comparable figure of 68.8 per cent in the 2015 AGS (see Figure 1).

The 2016 GOS report notes (p.3) that

Notwithstanding changes in survey methodology, the slight increase in the full-time employment rate would appear consistent with the modest improvement in the overall labour market over the period.

Of those graduates available for full-time employment, similar percentages of males and females (70.1 per cent and 71.5 per cent respectively - see Figures 2 and 3) had found a full-time position by the time of the 2016 survey. The comparative figures from the 2015 AGS were 68.4 and 69.1 per cent.

The GOS report also calculates an overall employment rate. This refers to the percentage of all employed graduates (full-time plus part-time or casual employment), as a proportion of those available for any employment. In 2016, the overall employment rate for all graduates was 86.4 per cent (83.3 per cent for males and 88.1 per cent for females – see Figure 1).

AGS figures for years prior to 2016 are also presented in Figures 1 and 2, but the GOS report notes that comparisons might be affected by the change in methodology ensuing from the move from the AGS to the GOS.

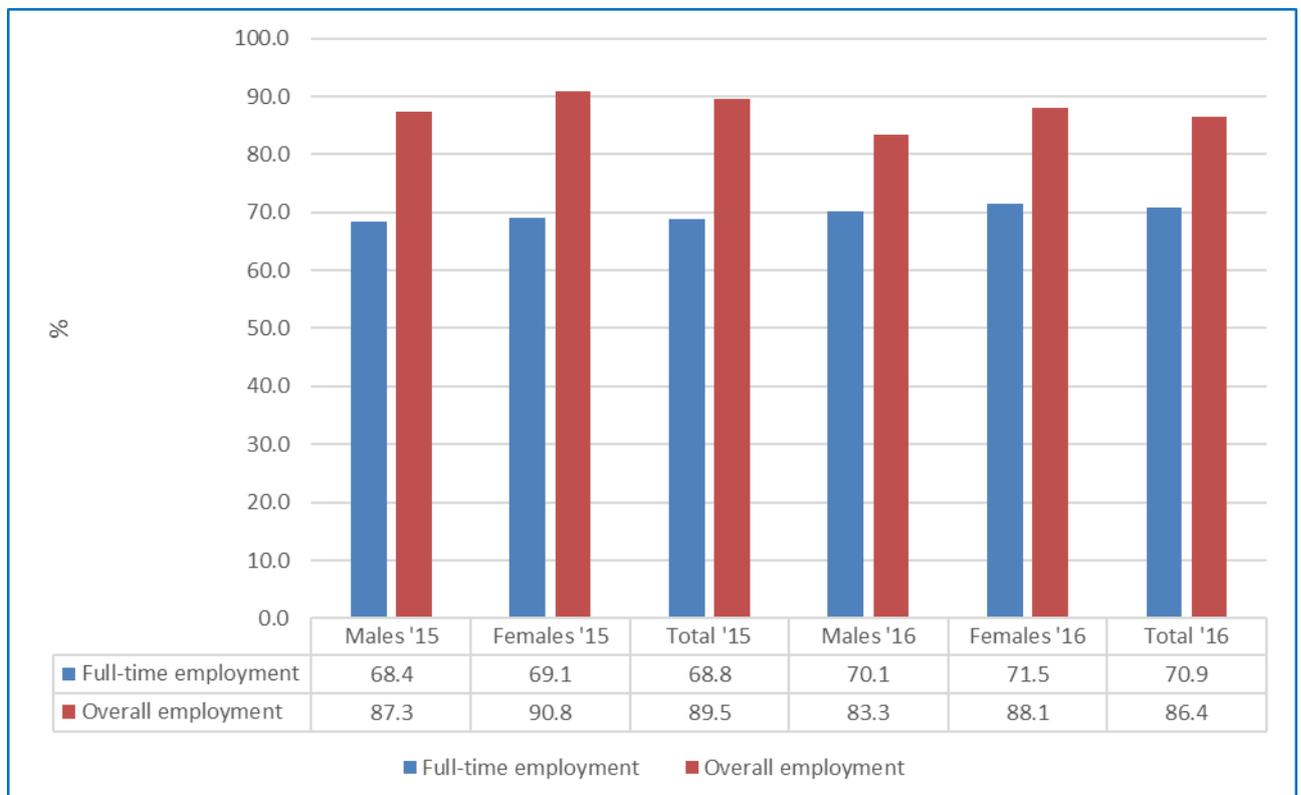


Figure 1: Undergraduates in employment, by sex, 2015 and 2016 (%)

Sources: 2015 Australian Graduate Survey and 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey

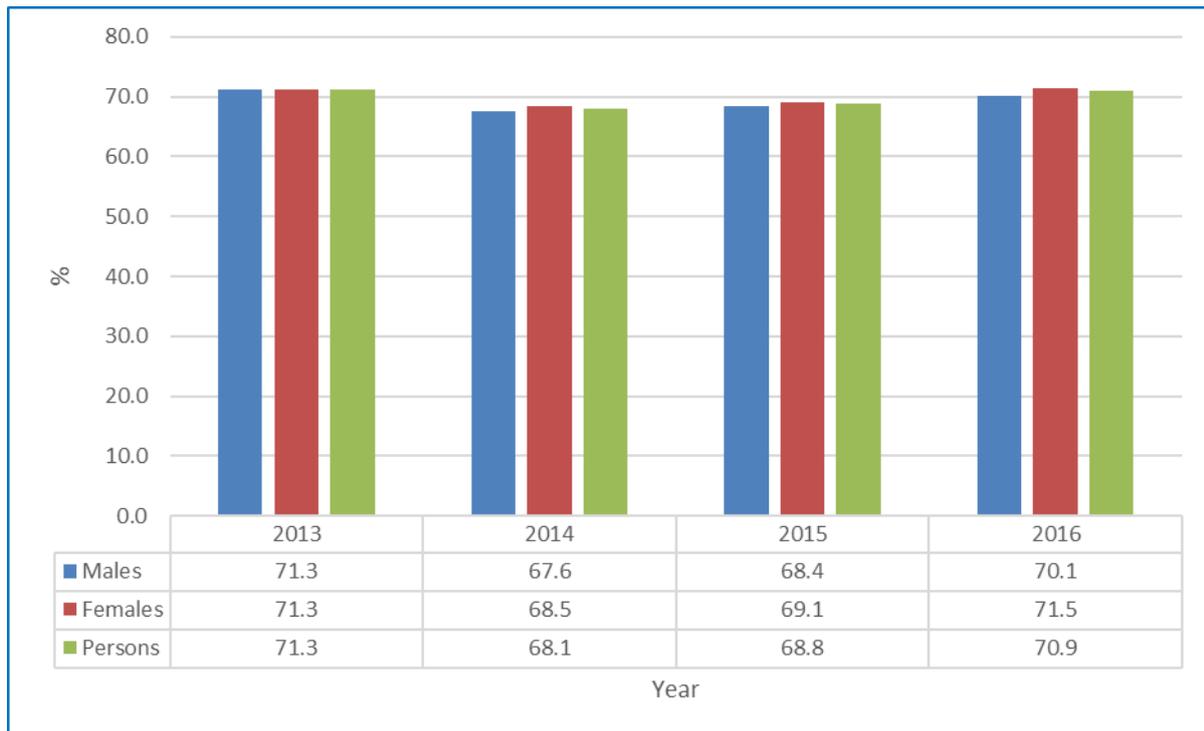


Figure 2: Undergraduates in full-time employment, by sex, 2013-16 (%)

Sources: 2013-15 Australian Graduate Survey and 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey

Long-term full-time employment prospects

Of additional note regarding the employment prospects of new graduates are longer-term figures, which remain strong.

QILT's follow-up longitudinal GOS (GOS-L) showed that after a full-time employment rate of 70.9 per cent² was found in the 2013 AGS data, three years later in 2016 this had grown to 88.4 per cent. GCA's Beyond Graduation Survey (BGS³) showed similar improvements in employment figures three years out.

And looking at the wider population, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures for May 2016 show that, in the general labour force (aged 15-74), just 3.1 per cent of bachelor degree graduates were unemployed (see Figure 3). The comparative figure for those with a postgraduate degree was 3.4 per cent, and for those with a graduate or postgraduate diploma it was 3.2 per cent.

For the total population (with or without non-school qualifications), the unemployment rate was 5.6 per cent and 8.2 per cent for persons with no post-secondary qualifications. Longer-term prospects for those with higher education qualifications remain very positive.

² This was re-calculated by QILT for the GOS-L report. The 2013 AGS reported 71.3 per cent, as shown in Figure 2 in this document.

³ Download the BGS report from: <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/research/surveys/beyondgraduationsurvey/>

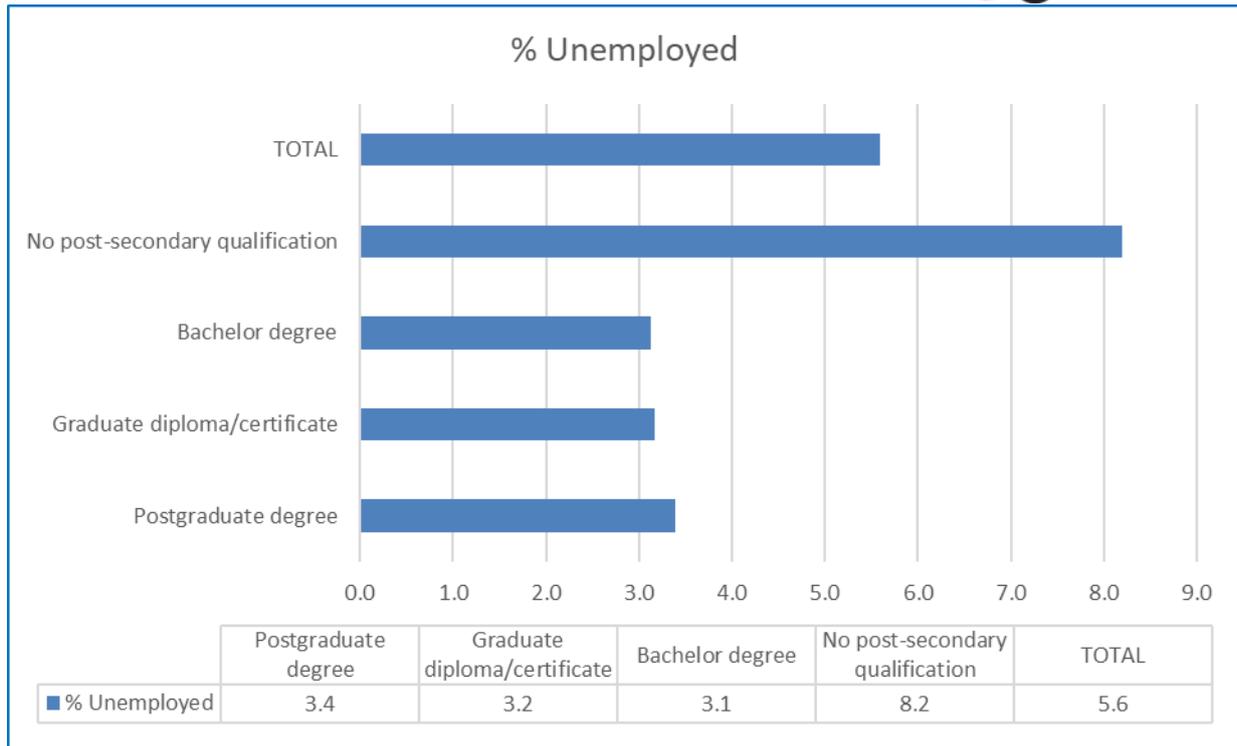


Figure 3: Unemployment rates by level of educational attainment, May 2016, Australian labour force aged 15-74

Source: *Education and Work, Australia, May 2016*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, publication 6227.0, released 29 November 2016 (Table 10)

Part-time employment

As in the general population, part-time employment is an important option for some new graduates, with females more likely to be in such. The 2016 GOS report notes that 38.4 per cent of all employed new graduates were working on a part-time basis (41.1 per cent for females and 32.8 per cent for males – see Figure 4).

Of those employed at the time of the 2016 GOS, 20.5 per cent were working part time and seeking more hours. This is defined as ‘involuntary’ part-time work, as those involved would prefer to be employed for more hours. Females were also more likely than males to be ‘involuntary’ part-timers (21.4 per cent and 18.7 per cent respectively).

A further 14.1 per cent were in part-time work and were described as ‘voluntary’ part-timers insofar as they were not seeking additional hours. As with ‘involuntary’ part-time work, females were more likely than males to be in ‘voluntary’ part-time employment (16.0 per cent and 10.5 per cent respectively).

While reliable comparisons with the old AGS categories are not possible based on the published data, this ‘voluntary’ category would broadly coincide with the ‘working part-time, not seeking full-time’ AGS category while the ‘involuntary’ group would seem to coincide with those ‘working part-time, and seeking full-time’.

In the 2016 GOS (Table 5 in that report), graduates from the fields of

- creative arts,
- psychology,
- agriculture and environmental studies,
- tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation,
- communications,
- humanities, culture and social sciences and
- science and mathematics

were more than five percentage points above the overall average of 20.5 per cent of employed graduates in ‘involuntary’ part-time positions and thus seeking more hours.

Table 6 in that report reveals that slightly more than half of ‘involuntary’ part-time employment (52.3 per cent) was based on labour market factors, and this figure was made up largely of 19.1 per cent who had not been able to find a suitable job in their area of expertise and 17.1 per cent who were unable to find a job with a suitable number of hours.

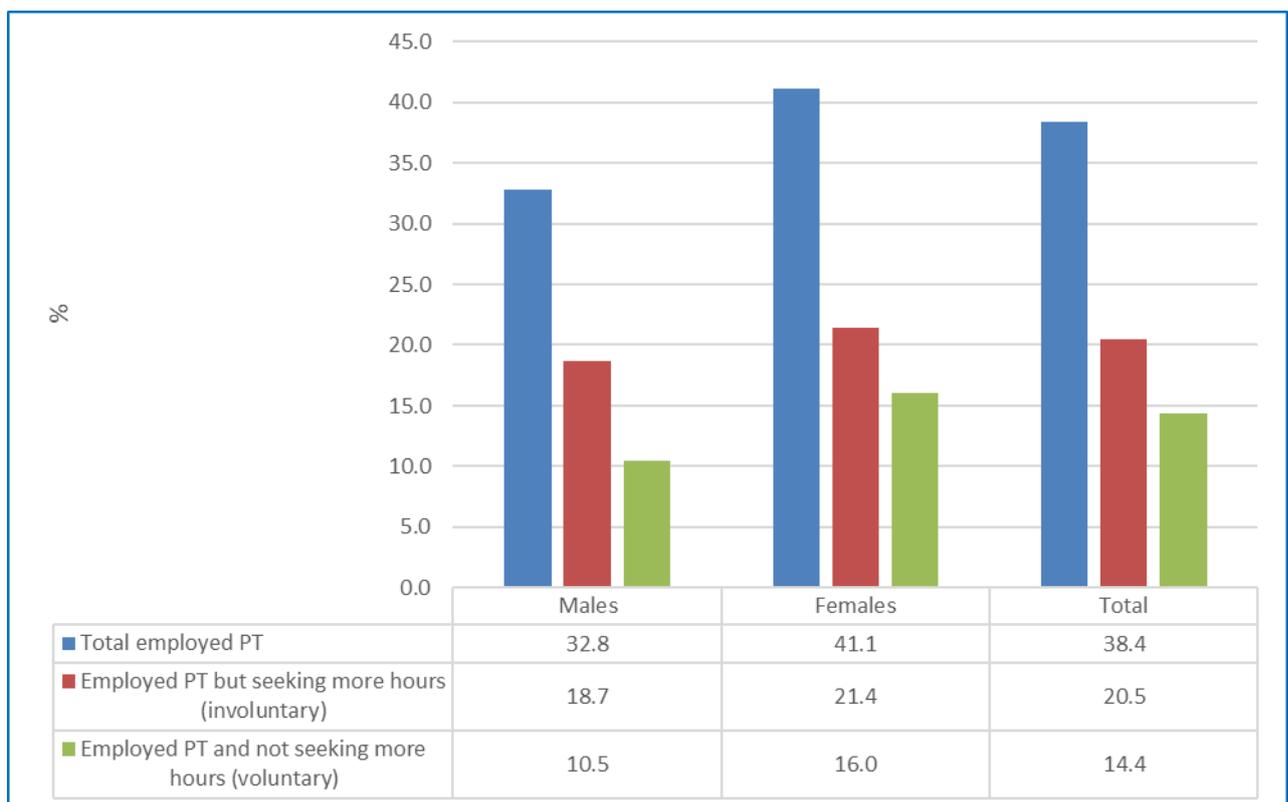


Figure 4: Undergraduates in part-time employment, by sex, 2016 (%)

Source: 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey

Further full-time study

The proportion of graduates continuing in further full-time study in 2016 was 21.6 per cent, up slightly from 19.7 per cent in 2015 (see Figure 5). Historically, between one-fifth and one-quarter of respondents elect to continue in further full-time study⁴ with the figures generally falling when labour market prospects are stronger.

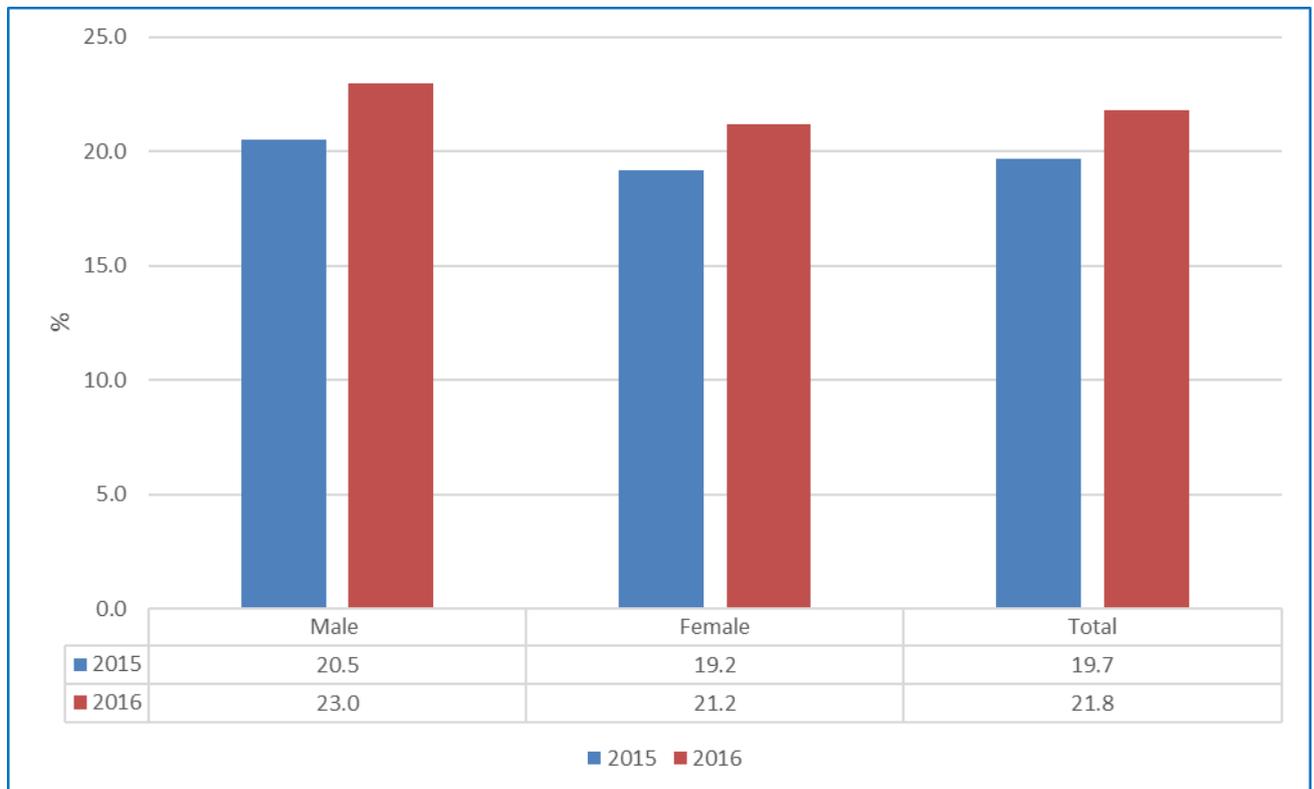


Figure 5: Undergraduates going into further full-time study, by sex, 2015-16 (%)

Sources: 2015 Australian Graduate Survey and 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey

⁴ See related discussion in *Graduate Destinations* reports available from www.graduatecareers.com.au/Research/ResearchReports/GraduateDestinations

Employment and equity groups

As with the AGS, the GOS examines employment outcomes for graduates from various sub-groups and equity groups (see Table 1).

As a general rule, some caution is required when comparing results for such groups as they can be affected by other variables not taken into account here. For example, the 2016 GOS report shows that those who had studied externally were notably more likely to have been in full-time employment at the time of the survey (81.0 per cent) than those who had studied mainly internally (69.7 per cent). However, external students are often also part-time students and can have full-time employment while studying and this gives them an artificial ‘advantage’ in terms of such unadjusted employment figures.

The relatively positive employment figures for indigenous graduates (74.5 per cent compared with 70.9 per cent) should be interpreted with a little caution because a rather small number of respondents (814) are involved; however, the response numbers were representative of the survey sample and it is worth noting that most editions of *GradStats* have observed similar figures over the years.

The figures in Table 1 indicate that graduates from a non-English speaking background (55.0 per cent) were taking longer to find full-time employment compared with graduates from an English-speaking background (71.5 per cent), as were those who identified as having a disability (60.9 per cent *cf.* 71.5 per cent).

Older graduates (over 30) were also more likely to be in full-time employment (73.2 per cent) than their younger colleagues (70.5 per cent).

	Full-time employment (%)		Overall employment (%)	
	2015	2016	2015	2016
Age				
30 years or under	68.1	70.5	89.8	86.4
Over 30 years	72.6	73.2	88.1	86.1
Indigenous status				
Indigenous	80.6	74.5	90.6	86.0
Non-Indigenous	68.8	70.9	89.5	86.4
Home language				
English	70.3	71.5	90.7	86.8
Language other than English	60.6	55.0	83.0	73.6
Disability				
Reported disability	56.2	60.9	77.5	79.5
No disability	69.2	71.5	89.9	86.8
Mode of study				
Internal and mixed mode	67.5	69.7	89.2	85.8
External	81.9	81.0	92.2	91.0
Total	68.8	70.9	89.5	86.4
<i>Sources: 2015 Australian Graduate Survey and 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey</i>				

Table 1: undergraduate employment outcomes for various sub-groups and equity groups, 2015-2016 (%)

	Full-time employment (%)		Overall employment (%)	
	2015	2016	2015	2016
Age				
30 years or under	68.1	70.5	89.8	86.4
Over 30 years	72.6	73.2	88.1	86.1
Indigenous status				
Indigenous	80.6	74.5	90.6	86.0
Non-Indigenous	68.8	70.9	89.5	86.4
Home language				
English	70.3	71.5	90.7	86.8
Language other than English	60.6	55.0	83.0	73.6
Disability				
Reported disability	56.2	60.9	77.5	79.5
No disability	69.2	71.5	89.9	86.8
Mode of study				
Internal and mixed mode	67.5	69.7	89.2	85.8
External	81.9	81.0	92.2	91.0
Total	68.8	70.9	89.5	86.4

Employment by study area

The 2016 GOS report (Table 3 in that report, Table 2 in this document) shows the full-time and overall employment figures for each of 21 QILT-based fields of study with 2015 AGS figures adapted into the QILT fields. Fields which achieved a full-time employment rate of 80 per cent or better in 2016 included

- teacher education,
- dentistry,
- nursing,
- rehabilitation,
- veterinary science,
- pharmacy and
- medicine.

Most of these fields were also strong in the 2015 figures. However, teacher education showed a notable improvement, moving from 71.7 per cent full-time employment in 2015 to 80.3 per cent in 2016.

Table 2: Undergraduate employment outcomes by field of study, 2015-2016 (%) **

Study area	Full-time employment		Total employment	
	2015	2016	2015	2016
Agriculture and environmental studies	58.1	59.8	84.0	84.2
Architecture and built environment	75.4	75.2	89.3	85.8
Business and management	72.7	75.5	90.1	87.1
Communications	53.1	60.7	85.4	83.0
Computing and information systems	67.0	72.5	83.2	82.5
Creative arts	47.0	55.0	85.4	81.4
Dentistry	86.9	82.3	95.6	94.1
Engineering	73.9	76.4	85.7	83.9
Health services and support	67.9	70.9	91.9	90.1
Humanities, culture and social sciences	59.3	61.8	86.6	83.5
Law and paralegal studies	73.0	72.6	89.8	84.3
Medicine	96.3	98.2	98.7	97.4
Nursing	78.7	82.5	95.1	93.3
Pharmacy	95.6	96.3	97.6	96.0
Psychology	55.4	60.8	86.4	85.0
Rehabilitation	87.4	84.0	96.1	95.2
Science and mathematics	49.5	61.0	82.1	81.5
Social work	71.2	66.7	87.7	85.5
Teacher education	71.7	80.3	94.4	94.3
Tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation	57.8	68.1	92.4	92.5
Veterinary science	84.9	89.8	93.0	89.4
All study areas*	68.8	70.9	89.5	86.4
<i>*For 2016, where a graduate completes combined degrees across two study areas, their outcomes are included in both study areas. 'All study areas' figures count each graduate once only.</i>				
<i>** 2015 figures from the 2015 Australian Graduate Survey, 2016 figures from the 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey</i>				

The fields of creative arts and agriculture and environmental studies returned full-time employment figures lower than 60 per cent in 2016. There are important factors to note regarding these figures. Creative arts graduates often find themselves in unrelated part-time employment while practising their art or craft on a part-time basis. Simply put, there are few full-time positions for new creative arts graduates in their fields and sometimes a degree of entrepreneurship and what some might define as self-employment, is required in terms of establishing their own careers.

Moreover, it is worth noting that the graduates of some fields of study can often take longer to find full-time employment than those from other fields, and this slower labour market uptake of the graduates of such fields reflects more the state of the labour market, and not necessarily the quality of the graduates or their study choices. Further, not all employment reported by graduates will necessarily be in the area in which the graduate trained, as opportunities in relevant occupations 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.

Additionally, within the field of study aggregations used in Table 2, there can be notable variation in terms of the proportions in and seeking full-time employment at the more detailed field of education level. For example, while the proportion of agriculture and environmental studies graduates in full-time work was relatively low in 2016,

closer examination of the detailed fields that make up the overall group can show marked differences in outcomes. In previous AGS reports, it was shown that while employment figures for the aggregated field were low, the figures for some component fields such as agricultural science and agribusiness were very strong.

There are numerous examples of such differences across a range of aggregated fields of study.

In terms of overall employment (full-time and part-time figures combined) the fields of health services and support, and tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation joined most of those with strong full-time employment figures in a group with over 90 per cent overall employment, indicating the importance of part-time employment to graduates of those two fields.

Graduate earnings

The advent of the QILT suite of surveys has seen a change to the way in which graduate earnings are reported. The AGS used, as a basic measure, 'graduate starting salaries', which represented the median annual earnings of domestic graduates aged less than 25 and in their first full-time employment in Australia.

The 2016 GOS report has simplified the definition to graduates in full-time employment and notes (in Section 5, p.39) that

The inclusion of older graduates and graduates with an ongoing relationship with an employer is likely to increase the estimate of the median salary of graduates in 2016 in comparison with 2015, all other things being equal.

Thus, GCA's overall graduate starting salary figure in 2015 was \$54,000 and the re-defined 2016 salary figure used in GOS was \$57,900 (see Table 3). To avoid confusion, further discussion in this document will focus on the QILT definition.

Table 3: Median full-time salaries by study area and sex, 2015 and 2016 ~

Study area	Males (\$,000)		Females (\$,000)		Total (\$,000)	
	2015*	2016	2015*	2016	2015*	2016
Agriculture and environmental studies	50.0	57.0	48.0	53.5	49.0	55.0
Architecture and built environment	50.0	59.0	45.0	50.0	45.0	55.0
Business and management	50.0	57.0	49.5	53.0	50.0	55.0
Communications	47.0	48.0	45.0	48.0	45.0	48.0
Computing and Information Systems	53.0	59.5	57.0	60.0	55.0	60.0
Creative arts	42.0	50.0	40.0	47.0	40.0	48.0
Dentistry		84.0	76.5	82.8	80.0	83.5
Engineering	60.0	62.6	63.0	62.3	60.0	62.6
Health services and support	55.0	64.0	56.0	58.2	56.0	59.5
Humanities, culture and social sciences	52.0	57.4	50.0	54.8	50.0	55.0
Law and paralegal studies	55.5	63.0	55.0	57.4	55.0	60.0
Medicine	65.0	70.0	64.0	68.2	65.0	69.2
Nursing	55.5	60.5	53.0	58.4	53.0	58.4
Pharmacy	40.5	43.8	42.0	43.6	42.0	43.8
Psychology	51.5	54.0	50.0	54.8	50.0	54.8
Rehabilitation	59.0	60.7	58.0	59.0	59.0	60.0
Science and mathematics	54.0	60.0	51.0	54.0	52.0	55.2
Social work		60.5	55.5	60.0	55.5	60.0
Teacher education	61.0	63.6	60.3	62.6	61.0	62.9
Tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation				51.4	40.0	52.2
Veterinary science			49.5	50.0	50.0	50.0
All study areas**	55.0	60.0	53.0	56.4	54.0	57.9
GCA 2015 figures reflecting QILT definition^	58.0		54.0		55.0	

*Graduates aged less than 25 and in first full-time employment.

**For 2016, where a graduate completes combined degrees across two study areas, their outcomes are included in both study areas. 'All study areas' figures count each graduate once only

~ 2015 figures from the 2015 Australian Graduate Survey, 2016 figures from the 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey. Blank cells indicate no or insufficient data for use.

^ Taken from GCA spreadsheets (Tables J1, J3 and J4) distributed to Australian university careers services.

Graduate earnings by study area

The 2016 GOS report (Table 28 in that report, Table 3 in this document) shows median full-time salary figures for each of 21 QILT-based fields of study with 2015 AGS figures adapted into the QILT fields.

Table 3 shows the 2016 median annual starting salary new bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment in Australia was \$57,900. GCA figures for 2015 reflecting a similar definition as used in the GOS report was \$55,000⁵.

In 2016, new male graduates earned a median salary of \$60,000, while new female graduates earned \$56,400. GCA's 2015 equivalent figures were \$58,000 and \$54,000 respectively³. So, in dollar terms, the 2016 median graduate salary rose by \$2,900 (or 5.3 per cent) from \$55,000. The change for males was \$2,000 (3.4 per cent) and \$2,400 for females (4.4 per cent).

In 2016 the median female salary was 94.0 per cent of the male salary (93.1 per cent in 2015).

Over the years, GCA research has suggested that overall differences in median salaries between males and females can be partly explained in terms of the differing enrolment profiles of male and female students. An analysis undertaken by GCA in 2014⁶ suggests that much of the earnings gap between new male and female graduates was determined by field of education choices often made prior to university enrolment.

The analysis suggested that when the field of education, personal, enrolment and occupational characteristics of male and female graduates were taken into account, males' overall starting salaries were 4.4 per cent higher than those for females. It highlighted the overall wage gap favouring males as being due, in part, to an over-representation of males in fields of education that typically had higher starting salaries, such as engineering. Alternatively, females outnumbered males when it came to humanities, which was ranked at the lower end of the salary distribution.

While the analysis recognises that some of the wage gap might be explained by 'like for like' inequalities in some workplaces, it might also be further explained if additional or more detailed information not captured within the GDS was available.

At \$83,500, the median salary for dentistry was the highest for this group of aggregated study areas. Following well behind (in the \$60,000-\$70,000 band) were medicine, teacher education, engineering, computing and information systems, law and paralegal studies, rehabilitation, and social work.

Study areas with lower levels of earnings were communications, creative arts and pharmacy.

It should be noted that the graduates in a number of fields must meet additional training requirements in order to gain professional registration, and this period can sometimes result in relatively low starting salaries. As an example, some pharmacy graduates in this survey are pre-registration and hence earn

⁵ Taken from GCA spreadsheets (Tables J1, J3 and J4) distributed to Australian university careers services.

⁶ See Lindsay, E., *An analysis of the gender wage gap in the Australian graduate labour market, 2013*, which can be downloaded from <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/GCA%20Gender%20Wage%20Gap%20Paper%20-%202013%20GDS%20-%2017%20June%202014%20FINAL.pdf>

relatively low salaries (\$43,800) due to the further on-the-job training requirements they must meet for professional registration.

The longitudinal (2013-2016) GOS report (GOS-L) shows that by 2016, earnings for the cohort that responded to the 2013 AGS grew from \$55,000 to \$67,000, or 21.8 per cent.

Graduate course satisfaction

The Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) has been in use since 1993 and is an instrument developed to measure graduates' satisfaction with aspects of their study experiences. In the CEQ, which is administered approximately four months after course completion, respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with 13 core items constituting two rating scales (good teaching and generic skills development) and a single-item overall satisfaction indicator.

The changes in survey and analysis methods in the move from the AGS to QILT might have brought about a change in CEQ responses (which can often be the case in such psychometric instruments). As a result, comparisons between 2015 AGS-CEQ and 2016 QILT-CEQ results will be of somewhat limited value.

The satisfaction figure represents the percentage of respondents answering '4' or '5' on a five-point scale (with the fifth point indicating highest satisfaction). In 2016, 63.0 per cent expressed satisfaction with the standard of teaching in their course, 82.1 per cent were satisfied with the development of their generic skills and 80.6 per cent were, overall, satisfied with their course (see Figure 6).

A figure of 63.0 per cent satisfaction with teaching, while appearing anomalous compared with the overall satisfaction indicator, must be of concern. While the equivalent figure from the 2015 AGS-CEQ was 68.0 per cent, and the difference of five percentage points could be an indication of the change in method and analysis, having fewer than two-thirds of respondents expressing satisfaction with what is obviously a core aspect of graduates' university experience might be seen as needing further exploration.

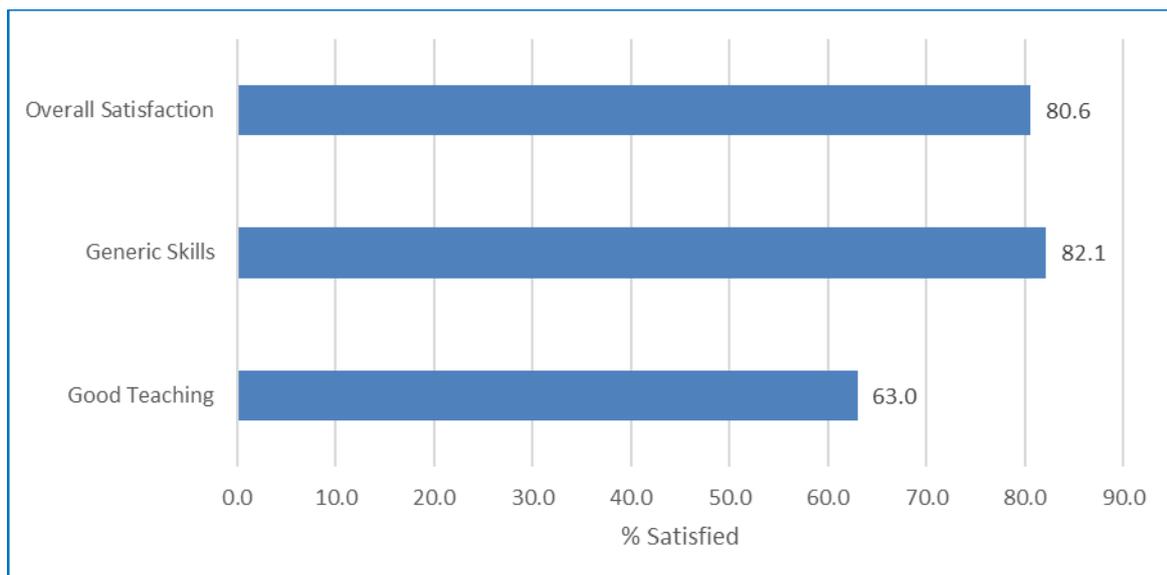


Figure 6: Undergraduates' satisfaction with aspects of their study, 2016 (%)

Source: 2016 Graduate Outcomes Survey

Job search strategies

The 2016 GOS gathered, but did not report on, data regarding how employed graduates conducted their job search strategy or how they first found the job they reported in the survey. As such, related figures from the 2015 AGS will be discussed here as the results don't change markedly from one year to the next.

The 2015 AGS⁷ report noted that of those full-time employed graduates who had commenced their job in 2014 or 2015, over a quarter (26.9 per cent) first found their position via an advertisement on the internet (see Table 4). While this figure reflects the importance of scouring online vacancies in today's job market, it is notable that around three-quarters of graduates in full-time employment did not first find their employment via this method.

Demonstrating the diversity in how graduates found their full-time jobs, Table 4 suggests employment seekers need to cast their nets widely, as these results clearly indicate that there are many effective ways to find a full-time position.

However, of the 12 job search methods identified in Table 4, just over half of the graduates in full-time work learned of their current employment first through one of three strategies: searching advertisements on the internet (26.9 per cent), talking to family or friends (14.2 per cent) and visiting university or college careers services (11.7 per cent). This suggests these are key strategies around which graduates should base their overall job search, while not ignoring other strategies.

Table 4: How graduates who started in full-time employment in 2014 or 2015 first found out about their employment, AGS, 2015 (%)

	Total Cases	%
Advertisement on the internet	5,513	26.9
Family or friends	2,915	14.2
University or college careers service	2,393	11.7
Other	1,895	9.3
Approached employer directly	1,742	8.5
Approached by an employer	1,483	7.2
Work contacts or networks	1,459	7.1
Other university or college source (such as faculties or lecturers)	1,010	4.9
Careers fair or information session	826	4.0
Employment agency	531	2.6
Advertisement in a newspaper or other print media	378	1.8
Via résumé posted on the internet	313	1.5
Total	20,458	100.0

⁷ Previous AGS reports can be downloaded from: www.graduatecareers.com.au/Research/ResearchReports

Employer satisfaction

Part of the QILT suite of surveys is an Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS). It is very positive for Australian higher education that the ESS results indicate that 84 per cent of employers are highly satisfied with their new graduate recruits.

Overall, employers reported

- 92 per cent satisfaction with foundation skills – general literacy, numeracy and communication skills and the ability to investigate and integrate knowledge.
- 88 per cent satisfaction with adaptive skills – the ability to adapt and apply skills/knowledge and work independently.
- 85 per cent satisfaction with collaborative skills – teamwork and interpersonal skills.
- 92 per cent satisfaction with technical skills – application of professional and technical knowledge and standards.
- 84 per cent satisfaction with employability skills – the ability to perform and innovate in the workplace.

Notably, employers seemed to be more satisfied with graduates with vocational degrees (Engineering, Health, IT and Education graduates) than they were with graduates with generalist degrees (the report cites the highly aggregated fields of Creative Arts, Management and Commerce, Natural and Physical Sciences, and Society and Culture). It's worth noting that these generalist aggregations could be hiding a great deal of diverse detail, as suggested previously regarding employment figures.

Further, these generalist graduates were not rated markedly lower by their supervisors than were vocationally qualified graduates, and it could be argued that the skill sets expected of the vocational graduates are more easily identified and assessed than those of the generalists.

Of additional note, 86 per cent of supervisors expressed satisfaction with their female graduate recruits compared with 82 per cent satisfaction with males.

For further information on ...

Beyond Graduation reports:

<http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/research/surveys/beyondgraduationsurvey/>

GCA: www.graduatecareers.com.au

GradStats and AGS reports: www.graduatecareers.com.au/Research/ResearchReports

Graduate Opportunities: www.graduateopportunities.com/

QILT: www.qilt.edu.au

QILT reports: www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/graduate-employment