

# **Beyond Graduation 2013**

The report of the Beyond Graduation Survey





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## 1. Introduction

Welcome to *Beyond Graduation 2013*, the fifth annual report into the activities, outcomes and experiences of Australian higher education graduates in the years after the completion of their studies. This report is based on the 2013 Beyond Graduation Survey, conducted by Graduate Careers Australia (GCA) in association with Australian higher education institutions. In all, 36 institutions assisted GCA in recontacting their graduates three years after course completion (see Table A1). Graduates who completed a course of study at an Australian higher education institution in 2009 and provided a response to the 2010 Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) were invited by email to complete an online survey about their experiences since they completed their studies. A total of 12,384 usable responses to the BGS were received, a slight decrease in response numbers compared to 2012 (by 3.4 percentage points). The secured responses were found to be representative of the broader graduate population in terms of sex ratio, age structure and broad field of education. As such, the survey data were analysed without corrective weighting.

The focus of this report is on Australian domestic bachelor degree graduates, who represent the largest single group of respondents to the BGS, although summary figures for Australian postgraduates are also presented later in the report

The BGS questionnaire addressed graduates' employment and further study activities as at 30 April 2013, and gave them the opportunity to give a retrospective assessment of their higher education course experience. Data on graduates' personal characteristics and activities in 2009 were imputed into the data file from the 2010 AGS.

In addition to the three-year survey, this report presents some high-level findings from a survey of graduates who completed their studies in 2007, responded to both the 2008 AGS and 2011 BGS, and provided valid contact details when responding to the latter. This unique data set gives insights into the activities and outcomes of graduates five years after course completion. A total of 2,181 usable responses to the five-year BGS were received, an increase by approximately 5.0 percentage points in the overall response numbers, with respondents representing 32 higher education institutions.

A list of the 36 institutions that participated in the 2013 BGS can be found in the appendices at the end of the report, along with a table containing broad respondent characteristics for the three- and five-year surveys, and a snap shot of the cohorts of the course completers that are the focus of this report.

## 2. Graduate Destinations

At the time of the 2010 AGS, 78.2 per cent of male graduates and 70.8 per cent of female graduates in the BGS sample reported themselves as being available for full-time employment—that is, in or seeking full-time employment (see Table 1). By 2013, the percentage of male graduates available for full-time employment had increased to 84.0 per cent, which reflects a decrease in the proportions in full-time study and part-time work. The percentage of female graduates available for full-time employment increased to 74.7 per cent by 2013, which mainly reflects a decrease in the proportion in further full-time study. Through both the AGS and BGS, female graduates were consistently more likely than males to be in part-time employment with no desire to secure full-time work, or to be unavailable for further study or any employment.

**Table 1. Main activity of bachelor graduates, by sex, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	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 n
<b>Males</b>							
2010	78.2	15.0	4.5	0.0	2.3	100	2,079
2013	84.0	10.6	3.4	0.3	1.7	100	2,119
<b>Females</b>							
2010	70.8	16.1	9.5	0.0	3.6	100	4,243
2013	74.7	11.3	10.1	0.5	3.4	100	4,360
<b>Total</b>							
2010	73.2	15.7	7.9	0.0	3.2	100	6,322
2013	77.7	11.1	7.9	0.5	2.8	100	6,479

Of the graduates who were available for full-time employment, the proportion who had secured full-time work increased considerably within three years of course completion (see Table 2). At the time of the 2010 AGS, 77.2 per cent of the male graduates and 75.8 per cent of the female graduates in our sample were in full-time employment. By 2013, this had increased to 90.6 per cent and 90.0 per cent respectively. This was necessarily accompanied by a general decline in the proportion of graduates in the full-time labour market who were in part-time employment or unemployed.

**Table 2. Bachelor graduates available for full-time employment, by sex, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	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 n
<b>Males</b>						
2010	77.2	13.3	9.4	22.7	100	1,626
2013	90.6	3.8	5.7	9.5	100	1,779
<b>Females</b>						
2010	75.8	16.8	7.4	24.2	100	3,002
2013	90.0	5.9	4.1	10.0	100	3,256
<b>Total</b>						
2010	76.3	15.6	8.1	23.7	100	4,628
2013	90.2	5.1	4.7	9.8	100	5,035

Compared to the 2012 BGS, there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of graduates securing full time employment (3.0 percentage points shortly after course completion and 2.0 percentage points three years after course completion).

Full-time employment rates are presented by field of education in Table 3.

**Table 3. Bachelor graduates working full time as a proportion of those available for full-time employment, by sex and broad field of education, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	2010		2013	
	%	n	%	n
<b>Males</b>				
Natural and physical sciences	67.2	131	84.5	148
Information technology	81.1	148	96.2	157
Engineering and related technologies	84.5	258	93.6	264
Architecture and building	81.7	60	85.1	67
Agriculture and environmental studies	61.2	49	91.3	46
Health	91.4	152	94.5	146
Education	78.1	96	93.9	99
Management and commerce	79.3	358	94.4	392
Society and culture	72.6	285	85.4	342
Creative arts	51.7	89	81.4	118
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>77.2</b>	<b>1,626</b>	<b>90.6</b>	<b>1,779</b>
<b>Females</b>				
Natural and physical sciences	67.1	210	80.1	246
Information technology	79.3	29	100.0	29
Engineering and related technologies	85.0	60	94.9	59
Architecture and building	83.3	54	82.8	64
Agriculture and environmental studies	65.0	60	84.3	83
Health	89.9	703	94.3	648
Education	73.4	346	88.6	378
Management and commerce	79.5	552	95.7	579
Society and culture	68.5	752	89.0	898
Creative arts	58.5	236	82.7	272
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>3,002</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>3,256</b>
<b>Total</b>				
Natural and physical sciences	67.2	341	81.7	394
Information technology	80.8	177	96.8	186
Engineering and related technologies	84.6	318	93.8	323
Architecture and building	82.5	114	84.0	131
Agriculture and environmental studies	63.3	109	86.8	129
Health	90.2	855	94.3	794
Education	74.4	442	89.7	477
Management and commerce	79.5	910	95.2	971
Society and culture	69.6	1,037	88.0	1,240
Creative arts	56.6	325	82.3	390
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>76.3</b>	<b>4,628</b>	<b>90.2</b>	<b>5,035</b>

Graduates from the fields of engineering and related technologies, and health, enjoyed particularly strong employment rates immediately after course completion. The fields of natural and physical sciences, agriculture and environmental studies, and creative arts recorded relatively low employment rates at the time of the 2010 AGS, but experienced strong growth in employment over the next three years. It is important to note that these figures do not necessarily reflect the proportion of graduates in jobs that are related to their respective courses of study (this is addressed later in Figure 1 - see page 7). It should also be noted that while the field of education labels used in this report aggregate similar and related but smaller and more detailed fields of education, there can be a degree of variation in terms of the survey results amongst those more detailed fields. The survey estimates shown here need to be read with that caveat in mind.



## 2.1. Industries of employment

The industries employing recent bachelor degree graduates did not change markedly in the years after course completion (see Table 4). Full-time employed males were most likely to be employed in the professional, scientific and technical services industry, followed by the public administration and safety, education and training, and healthcare and social assistance industries. These same four industries were the most common destinations for full-time employed females, albeit in a different relative order. Female graduates were most likely to be employed in the healthcare and social assistance industry immediately after course completion; however the proportion employed in this industry fell from 30.5 per cent in 2010 to 24.5 per cent in 2013, a pattern also observed in the 2012 survey. This remained the most common employment industry for female graduates three years after course completion.

**Table 4. Employing industries, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, by sex, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	Males		Females		Total	
	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.5
Mining	2.8	3.5	1.0	1.3	1.6	2.1
Manufacturing	4.0	5.1	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.6
Electricity, gas and water supply	2.5	1.9	0.6	0.7	1.3	1.1
Construction	4.8	2.7	1.0	0.8	2.3	1.4
Wholesale trade	1.1	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.9
Retail trade	3.4	1.9	4.3	2.8	4.0	2.5
Accommodation and food services	1.1	0.7	2.0	0.8	1.7	0.8
Transport, postal and warehousing	1.4	1.7	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.2
Information media and telecommunications	4.0	3.6	2.6	2.6	3.1	3.0
Financial and insurance services	7.8	7.8	3.7	4.4	5.2	5.6
Rental, hiring and real estate services	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7
Professional, scientific and technical services	26.0	28.1	17.9	17.8	20.8	21.4
Administrative and support services	1.6	1.0	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.4
Public administration and safety	12.8	14.2	9.3	12.0	10.5	12.8
Education and training	9.3	11.7	17.4	20.5	14.5	17.4
Health care and social assistance	12.2	10.2	30.5	24.5	24.0	19.5
Arts and recreation services	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9
Other services	1.7	1.3	1.1	2.6	1.3	2.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>TOTAL n</b>	<b>1,221</b>	<b>1,504</b>	<b>2,231</b>	<b>2,776</b>	<b>3,452</b>	<b>4,280</b>

## 2.2. Occupations

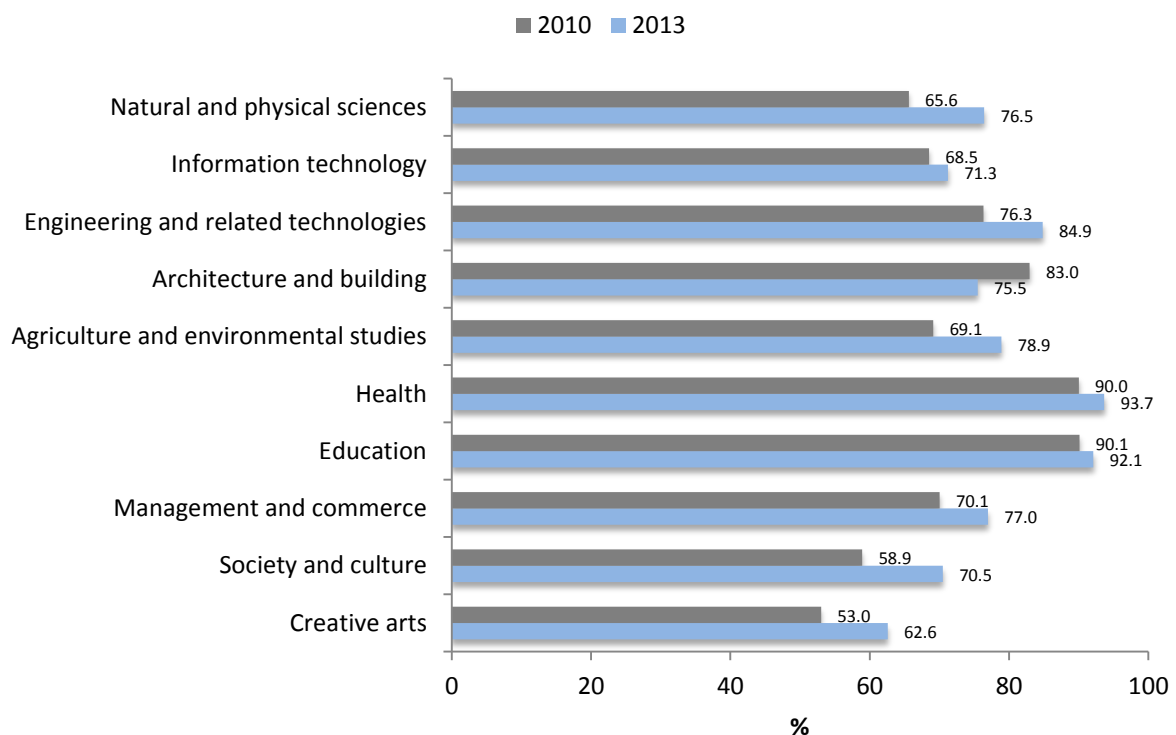
While the industries employing graduates did not change greatly in the years immediately after course completion (see Table 4), the occupations held by graduates did tend to vary. As shown in Table 5, the proportion of graduates of both sexes employed in managerial roles increased notably, as did the proportion of female graduates employed in professional roles. This was necessarily accompanied by a general decline in the proportion of graduates in 'lower-skilled' occupations, for example clerical and administrative roles. By 2013, male graduates were more likely than their female counterparts to be employed in a managerial capacity, while female graduates were more likely to be employed in professional roles. Females remained notably more likely than males to be employed in clerical or administrative roles three years after course completion; however only around one in ten female graduates were so employed by this stage.

**Table 5. Broad occupation types, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, by sex, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	Males		Females		Total	
	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013
Managers	8.0	14.0	5.0	10.9	6.1	12.0
Professionals	68.7	70.7	68.8	73.1	68.8	72.2
Technicians and trades workers	5.2	3.9	3.5	1.8	4.1	2.5
Community and personal service workers	4.3	2.7	6.2	3.3	5.5	3.1
Clerical and administrative workers	9.7	7.4	13.1	10.0	11.9	9.1
Other occupations	4.1	1.4	3.4	0.9	3.7	1.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>TOTAL n</b>	<b>1,221</b>	<b>1,505</b>	<b>2,240</b>	<b>2,760</b>	<b>3,461</b>	<b>4,265</b>

### 2.3. Importance of qualification

Being in full-time employment, even if in a managerial or professional capacity, does not necessarily mean that a graduate is in a job related to his or her course of study. To investigate this potential gap between employment and *relevant* employment, graduates were asked to rate the importance of the qualification they completed in 2009 to their main paid job using a five-point response format with categories labelled ‘formal requirement’, ‘important’, ‘somewhat important’, ‘not important’ and ‘don’t know’. The relative proportions of graduates who considered the qualification they completed in 2009 to be a formal requirement or important to their main paid jobs in 2010 and 2013 are given in Figure 1, stratified by field of education. Graduates who were unsure (don’t know) are excluded from the results.



**Figure 1. Qualification important to main paid job, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, by broad field of education, 2010 and 2013 (%)**

There is considerable variation across fields of education in terms of the proportion of graduates who believed that their qualification was important to their main paid job. Graduates from the fields of health and education were consistently the most likely to be in a job for which their qualification is important. Creative arts graduates were the least likely to be in a relevant job shortly after course completion and to be so employed three years later. The fields of society and culture, natural and physical sciences and agriculture and environmental studies saw the largest increase in graduates employed in relevant jobs between 2010 and 2013. The only field that experienced negative growth in this regard was architecture and building; however it should be noted that this result is based on a relatively small number of cases.

It is important, however, to emphasise that graduates in non-relevant jobs (by the definition employed here) are not necessarily in unrewarding jobs or even jobs that are not in line with their own career goals. It simply means that they are employed in jobs that they believe are not closely

related to the degree they completed in 2009. While some graduates may take longer than others to secure work in their chosen field, others may develop a career in a different, potentially unrelated field. The nature of these non-relevant jobs is examined in Table 6, in which broad occupation types are cross-tabulated with graduates' perceptions of the importance of their qualification to their main paid job. It is worthy of note that 38.9 per cent of graduates who indicated that their qualification was not important to their main paid employment in 2010 were employed in managerial or professional roles. By 2013, this figure had reached 55.9 per cent, a larger increase than was observed in the 2012 BGS (an increase of 17.0 percentage points compared to an increase of 14.2 percentage points in 2012). This finding helps to dispel the myth that graduates working in jobs unrelated to their field of study must necessarily be trapped in unskilled jobs.

**Table 6. Aggregated occupation type, by importance of qualification to main paid job, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	Important		Somewhat important		Not important		Total	
	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013
Managerial/professional	84.2	89.5	61.3	71.9	38.9	55.9	74.9	84.4
Other	15.8	10.5	38.7	28.1	61.1	44.1	25.1	15.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>TOTAL n</b>	<b>2,530</b>	<b>3,344</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>3,434</b>	<b>4,236</b>

#### **2.4. Average weekly working hours**

Average weekly working hours for full-time employed bachelor degree graduates in 2010 and 2013 are presented in Table 7, split by field of education and sex. At an overall level, males tended to work longer hours than females in 2010 and 2013, with some variation in working hours observed between different fields of education. Three years after course completion, male graduates from the fields of architecture and building, and management and commerce tended to work the longest hours, on average, out of any graduate cohort (45.3 hours and 44.7 hours respectively). In spite of the general shift towards more highly-skilled occupations between 2010 and 2013 (see Table 5), average weekly working hours increased by just 2.3 hours for male graduates and 1.7 hours for female graduates over this period. The largest increase was observed for female natural and physical sciences graduates, who saw their average weekly working hours increase by 5.6 hours between the two survey periods.

**Table 7. Average weekly working hours for full-time employed bachelor graduates, by broad field of education and sex, 2010 and 2013 (mean hours, n)**

	Males		Females		Total	
	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013
Natural and physical sciences	37.9	42.3	36.3	41.9	36.9	42.1
Information technology	39.8	41.8	37.4	39.7	39.5	41.5
Engineering and related technologies	41.8	43.6	40.1	42.0	41.4	43.3
Architecture and building	43.6	45.3	39.6	40.6	41.6	42.9
Agriculture and environmental studies	42.0	43.6	38.9	41.2	40.2	42.2
Health	42.6	42.4	40.6	40.4	40.9	40.8
Education	40.4	44.0	39.6	41.7	39.8	42.2
Management and commerce	41.9	44.7	39.7	41.8	40.6	43.0
Society and culture	40.5	42.8	38.8	40.3	39.3	41.0
Creative arts	39.2	44.1	37.2	41.5	37.7	42.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>43.4</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>41.9</b>
<b>TOTAL n</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>2,243</b>	<b>2,730</b>	<b>3,472</b>	<b>4,225</b>

### 2.5. Employment seeking behaviour

In addition to their current employment, full-time employed bachelor degree graduates were asked whether they were actively seeking other employment at the time of the survey (see Figure 2). As may be expected, these figures generally mirror those presented in Figure 1 concerning whether graduates felt that their qualification was important to their main paid job for both 2010 and 2013. The notable exceptions to this were engineering and related technologies, and agriculture and environmental studies graduates, who were among the most likely to be in relevant employment and also to be looking for a different job. These fields were also two of the three fields in which a greater proportion of graduates were reported to be seeking other employment three years after course completion than immediately afterwards. It is important to note that the results for agriculture and environmental studies graduates are based on a relatively small number of cases.

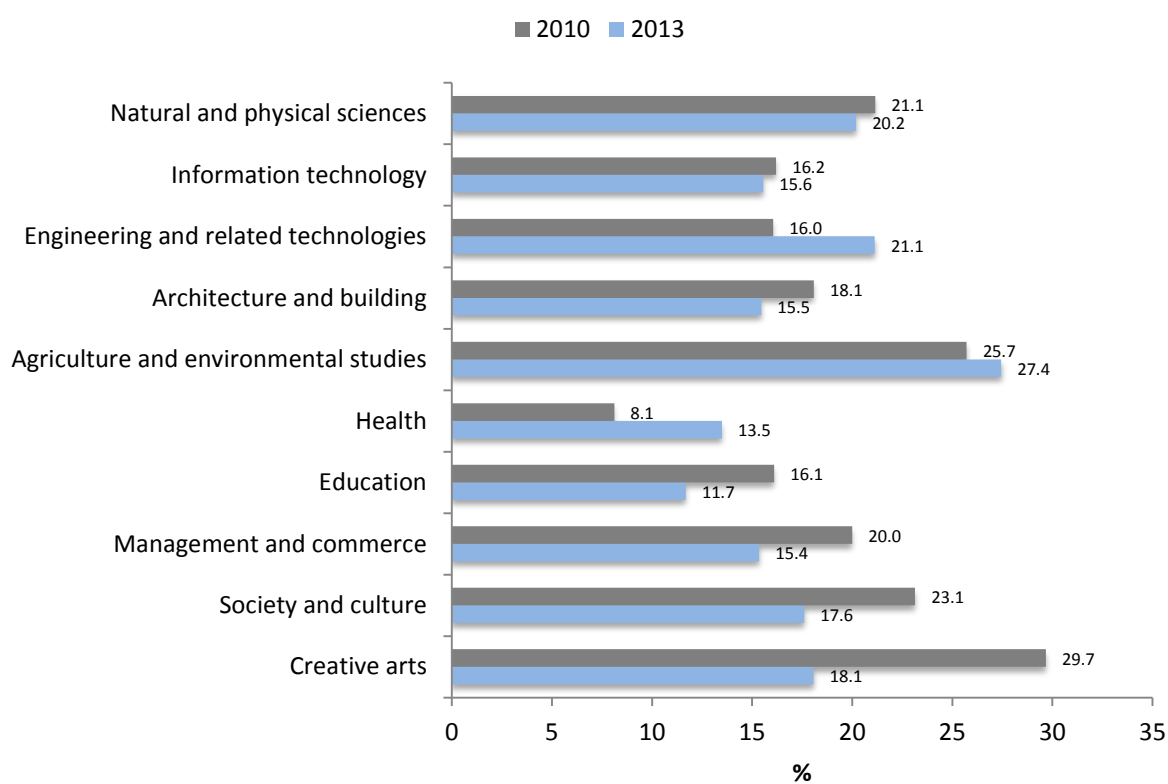


Figure 2. Graduates seeking alternative work, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, by broad field of education, 2010 and 2013 (%)

## 2.6. Interstate mobility

The interstate mobility of graduates in the full-time workforce is investigated in Table 8. The large percentage figures on the diagonal indicate that the majority of graduates are working in the same State or Territory in 2013 as they were in 2010. Graduates who began their post-study careers in one of the five mainland states tended to be less mobile than those who were initially employed in Northern Territory, Tasmania or the Australian Capital Territory. Graduates who began their careers in the Northern Territory were the most likely to move interstate within three years of completing their studies, with almost one-third having done so by the time of the 2013 BGS.

**Table 8. Interstate mobility of bachelor graduates in full-time employment, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

State of 2010 job	State of 2013 job									TOTAL n
	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	TOTAL	
NSW	89.8	2.7	2.2	0.8	1.0	0.5	0.2	2.9	100	626
Vic.	1.7	93.2	1.2	0.6	1.5	0.2	1.0	0.7	100	891
Qld	3.2	4.6	88.2	0.6	1.1	0.0	0.6	1.7	100	348
SA	2.6	5.2	0.0	88.3	1.3	0.0	1.3	1.3	100	77
WA	3.4	4.0	0.6	0.0	90.4	0.0	0.6	1.1	100	177
Tas.	11.1	8.3	8.3	0.0	2.8	66.7	0.0	2.8	100	36
NT	0.0	14.3	9.5	0.0	14.3	0.0	61.9	0.0	100	21
ACT	13.2	5.4	5.4	0.8	0.0	0.8	2.3	72.1	100	129

## 2.7. 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 9, graduates employed part time immediately after course completion were typically in 'lower-skilled' occupations, with only around four-in-ten 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 5). Three years later, around two-thirds of part-time employed graduates were in professional roles (65.6 per cent of males and 68.2 per cent of females), although part-time employed graduates were still less likely than their full-time employed counterparts to hold a managerial position.

**Table 9. Broad occupation types, by sex, bachelor graduates in part-time employment, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	Males		Females		Total	
	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013
Managers	4.3	3.8	2.8	3.5	3.2	3.6
Professionals	31.1	65.6	37.3	68.2	35.7	67.7
Technicians and trades workers	7.0	3.3	3.9	2.1	4.7	2.3
Community and personal service workers	15.6	7.2	14.1	7.2	14.5	7.2
Clerical and administrative workers	11.9	11.5	14.6	12.4	13.9	12.2
Other occupations	30.1	8.6	27.2	6.6	28.1	6.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>TOTAL n</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>1,337</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>1,825</b>	<b>1,031</b>

## 2.8. Graduates in further study

For many graduates, the completion of a course of study in 2009 did not represent the end of their learning journey. As shown in Figure 3, 26.8 per cent of both male and female bachelor degree graduates were engaged in some type of further study at the time of the 2010 AGS. At this point in time, graduates were more likely to be undertaking full-time study, with 19.0 per cent of males and 19.1 per cent of females so engaged.<sup>1</sup> Three years later, the proportion of graduates in further study had increased, with 33.1 per cent of males and 30.4 per cent of females studying at the time of the 2013 BGS. Part-time study constituted a greater share of further study enrolments three years after course completion.

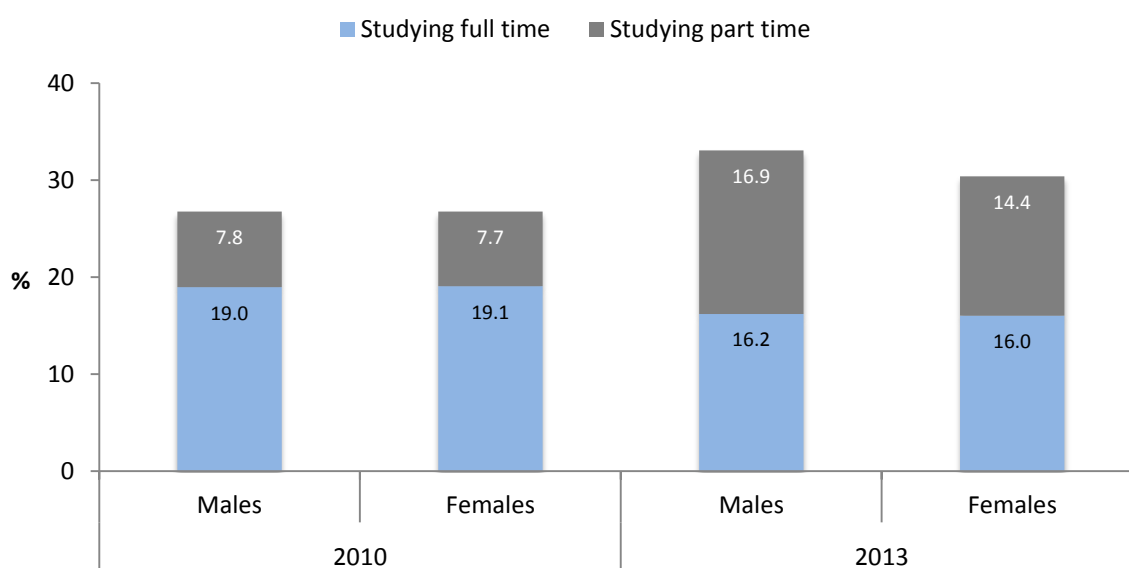
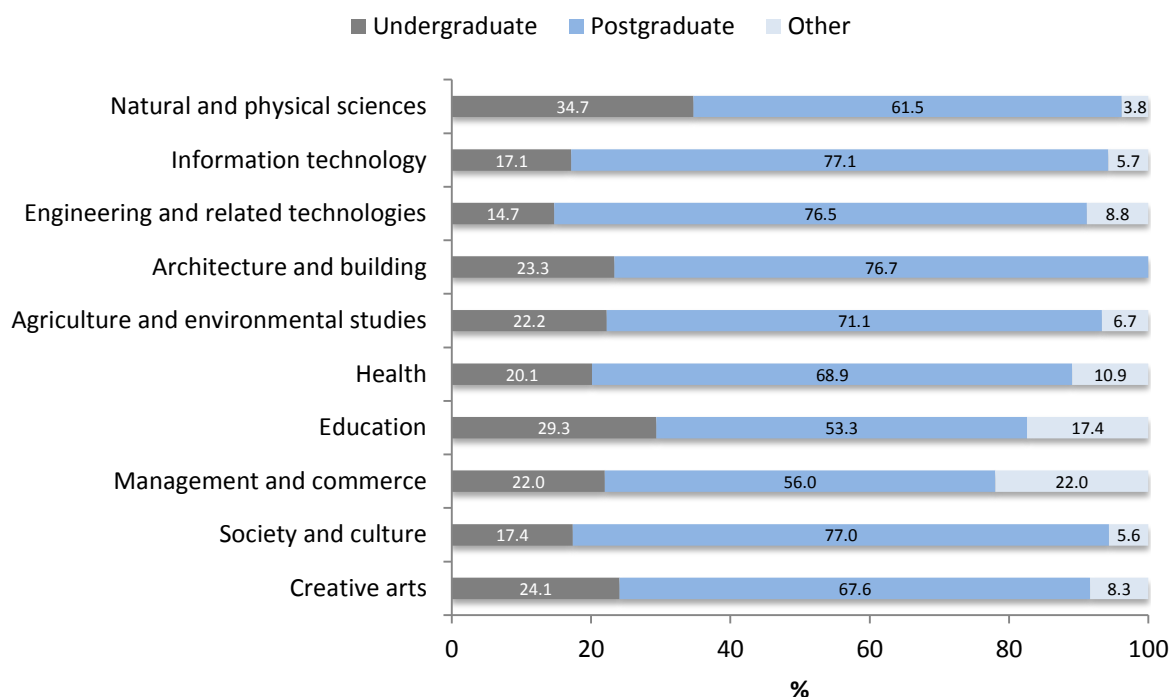


Figure 3. Graduates in further study, bachelor graduates, by sex, 2010 and 2013 (%)

Examining those bachelor degree graduates who were in further study three years after course completion in Figure 4, it can be seen that the majority of graduates from all fields of education were undertaking postgraduate study. Graduates originally from the fields of natural and physical sciences, and education were the most likely to be studying for another undergraduate degree at the time of the 2013 BGS. Graduates from the fields of information technology, society and culture, engineering and related technologies, and architecture and building were the most likely to be undertaking a postgraduate course of study. Just under a quarter of management and commerce graduates were studying some other type of award course.

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



**Figure 4. Level of further study, bachelor graduates, by broad field of education, 2013 (%)**

The BGS also investigated whether graduates had completed another course of study in the three years since course completion (see Table 10). Bachelor degree graduates from the society and culture field were the most likely to have done so, with 45.2 per cent indicating that they had completed another qualification since 2010. On the other hand, graduates from the fields of engineering and related technologies were the least likely to have completed another qualification (14.7 per cent). Considering those bachelor degree graduates who had completed another qualification, agriculture and environmental studies graduates were the most likely to have completed another undergraduate degree, and architecture and building graduates were the most likely to have completed a postgraduate degree. Graduates from the fields of engineering and related technologies, information technology and education were the most likely to have completed some other type of award course.

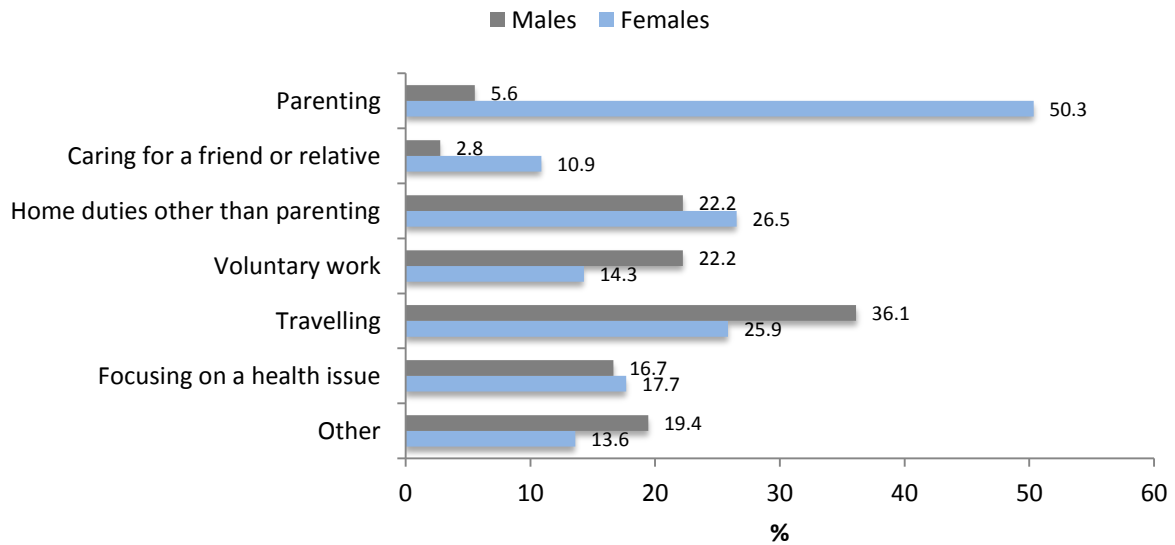
**Table 10. Completion of other qualification between 2010 and 2013, by degree level (% , n)**

	Completed other qualification		Level of completed qualification				
	Yes	n	UG	PG	Other	TOTAL	TOTAL n
Natural and physical sciences	37.4	668	43.5	48.4	8.1	100	248
Information technology	20.6	189	35.9	33.3	30.8	100	39
Engineering and related technologies	14.7	320	19.1	48.9	31.9	100	47
Architecture and building	33.6	131	9.1	77.3	13.6	100	44
Agriculture and environmental studies	29.4	153	55.6	22.2	22.2	100	45
Health	27.0	1,044	18.1	63.3	18.5	100	281
Education	19.3	534	23.3	46.6	30.1	100	103
Management and commerce	34.7	980	19.4	58.8	21.8	100	340
Society and culture	45.2	1,631	25.6	61.5	12.8	100	733
Creative arts	37.1	485	22.9	56.4	20.7	100	179
Total	33.7	6,135	25.7	57.2	17.0	100	2,059



### 2.9. Other activities

Bachelor degree graduates who were unavailable for full-time study or any employment at the time of the 2013 BGS were asked to indicate the activities in which they were engaged (Figure 5). Graduates were permitted to indicate more than one activity. The most common activity for female graduates who were neither available for work nor full-time study was parenting, with 50.3 per cent listing this as an activity. Male graduates in the same situation were most likely to be travelling (36.1 per cent), which was also a relatively common activity for females (25.9 per cent).



**Figure 5. Activities of bachelor graduates unavailable for full-time study or any employment, by sex, 2013 (%)**

### 3. Graduate Salaries

An overview of the median annual salaries of bachelor degree graduates in full-time employment is presented in Table 11. When interpreting these figures, it is important to bear in mind that graduate salary levels may potentially be influenced by a myriad of economic forces, and do not necessarily reflect the quality of graduates in terms of their academic results or employability skills. Following visual and statistical inspection of the survey data, salary figures below the 2nd percentile and above the 98th percentile were identified as outliers and excluded from the analysis.

**Table 11. Median salary, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, by sex and broad field of education, 2010 and 2013 (\$'000, n, %)**

	2010		2013		Growth	
	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	%
<b>Males</b>						
Natural and physical sciences	49.7	68	65.0	103	15.3	30.8
Information technology	50.0	105	75.0	122	25.0	50.0
Engineering and related technologies	58.0	194	77.5	185	19.5	33.6
Architecture and building	51.0	44	70.2	41	19.2	37.6
Agriculture and environmental studies	56.0	25	69.0	38	13.0	23.2
Health	52.0	125	75.0	113	23.0	44.2
Education	54.0	62	67.0	80	13.0	24.1
Management and commerce	50.0	246	72.0	308	22.0	44.0
Society and culture	51.0	176	72.0	244	21.0	41.2
Creative arts	44.5	42	62.0	68	17.5	39.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>1,087</b>	<b>72.0</b>	<b>1,302</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>38.5</b>
<b>Females</b>						
Natural and physical sciences	50.0	126	62.0	173	12.0	24.0
Information technology	50.0	21	70.0	21	20.0	40.0
Engineering and related technologies	56.0	48	78.0	46	22.0	39.3
Architecture and building	40.0	39	60.0	43	20.0	50.0
Agriculture and environmental studies	47.3	38	61.8	58	14.5	30.7
Health	49.0	556	68.0	516	19.0	38.8
Education	54.0	219	63.0	283	9.0	16.7
Management and commerce	48.0	393	68.0	459	20.0	41.7
Society and culture	49.0	439	64.0	666	15.0	30.6
Creative arts	40.0	118	56.0	165	16.0	40.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>1,997</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>2,430</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>30.0</b>
<b>Total</b>						
Natural and physical sciences	50.0	194	64.0	276	14.0	28.0
Information technology	50.0	126	73.0	143	23.0	46.0
Engineering and related technologies	57.7	242	78.0	231	20.3	35.2
Architecture and building	47.5	83	70.0	84	22.5	47.4
Agriculture and environmental studies	50.0	63	63.0	96	13.0	26.0
Health	50.0	681	70.0	629	20.0	40.0
Education	54.0	281	65.0	363	11.0	20.4
Management and commerce	50.0	639	70.0	767	20.0	40.0
Society and culture	50.0	615	65.0	910	15.0	30.0
Creative arts	40.0	160	60.0	233	20.0	50.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>3,084</b>	<b>67.0</b>	<b>3,732</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>34.0</b>

At the overall level, full-time employed bachelor degree graduates earned a median salary of \$67,000 at the time of the 2013 BGS, representing an increase of 34.0 per cent since the 2010 AGS, at which point the median full-time graduate salary was \$50,000. This increase is slightly higher than what was observed in the 2012 BGS, where the median salary had increased by 32.0 per cent since course completion. Furthermore, by comparison, the level of consumer price inflation over this period was only 8.0 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

Graduates from the field of engineering and related technologies enjoyed the highest median salary in both 2010 and 2013. Information technology graduates were also high earners three years after course completion. Creative arts graduates consistently earned the lowest median salary out of any field of education, but enjoyed the strongest growth in the three years after the completion of their studies. Graduates from the education field saw the lowest growth in their median salary. Male graduates tended to report higher salaries than female graduates, especially three years after course completion. The largest percentage gaps were observed for graduates from the fields of architecture and building (17.0 per cent) and society and culture (12.5 per cent). The smallest wage gap between males and females was observed for engineering and related technologies (0.6 per cent), with females earning a marginally higher median salary.

It should be noted that these aggregate results do not account for differences in occupational destinations between males and females, nor other factors that may affect earnings. As such, these figures do not necessarily imply unequal pay for equal work.

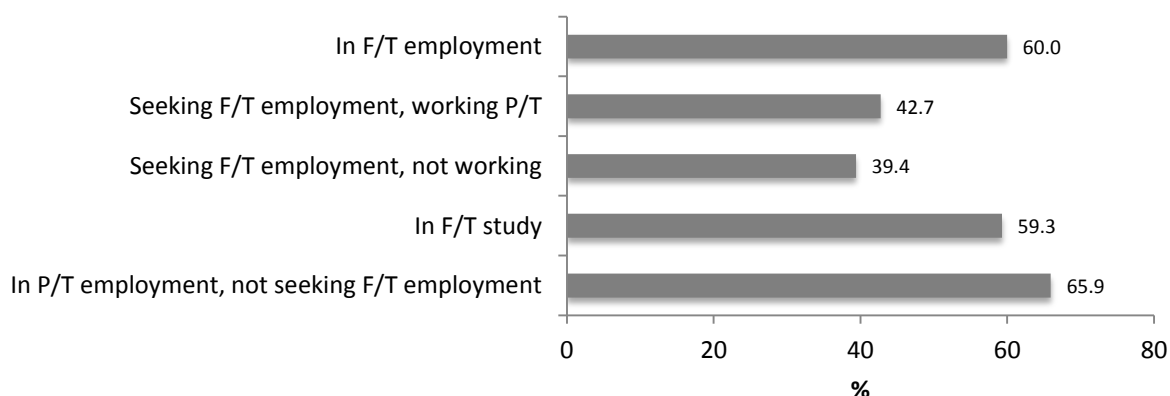
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<sup>2</sup> ABS Catalogue No. 6401.0 - Consumer Price Index, Australia, Approximate change from 2010 to 2013

## 4. Course Review

As part of the 2013 BGS, bachelor degree graduates were invited to provide an indication of their likelihood of studying the same degree at the same institution if they were given the (hypothetical) opportunity to choose whether or not to repeat the course of study that led to the qualification they completed in 2009. The five-point response format consisted of categories labelled very unlikely, unlikely, neither unlikely nor likely, likely and very likely.

As shown in Figure 6, three years after course completion graduates who were unemployed and seeking full-time employment at the time of the survey were the least likely to want to repeat the same degree at their graduating institution, with only 39.4 per cent indicating that they were either likely or very likely to do so given the opportunity. Graduates who were working part-time whilst seeking full-time employment were similarly unlikely to want to repeat the same degree (42.7 per cent). Full-time employed graduates and part-time employed graduates not seeking full-time employment were much more likely to indicate that they were either likely or very likely to repeat the same degree at the same institution, which suggests that poor labour market outcomes can strongly influence graduates' perceptions of the utility of their higher education experience. In the absence of additional data, it can only be speculated as to whether these views are maintained or modified after the graduate finds satisfactory employment.



**Figure 6. Likelihood of bachelor graduates studying the same degree at the same institution again if given the choice, likely/very likely, by labour market status, 2013 (%)**

## 5. Postgraduate Outcomes

Up to this point, this report has focused exclusively on the destinations and salaries of domestic bachelor degree graduates. The following section gives a brief overview of the destinations and salaries of individuals who completed a postgraduate degree in 2009. Postgraduates constitute around 37 per cent of responses to the 2013 BGS (see Table A2 for details of this cohort).

From Table 12, it can be seen that 90.6 per cent of male postgraduates and 78.3 per cent of female postgraduates indicated that they were available for full-time employment at the time of the 2010 AGS. Female postgraduates were less likely to be available for the full-time labour force three years after completing their degrees; however no substantial change in this regard was observed for males.

**Table 12. Main activity of postgraduates, by sex, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

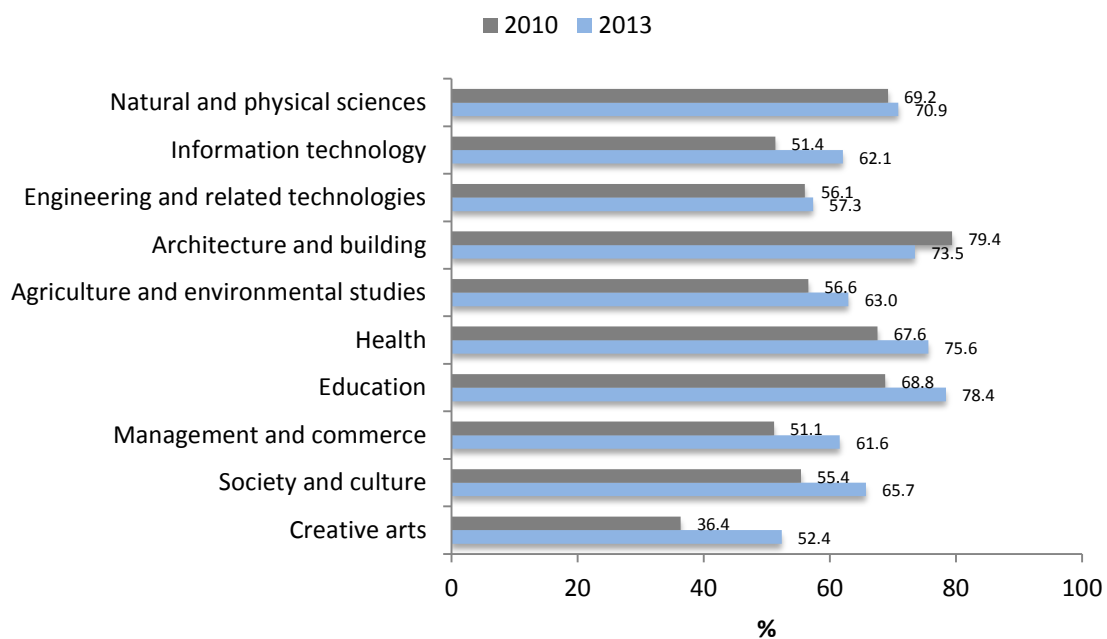
	Available for full-time employment (see Table 13)	In full-time study	In part-time or casual employment, not seeking full-time employment	Not working, seeking part-time or casual employment only	Unavailable for full-time study or any employment	TOTAL	TOTAL n
<b>Males</b>							
2010	90.6	3.2	3.7	0.0	2.5	100	1,340
2013	91.1	2.0	4.1	0.3	2.6	100	1,369
<b>Females</b>							
2010	78.3	3.8	13.9	0.0	4.0	100	2,318
2013	72.5	4.0	17.4	0.6	5.5	100	2,441
<b>Total</b>							
2010	82.8	3.6	10.2	0.0	3.4	100	3,658
2013	79.2	3.3	12.6	0.5	4.4	100	3,810

Of the postgraduates who were available for full-time employment, a considerable proportion was already in, or had already secured full-time employment by the time of the 2010 AGS. As shown in Table 13, 88.4 per cent of male postgraduates and 86.7 per cent of female postgraduates were in full-time employment in 2010, which had increased to 92.8 per cent and 93.1 per cent respectively by 2013. Full-time employment rates tended to be higher for postgraduates than for bachelor degree graduates. It is important to note that postgraduates are typically older than bachelor degree graduates (see Table A2) and, given that many undertook their studies part time, tend to have more extensive work experience than bachelor degree graduates. These factors, along with their higher level of education, may contribute to their generally superior labour market outcomes.

**Table 13. Postgraduates available for full-time employment, by sex, 2010 and 2013 (% , n)**

	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 n
<b>Males</b>						
2010	88.4	5.5	6.1	11.6	100	1,214
2013	92.8	3.7	3.5	7.2	100	1,247
<b>Females</b>						
2010	86.7	8.2	5.2	13.4	100	1,814
2013	93.1	4.4	2.6	7.0	100	1,770
<b>Total</b>						
2010	87.4	7.1	5.5	12.6	100	3,028
2013	92.9	4.1	3.0	7.1	100	3,017

Full-time employed postgraduates were asked to rate the importance of the qualification they completed in 2009 to their main paid job (see Figure 7). Notably, when these figures are compared with those for bachelor degree graduates from corresponding fields in Figure 1, postgraduates were generally less likely than bachelor degree graduates to feel that their qualification was important to their main paid job. While postgraduates do enjoy strong full-time employment rates, these findings suggest that many do not believe themselves to be in jobs that fully utilise their specialised knowledge and skills. The fact that further analysis shows that 82.3 per cent of full-time employed postgraduates were not seeking other work at the time of the 2013 survey suggests that this situation is not necessarily seen as a negative one for many. Postgraduates from the fields of education, health, and architecture and building were the most likely to be in full-time employment they felt their qualification was important to, three years after the completion of their studies.



**Figure 7. Qualification important to main paid job, postgraduates in full-time employment, by broad field of education, 2010 and 2013 (%)**

Full-time employed postgraduates earned a median salary of \$86,000 at the time of the 2013 BGS, which represents an increase of 20.1 per cent in the three years following course completion (cf. 34.0 per cent for bachelor degree graduates), at which time their median salary was \$71,600 (see Table 14). This is slightly lower than the 21.4 per cent increase observed in the 2012 BGS. Postgraduates from the fields of management and commerce, and engineering and related technologies enjoyed the highest overall median salary in 2013. The latter field also enjoyed the strongest growth in the years after course completion (31.6 per cent). Postgraduates from the creative arts field consistently earned the lowest median salary and recorded the weakest overall growth (12.0 per cent).

**Table 14. Median salary, postgraduates in full-time employment, by sex and broad field of education, 2010 and 2013 (\$'000, n, %)**

	2010		2013		Growth	
	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	%
<b>Males</b>						
Natural and physical sciences	67.0	53	88.7	59	21.7	32.4
Information technology	75.0	41	85.5	52	10.5	14.0
Engineering and related technologies	80.0	92	100.0	89	20.0	25.0
Architecture and building	62.0	16	70.2	17	8.2	13.2
Agriculture and environmental studies	80.0	21	92.0	21	12.0	15.0
Health	75.0	63	94.0	63	19.0	25.3
Education	75.0	113	80.0	120	5.0	6.7
Management and commerce	95.0	330	110.0	293	15.0	15.8
Society and culture	75.9	140	95.0	141	19.1	25.2
Creative arts	70.0	17	72.0	22	2.0	2.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>96.0</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>20.0</b>
<b>Females</b>						
Natural and physical sciences	65.0	50	83.0	53	18.0	27.7
Information technology	70.5	14	82.0	21	11.5	16.3
Engineering and related technologies	71.0	27	96.1	24	25.1	35.4
Architecture and building	58.0	45	70.0	42	12.0	20.7
Agriculture and environmental studies	65.2	26	82.2	26	17.0	26.1
Health	65.0	255	82.2	227	17.2	26.5
Education	63.4	311	76.0	350	12.6	19.9
Management and commerce	79.0	267	90.0	244	11.0	13.9
Society and culture	65.0	307	81.0	308	16.0	24.6
Creative arts	54.3	38	67.2	51	12.9	23.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67.0</b>	<b>1,340</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>19.4</b>
<b>Total</b>						
Natural and physical sciences	66.0	103	85.0	112	19.0	28.8
Information technology	75.0	55	85.0	73	10.0	13.3
Engineering and related technologies	76.0	119	100.0	113	24.0	31.6
Architecture and building	58.0	61	70.0	59	12.0	20.7
Agriculture and environmental studies	70.0	47	87.0	47	17.0	24.3
Health	68.0	318	85.0	290	17.0	25.0
Education	66.0	424	78.0	470	12.0	18.2
Management and commerce	87.5	597	100.0	537	12.5	14.3
Society and culture	70.0	447	85.0	449	15.0	21.4
Creative arts	60.0	55	67.2	73	7.2	12.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71.6</b>	<b>2,226</b>	<b>86.0</b>	<b>2,223</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>20.1</b>

The highest median salary earned by postgraduates of either sex in 2013 was observed for males from the management and commerce field (\$110,000), whereas the lowest was earned by females from the creative arts field (\$67,200). The widest reported earnings gap for the sexes in 2013 was observed for postgraduates from the field of management and commerce (22.2 per cent favouring males). The smallest gap was observed among graduates from the field of architecture and building (0.3 per cent favouring males).



## 6. Graduate Outcomes Five-Years Out

Of the graduates in or seeking full-time work at the time of the 2008 AGS, 86.8 per cent of male bachelor degree graduates and 85.2 per cent of female bachelor degree graduates were already in full-time employment. This figure increased strongly in the first three years since course completion (2008 – 2011) and remained fairly stable in the last two years (2012 – 2013).

**Table 16. Bachelor graduates available for full-time employment, by sex, 2008, 2011 and 2013 (% , n)**

	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 n
<b>Males</b>						
2008	86.8	8.5	4.7	13.2	100	341
2011	93.6	3.2	3.2	6.4	100	373
2013	94.1	3.1	2.8	5.9	100	354
<b>Females</b>						
2008	85.2	10.7	4.0	14.7	100	522
2011	93.4	5.1	1.6	6.7	100	573
2013	92.4	4.2	3.4	7.6	100	642
<b>Total</b>						
2008	85.9	9.8	4.3	14.1	100	863
2011	93.4	4.3	2.2	6.5	100	946
2013	93.0	3.8	3.2	7.0	100	996

As seen in Table 17, the overall proportion of graduates employed in management and professional roles grew steeply between 2008 and 2011, and more gradually between 2011 and 2013. The proportion of graduates employed in professional roles fell over the period 2011-13, with many graduates likely making the transition to managerial positions once they had accumulated the necessary experience and skills.

**Table 17. Broad occupation types, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, by sex, 2008, 2011 and 2013 (% , n)**

	Males			Females			Total		
	2008	2011	2013	2008	2011	2013	2008	2011	2013
Managers	6.1	12.6	15.4	3.6	7.0	16.5	4.5	9.0	16.1
Professionals	66.3	73.6	69.4	62.2	74.9	69.3	63.7	74.4	69.3
<i>Total man. and prof.</i>	<i>72.4</i>	<i>86.2</i>	<i>84.8</i>	<i>65.8</i>	<i>81.9</i>	<i>85.8</i>	<i>68.2</i>	<i>83.4</i>	<i>85.4</i>
Technicians	4.4	3.4	1.5	4.1	3.1	1.9	4.2	3.2	1.7
Community workers	5.5	2.5	4.1	6.6	4.2	2.2	6.2	3.6	2.9
Clerical workers	10.5	6.5	8.0	14.3	8.6	8.8	12.9	7.8	8.5
Other occupations	7.1	1.4	1.6	9.3	2.2	1.4	8.5	1.9	1.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>TOTAL n</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>999</b>	<b>997</b>	<b>1,086</b>

Full-time employed bachelor degree graduates earned a median salary of \$80,000 at the time of the 2013 BGS, representing a 66.7 per cent increase in the five years since 2008, at which point their median salary was \$48,000 (see Table 18). This growth is broadly consistent with growth observed in the 2012 BGS.

**Table 18. Median salary, bachelor graduates in full-time employment, by sex and broad field of education, 2008, 2011 and 2013 (\$'000, n, %)**

	2008		2011		2013		Growth	
	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	n	\$'000	%
<b>Males</b>								
Natural and physical sciences	46.0	15	70.0	19	78.0	31	32.0	69.6
Information technology	52.0	33	75.0	36	80.0	28	28.0	53.8
Engineering and related technologies	56.0	60	80.0	58	80.0	37	24.0	42.9
Architecture and building	†	7	†	5	†	8	†	†
Agriculture and environmental studies	†	6	†	8	†	7	†	†
Health	52.0	25	78.0	23	75.0	20	23.0	44.2
Education	50.0	14	62.5	16	88.5	12	38.5	77.0
Management and commerce	50.0	60	70.3	66	83.2	48	33.2	66.4
Society and culture	48.3	34	65.0	42	81.0	57	32.7	67.7
Creative arts	†	7	67.5	10	70.0	18	†	†
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>70.0</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>59.7</b>
<b>Females</b>								
Natural and physical sciences	46.9	31	60.0	38	85.0	63	38.1	81.2
Information technology	†	8	†	7	†	6	†	†
Engineering and related technologies	56.0	15	72.0	19	84.8	12	28.8	51.4
Architecture and building	†	9	57.5	12	†	8	†	†
Agriculture and environmental studies	†	9	56.0	13	62.0	13	†	†
Health	47.0	65	63.0	74	80.0	60	33.0	70.2
Education	47.0	43	64.5	42	80.0	38	33.0	70.2
Management and commerce	45.0	79	68.0	88	75.0	69	30.0	66.7
Society and culture	45.0	98	64.5	110	75.5	130	30.5	67.8
Creative arts	43.5	30	51.0	49	80.0	53	36.5	83.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.1</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>62.7</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>79.0</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>71.4</b>
<b>Total</b>								
Natural and physical sciences	46.8	46	61.0	57	81.0	94	34.2	73.1
Information technology	52.0	41	75.0	43	77.4	34	25.4	48.8
Engineering and related technologies	56.0	75	75.0	77	80.0	49	24.0	42.9
Architecture and building	43.8	16	59.0	17	76.5	16	32.7	74.7
Agriculture and environmental studies	45.0	15	56.5	21	63.5	20	18.5	41.1
Health	48.0	90	65.0	97	78.3	80	30.3	63.1
Education	48.2	57	64.0	58	81.5	50	33.3	69.1
Management and commerce	46.0	139	70.0	154	80.0	117	34.0	73.9
Society and culture	46.0	132	65.0	152	78.0	187	32.0	69.6
Creative arts	44.0	37	52.0	59	79.0	71	35.0	79.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>66.7</b>

Education graduates were the highest overall earners five years after course completion, with a median salary of \$81,500; however there was little difference between most fields of education in terms of median earnings five years after course completion. The two fields with the lowest median salaries in 2013 – architecture and building, and agriculture and environmental studies – both contain very few cases. If these two are ignored, only \$4,100 separates the fields with the highest and lowest median salaries. The field with the strongest salary growth over the five-year period under review was creative arts (79.5 per cent).

## Appendix A1: Participating higher education institutions

**Table A1. Included higher education institutions, 2013**

Three-year survey	Five-year survey
Australian Catholic University	Australian Catholic University
Australian National University	Australian College of Theology
Avondale College	Avondale College
Bond University	Bond University
CQUniversity	Charles Darwin University
Charles Darwin University	Charles Sturt University
Charles Sturt University	Deakin University
Deakin University	Edith Cowan University
Edith Cowan University	Flinders University of South Australia
Flinders University of South Australia	Griffith University
Griffith University	James Cook University
James Cook University	La Trobe University
La Trobe University	Macquarie University
Macquarie University	MCD University of Divinity
MCD University of Divinity	Monash University
Monash University	Murdoch University
Murdoch University	RMIT
RMIT	Southern Cross University
Southern Cross University	Swinburne University of Technology
Swinburne University of Technology	University of Ballarat
University of Ballarat	University of Melbourne
University of Canberra	University of New South Wales
University of Melbourne	University of Newcastle
University of New England	University of Notre Dame, Australia
University of New South Wales	University of Queensland
University of Newcastle	University of South Australia
University of Notre Dame, Australia	University of Southern Queensland
University of Queensland	University of Sydney
University of Southern Queensland	University of Tasmania
University of Sydney	University of Technology, Sydney
University of Tasmania	University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Technology, Sydney	Victoria University
University of the Sunshine Coast	
University of Western Australia	
University of Western Sydney	
Victoria University	

## Appendix A2: Respondent Characteristics

Table A2. BGS respondent characteristics, 2013 (% , n)

	Three-year survey				Five-year survey	
	Bachelor degree		Postgraduate		Bachelor degree	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
<b>Broad field of education</b>						
Natural and physical sciences	10.6	695	5.1	195	13.6	170
Information technology	3.1	205	2.7	104	4.7	59
Engineering and related technologies	5.3	351	4.3	165	7.7	96
Architecture and building	2.3	149	2.3	88	2.4	30
Agriculture and environmental studies	2.5	163	1.9	75	2.6	32
Health	16.8	1,101	14.6	564	11.6	145
Education	8.8	577	20.7	796	6.7	84
Management and commerce	16.0	1,051	22.0	846	16.4	206
Society and culture	26.4	1,734	22.3	857	25.4	318
Creative arts	8.2	540	4.2	160	9.1	114
<b>Means of financing study</b>						
HECS paid upfront	18.1	1,190	12.3	469	19.4	239
HECS deferred some or all	75.3	4,939	29.8	1,139	74.9	923
International fee-paying student	1.1	69	2.1	79	1.0	12
Australian fee-paying student	5.5	359	46.7	1,786	4.5	56
APA or RTS research student	0.0	1	9.2	350	0.2	2
<b>Main attendance type</b>						
Mainly full time	82.9	5,434	37.2	1,430	85.7	1,062
Mainly part time	17.1	1,123	62.8	2,414	14.3	177
<b>Main attendance mode</b>						
Internal (on campus)	82.1	5,383	50.5	1,941	87.6	1,085
External (off campus)	9.0	590	38.4	1,477	5.6	70
Mixed mode (internal and external)	8.9	585	11.1	425	6.8	84
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	32.6	2,143	35.9	1,381	35.9	450
Female	67.3	4,419	64.0	2,464	64.0	802
Unknown	0.1	4	0.1	5	0.2	2
<b>Age group</b>						
Under 25	65.8	4,316	9.4	361	69.9	875
25 and over	34.2	2,244	90.6	3,482	30.1	377
<b>Main language spoken at home</b>						
English	88.6	5,803	88.8	3,407	89.1	1,102
Other	11.4	749	11.2	428	10.9	135
<b>Disability identification</b>						
Yes	3.0	199	3.0	115	1.9	23
No	97.0	6,358	97.0	3,728	98.1	1,213
<b>Paid work during final year of study</b>						
Yes	82.2	5,362	86.2	3,284	82.8	989
No	17.8	1,158	13.8	525	17.2	206

**Appendix A3: Three year and five year survey cohorts**

**Table A3. BGS cohorts, 2013 (% , n)**

Survey type	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<i><b>BGS 2013 (3 year survey)</b></i>			Graduation Year	AGS			BGS (3 year)
<i><b>BGS 2013 (5 year survey)</b></i>	Graduation Year	AGS			BGS (3 year)		BGS (5 year)





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