



2020 Macquarie University Graduate Destination Survey

Final Report

March 2021

Office of Business Intelligence and Reporting (BIR)

Executive Summary

- The Macquarie University Graduate Destination Survey (MQGDS) was initiated in 2016 to understand the labour force outcomes of recent graduates within one year of their course completion in accordance with the QS Employability Ranking criteria.
- In 2020, two rounds of fieldwork were conducted in May and November with a total population of 9,776 graduates. 2,356 surveys were completed with 2,287 usable responses received, constituting an effective response rate of 23.4 per cent. The response rate in 2020 increased slightly by 1.7 percentage points from the 2019 MQGDS.¹
- Overall, 82 per cent of graduates completing the survey, were active in the labour market (i.e., working full-time, working part-time or casual and/or seeking full-time or part-time work, and not working and seeking full-time or part-time employment); 15 per cent of the graduates were enrolled in further full-time study, and 3 per cent were not working and not seeking any work, and 0.4 per cent were unavailable for any work or study. Percent of graduates active in labour market fell by 8 percentage points compared to the 2019 MQGDS (90 per cent in 2019)².
- 88 per cent of the responding graduates were employed overall, either in full-time or part-time employment, close to one year after course completion (this excludes those graduates enrolled in further full-time study or not available for employment or study). The overall employment rate significantly declined by 6 percentage points from 2019 MQGDS (94 per cent in 2019).
- 73 per cent of the responding graduates, available for full-time employment (that is, working full-time and/or seeking full-time employment), were working full-time at the time of this survey. Full-time employment rate significantly dropped by 9 percentage points from the 2019 MQGDS (82 per cent in 2019)³. The decline in full-time overall employment rates was most likely due to the weakening of labour market opportunities for new graduates from mid-2019 and economic and social restrictions due to COVID-19 that worsened the employment outcome for graduates in 2020.⁴
- Overall, 66 per cent of employed graduates were working as managers or professionals. Postgraduate research graduates were most likely to be working as managers or professionals (85 per cent), followed by the postgraduate coursework graduates (75 per cent), and undergraduates (55 per cent).

¹ The 2019 MQGDS report is available at: https://www.mq.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/749261/2019-MQGDS_Report-for-web-publication_Final-10-Feb-2020.pdf

² Differences in percent to graduates active in labour market, as reported in the 2019 and 2020 MQGDS, were found to be statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

³ The decline in the full-time employment rate between 2019 and 2020 MQGDS was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

⁴ ABS Labour Force Survey showed that the national unemployment rate increased to 5.3% in October 2019 and then 7.5% in July 2020 (seasonally adjusted). See: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release#unemployment>

- Overall, the majority of graduates completing undergraduate or postgraduate coursework programs were found to be working in private sector (71 per cent for both the cohorts), while the majority of graduates who completed a postgraduate research degree were working in the public sector (48 per cent).
- 88 per cent of graduates were found to be working for an employer and 91 per cent of graduates were working in Australia.
- A significant majority of employed undergraduates (53 per cent) and postgraduate coursework graduates (58 per cent) mentioned that their qualification was not a formal requirement of their job; while significantly more postgraduate research graduates (58 per cent), agreed that their award was a formal requirement for their current employment.⁵
- When the graduates were asked how important their qualification was to do the current job, overall, 76 per cent of the employed graduates expressed that their qualification was ‘fairly important’ to ‘very important’. Significantly, more postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates (85 and 78 per cent respectively) mentioned that their qualification was important for their current job/career, than undergraduates (73 per cent).
- Overall, 54 per cent of the graduates agreed that their qualification was ‘fairly or very much’ related to their current employment, compared to 46 per cent of graduates that mentioned their qualification was ‘little or not at all’ related to their current employment. The agreement was highest for the postgraduate coursework cohort at 60 per cent and lowest for the undergraduate cohort at 50 per cent.

⁵ Significant at $p < 0.05$

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Introduction

The Macquarie University Graduate Destination Survey (MQGDS) was first administered in 2016. The MQGDS focuses on understanding the labour force outcomes of recent graduates within 12 months of their course completion in accordance with the [QS Employability Ranking criteria](#).⁶ The survey was implemented as a recommendation by the University Ranking Taskforce to address the gap in employability data collection for pilot QS Employability Rankings in 2015.

The objectives of this survey were to:

- collect information on graduate employment outcome and further study close to one year after course completion as required by the QS Employability Ranking.
- provide information to faculties, career advisors, and other stakeholders within the University on employment outcomes and further study, collected close to one year after course completion. The Graduate Outcome Survey (GOS) administered since 2016 under the [QILT](#)⁷ is scheduled four months after completion of a course, a very short time to find graduate employment in the current market scenario (see Ref 1 and 2). Moreover, the GOS follows the labour force model of the Australia Bureau of Statistics, where graduates enrolled in a further full-time study were included in the calculation of the employment rates.⁸ Following the QS employability criteria, MQGDS excludes graduates enrolled in further full-time study from the calculation of employment rates.

This report presents the employment and further study outcomes of the graduates as collected by the 2020 MQGDS.

2020 MQGDS Sample

The population of the 2020 MQGDS (that is, 9,776 graduates) were students who completed a course in 2019 within Australia (onshore) and had a valid email address at the time of course completion. 2020 MQGDS population frame was drawn from the 2019 Past Course Completion file submitted to Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

⁶ See details on the QS Employability Rankings in <http://www.iu.qs.com/university-rankings/indicator-graduate-employment/>

⁷ <https://www.qilt.edu.au/>

⁸ For details of the methodology of the Graduate Outcome Survey, see: [2020 Graduate Outcome Survey National Report](#)

Fieldwork

Two rounds of fieldwork were conducted with graduates eleven months after completion of their course. Round 1 was conducted between 1 and 30 May 2020, following a course completion between 1 January and 30 June 2019. Round 2 was conducted between 1 and 30 November 2020, following a course completion between 1 July and 30 December 2019. The data collection mode was online where four emails were sent to the graduates from the Office of Business Intelligence and Reporting in each round of the survey. A breakdown of collection per round is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. 2020 MQGDS collection summary

Survey elements	Round 1 May 2020	Round 2 November 2020	Total Collection
No. of in-scope graduates	1,528	8,248	9,776
No of completed Survey	363	1,993	2,356
Overall response rate	23.8%	24.2%	24.1%
No. of completed survey that can be useable	358	1,929	2,287
Effective response rate	23.4%	23.4%	23.4%
Data collection period	1 May - 30 May 2020	1 Nov - 30 Nov 2020	
Data collection mode	Online	Online	
Analytic unit	Graduate	Graduate	

Findings

Out of 2,356 responses received, 2,287 were usable, constituting a response rate of 23.4 per cent (Table 1 above). Representativeness of the response sample is presented in Table 2 below, where the response sample has been compared to the population with respect to some of the demographic and course related variables.

Table 2. Representativeness of the 2020 MQGDS response sample

Sub-Groups	Sample		Population		Proportion of Population
	n	%	N	%	
Broad Level of study					
UG	1,270*	55.5	6,323	64.7	20%
PG Coursework	774**	33.8	2,926	29.9	26%
PG Research	243***	10.6	527	5.4	46%
Citizenship					
Domestic	1,519	66.4	6,177	63.2	25%
International	768	33.6	3,599	36.8	21%
Gender					
Female	1,306	57.1	5,224	53.4	25%
Male	981	42.9	4,552	46.6	22%
Type of Attendance					
Full-time	2,106	92.1	9,244	94.6	23%
Part-time	181	7.9	532	5.4	34%
Mode of Attendance					
Internal	2,114	92.4	9,268	94.8	23%
External	173	7.6	508	5.2	34%
Grand Total	2,287****	100.0	9,776	100.0	23.4%

* the sample size is representative of the undergraduate population at $\pm 2.5\%$ Margin of Error at 95% confidence level,

** the sample size is representative of the postgraduate coursework population at $\pm 3.0\%$ Margin of Error at 95% confidence level,

*** the sample size is representative of the postgraduate research population at $\pm 4.6\%$ Margin of Error at 95% confidence level,

**** the overall sample size is representative of the population at $\pm 1.8\%$ Margin of Error at 95% confidence level.

Table 2 presents the comparison of proportion of sample to population for some sub-groups. Both postgraduate coursework and undergraduate levels were slightly under represented, while postgraduate research level was over represented in the sample. Domestic, female, part-time and external graduates and were also slightly over represented in the sample. Overall, it was found that the sample was representative of the population at a small margin of error ($\pm 1.8\%$ margin of error) at 95% confidence level. Moreover, except for the postgraduate research cohort, the samples for other cohorts were found to be representative of the population with a small margin of error.

Section A. Graduate Outcome

A.1. Destination of graduates by broad levels of award

This section examines the progress of graduates in their career, eleven months after their course completion by broad levels of award, comparing employment and further study outcomes. Detailed definitions of graduate outcome used in this study can be found in Appendix A. To understand the reliability of the data, this report presents confidence intervals (CI) for each result, either in parentheses in a table (with left number representing the lower CI, and right number the upper CI) or presented as “whisker” on a bar in a figure. The confidence interval is the interval within which the actual proportion for the population *is predicted* to fall. The smaller the whisker on a bar or the smaller the gap between upper and lower CI, the greater the confidence is that the information is *reliable*. Overall, the results shown in this section were found to be reliable as the confidence intervals were small for most of the proportions, except for some estimated values for the postgraduate research cohort.

A.1.1. Available for full-time employment and full-time employment rate

Table A.1.1 examines the full-time employment outcomes of the graduates by broad levels of award. Outcomes (or destinations) include graduates available for full-time employment (that is, those in full-time employment⁹ as well as those seeking full-time employment), graduates in full-time study, graduates seeking only part-time or casual employment (whether in it, or looking for it), graduates not working and not seeking any, and those who are unavailable for full-time study or employment. More than half of Macquarie University graduates (64.3 per cent) completing the survey, were available for full-time employment at the time of survey, highest being the postgraduate coursework graduates 74.4 per cent), followed by those graduates who completed an undergraduate award (59.2 per cent) and a postgraduate research award (58.8).

⁹ ‘Full-time’ employment is defined as working in a job or in multiple jobs totalling to 35 hours or more per week; ‘part-time’ or ‘casual’ employment is defined as working less than 35 hours per week in a job or in multiple jobs.

Table A.1.1. Main activity of all survey respondents by broad levels of award – Full-time employment

Broad level of Award	Available for full-time employment (see Table A.1.1a)		In further full-time study		In part-time or casual employment, not seeking FT employment		Not working, seeking part-time employment		Not working, not seeking any		Unavailable /Unknown		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Undergraduate	752	59.2 (56.4, 61.8)	217	17.0 (15.0, 19.2)	229	18.0 (15.9, 20.2)	19	1.5 (0.9, 2.3)	43	3.4 (2.5, 4.5)	10	0.8 (0.4, 1.4)	1,270	100
Postgraduate Coursework	576	74.4 * (71.2, 77.3)	77	9.4 (8.0, 12.2)	101	13.0 (10.8, 15.5)	4	0.5 (0.2, 1.2)	16	2.1 (1.2, 3.2)	0		774	100
Postgraduate Research	143	58.8 (52.5, 64.9)	41	16.8 (12.5, 21.9)	46	18.9 (14.3, 24.2)	2	0.8 (0.2, 2.6)	11	4.5 (2.4, 7.7)	0		243	100
Total	1,471	64.3 (62.3, 66.2)	335	14.6 (13.2, 16.1)	376	16.4 (14.9, 18.0)	25	1.1 (0.7, 1.6)	70	3.1 (2.4, 3.8)	10	0.4 (0.2, 0.8)	2,287	100

Note: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at 95% confidence level.

* Significantly higher than undergraduate and postgraduate research cohorts at $p < 0.05$

Table A.1.1 also shows that of all respondents, 14.6 per cent went on to further full-time study. The graduates who completed an undergraduate award were more likely to be enrolled in further full-time study (17 per cent) postgraduate research award were more likely to be enrolled in further full-time study (16.8 per cent), followed by those who completed postgraduate research award (16.8 per cent) and postgraduate coursework award (9.4 per cent).

Table A.1.1a examines the group of graduates available for (that is, in or seeking to be in) full-time employment in more detail. Of those available for full-time employment, 73.2 per cent were working full-time by the time of the survey. A significant variation in full-time employment rate was found across the three levels of award – 77.2 per cent for the postgraduate coursework, 74.1 per cent for postgraduate research and 70 per cent for the undergraduate awards.

Of the remaining graduates who were available for full-time employment, a further 13.2 per cent were working part-time or casual while seeking full-time employment. The remaining 13.4 per cent of the graduates, available for full-time employment, were not working while seeking full-time work. This means, in total, about 26 per cent of the graduates were still seeking a full-time job eleven months after course completion. When this figure was further examined by broad levels of award, graduates who completed an undergraduate award were most likely to be seeking a full-time position (29.8 per cent), followed by the

graduates who completed a postgraduate research award (25.7 per cent) and a postgraduate coursework (22.6 per cent) award. A further detail breakdown of graduates' destination is included in Appendix B.

Table A.1.1a. Graduates available for full-time employment, by broad levels of award

Broad level of Award	Working full-time		Working part-time, seeking full-time work		Not working, seeking full-time work		Total available for full-time employment	
	Count	% (Lower, Upper)	Count	% (Lower, Upper)	Count	% (Lower, Upper)	Count	%
Undergraduate	527	70.0 (66.7, 73.2)	114	15.1 (12.7, 17.8)	111	14.7 (12.3, 17.4)	752	100
Postgraduate Coursework	445	77.2 (73.7, 80.5)	62	10.7 (8.4, 13.4)	69	11.9 (9.5, 14.8)	576	100
Postgraduate Research	106	74.1 (66.5, 80.7)	19	13.2 (8.5, 19.5)	18	12.5 (7.91, 18.7)	143	100
Total	1,078	73.2 (70.9, 75.4)	195	13.2 (11.5, 15.0)	198	13.4 (11.7, 15.2)	1,471	100

Note: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at 95% confidence level.

A few statistical tests were conducted to ensure the reliability of the full-time employment results as the response rate for the survey was as low as 23.4 per cent. Table A.1.1a and Figure A.1.1 present the confidence interval of the full-time employment rates at 95% confidence level. As shown in Table A.1.1a and Figure A.1.1, with a 95% chance that between 70 per cent and 75 per cent of graduates would work full-time within one year of their course completion. Thus, the estimate that, out of all graduates, 73.2 per cent were employed full-time was found to be reliable.

The results were found to be reliable across the other levels of award, except for the postgraduate research award, where the confidence interval was slightly larger than the other cohorts. This could be an impact of the smaller sample size of the postgraduate research cohort compared to the other cohorts in this study.

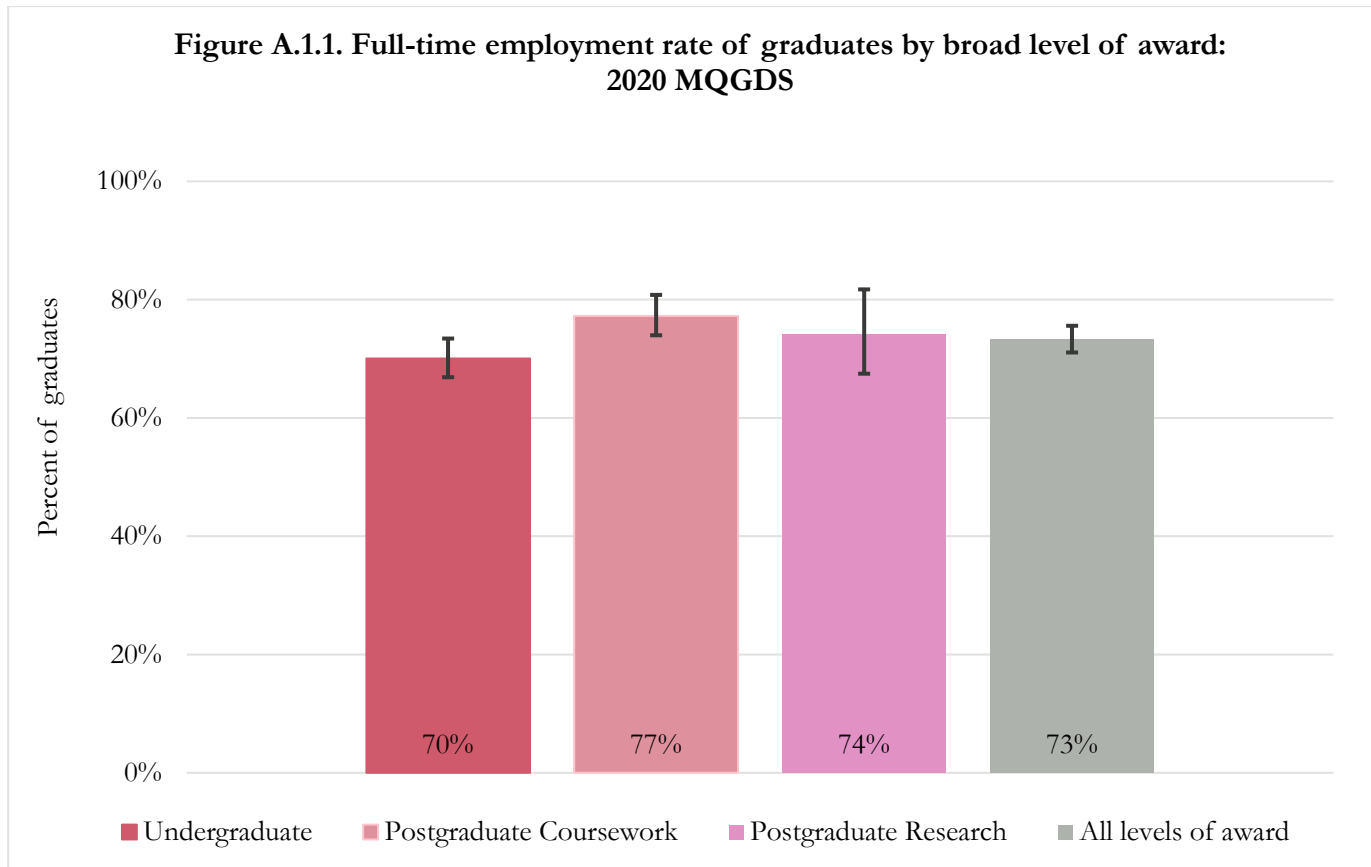
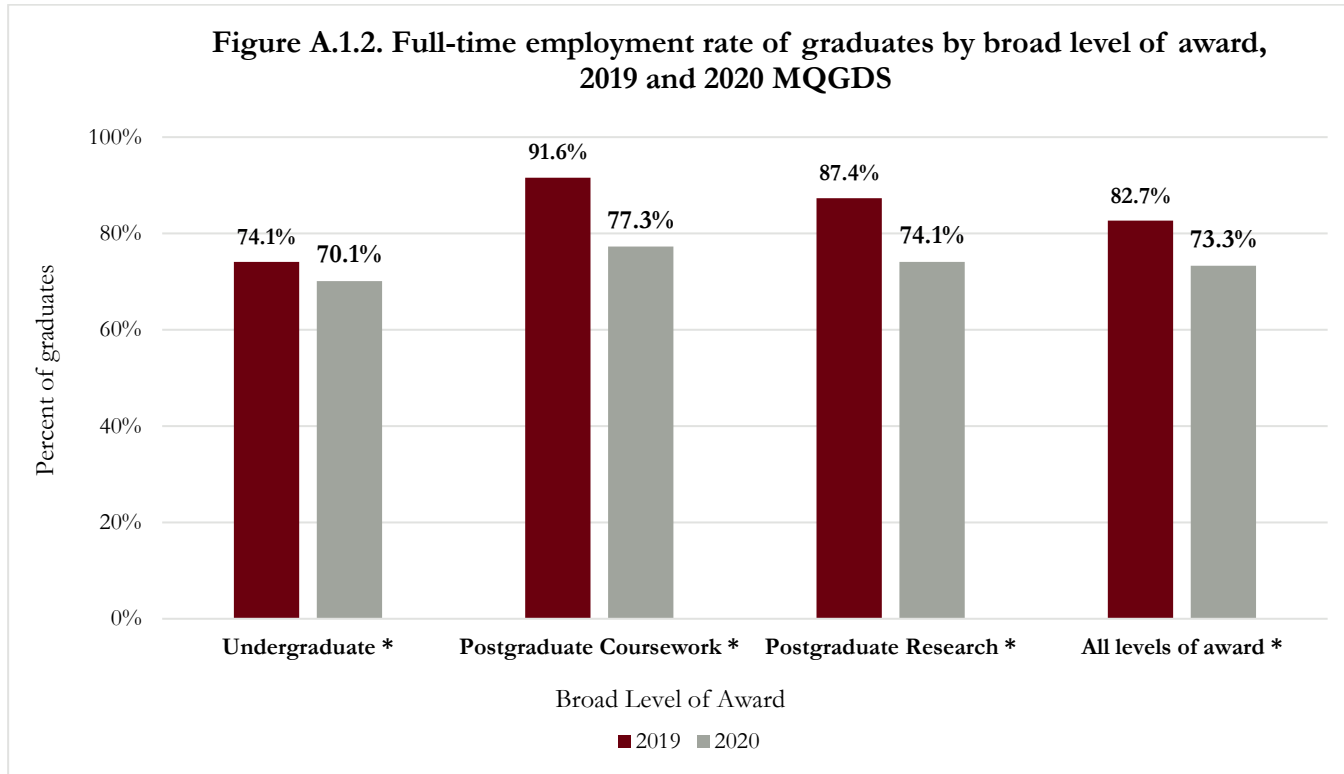


Figure A.1.2. compares the full-time employment rates reported in the 2019 and 2020 MQGDS. It was noted that the full-time employment rate dropped significantly for all levels of study between 2019 and 2020 (significant at $p < 0.05$). This survey was conducted in May and November 2020 when the labour market across the globe was severely hit by onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This result was consistent with the recent ABS data which shows that the national youth unemployment rate rose to 14.3% in August 2020. The ABS Labour Force Surveys indicated a weakening of the labour market for recent graduates which predates the COVID-19 pandemic, but was then worsened by, the onset of the pandemic from February 2020.¹⁰

¹⁰ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/jun-2020>
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release#unemployment>



* Difference was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

A.1.2. Available for overall employment and overall employment rate

The overall employment rate includes the employed graduates (that is working in full-time, part-time or casual employment) as a proportion of those who are available for any employment (working in and/or seeking any employment). This excludes graduates who are enrolled in further full-time study.

Table A.1.2 presents the availability of graduates for overall employment by board levels of award. Overall employment outcomes include graduates available for overall employment (those employed as well as those seeking any employment), graduates in full-time study, those graduates not working and not seeking any (including studying part-time), and those who are unavailable for full-time study or any employment. 81.8 per cent of Macquarie University graduates were available for overall employment at the time of survey, highest being the postgraduate coursework graduates (87.9 per cent), followed by those graduates who completed an undergraduate award (78.4 per cent) and postgraduate research award (78.6 per cent).

Table A.1.2. Main activity of all survey respondents by broad levels of award – Overall employment

Broad level of Award	Available for overall employment (see Table A.1.2a)		In full-time study		Not working, not seeking any (including studying part-time)		Unavailable /Unknown		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Undergraduate	1,000	78.7 (76.4, 80.9)	217	17.0 (15.0, 19.2)	43	3.4 (2.5, 4.5)	10	0.8 (0.4, 1.4)	1,270	100
Postgraduate Coursework	681	87.9 * (85.5, 90.1)	77	9.94 (7.98, 12.2)	16	2.1 (1.2, 3.2)	0		774	100
Postgraduate Research	191	78.6 (73.1, 83.4)	41	16.8 (12.5, 21.9)	11	4.5 (2.4, 7.7)	0		243	100
Total	1,872	81.8 (80.2, 83.3)	335	14.6 (13.2, 16.1)	70	3.1 (2.4, 3.8)	10	0.4 (0.2, 0.8)	2,287	100

Note: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at 95% confidence level.

* Significantly higher than undergraduate and postgraduate research cohorts at $p < 0.05$

Table A.1.2a presents the number of graduates available for overall employment (that is, in or seeking to be in) in more detail. Out of those graduates available for overall employment, 88.1 per cent were working by the time of the survey. Of the remaining graduates who were available for overall employment, a further 11.9 per cent were working while seeking employment. The percentage of graduates in overall employment ranges between 89.5 per cent for postgraduate research, 89.2 per cent for postgraduate coursework, and 87.0 per cent for the undergraduate level of award.

Table A.1.2a. Graduates available for overall employment, by broad level of award

Broad level of Award	Overall employed		Seeking full-time or part-time employment		Total available for overall employment	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Undergraduate	870	87.0 (84.8, 88.9)	130	13.0 (11.0, 15.1)	1,000	100
Postgraduate Coursework	608	89.2 (86.7, 91.4)	73	10.7 (8.56, 13.2)	681	100
Postgraduate Research	171	89.5 (84.5, 93.2)	20	10.4 (6.72, 15.4)	191	100
Total	1,649	88.1 (86.5, 89.4)	223	11.9 (10.5, 13.4)	1,872	100

Note: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at 95% confidence level.

Table A.1.2a and Figure A.1.3 present the confidence interval of the overall employment rates with a 95% confidence level. As shown in Table A.1.2a and Figure A.1.3, with a 95% chance, between 86.5 per cent and 89.4 per cent of graduates will be employed within one year of their course completion. Thus, the estimate that, out of all graduates, 86.8 per cent were employed was found to be reliable. The results were found to be reliable across the other levels of award, except for the postgraduate research award, where the confidence interval was slightly larger than the other cohorts. This could be an impact of the smaller sample size of the postgraduate research cohort compared to the other cohorts in this study.

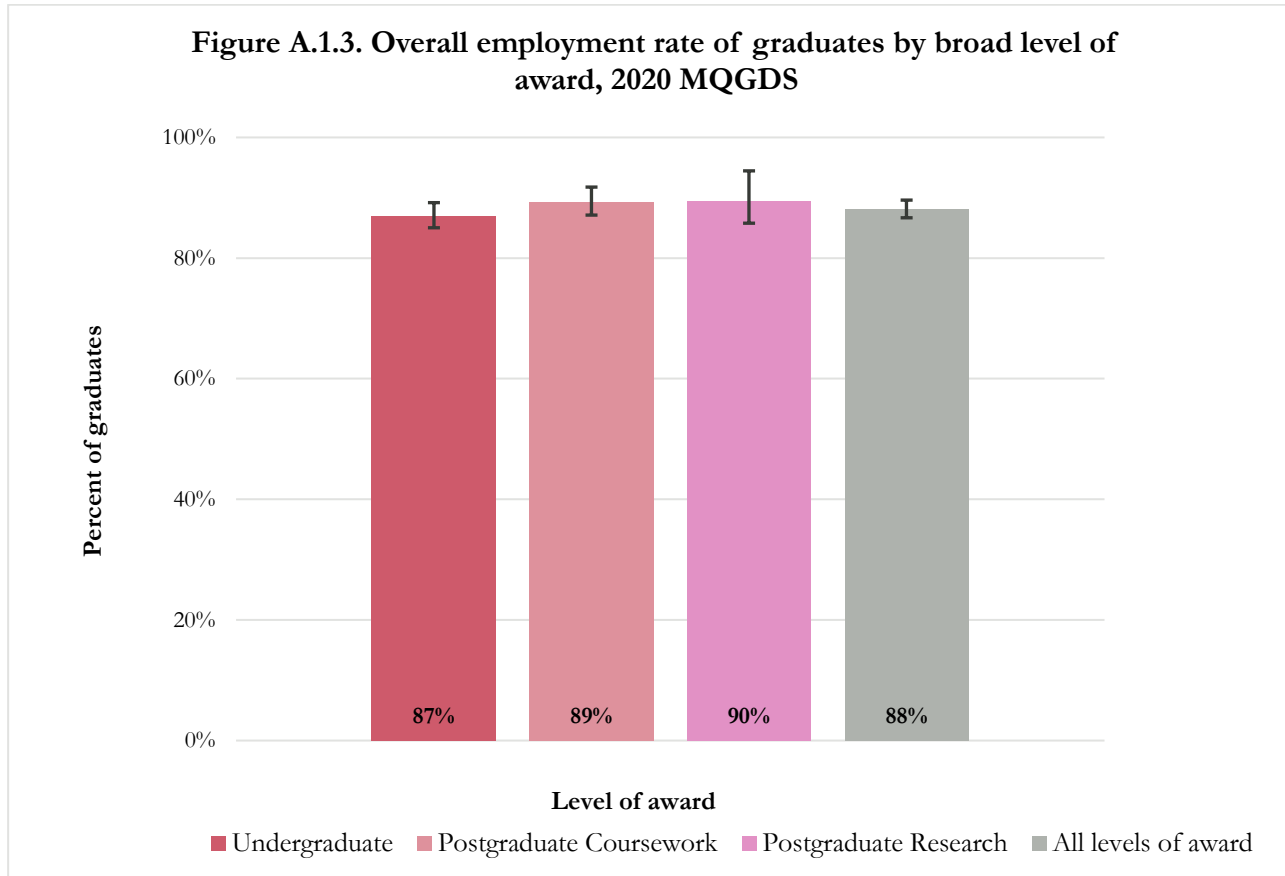
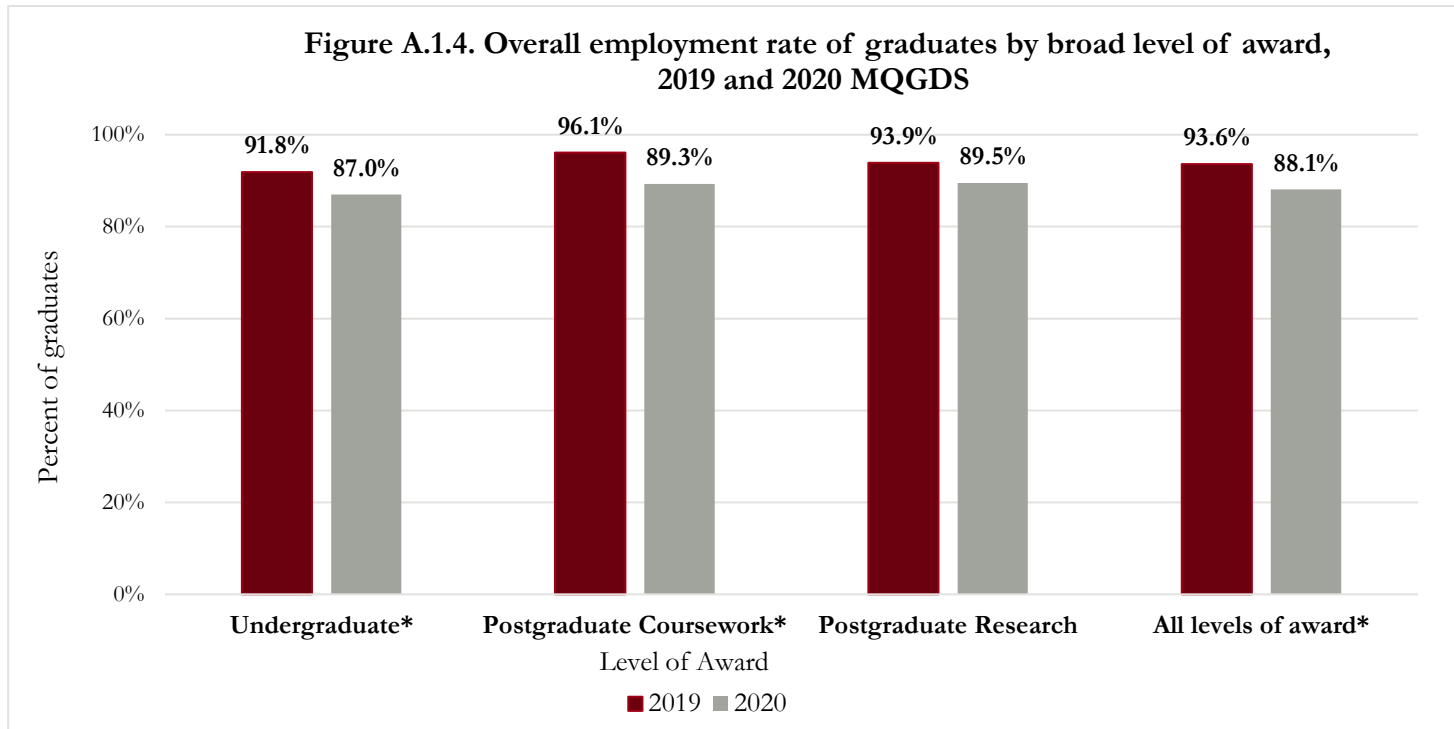


Figure A.1.4 compares the overall employment rates reported in 2019 and 2020 MQGDS. In 2020, the overall employment rate fell significantly across all levels of study, compared to 2019 (significant at $p < 0.05$). This survey was conducted in May and November 2020 when the labour market across the globe was severely hit by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially the retail, hospitality, events and travel and tourism industries, where a higher proportion

of part-time work was available pre-pandemic. This result was consistent with the findings from the 2020 Graduate Outcome Survey conducted by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment and recent ABS Labour Force Surveys ¹¹.



A.2. Destination of graduates by citizenship

Tables A.2 and A.2a present the main activities and full-time employment rates of the domestic and international graduates.

Main activities of the domestic graduates

¹¹ <https://www.qilt.edu.au/docs/default-source/gos-reports/2020-gos/2020-gos-national-report.pdf>
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/jun-2020>

66 per cent of the domestic graduates were available for full-time work, 10 per cent were enrolled in full-time study, about 20 per cent were involved in part-time or casual work but not looking for any full-time work, about 1 per cent of graduates were not working or seeking part-time employment, and about 3 per cent were not working and not seeking any job. Among those who were available for full-time employment, 76 per cent were working full-time and about 24 per cent were seeking full-time work (see Table A.2).

Table A.2. Main activity of survey respondents by citizenship

Graduates' citizenship	Available for full-time employment (see Table A.2a)		In further full-time study		In part-time or casual employment, other activities		Not working, seeking part-time employment		Not working, not seeking any		Unavailable /Unknown		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Domestic	1,004	66.0 * (63.6, 68.4)	148	9.7 (8.3, 11.3)	302	19.8 (17.9, 21.9)	15	1.1 (0.6, 1.7)	47	3.1 (2.3, 4.1)	3	0.2 (0.1, 0.2)	1,519	100
International	467	60.8 (57.3, 64.2)	187	24.3 * (21.4, 27.4)	74	9.6 (7.7, 11.8)	10	2.5 (1.5, 3.8)	23	3.0 (2.0, 4.4)	7	0.9 (0.4, 1.8)	768	100
Total	1,471	64.3 (62.3, 66.2)	335	14.6 (13.2, 16.1)	376	16.4 (14.9, 18.0)	25	1.5 (1.1, 2.1)	70	3.1 (2.4, 3.8)	10	0.4 (0.2, 0.8)	2,287	100

Note: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at 95% confidence level. * Significantly higher than the comparing group.

Table A.2a. Graduates available for full-time employment by citizenship

Graduates' citizenship	Working full-time		Working part-time, seeking full-time work		Not working, seeking full-time work		Total available for full-time employment	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Domestic	766	76.2 * (73.5, 78.8)	126	12.5 (10.6, 14.7)	112	11.1 (9.3, 13.2)	1,004	100
International	312	66.8 (62.4, 70.9)	69	14.7 (11.7, 18.2)	86	18.4 (15.1, 22.1)	467	100
Total	1,078	73.2 (70.9, 75.4)	195	13.2 (11.5, 15.0)	198	13.4 (11.7, 15.2)	1,471	100

Note: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at 95% confidence level. * Significantly higher than the international graduates,

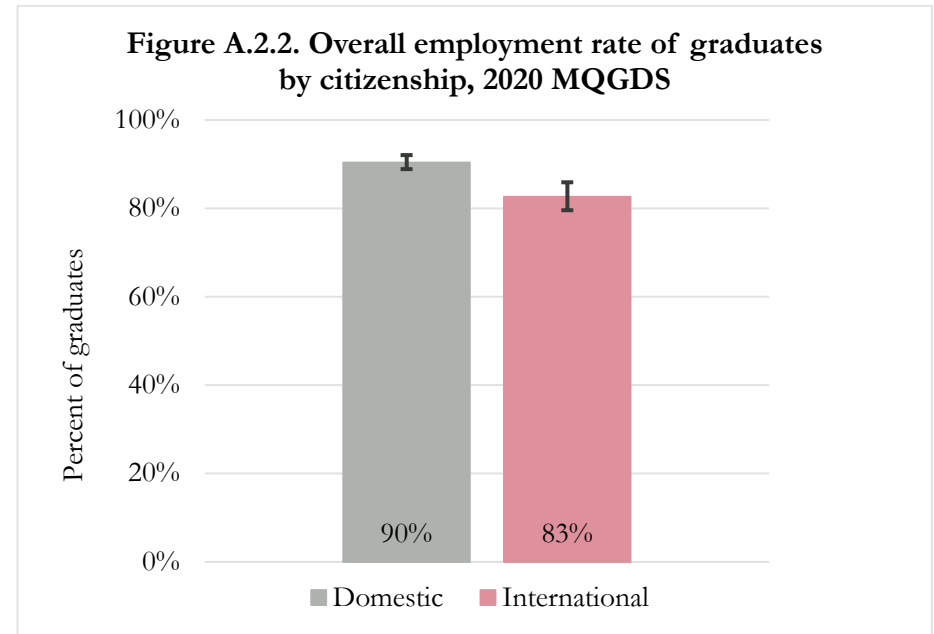
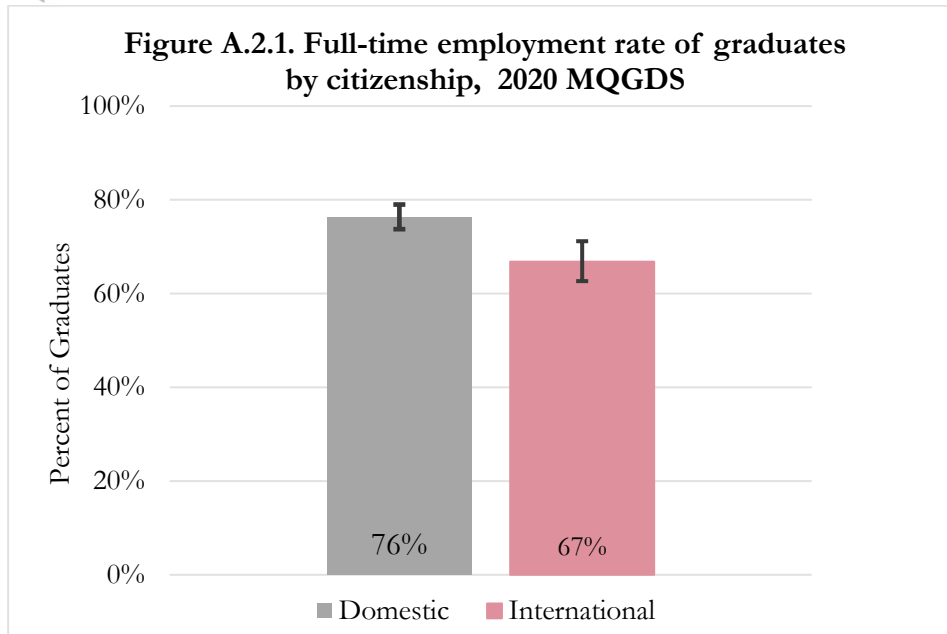
Main activities of the international graduates

At the time of this survey, 61 per cent of the international graduates were available for full-time work, about 24 per cent were enrolled in full-time study, about 10 per cent were involved in part-time or casual work, but not looking for any full-time work, 3 per cent of the graduates were not working and seeking part-time employment, and about 3 per cent were not working and not seeking any job. Among those who were available for full-time employment, 67 per cent were working full-time and only 33 per cent were seeking full-time work.

From Table A.2a it was noted that significantly higher proportion of domestic graduates were employed full-time than international graduates eleven months after their course completion. To the contrary, a higher proportion of international graduates were found to be enrolled in further full time study than the domestic graduates.

Figures A.2.1 and A.2.2 present the indicative confidence intervals (whiskers on the bar) for the full-time and overall employment estimates for domestic and international graduates. Confidence intervals reflect the accuracy and reliability of the estimates and the confidence we can have in those estimates. The confidence intervals for the two cohorts does not overlap, indicating that there was a significant difference between the domestic and international graduates for the full-time employment and overall employment rates. Further *Z* test shows that significantly higher proportion of domestic graduates were in full-time or overall employment than the international graduates (*at p*<0.05) at the time of this survey¹².

¹² Comparison of domestic and international graduates' full time employment rate - *Z*= 5.8, *p*<0.0001, statistically significant at 95% confidence level
Comparison of domestic and international graduates' overall employment rate - *Z*= 5.7, *p*<0.0001, statistically significant at 95% confidence level



Figures A.2.3 and A.2.4 present the full-time and overall employment rates by the graduates' citizenship reported in the 2019 and 2020 MQGDS. It is noted that for both the domestic and international graduates, the employment rates declined significantly.¹³ Again, this result shows a significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job market for new graduates.

¹³ The decline in full-time employment rate and overall employment rate between 2019 and 2020 for both the domestic and international graduates were found to be statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

Figure A.2.3. Full-time employment rate of graduates by citizenship, 2019 and 2020 MQGDS

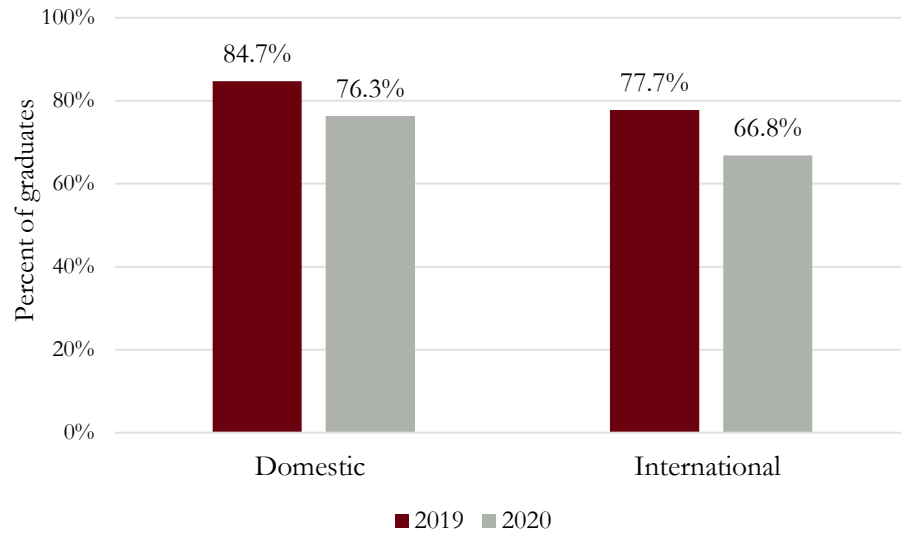
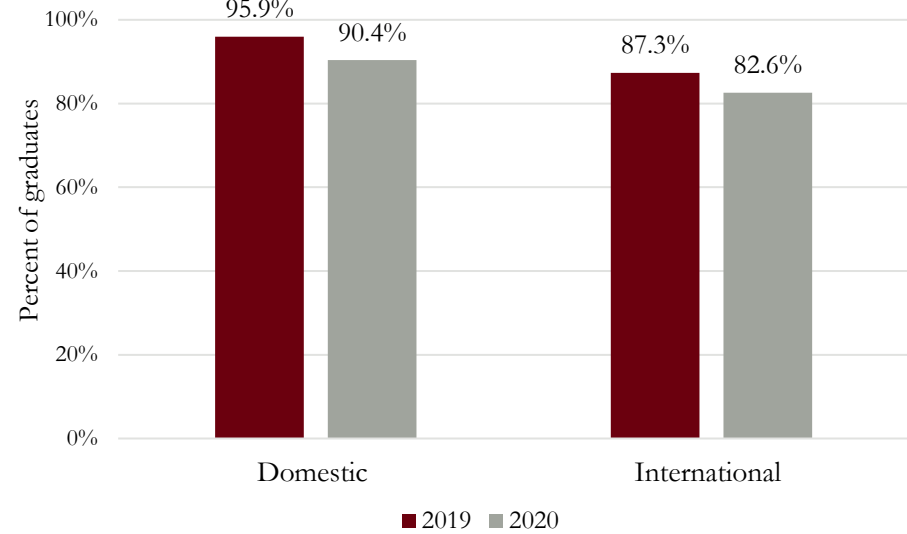
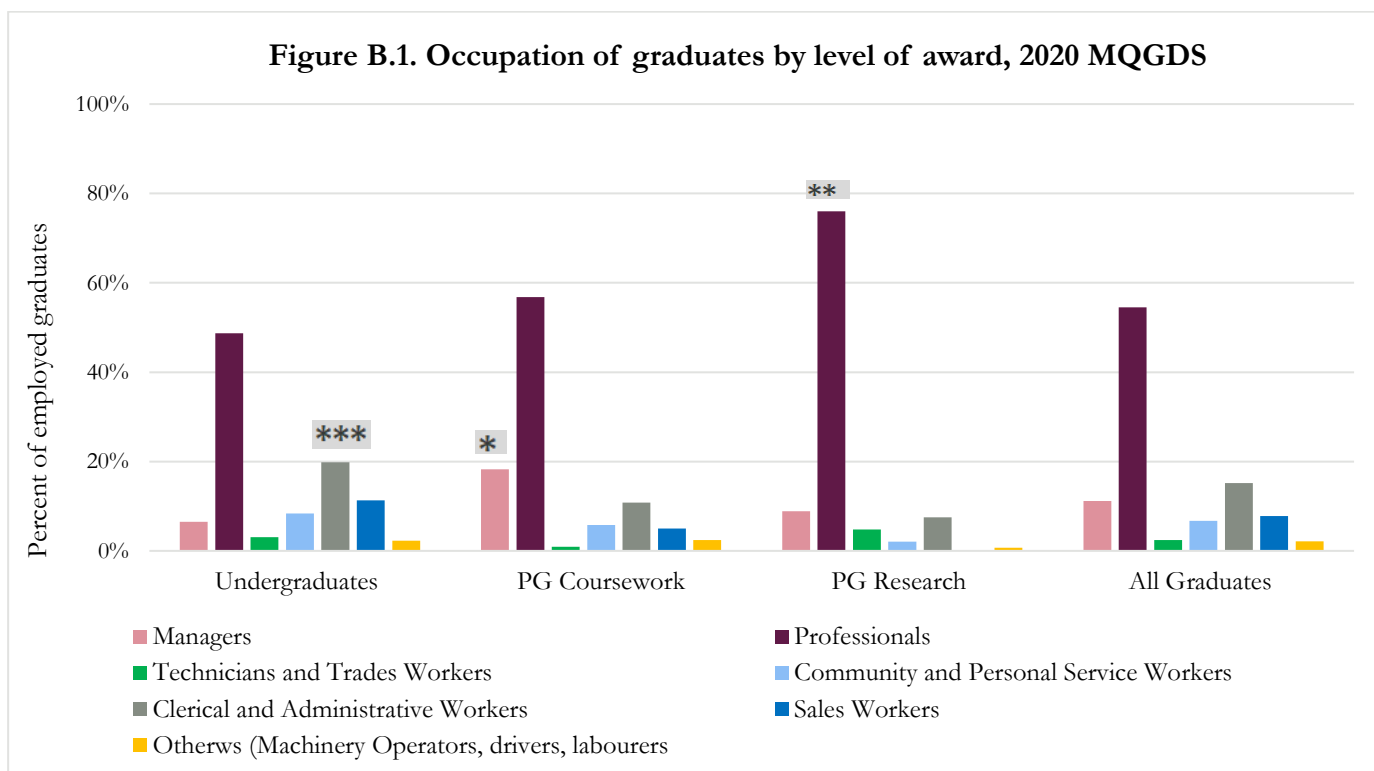


Figure A.2.4. Overall employment rate of graduates by citizenship, 2019 and 2020 MQGDS



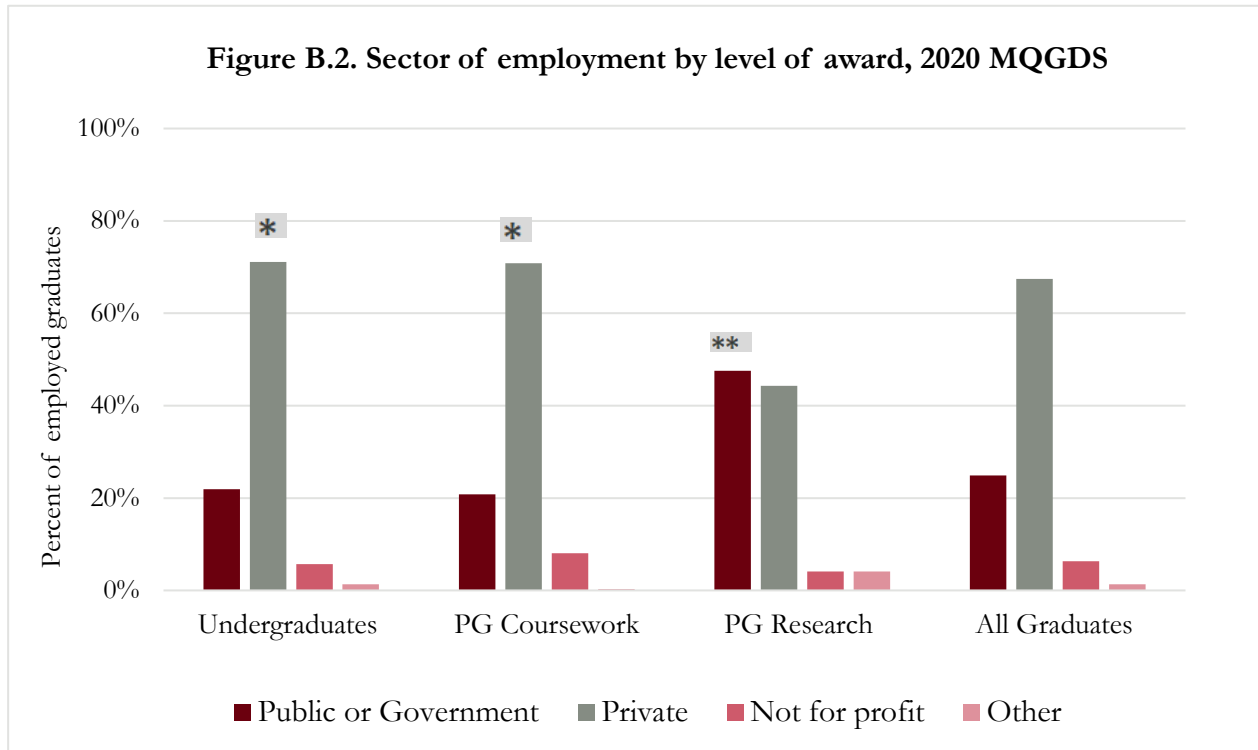
Section B. Occupation of the Graduates, Sector and Location of Employment, Job Search Methods

Figure B.1 presents the main occupation of the respondents by their broad levels of award. Overall, majority of the graduates were working as professionals (54 per cent), followed by managers (11 per cent), clerical and administrative workers (15 per cent), sales workers (8 per cent) and community and personal service workers (7 per cent). A significantly higher proportion of postgraduate coursework graduates were found to be working as managers than the postgraduate research or undergraduate programs, while a significantly higher proportion of postgraduate research graduates were working as professionals than postgraduate coursework or undergraduates. Significantly more undergraduates were found to be working as clerical and administrative workers, sales workers and community workers than postgraduate coursework or research graduates (significant at $p < 0.05$).



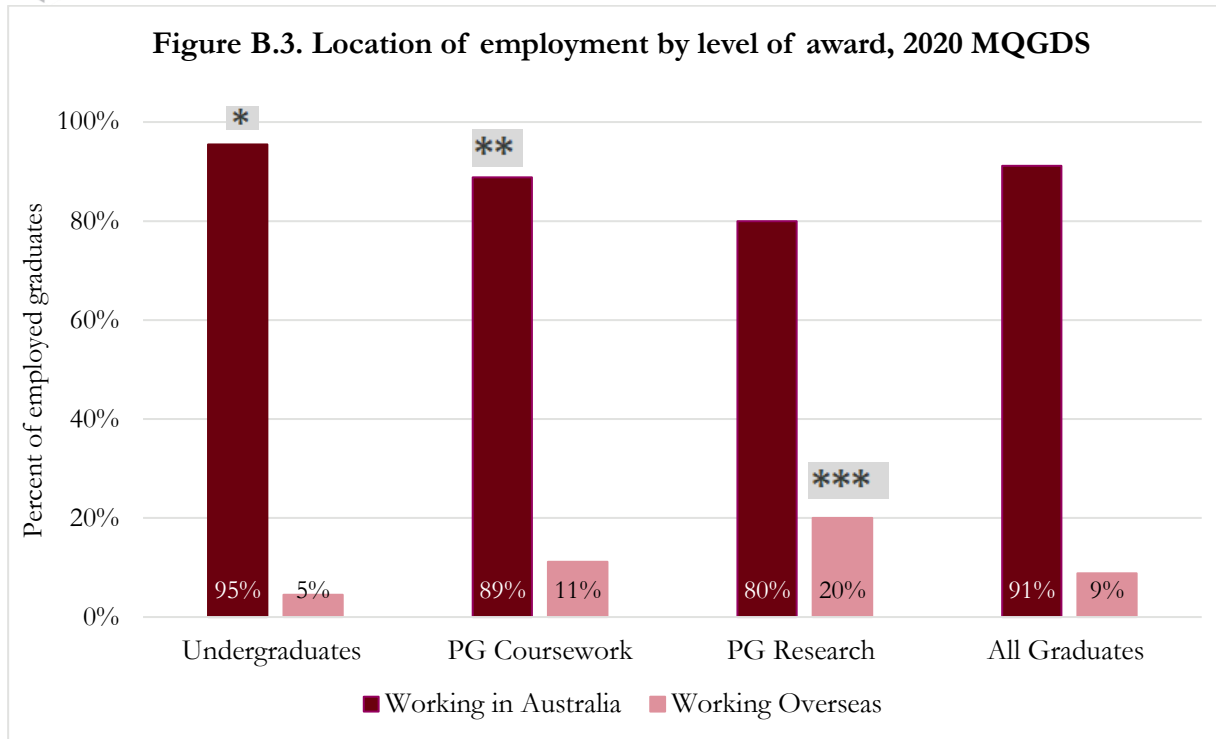
* Significantly higher than undergraduate and postgraduate research cohorts at 95% confidence level, ** Significantly higher than the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework cohorts at 95% confidence level, *** Significantly higher than the postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research cohorts at 95% confidence level.

Figure B.2 shows the sector of employment of the respondents by their broad level of award. Overall, the majority of graduates completing undergraduate or postgraduate coursework programs were employed in the private sector. On the contrary, the majority of postgraduate research graduates were found to be working in the public sector.



* Significantly higher than postgraduate research cohorts at $p < 0.05$, ** Significantly higher than the undergraduate and postgraduate research cohort at $p < 0.05$

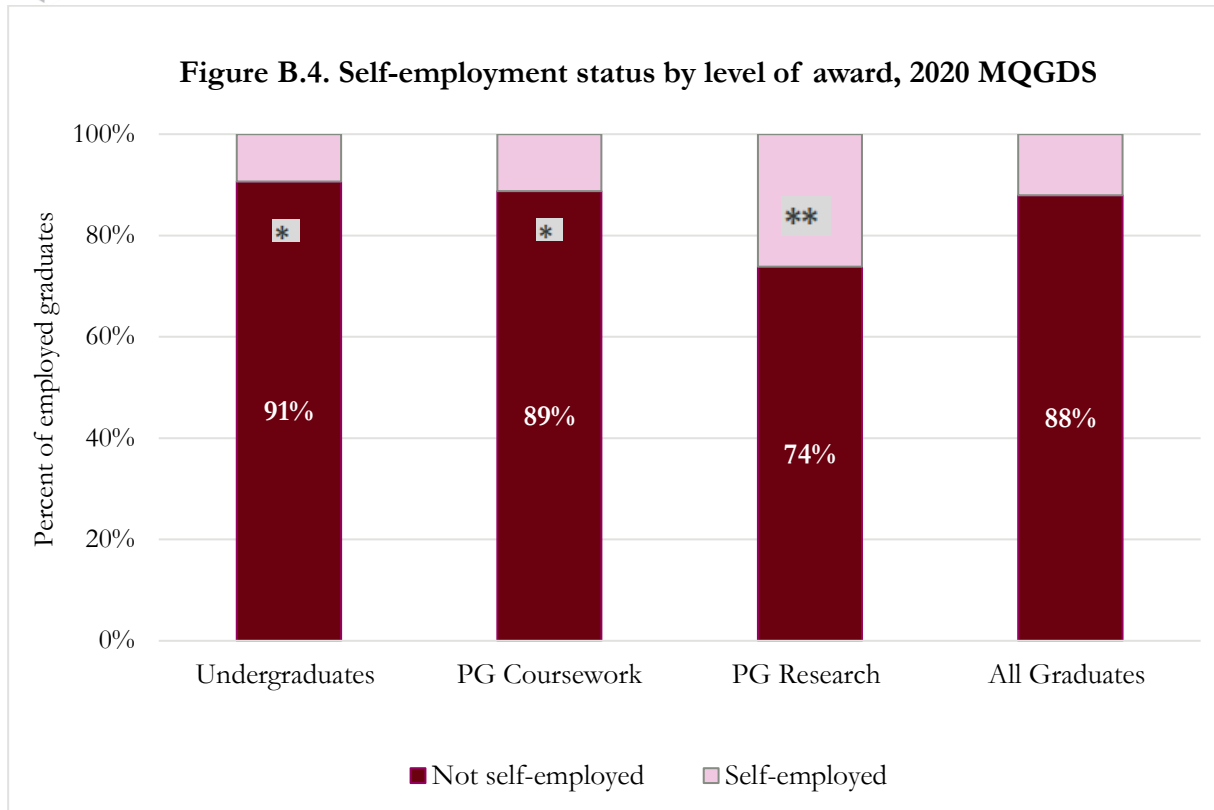
Figure B.3 shows that overall, 91 per cent of all respondents were working in Australia. It was also noticed that out of all three levels of award, a significantly higher proportion of postgraduate research graduates were working overseas.



* Significantly higher than the postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research cohorts at $p < 0.05$, ** Significantly higher than the postgraduate research cohort at $p < 0.05$

*** Significantly higher than the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework cohort at $p < 0.05$,

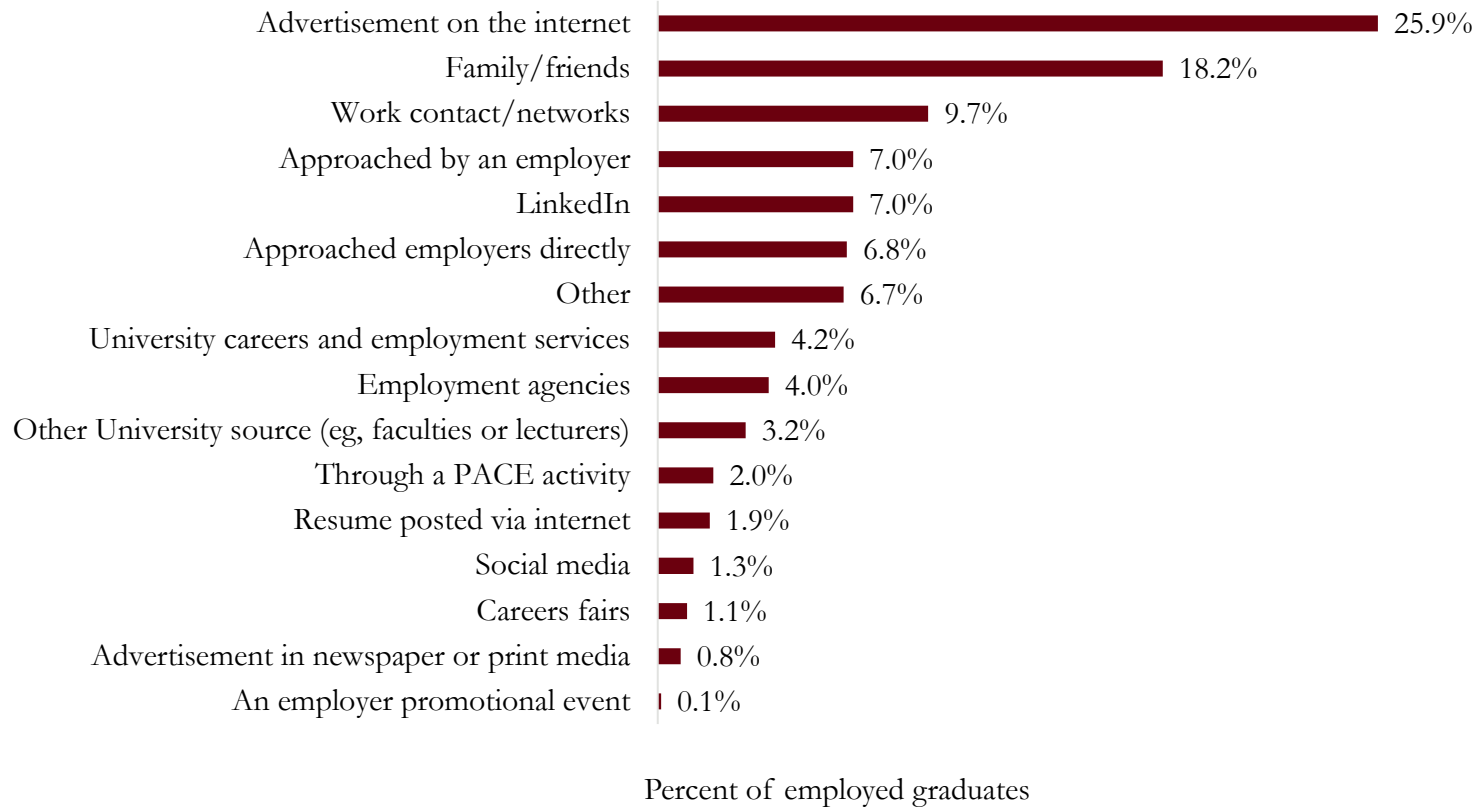
Figure B.4 shows that across all the levels of awards a significantly higher proportion of graduates were working for an employer than were self-employed (significant at $p < 0.05$). Moreover, proportion of self-employed graduates were significantly higher for postgraduate research cohort than undergraduates and postgraduate coursework graduates.



* Significantly higher than the postgraduate research cohort at $p < 0.05$, ** Significantly higher than the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework cohorts at $p < 0.05$

When asked about the job search method for their current job, top five methods reported by graduates were, ‘advertisement on the internet’ (25.9 per cent), ‘friends or family’ (18.2 per cent), ‘work contacts/networks’ (9.7 per cent), ‘approached by an employer’ (7 per cent), and ‘LinkedIn’ (7 per cent) (see Figure B.5). The job search method by level of award is included in Appendix C.

**Figure B.5. Job search method used for the current job: all graduates,
2020 MQGDS**



Section C. Graduate preparedness

The survey also asked the employed graduates how well their course equipped them with the necessary skills to perform in their current job(s). Tables C.1 to C.3 show the relevance and requirement of the qualification of the employed graduates by their broad levels of award. As Table C.1 shows, overall a significantly higher proportion of employed graduates mentioned that their qualification was not a formal requirement (53.8 per cent) than those mentioning that it was a formal requirement (46.1 per cent) for their current employment. A variation by level of award was noticed, where significantly more undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduates expressed that their qualification *was* a not formal requirement of their job than the postgraduate research cohorts.

Table C.1. Qualification a formal requirement

Qualification a formal requirement	Undergraduate*		Postgraduate Coursework		Postgraduate Research *		All Graduates*	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Qualification formal requirement	299	46.9 (43.0, 50.8)	200	41.6 (37.2, 46.0)	82	58.1 (49.9, 66.0)	581	46.1 (43.4, 48.9)
Qualification not formal requirement	338	53.0 (49.1, 56.9)	281	58.4 (53.9, 62.7)	59	41.8 (33.9, 50.0)	678	53.8 (51.0, 56.5)
Total	637	100	481	100	141	100	1,259	100

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at 95% confidence level

* Significant difference is found between qualification being formal requirement or not formal requirement, for all levels of award, undergraduate, postgraduate cohorts at $p < 0.05$.

Table C.2 shows that 53.6 per cent of the employed graduates agreed that their qualification was *'fairly'* or *'very much'* related to their current employment¹⁴. The agreement was highest for the postgraduate coursework cohort at 59.7 per cent, while 52.1 per cent of the postgraduate coursework graduates and 49.4 per cent of undergraduates agreed that their qualification was related to their employment. A significantly higher proportion of the undergraduate cohort (51 per cent) mentioned that their employment was *'little'* or *'not at all related'* to their qualification as against the postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research cohorts (40 per cent and 48 per cent respectively).

¹⁴ The differences between *'fairly'* or *'very much'* and *'little'* or *'not at all related'* were statistically significant for all levels of study and for all graduates, at $p < 0.05$.

Table C.2. Employment related to qualification by levels of award

Employment related to qualification	Undergraduate*		Postgraduate Coursework *		Postgraduate Research*		All Graduates *	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Not at all and A little	323	50.6 *** (46.7, 54.4)	194	40.3 (35.9, 44.6)	68	47.8 (39.7, 56.0)	585	46.4 (43.6, 49.1)
Fairly or Very much	315	49.4 (45.5, 53.2)	288	59.7 ** (55.3, 64.0)	74	52.2 (43.9, 60.2)	677	53.6 (50.8, 56.3)
Total	638	100	482	100	142	100	1262	1.00

Note: Numbers in parentheses are lower and upper confidence intervals at $p < 0.05$

* Significantly difference between ‘a Qualification formal requirement’ and ‘Qualification not formal requirement’ at $p < 0.05$. postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research

** Significantly higher than undergraduate cohort at $p < 0.05$. *** Significantly higher than the postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research cohorts at $p < 0.05$.

When the employed graduates were asked how important their qualification was to be able to do their current job (Table C.3), overall, about 76 per cent of the graduates mentioned that their qualification was fairly to very important. Significantly more postgraduate research and postgraduate coursework graduates (85 per cent and 78 per cent respectively) mentioned that their qualification was important for their current job than the undergraduate cohort (73 per cent)¹⁵. Similarly, significantly more undergraduates (27 per cent) mentioned that their qualification was not at all important or not that important for their current job than the postgraduate research or postgraduate coursework cohorts (15 per cent and 22 per cent respectively)¹⁶.

Table C.3. Importance of the qualification to be able to do your job

Importance of qualifications to do the current job	Undergraduate		Postgraduate Coursework *		Postgraduate Research		All Graduates	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Qualification was not important to do the current job	174	27.3 * (24.0, 30.9)	107	22.1 (18.6, 26.0)	21	15.0 (9.82, 21.6)	302	24.0 (21.7, 26.4)
Qualification was important to do the current job	462	72.6 (69.0, 75.9)	375	77.8 ** (73.9, 81.3)	119	85.0 ** (78.3, 90.1)	956	75.9 (73.5, 78.2)
Total	636	100	482	100	140	100	1258	100

* Significantly higher than the postgraduate research cohorts at $p < 0.05$, ** Significantly higher than the undergraduate cohorts at $p < 0.05$,

¹⁵ Significant at $p < 0.05$

¹⁶ Significant at $p < 0.05$

Limitations of the study

The overall response rate of this survey was 23.4 per cent (2,287 usable responses). This was limited to the fact that the survey was conducted online without any SMS or telephone reminders. Further investigation revealed that fewer responses were received on the 2020 MQGDS than the Federal Government's 2020 Graduate Outcome Survey (GOS), mainly due to the time lag as the MQGDS was conducted eleven months after course completion while the GOS was conducted three/four months after course completion. Moreover, this may be due to survey fatigue as the MQGDS was sent to the same graduate population six months after the GOS fieldwork. Some issues were also found with email addresses, for example, about 5 per cent of the population had university student email addresses instead of their personal addresses.

Conclusion

88 per cent of survey graduates were either in full-time or part-time employment close to one year after graduation¹⁷. Moreover, 73 per cent of graduates, available for full-time employment, were working full-time at the time of this survey. The full-time employment rate was highest for the postgraduate research graduates (90 per cent), followed by postgraduate coursework graduates (89 per cent) and undergraduates (87 per cent).

The 2020 MQGDS reported a significant decline of both full-time and overall employment rates compared to 2019 MQGDS, most likely due to the fact the 2020 MQGDS field work was conducted in May and November 2020 when the unemployment rate was at a ten years high in the Australian labour market due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, these findings were consistent with the ABS Labour Force Surveys conducted in 2020 and 2020 Graduate Outcome Survey conducted by the Federal Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

Overall, 66 per cent of the employed graduates were working as managers or professionals. Postgraduate research graduates were most likely to be working as managers or professionals (85 per cent), followed by the postgraduate coursework graduates (75 per cent), and undergraduates (55 per cent). Majority of the graduates completing an undergraduate degree or postgraduate coursework award (71 per cent) were found to be working in private sector, while most of the graduates completed a postgraduate research degree were identified as working in the public sector (48 per cent).

The majority of graduates, across three levels of award, were found to be working in Australia and were working for an employer. While a slightly higher proportion of employed undergraduates and postgraduate coursework graduates agreed that their qualification was *not* a formal requirement of their job, for postgraduate research graduates the award they completed was a formal requirement for their job.

¹⁷ This excludes those graduates enrolled in further full-time study or not available for employment or further study.

Appendix A: Definitions of graduate outcome used in the MQGDS

Measures	Definitions
Full-time Employed %	This includes graduates who were in paid employment for at least 35 hours per week (in one job or in multiple jobs), at the reference date of the survey as a proportion of those who were <i>available for full-time work</i> . This excludes graduates who are in full-time.
Base - full-time Employed	Graduates who were available for full-time employment , i.e., working at least 35 hours (in one job or in multiple jobs) and/or looking for full-time work, excluding those who are in full-time study.
Overall Employed %	This includes employed graduates (including in full-time, part-time or casual employment), as a proportion of those <i>who are available for employment</i> . This also excludes graduates who are in full-time study.
Base - Overall Employment	Graduates who were available for any employment - graduates including employed full-time, employed part-time , unemployed and seeking full-time work and unemployed and seeking part-time work
Further FT Study %	Includes graduates in full-time study as a proportion of all graduates responded
Base - Further FT Study	All graduates responded

Appendix B: Frequency distribution of destination of graduates responded to the 2020 MQGDS.

Detailed destination of graduates	Count
Available for Full-time employment (working Full-time, Seeking Full-time, excluding studying Full-time)	
Working Full-time, not seeking any employment	956
Working Full-time, seeking Full-time employment	50
Working Full-time, seeking Full-time or Part-time employment	66
Working Full-time, seeking Part-time employment	6
Not working, seeking Full-time employment, studying Part-time	17
Not working, seeking Full-time or Part-time employment	126
Not working, seeking Full-time or Part-time employment, studying Part-time	5
Not working, seeking Full-time employment	50
Working PT, seeking Full-time employment	50
Working PT, seeking Full-time or Part-time employment	145
Available for full-time employment total	1,471
In Further full-time study	
Not working, not seeking any employment, studying Full-time	83
Not working, seeking Part-time employment, studying Full-time	26
Not working, seeking Full-time or Part-time employment, studying Full-time	63
Not working, seeking Full-time employment, studying Full-time	33
Working Part-time, not seeking employment, Studying Full-time	93
Working Part-time, seeking Part-time employment, studying Full-time	23
Working Part-time, seeking Full-time employment, Studying Full-time	6
Working Part-time, seeking Full-time or Part-time employment, studying Full-time	8
Full-time study total	335
In Part-time/casual employment, not seeking full-time employment	



Working Part-time, not seeking any employment	303
Working Part-time, seeking Part-time employment, studying Part-time or other	54
Working Part-time, seeking Part-time employment	19
<i>Part-time/casual employment total</i>	<i>376</i>
Not working, seeking part-time or casual employment only	
Not working, seeking Part-time employment, studying Part-time	2
Not working, seeking Part-time employment	23
<i>Not working seeking part-time employment total</i>	<i>25</i>
Not working, not seeking any	
Not working, not seeking any employment	56
Not working, not seeking any employment, studying Part-time	14
<i>Not working, not seeking employment total</i>	<i>70</i>
Unknown/unavailable for full-time study, for any employment	10
Grand Total	2,287

Appendix C: Job search method used for the current job by level of award

Job search methods	Level of Award															
	Undergraduate				Postgraduate Coursework				Postgraduate Research				Total			
	Count	%	95.0% Lower CL (%)	95.0% Upper CL (%)	Count	%	95.0% Lower CL (%)	95.0% Upper CL (%)	Count	%	95.0% Lower CL (%)	95.0% Upper CL (%)	Count	%	95.0% Lower CL (%)	95.0% Upper CL (%)
University careers and employment services	19	4.4%	2.7%	6.6%	11	3.4%	1.8%	5.8%	6	6.5%	2.8%	12.9%	36	4.2%	3.0%	5.7%
Careers fairs	5	1.2%	0.4%	2.5%	4	1.2%	0.4%	2.9%	0	0.0%			9	1.1%	0.5%	1.9%
Through a PACE activity	12	2.8%	1.5%	4.6%	5	1.5%	0.6%	3.3%	0	0.0%			17	2.0%	1.2%	3.1%
Other University source (eg, faculties or lecturers)	14	3.2%	1.9%	5.2%	5	1.5%	0.6%	3.3%	8	8.7%	4.2%	15.7%	27	3.2%	2.1%	4.5%
LinkedIn	33	7.6%	5.4%	10.4%	23	7.1%	4.6%	10.2%	4	4.3%	1.5%	10.0%	60	7.0%	5.5%	8.9%
Advertisement in newspaper or print media	2	0.5%	0.1%	1.5%	3	0.9%	0.3%	2.4%	2	2.2%	0.5%	6.8%	7	0.8%	0.4%	1.6%
Advertisement on the internet	117	27.0%	22.9%	31.3%	89	27.3%	22.7%	32.3%	15	16.3%	9.8%	24.8%	221	25.9%	23.1%	29.0%
Resume posted via internet	6	1.4%	0.6%	2.8%	10	3.1%	1.6%	5.4%	0	0.0%			16	1.9%	1.1%	3.0%
Family/friends	84	19.4%	15.8%	23.3%	62	19.0%	15.0%	23.5%	9	9.8%	5.0%	17.1%	155	18.2%	15.7%	20.9%
Approached employers directly	33	7.6%	5.4%	10.4%	13	4.0%	2.3%	6.5%	12	13.0%	7.3%	21.0%	58	6.8%	5.3%	8.6%
Approached by an employer	24	5.5%	3.7%	8.0%	24	7.4%	4.9%	10.6%	12	13.0%	7.3%	21.0%	60	7.0%	5.5%	8.9%
An employer promotional event	0	0.0%			1	0.3%	0.0%	1.4%	0	0.0%			1	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%
Employment agencies	19	4.4%	2.7%	6.6%	14	4.3%	2.5%	6.9%	1	1.1%	0.1%	5.0%	34	4.0%	2.8%	5.5%
Social media	6	1.4%	0.6%	2.8%	4	1.2%	0.4%	2.9%	1	1.1%	0.1%	5.0%	11	1.3%	0.7%	2.2%
Work contact/networks	30	6.9%	4.8%	9.6%	38	11.7%	8.5%	15.5%	15	16.3%	9.8%	24.8%	83	9.7%	7.9%	11.9%
Other	30	6.9%	4.8%	9.6%	20	6.1%	3.9%	9.1%	7	7.6%	3.5%	14.4%	57	6.7%	5.2%	8.5%
Total	434	100.0%			326	100.0%			92	100.0%			852	100.0%		

Appendix D: 2020 Macquarie University Graduate Destination Survey (MQGDS) Questionnaire

Dear << First name>>,

You are invited to participate in the Macquarie University Graduate Destination survey. This is an important survey conducted by your University to measure graduate employment outcomes or further studies /activities that you are involved in close to one year of your graduation. Most people take less than 10 minutes to complete all the questions.

If you need to take a break, you can come back and continue from where you left off.

Please do not use the browser BACK button to go back to a previous question.

Please press the 'Next' button below to continue

--

Your paid work status *on ref date*

1. Were you in paid work (including permanent, contract, casual and self-employment) *on ref date*?

- a. In full-time work, or had accepted an offer of full-time work (i.e., working 35 hours a week or more)
- b. In part-time work, or had accepted an offer of full-time work (i.e., working less than 35 hours a week)
- c. Not working in paid job, e.g. volunteering

2. Were you seeking work *on ref date*?

- a. Yes
- b. No

3. If seeking work, what kind of work were you seeking?

(Mark both if both apply)

- a. Full-time work
- b. Part-time work

Your main paid work on Ref Date

Please go to the next section 'your study' if you were not working on ref date

4. Tell us about the job in which you were working the most paid hours

About your employer

	What was your employer's business name in full?	What is your employer's main business? (e.g., Medical Hospital , Primary Education, Accounting)	How many hours per week were you working in this job?	Sector (e.g., Public/Government, Private, non-profit organisation)
Employer 1:				
Employer 2: (if you are working for two employers)				
Employer 3: (if you are working for three employers)				

5. Were you working in Australia?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If *no*, in what country was your employment based?

--

6. Were you self-employed?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. What was the full-title of your occupation?

--

8. In what month and year did you start this job?

(For example, write March 2015 as "03/2015")

		/					
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9. What were the main tasks or duties in this work?

10. What was your gross pre-tax annual salary in Australian dollars on *ref date*?

AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS \$

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 .00

11. If you were working full-time (more than 35 hours a week) on *ref date*, was this your first full-time job?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not working full-time

12. How did you first find out about this job?

- a. University careers and employment services
- b. Careers fairs
- c. Through a PACE activity
- d. Other University source (e.g., faculties or lecturers)



- e. LinkedIn
- f. Advertisement in newspaper or print media
- g. Advertisement on the internet
- h. Resume posted via internet
- i. Family/friends
- j. Approached employers directly
- k. Approached by an employer
- l. An employer promotional event
- m. Employment agencies
- n. Social media
- o. Work contact/networks
- p. Other : _____

Graduate Preparation

13. Is your <Degree Name> a formal requirement for you to do your current job?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. To what extent is your current employment related to your qualification <degree name>?

- a. Not at all
- b. A Little
- c. Fairly
- d. Very much
- e. Unsure

15. To what extent is it important for you to have a qualification to be able to do your job?

- a. Not at all important
- b. Not that important
- c. Fairly important
- d. Important
- e. Very important

16. Did you complete a PACE unit as part of your degree?

- a. Yes (if yes, go to Q16a, *(for programmer use)*)
- b. No (go to Q17, *(for programmer use)*)
- c. Unsure (go to Q17, *(for programmer use)*)

16a. (If 'yes' to Q16, *(for programmer use)*) What type of activity did you participate in as part of that unit? (Mark all that apply)

- a. Internship
- b. Community/industry panel with project mentoring
- c. Professional experience and/or practicum
- d. Community development project
- e. Service provision
- f. Research project
- g. Evaluation project
- h. Peer-assisted learning and/or mentoring
- i. Fieldwork with a partnership component
- j. Other [Please describe]

16b. (If 'yes' to Q16, *(for programmer use)*) Did the PACE experience:

16b.1. help you in planning or making decisions about your career?	No	A little	Moderately	A lot	Unsure
16b.2. help you feel more confident seeking work?	No	A little	Moderately	A lot	Unsure
16b.3. contribute to your ability to get a satisfying job in an area that interests you?	No	A little	Moderately	A lot	Unsure
16b.4. encourage you to be more engaged in the community?	No	A little	Moderately	A lot	Unsure

16c. (If 'yes' to Q16, (for programmer use)) Are you currently employed, volunteering or otherwise engaged with the organisation with whom you undertook your PACE activity, or a similar organisation?

- a. Employed
- b. Volunteering
- c. Other form of engagement, please specify _____
- d. None of the above

17. Did you access / participate in any of the following Careers services during your degree?

(Mark all that apply)

a. Resume writing	Yes	No	Unsure
b. Workshops	Yes	No	Unsure
c. Careers fairs	Yes	No	Unsure
d. One on one consultation sessions	Yes	No	Unsure
e. Other services	Yes	No	Unsure

17a. (if 'Yes' to any of choices in Q17, (for programmer use)) Did those activities -

17a.1. help you in planning or making decisions about your career?	No	A little	Moderately	A lot	Unsure
17a.2. help you feel more confident seeking work?	No	A little	Moderately	A lot	Unsure
17a.3. contribute to your ability to get a satisfying job in an area that interests you?	No	A little	Moderately	A lot	Unsure

18. Overall, how well did your < Degree Name > prepare you for your job?

- a. Not at all
- b. Not well
- c. Well
- d. Very well
- e. Don't know / Unsure

19. What are the main ways that your < Degree Name > prepared you for employment in your organisation? (best aspect)

20. What are the main ways that your < Degree Name> could have better prepared you for employment in your organisation? (Needs improvement)

Further study

21. Are you currently a full-time or part-time student at a university, TAFE, or other educational institution?

- a. Yes – full-time
- b. Yes – part-time
- c. No

22. What is the full title of the qualification you are currently studying?

23. What is your major field of education for this qualification?

- a. Natural and Physical Sciences
- b. Information Technology
- c. Engineering and Related Technologies
- d. Architecture and Building
- e. Agriculture Environmental and Related Studies
- f. Health
- g. Education
- h. Management and Commerce
- i. Society and Culture
- j. Creative Arts
- k. Food, Hospitality and Personal Services
- l. Mixed field qualification
- m. Other (please specify_____)

24. What is the level of this qualification?

- a. Doctorate
- b. Master's degree by research
- c. Master's degree by coursework
- d. Other postgraduate degree



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- e. Graduate diploma
- f. Graduate certificate
- g. Bachelor degree
- h. Advanced diploma or Associate degree
- i. Diploma
- j. Certificate
- k. Unsure

25. What is the name of the institution where you are currently studying?

26. As a valued Alumni of Macquarie University, would you like to be contacted by the University for career development events, benefits and services discounts, University and Alumni news?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If Yes (for programmer use), Please provide your contact details:

a. email: **(mandatory)**

b. Telephone number:

c. Postal address:

*Thank you for your time in completing the survey. Your responses will be kept **in confidence**. Reports based on this survey will contain only de-identified summary information*

Reference:

1. Trounson, A., (2015, July 24). Grim jobs outlook for new graduates, *The Australian*, retrieved from <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/grim-jobs-outlook-for-new-graduates/news-story/3d6a774ebb995dc9ba3f178c721d50d5>, on 30 June 2016.
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