



2019 Employer Satisfaction Survey

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QILT

Quality Indicators for
Learning and Teaching



ESS

Employer Satisfaction Survey

EMPLOYER VIEWS OF
RECENT GRADUATES

Acknowledgements

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The 2019 ESS was led by Graham Challice and the project team consisted of Shane Compton, Lisa Bolton, Natasha Vickers, Florence Le Guyader, James Morrison, David Haysom, Cynthia Kim, Gimwah Sng, Dean Pennay, Daniel Smith, Alistair Wilcox, Ben Desta, Shane Smith, Paddy Tobias, Joe Feng, Amida Cumming, Bobby Hoque and Sydney Rowe.

For more information on the conduct and results of the 2019 ESS, see the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) website: www.qilt.edu.au. The QILT team can be contacted by email at qilt@srcentre.com.au.



Executive summary

The 2019 Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS) represents the largest survey of its kind, reporting the views of 4,689 employers about the attributes of recent graduates from Australian higher education institutions including universities and non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs). Employer views of the technical skills, generic skills and work readiness of recent graduates provide assurance about the quality of Australia's higher education sector. This survey was first run in 2016, with over 3,000 employers responding, over 4,000 in 2017, and over 5,300 in 2018. The 2019 survey continues to add valuable contextual information from graduates' direct supervisors.

The ESS has three design features. First, the ESS is the first national survey in Australia that directly links the experiences of graduates to the views of their direct supervisors. Second, the ESS is undertaken on a systematic basis by asking employed graduates who participate in the Graduate Outcome Survey (GOS) to provide contact information for their supervisor who is then invited to complete the ESS. This enables understanding of the limitations and bias associated with the survey methodology. By way of comparison, many other employer surveys are not conducted on a systematic basis and report the perceptions of executives who may have had little or no direct experience with graduates. Third, the ESS is large enough to provide comparisons by broad field of education, employment characteristics, occupation, demographic group and institution.

Other employer surveys of Australian higher education graduates are much smaller in scale, lack transparency in methodology and rely on the views of persons who may have had little or no direct contact with graduates. For example, the QS Graduate Employability Rankings are based on the views of approximately 900 employers while the 2018 Times Higher Education Global University Employability Ranking is based on 150 responses.

4,689

Number of survey responses from supervisors

Summary national results

In 2019, the overall satisfaction with graduates as rated by their direct supervisors was 84 per cent.

Employer satisfaction with other graduate attributes was as follows:

- 93 per cent satisfaction with Foundation skills – general literacy, numeracy and communication skills and the ability to investigate and integrate knowledge.
- 89 per cent satisfaction with Adaptive skills – the ability to adapt and apply skills/knowledge and work independently.
- 88 per cent satisfaction with Collaborative skills – teamwork and interpersonal skills.
- 93 per cent satisfaction with Technical skills – application of professional and technical knowledge and standards.
- 85 per cent satisfaction with Employability skills – the ability to perform and innovate in the workplace.

As shown at Table 1, these results suggest employers remain highly satisfied with graduates from Australia's higher education system with overall satisfaction ranging between 84 per cent to 85 per cent across 2016-2019.

Results for employer satisfaction were slightly down across all areas in 2019 compared with peak levels reported in 2018. However, note the changes in overall satisfaction and satisfaction with other graduate attributes were not statistically significant due to the relatively small number of responses from employers, as demonstrated by the presentation of confidence intervals.

Results by course, demographic, labour market characteristics and institution

In 2019, employers reported highest overall satisfaction with Engineering and Health graduates at 90 per cent. In addition, supervisors also reported above average satisfaction with Architecture and building graduates at 86 per cent and Education graduates at 85 per cent. On the other hand, employer satisfaction, while still quite high, appears lower for Creative Arts graduates, 75 per cent, Management and commerce graduates, 80 per cent, and Information technology graduates at 81 per cent.

Supervisors expressed significantly higher levels of overall satisfaction with graduates who had studied internally, 85 per cent, in comparison with graduates who had studied externally, 80 per cent.

Employers appear less satisfied with postgraduate coursework graduates, 83 per cent than with undergraduates, 84 per cent and postgraduate research graduates, 86 per cent, though in 2019 these differences were not statistically significant.

Employers reported higher overall satisfaction with graduates working in Professional occupations, 87 per cent. This is consistent with higher education qualifications being more relevant for graduates working in those occupations.

Employers remain highly satisfied with graduates from Australia's higher education system.

84%

of employers expressed overall satisfaction with their graduates.

This report combines results from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 Employer Satisfaction Surveys providing over 14,700 employer responses to publish results at institution level for Australia's universities. Overall employer satisfaction is consistently high ranging from 95 per cent to 76 per cent across Australia's universities. Employer satisfaction was highest with graduates from Bond University at 95 per cent, followed by University of Divinity, Australian Catholic University and University of Wollongong all reporting overall employer satisfaction of 90 per cent.

Table 1 **Employer satisfaction, 2016 - 2019 (%)**

	Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
2016	92.0	(91.2, 92.8)	88.4	(87.4, 89.4)	84.6	(83.5, 85.7)	92.2	(91.4, 93.0)	83.8	(82.7, 84.9)	84.3	(83.2, 85.4)
2017	93.4	(92.8, 94.0)	90.1	(89.3, 90.9)	85.9	(85.0, 86.8)	93.3	(92.6, 94.0)	85.0	(84.1, 85.9)	83.6	(82.7, 84.5)
2018	93.5	(92.9, 94.1)	89.9	(89.2, 90.6)	88.7	(87.9, 89.4)	93.8	(93.3, 94.4)	86.5	(85.7, 87.3)	84.8	(84.0, 85.6)
2019	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	89.3	(88.5, 90.1)	87.8	(86.9, 88.5)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	85.4	(84.5, 86.2)	84.0	(83.1, 84.9)

Skills relevance and utilisation

Overall, graduates tended to view their qualification as less important for their current employment than their supervisor. While a little over half of graduates, 53 per cent, considered their qualification to be 'very important' or 'important' to their current job, around 62 per cent of supervisors indicated the graduate's qualification was 'very important' or 'important'.

Health and Education qualifications were rated by graduates and supervisors as being significantly more important for their current position than most other fields of education. This is consistent with these qualifications being a requirement for employment in many instances. For example, 70 per cent of graduates and 79 per cent of supervisors thought that Health qualifications were important for current employment. Similarly, 69 per cent of graduates and 78 per cent of supervisors thought that Education qualifications were important for graduates' current employment. Supervisors of Creative arts and Management and commerce and Information technology graduates were least likely to think that the qualification was important for current employment at 44 per cent, 48 per cent and 48 per cent respectively.

Supervisors of graduates working in Professional occupations were more likely to state that the qualification was important for the graduate's current employment, 76 per cent. This finding is not surprising as, of all the occupational groups, the qualifications related to professional employment are most likely to translate directly to a specific job or role, especially where qualifications are a requirement for employment.

Overall, 92 per cent of supervisors in 2019, reported that the qualification prepared the graduate 'very well' or 'well' for their current employment. The proportion of supervisors who thought the qualification prepared the graduate for the job has remained consistently high since the employer survey was first conducted in 2016, ranging between 92 per cent and 93 per cent. Overall, there appears to be a strong relationship between skills and knowledge acquired by higher education graduates and the requirements of their jobs after graduation. This result affirms the value of higher education qualifications for employment.

92%

supervisors reporting the qualification prepared the graduate 'very well' or 'well' for current employment

Methodology

The 2019 ESS was primarily conducted as a national online survey among supervisors of graduates from 109 higher education institutions, including all 41 Table A and B universities, and 68 Non-University Higher Education Institutions (NUHEIs). In all supervisors from all 41 universities and 50 NUHEIs participated in the ESS.

The population frame for the 2019 ESS comprised 102,804 graduates, domestic and international, who responded to the 2019 GOS and indicated that they were employed. Of these, 10,494 employed graduates provided sufficient contact details to approach 9,371 supervisors, yielding a supervisor referral rate of 9.5 per cent. This is marginally lower than the 10.7 per cent supervisor referral rate achieved in the 2018 ESS, and higher than the 9.3 per cent and 7.7 per cent supervisor referral rate achieved in 2017 and 2016 respectively. There remains a reluctance among graduates to pass on their supervisor contact details.

In the 2019 ESS, a total of 4,689 valid survey responses from direct supervisors were collected across all study levels, representing a supervisor response rate of 48.2 per cent. This is lower than the 52.0 per cent supervisor response rate achieved in 2018 and equal to 48.2 per cent in 2017, but higher than the 44.5 per cent supervisor response rate achieved in 2016.

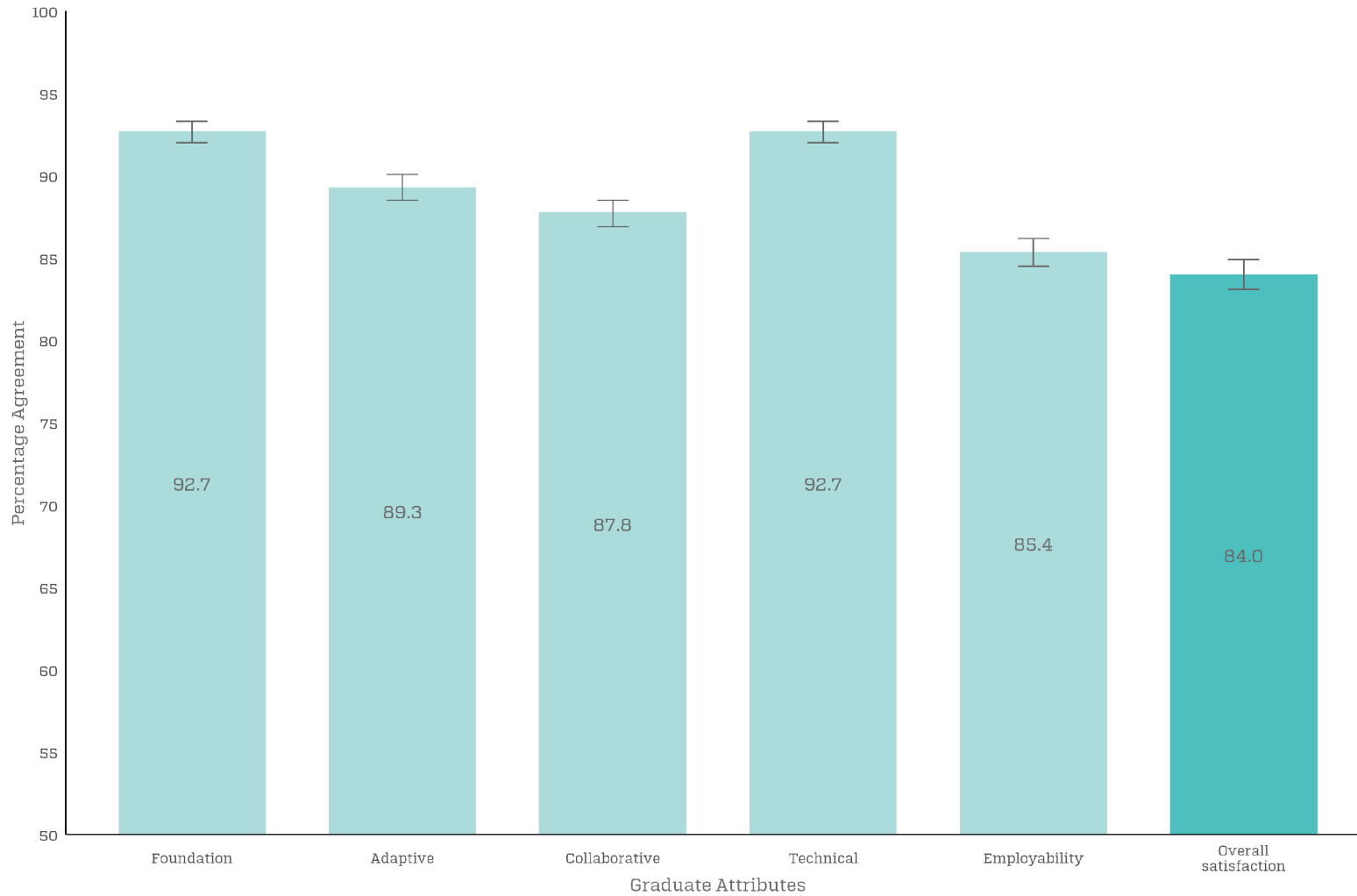
Supervisors of graduates working in Education and supervisors of graduates in Professional occupations were overrepresented in the ESS compared with the proportion of graduates who had responded to the Graduate Outcomes Survey. Supervisors of Education graduates rated overall satisfaction slightly above average and supervisors of graduates in Professional occupations also rated overall satisfaction more highly. This is expected to lead to an upward bias in reported employer satisfaction in the 2019 ESS.

Supervisors of postgraduate coursework and external graduates were also overrepresented in the ESS, however. Supervisors of these graduates rated overall satisfaction lower than average, and this is expected to lead to a downward bias in reported employer satisfaction in the 2019 ESS.

Graduates who did not provide supervisor contact details rated their Foundation skills at 84.2 per cent. While still high, this was lower than for graduates who supplied their supervisor contact details, 88.6 per cent, and the supervisor satisfaction rating of foundation skills of 92.7 per cent and this general pattern is repeated in the Adaptive skills and Collaborative skills domains. It would appear graduates who were more positive about the skills they had acquired may be more comfortable having their supervisor participate in the ESS. This is expected to lead to upward bias in reported levels of employer satisfaction in the 2019 ESS.

Notwithstanding a potential upward bias in reported employer satisfaction, ratings of attributes across graduates who are willing or not willing to provide supervisor contact details are of broadly similar magnitude suggesting that results from the 2019 ESS provide evidence of the likely high quality of graduates from the Australian higher education system.

Figure 1 Employer satisfaction with graduate attributes and overall satisfaction (%)



Contents

Acknowledgements	i	3 Methodology	25
Executive summary	ii	3.1 Methodology overview	25
Summary national results	iii	3.2 Response bias	26
Results by course, demographic, labour market characteristics and institution	iii	3.3 Graduate Attributes Scale - Employer (GAS-E)	30
Skills relevance and utilisation	iv	Appendices	31
Methodology	v		
Contents	vii		
List of tables	viii		
List of figures	ix		
1 Introduction	1		
2 Results	3		
2.1 Employer satisfaction by course, demographic, labour market characteristics and institution	3		
2.2 Employer satisfaction by institution	14		
2.3 Skills relevance and utilisation	18		

List of tables

1	Employer satisfaction, 2016 - 2019 (%)	iv	12	Extent to which qualification prepared graduate well or very well for current employment, by broad field of education, 2019*	22	A3a	University participation	39
2	Employer satisfaction, 2016 - 2019 (%)	3	13	Extent to which qualification prepared well or very well for current employment, by occupation, 2019 (%)	23	A3b	NUHEI participation	40
3	Employer satisfaction by broad field of education, 2019	5	14	Main ways that the qualification prepared the graduate for employment, 2019*	24			
4	Employer satisfaction by type of institution and course characteristics, 2019 (%)	7	15	Main ways that the qualification could have better prepared the graduate for employment, 2019	24			
5	Employer satisfaction by demographic characteristics, 2019 (%)	9	16	Respondents by broad field of education, 2019*	26			
6	Employer satisfaction by labour market characteristics, 2019 (%)	11	17	Respondents by type of institution and course characteristics, 2019	27			
7	Employer satisfaction by institution (universities only), 2017 - 2019	15	18	Respondents by demographic characteristics, 2019	28			
8	Importance of qualification for current employment, 2019	18	19	Respondents by labour market characteristics, 2019	29			
9	Importance of qualification for current employment by broad field of education, 2019*	20	20	Graduate attributes of graduates who did and did not provide contact details, 2019	30			
10	Importance of qualification for current employment, by occupation group, 2019*	21	21	ESS project overview, 2017 - 2019	33			
11	Extent to which qualification prepared graduate for current employment, 2019	22						

List of figures

1	Employer satisfaction with graduate attributes and overall satisfaction (%)	vi
2	Employer satisfaction with graduate attributes and overall satisfaction	4
3	Employer satisfaction by broad field of education, 2019 (%)	6
4	Overall satisfaction by type of institution and course characteristics, 2019 (%)	8
5	Overall satisfaction by demographic group, 2019 (%)	10
6	Overall satisfaction by occupation, 2019 (%)	12
7	Overall satisfaction by employment characteristics, 2019 (%)	13
8	Overall satisfaction by institution (universities only), 2017 to 2019 (%)	17

1 Introduction

The 2019 Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS) measures employer views of the attributes of recent graduates from Australian higher education institutions providing assurance about the quality of Australia's higher education sector. The ESS is included as part of the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) survey suite. The QILT surveys are independently and centrally administered by the Social Research Centre on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education.

The impetus for a national survey of graduate employers is grounded in the Australian Government's desire to improve the range and quality of higher education performance indicators in Australia. Since graduate employment is usually one of the main objectives of completing a higher education qualification, employer views of the readiness of graduates to enter the workplace forms a key component of the quality matrix. The ESS is the first national survey of its kind in Australia that directly links the experiences of graduates to the views of their direct supervisors. Employed graduates who participate in the Graduate Outcome Survey (GOS) are asked to provide contact information for their supervisor who is then invited to complete the ESS. This report describes results from that survey of employer views of the technical skills, generic skills and work readiness of recent graduates from Australian higher education institutions.

The QILT surveys are conducted on a consistent basis using population frames constructed from the Higher Education Information Management System (HEIMS) data collection. The surveys are based on the student life cycle starting with the Student Experience Survey

measuring the experiences of commencing and later year students through to the Graduate Outcomes Survey and Employer Satisfaction Survey measuring graduate outcomes and entry to the workforce and the GOS Longitudinal which measures graduate outcomes three years after course completion.

The vocational nature of Australian higher education is reflected in the long tradition of accreditation of courses by professional bodies and organisations, and a strong focus on the employment outcomes of graduates. While employer preferences for graduates are revealed by employment outcomes, in the past less attention has been paid to employers' qualitative assessment of graduates. In part, this reflects the many methodological challenges associated with measuring employer satisfaction with graduates.

A major dilemma in designing employer surveys of graduates lies in constructing robust population and sample frames while seeking to garner a sufficient number of responses. The present survey uses all graduate respondents, domestic and international, to the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS), which in turn is based on Higher Education Information Management System (HEIMS) data collection, to gather the contact details of direct supervisors. One of the advantages of measuring employer satisfaction on a systematic basis is that it enables understanding of the limitations and bias associated with the survey methodology. Further details of the methodology and pattern of responses and possible bias are presented in Section 3.

One disadvantage of a systematic approach to survey collection is that the ensuing methodology can make it difficult to achieve an adequate number of responses for reporting purposes. In the present survey, this manifests itself through the low graduate referral rate due to a reluctance of graduates to pass on contact details of their direct supervisor. Collection of over 4,680 employer responses, however, does permit reporting of employer satisfaction while discriminating against key course, demographic, labour market characteristics and institution.

A key distinguishing feature of the present survey is that it measures the experiences of direct supervisors of graduates. This is unlike other employer surveys that report the perceptions of executives with little or no direct experience with graduates.

2 Results

2.1 Employer satisfaction by course, demographic, labour market characteristics and institution

The 2019 Employer Satisfaction Survey confirms the findings of the 2018, 2017 and 2016 surveys and earlier 2013–14 pilot survey that supervisors rate their graduates highly. In 2019, overall satisfaction with graduates as rated by direct supervisors was 84 per cent. Overall satisfaction reports the proportion of supervisors giving responses ‘Very likely to consider’ or ‘Likely to consider’ to the item, ‘Based on your experience with this graduate, how likely are you to consider hiring another graduate from the same course and institution, if you had a relevant vacancy?’ Overall, these results suggest employers are highly satisfied with graduates from Australia’s higher education system.

Employers were also requested to report their satisfaction with graduates across five graduate attribute domains or scales:

- Foundation skills – general literacy, numeracy and communication skills and the ability to investigate and integrate knowledge.
- Adaptive skills – the ability to adapt and apply skills/knowledge and work independently.
- Collaborative skills – teamwork and interpersonal skills.
- Technical skills – application of professional and technical knowledge and standards.
- Employability skills – ability to perform and innovate in the workplace.

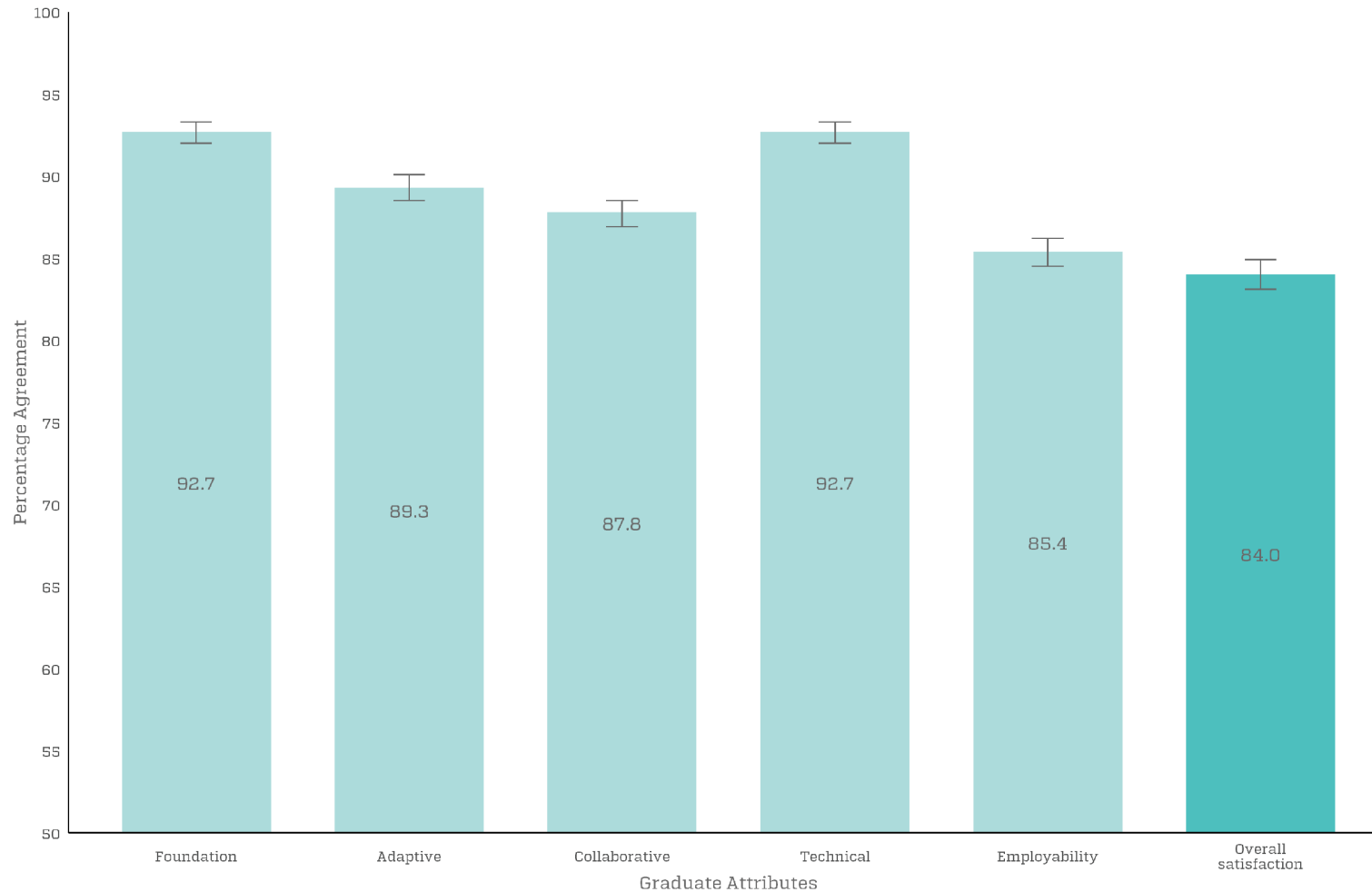
Table 2 **Employer satisfaction, 2016 - 2019 (%)**

	Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
2016	92.0	(91.2, 92.8)	88.4	(87.4, 89.4)	84.6	(83.5, 85.7)	92.2	(91.4, 93.0)	83.8	(82.7, 84.9)	84.3	(83.2, 85.4)
2017	93.4	(92.8, 94.0)	90.1	(89.3, 90.9)	85.9	(85.0, 86.8)	93.3	(92.6, 94.0)	85.0	(84.1, 85.9)	83.6	(82.7, 84.5)
2018	93.5	(92.9, 94.1)	89.9	(89.2, 90.6)	88.7	(87.9, 89.4)	93.8	(93.3, 94.4)	86.5	(85.7, 87.3)	84.8	(84.0, 85.6)
2019	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	89.3	(88.5, 90.1)	87.8	(86.9, 88.5)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	85.4	(84.5, 86.2)	84.0	(83.1, 84.9)

As shown by Table 2, overall satisfaction of employers with their graduates is at 84 per cent in rounded terms. This is a slight decrease of 1 percentage point from last year. Employer satisfaction with all other graduate attributes also decreased by around 1 percentage point last year compared to peak levels reported in 2018.

These changes in overall satisfaction and satisfaction with other graduate attributes, however, were not statistically significant due to the relatively small number of responses from employers, as demonstrated by the presentation of confidence intervals. However, the score of 88 per cent for collaborative skills in 2019, while lower than for 2018, did represent a statistically significant improvement compared with 2017.

Figure 2 Employer satisfaction with graduate attributes and overall satisfaction



In 2019, employers reported highest overall satisfaction with Engineering and Health graduates at 90 per cent. Supervisors also reported above average satisfaction with Architecture and building, and Education graduates, with 86 and 85 per cent respectively. On the other hand, employer satisfaction, while still relatively high, appears lower for Creative arts graduates, 75 per cent, Management and commerce graduates, 80 per cent and Information technology graduates, 81 per cent.

Employer satisfaction was significantly lower for Creative arts graduates than for five other study areas including Health, Engineering, Education, Architecture and building and Society and culture, as demonstrated by the presentation of confidence intervals in Table 3. This indicates the ESS instrument is capable of discriminating across fields of education.

Employer satisfaction with different graduate attributes varies across fields of education as shown in Table 3.

For example, employers of Engineering and Health graduates provided the highest rating of overall satisfaction in 2019, as noted above. Employers of Engineering graduates rated them above average for all other graduate attributes. Similarly, employers are highly satisfied with Natural and physical sciences graduates also rating them higher than average across all graduate attributes with the exception of the overall satisfaction item.

Conversely, Information technology graduates rated below average on all attributes with the exception of Collaboration and Management and commerce graduates rated below average on all attributes with the exception of Employability. There appears to be similar variation in each of the graduate attributes scales of 7 to 8 percentage points across different fields of education in each case. On the other hand, there appears more variation in overall satisfaction scores with a variation of over 15 percentage points across fields of education.

90%

highest employer satisfaction -
Engineering and related technologies

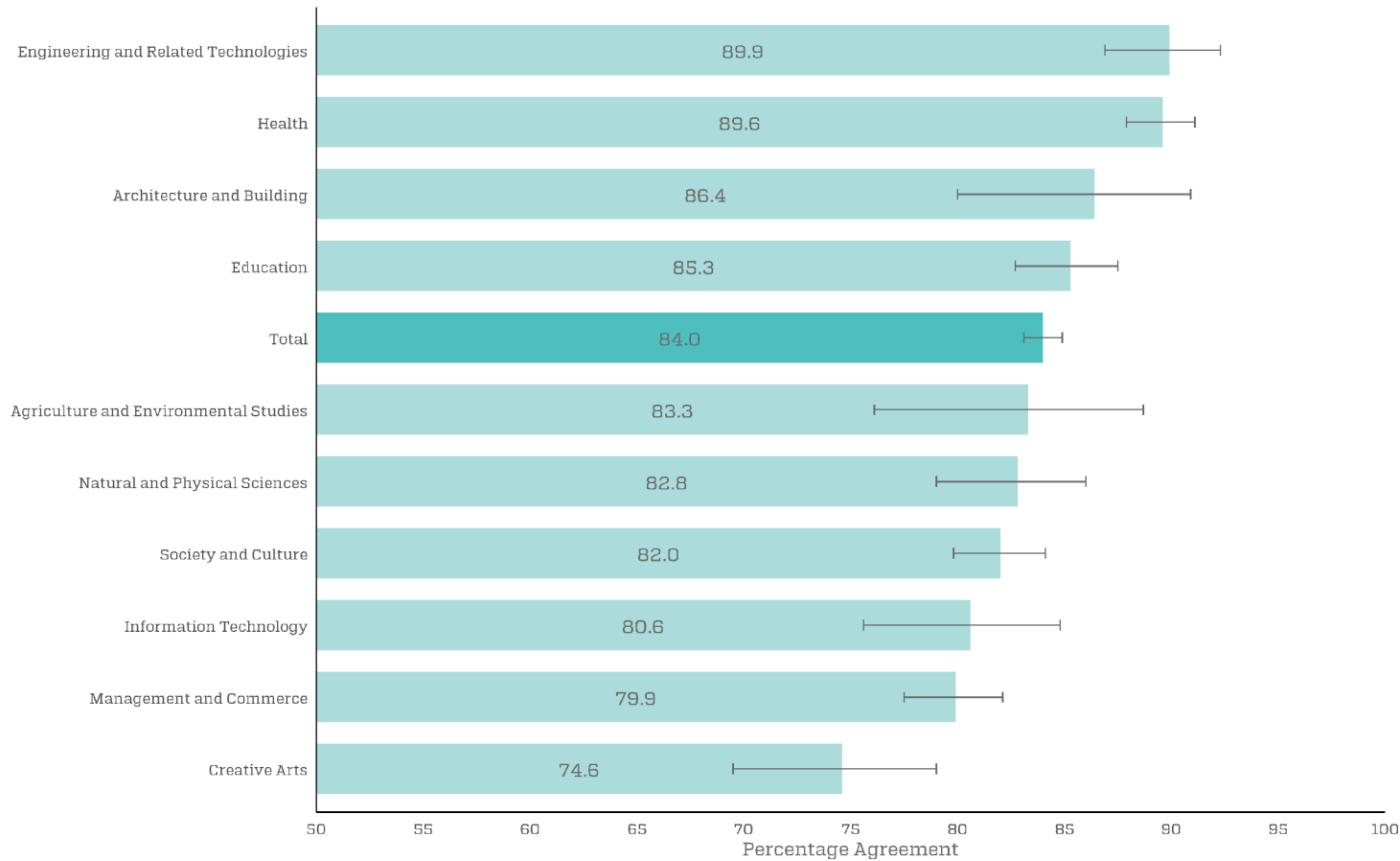
75%

lowest employer satisfaction -
Creative arts

Table 3 Employer satisfaction by broad field of education, 2019 (%)

	Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
Natural and Physical Sciences	95.4	(93.0, 97.0)	91.3	(88.3, 93.5)	92.0	(89.1, 94.1)	94.3	(91.8, 96.2)	90.0	(86.9, 92.5)	82.8	(79.0, 86.0)
Information Technology	91.5	(87.7, 94.3)	86.9	(82.5, 90.4)	87.9	(83.6, 91.2)	92.3	(88.6, 95.0)	82.1	(77.1, 86.1)	80.6	(75.6, 84.8)
Engineering and Related Technologies	97.1	(95.2, 98.3)	90.4	(87.4, 92.7)	91.7	(88.9, 93.9)	97.1	(95.2, 98.3)	88.2	(85.0, 90.8)	89.9	(86.9, 92.3)
Architecture and Building	92.0	(86.6, 95.4)	83.3	(76.6, 88.5)	90.3	(84.6, 94.0)	92.5	(87.0, 95.8)	83.2	(76.4, 88.3)	86.4	(80.0, 90.9)
Agriculture and Environmental Studies	93.9	(88.4, 97.0)	86.6	(79.8, 91.4)	90.6	(84.4, 94.6)	91.4	(85.2, 95.2)	87.8	(81.2, 92.3)	83.3	(76.1, 88.7)
Health	93.9	(92.6, 95.1)	90.1	(88.5, 91.6)	88.1	(86.3, 89.7)	94.4	(93.1, 95.5)	84.1	(82.1, 85.9)	89.6	(87.9, 91.1)
Education	89.5	(87.2, 91.4)	88.9	(86.7, 90.9)	84.5	(81.9, 86.8)	91.1	(89.0, 92.9)	83.6	(80.9, 85.9)	85.3	(82.7, 87.5)
Management and Commerce	92.5	(90.9, 93.9)	88.3	(86.3, 90.0)	87.3	(85.3, 89.0)	90.7	(88.9, 92.3)	86.9	(84.8, 88.7)	79.9	(77.5, 82.1)
Society and Culture	92.6	(91.0, 94.0)	90.0	(88.2, 91.6)	87.1	(85.1, 88.9)	92.3	(90.6, 93.7)	84.8	(82.7, 86.8)	82.0	(79.8, 84.1)
Creative Arts	89.4	(85.6, 92.4)	88.5	(84.6, 91.6)	87.1	(83.0, 90.3)	90.1	(86.3, 93.0)	86.2	(82.0, 89.6)	74.6	(69.5, 79.0)
Total	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	89.3	(88.5, 90.1)	87.8	(86.9, 88.5)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	85.4	(84.5, 86.2)	84.0	(83.1, 84.9)

Figure 3 Employer satisfaction by broad field of education, 2019 (%)



Supervisors expressed significantly higher levels of overall satisfaction with internal graduates.

Table 4 shows that employer satisfaction with graduates from universities (84 per cent) is 5 percentage points higher than for graduates from non-university higher education institutions (79 per cent) and is higher across all other graduate attributes. Employer satisfaction with graduates from universities is significantly higher in terms of overall satisfaction and with Collaborative skills and Technical skills, as shown by confidence intervals in Table 4.

Supervisors expressed significantly higher levels of overall satisfaction with graduates who studied internally, 85 per cent, in comparison with graduates who studied externally, 80 per cent, as shown by Table 4. Supervisors also rated internal graduates' Collaborative skills more highly than those of external graduates, 90 per cent in comparison with 80 per cent and all graduate attributes scales significantly lower for external graduates except for Adaptive Skills.

This difference may be related to similar issues identified in the Student Experience Survey where students studying externally rated their engagement in learning activities, which involve collaboration with other students, lower than did internal students and also the Graduate Outcomes Survey where graduates who studied externally reported lower Collaborative skills using the same scale.

Employers appear less satisfied with postgraduate coursework graduates, 83 per cent than with undergraduates, 84 per cent and postgraduate research graduates, 86 per cent, as shown by Table 4. Supervisors rated postgraduate coursework graduates significantly lower than undergraduates for most attributes with the exception of overall satisfaction and Adaptive skills. This difference is most pronounced around Collaborative skills where employers rated postgraduate coursework graduates at 84 per cent compared with 91 per cent for undergraduates. This may be attributed to a high proportion of postgraduate coursework graduates studying externally and so not engaging as much

in student centred collaborative learning activities. Similarly, employers rated postgraduate coursework graduates significantly lower than postgraduate research graduates on their Foundation skills, Technical skills and Employability skills.

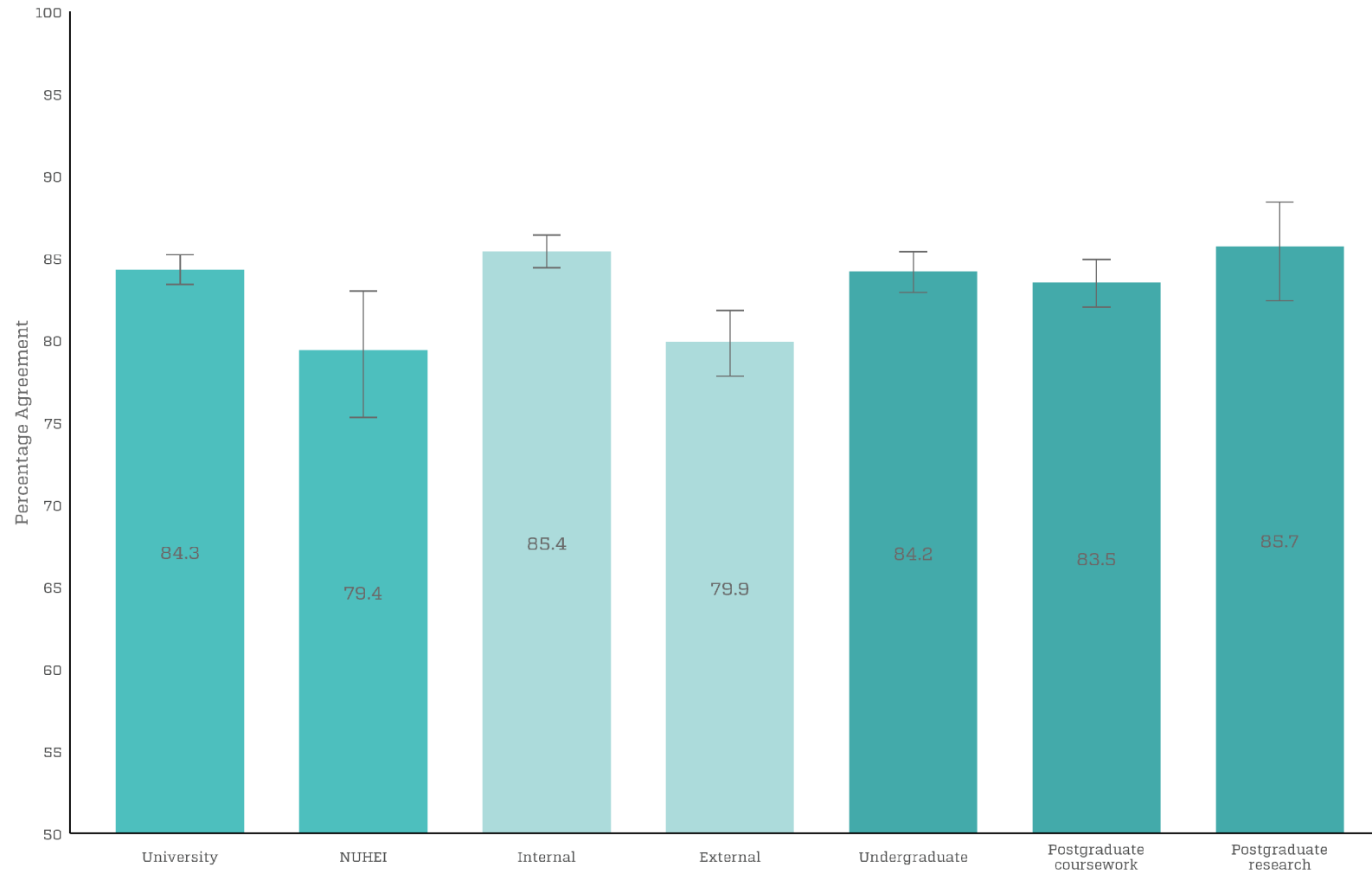
Broadly speaking, employers appear equally satisfied with male and female graduates in 2019. The exception being there is a small but significant difference in employer perceptions of the Collaborative skills of male and female graduates with employers rating males 2 percentage points higher than female graduates, as shown by Table 5.

Employers generally rated the skills of younger graduates higher than those of older graduates aged over 30 years. However, younger graduates were rated significantly better than older graduates with respect to the Foundation skills and Collaborative skills, as shown by the confidence intervals in Table 5. For example, employers rated younger graduates' Collaborative skills at 91 per cent compared with 83 per cent for older graduates.

Table 4 **Employer satisfaction by type of institution and course characteristics, 2019 (%)**

		Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
		%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
Type of institution	University	92.9	(92.2, 93.5)	89.5	(88.7, 90.2)	88.2	(87.3, 89.0)	92.9	(92.2, 93.5)	85.4	(84.5, 86.3)	84.3	(83.4, 85.2)
	NUHEI	89.7	(86.3, 92.3)	87.4	(83.8, 90.2)	81.5	(77.6, 85.0)	89.4	(86.1, 92.0)	84.7	(80.9, 87.8)	79.4	(75.3, 83.0)
Mode	Internal	93.8	(93.1, 94.4)	89.5	(88.6, 90.3)	90.2	(89.3, 91.0)	93.6	(92.8, 94.2)	86.8	(85.8, 87.7)	85.4	(84.4, 86.4)
	External	89.3	(87.7, 90.8)	89.0	(87.3, 90.4)	80.2	(78.1, 82.1)	90.0	(88.3, 91.4)	81.1	(79.1, 83.0)	79.9	(77.8, 81.8)
Course level	Undergraduate	93.8	(92.9, 94.6)	89.0	(87.9, 90.1)	90.9	(89.8, 91.8)	94.0	(93.1, 94.8)	86.8	(85.6, 88.0)	84.2	(82.9, 85.4)
	Postgraduate coursework	91.0	(89.8, 92.0)	89.1	(87.9, 90.2)	84.2	(82.7, 85.5)	90.6	(89.4, 91.7)	83.1	(81.6, 84.5)	83.5	(82.0, 84.9)
	Postgraduate research	94.7	(92.4, 96.3)	92.2	(89.6, 94.2)	86.8	(83.6, 89.4)	95.2	(93.0, 96.7)	88.5	(85.4, 91.0)	85.7	(82.4, 88.4)
Total		92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	89.3	(88.5, 90.1)	87.8	(86.9, 88.5)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	85.4	(84.5, 86.2)	84.0	(83.1, 84.9)

Figure 4 Overall satisfaction by type of institution and course characteristics, 2019 (%)



Employers rated graduates from a non-English speaking background more highly than those of graduates from an English-speaking background in terms of overall satisfaction and all other graduate attributes. There were significant differences between non-English speaking graduates and English-speaking graduates in terms of their Collaborative skills, 95 per cent in comparison with 87 per cent and Employability skills, 90 per cent and 85 per cent.

Differences in employer ratings for Indigenous and non-Indigenous graduates are not significant and should be treated with caution due to the relatively small numbers of responses from employers of Indigenous graduates. This is similarly the case with employers of graduates with a reported disability.

Employers reported higher overall satisfaction with graduates working in Professional occupations, 87 per cent, and this was significantly higher than employer satisfaction with graduates

working in Community and personal service, Clerical and administrative and other occupations. While this is consistent with higher education qualifications being more relevant for working in Professional occupations, as shown later when discussing graduate and employer views of skills relevance and utilisation, overall satisfaction with graduates in Professional occupations was rated significantly higher than graduates working in Managerial occupations, 79 per cent. Employers also rated graduates employed in Professional occupations significantly higher than graduates employed in Managerial occupations in terms of their Collaborative skills, 87 per cent and 81 per cent, and their Technical skills, 93 per cent and 88 per cent.

In general, employer perceptions of graduates that worked full-time were broadly similar to those of graduates that worked part-time with no significant differences between the two groups of graduates, as shown by the confidence intervals in Table 6.

Table 5 Employer satisfaction by demographic characteristics, 2019 (%)

		Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
		%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
Gender	Male	92.8	(91.8, 93.8)	88.7	(87.5, 89.9)	89.4	(88.2, 90.5)	92.9	(91.8, 93.8)	85.7	(84.3, 87.0)	83.6	(82.1, 85.0)
	Female	92.6	(91.7, 93.4)	89.8	(88.8, 90.7)	86.6	(85.5, 87.7)	92.6	(91.7, 93.4)	85.2	(84.0, 86.3)	84.4	(83.2, 85.6)
Age	30 years or under	93.5	(92.7, 94.3)	88.6	(87.5, 89.6)	91.1	(90.2, 92.0)	93.5	(92.6, 94.3)	86.3	(85.1, 87.4)	84.4	(83.2, 85.6)
	Over 30 years	91.6	(90.5, 92.6)	90.3	(89.1, 91.4)	83.3	(81.9, 84.7)	91.6	(90.5, 92.6)	84.2	(82.8, 85.6)	83.5	(82.0, 84.8)
Indigenous	Indigenous	92.4	(85.0, 96.5)	91.0	(83.4, 95.5)	85.1	(76.4, 91.0)	92.5	(85.2, 96.6)	86.6	(78.1, 92.2)	83.3	(74.4, 89.6)
	Not Indigenous	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	89.3	(88.5, 90.0)	87.8	(87.0, 88.6)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	85.4	(84.5, 86.2)	84.0	(83.1, 84.9)
Home language	English	92.4	(91.7, 93.1)	89.1	(88.2, 89.9)	86.7	(85.8, 87.6)	92.4	(91.6, 93.0)	84.7	(83.7, 85.6)	83.6	(82.6, 84.5)
	Other than English	94.8	(93.0, 96.1)	91.1	(88.9, 92.9)	95.0	(93.3, 96.3)	94.8	(93.0, 96.2)	90.4	(88.1, 92.3)	87.1	(84.5, 89.2)
Disability	Reported disability	94.5	(91.7, 96.4)	88.6	(85.0, 91.4)	86.3	(82.5, 89.4)	94.1	(91.2, 96.1)	86.8	(83.0, 89.9)	82.4	(78.2, 85.8)
	No disability	92.6	(91.9, 93.2)	89.4	(88.6, 90.2)	87.9	(87.0, 88.7)	92.6	(91.9, 93.2)	85.3	(84.4, 86.2)	84.2	(83.2, 85.1)
Total		92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	89.3	(88.5, 90.1)	87.8	(86.9, 88.5)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	85.4	(84.5, 86.2)	84.0	(83.1, 84.9)

Employers' overall satisfaction with graduates who had been working for between three months and one year was higher, 85 per cent, than for graduates who had been working for less than three months or for one year or more, 84 per cent and 83 per cent respectively. However, these differences were not significant. Graduates who had been working for one year or more were rated by employers more highly in terms of their Adaptive skills, 90

per cent, in comparison with graduates who had been working for three months or less, 87 per cent. On the other hand, the Collaborative skills of graduates with longer work histories were rated significantly lower, 85 per cent, than for those graduates who had been working less than three months or between three months and less than a year, 91 per cent and 90 per cent respectively.

Figure 5 Overall satisfaction by demographic group, 2019 (%)

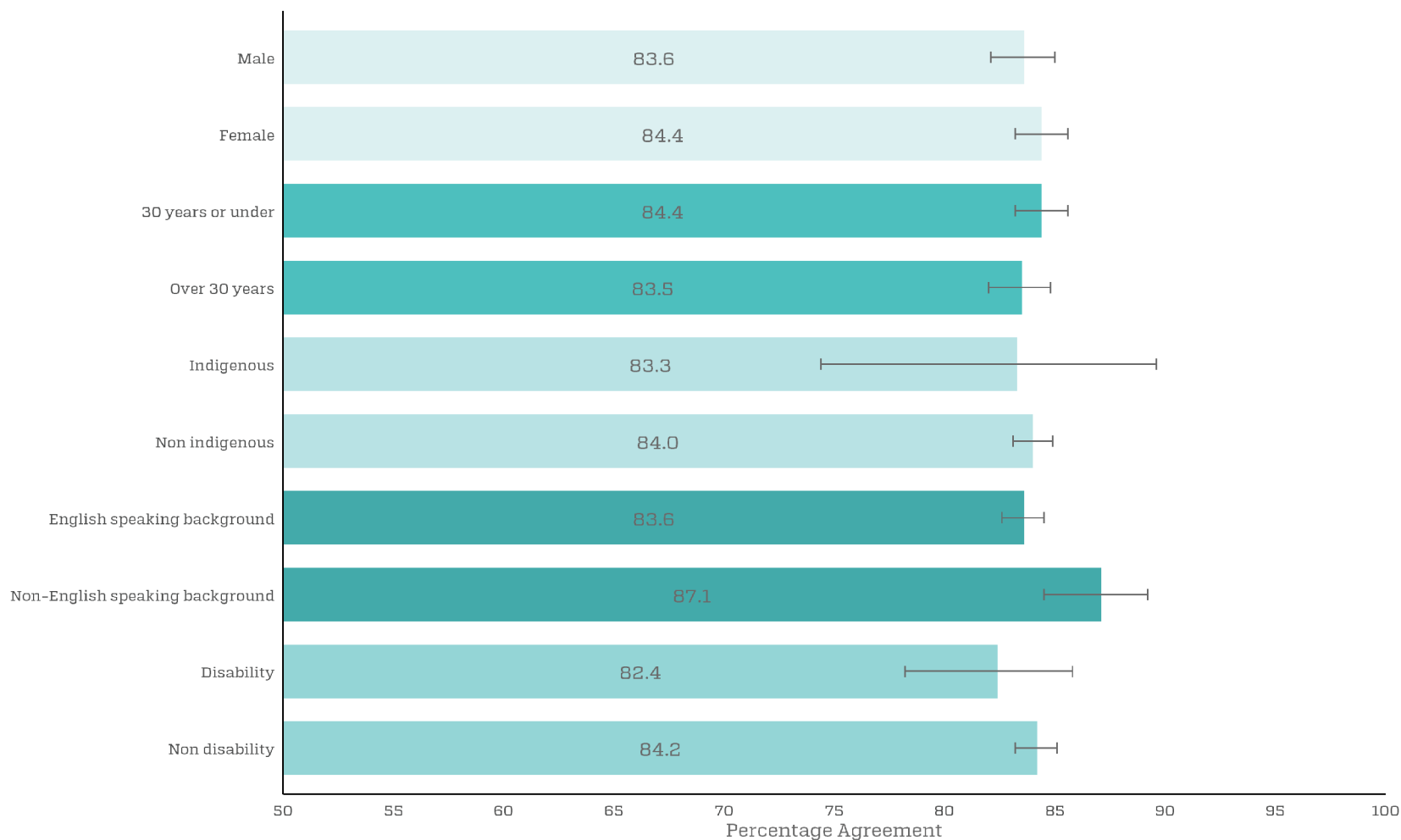


Table 6 Employer satisfaction by labour market characteristics, 2019 (%)

		Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
		%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
Occupation	Managers	91.8	(89.2, 93.8)	87.9	(84.9, 90.4)	80.8	(77.4, 83.8)	88.4	(85.5, 90.8)	84.6	(81.4, 87.4)	79.0	(75.5, 82.2)
	Professionals	92.8	(92.0, 93.6)	89.7	(88.7, 90.6)	87.2	(86.2, 88.2)	93.3	(92.4, 94.0)	84.6	(83.4, 85.7)	86.6	(85.5, 87.6)
	Technicians and trades workers	93.5	(89.3, 96.1)	87.1	(82.0, 90.9)	90.4	(85.8, 93.7)	93.5	(89.3, 96.2)	83.0	(77.3, 87.5)	85.1	(79.7, 89.4)
	Community and personal service workers	93.8	(91.1, 95.7)	89.0	(85.7, 91.6)	91.9	(89.0, 94.1)	93.1	(90.3, 95.2)	88.3	(84.9, 91.0)	79.2	(75.3, 82.7)
	Clerical and administrative workers	92.7	(90.3, 94.6)	88.8	(85.9, 91.2)	89.0	(86.2, 91.3)	93.0	(90.6, 94.9)	86.3	(83.1, 88.9)	79.8	(76.3, 83.0)
	Other workers	92.0	(89.0, 94.2)	90.3	(87.0, 92.8)	93.7	(91.0, 95.6)	92.3	(89.1, 94.6)	91.7	(88.6, 94.0)	76.4	(72.2, 80.2)
Employment status	Full-time	92.6	(91.9, 93.4)	89.2	(88.3, 90.1)	87.2	(86.2, 88.1)	92.6	(91.9, 93.4)	85.0	(83.9, 86.0)	84.1	(83.0, 85.1)
	Part-time	92.8	(91.6, 94.0)	89.6	(88.1, 91.0)	89.1	(87.6, 90.5)	92.7	(91.4, 93.8)	86.5	(84.8, 88.0)	83.9	(82.1, 85.5)
Duration of job with current employer	Less than 3 months	92.9	(90.6, 94.6)	86.5	(83.6, 88.9)	90.7	(88.2, 92.6)	92.7	(90.4, 94.5)	83.4	(80.3, 86.1)	84.0	(81.0, 86.7)
	3 months to < 1 year	93.0	(92.0, 93.9)	89.1	(87.9, 90.2)	90.1	(88.9, 91.2)	92.8	(91.8, 93.7)	85.7	(84.3, 87.0)	84.9	(83.5, 86.2)
	1 year or more	92.3	(91.3, 93.2)	90.2	(89.0, 91.2)	84.9	(83.6, 86.2)	92.5	(91.5, 93.4)	85.6	(84.3, 86.8)	83.1	(81.8, 84.4)
Total		92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	89.3	(88.5, 90.1)	87.8	(86.9, 88.5)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)	85.4	(84.5, 86.2)	84.0	(83.1, 84.9)

Figure 6 Overall satisfaction by occupation, 2019 (%)

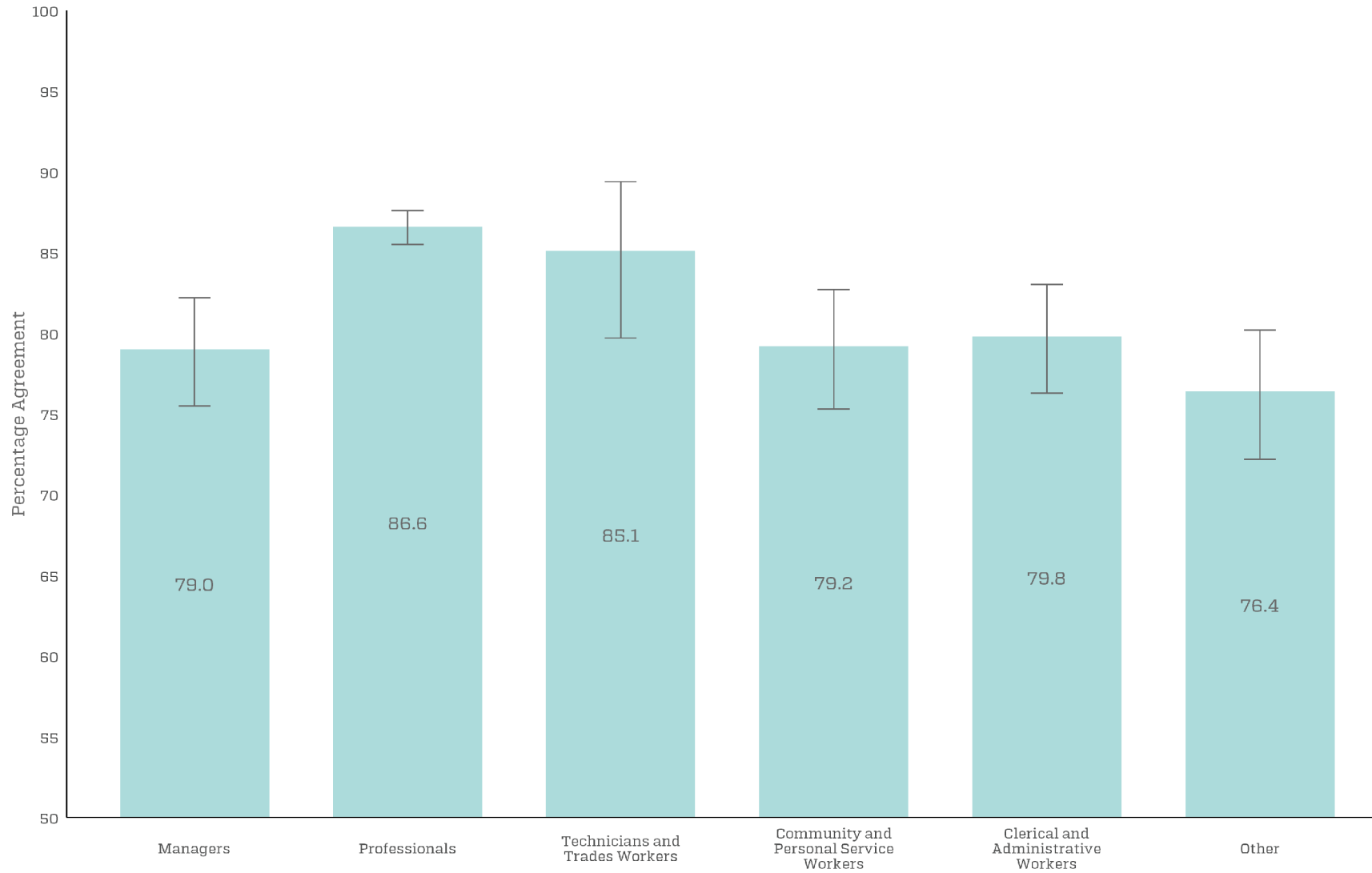
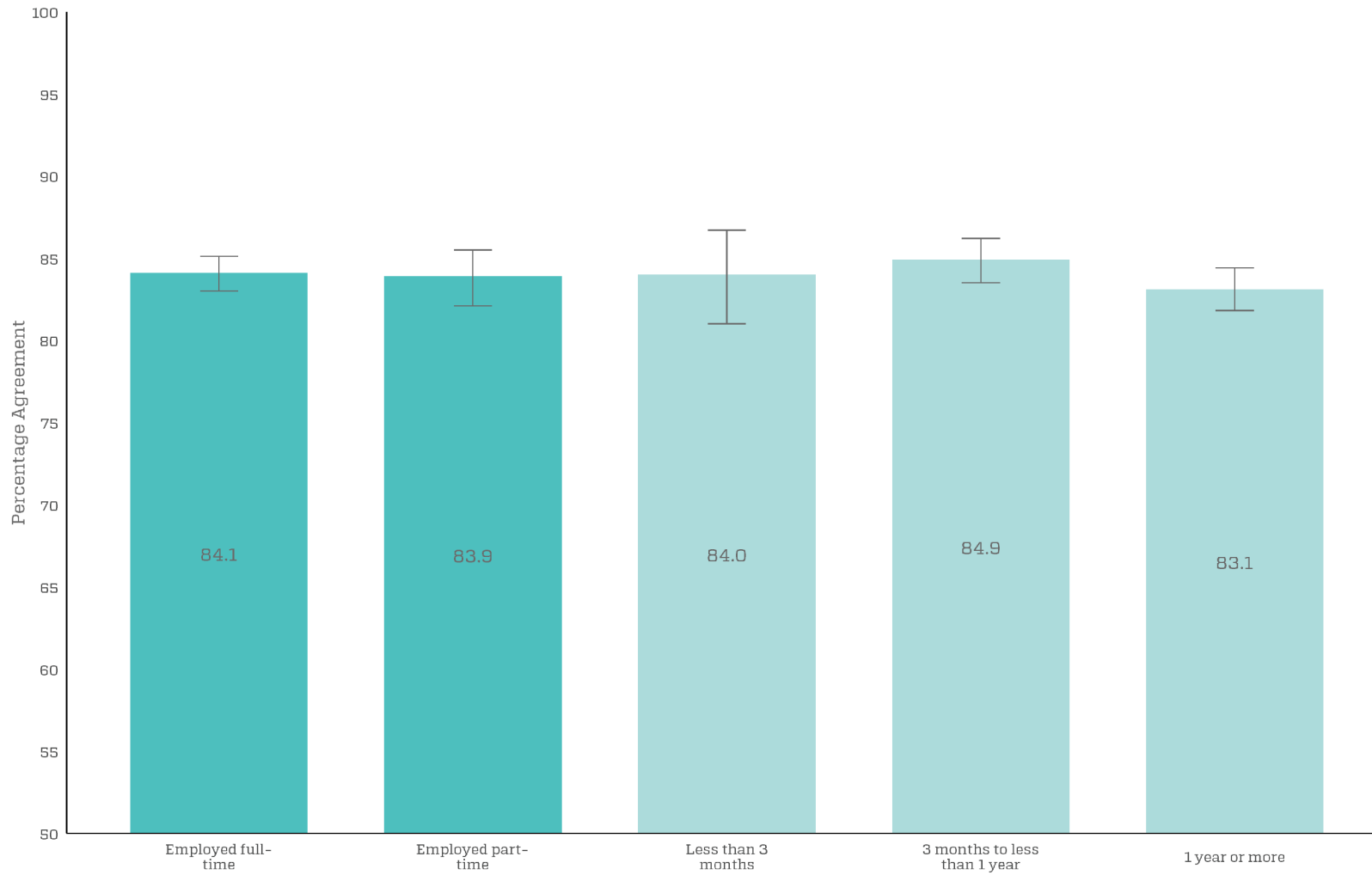


Figure 7 Overall satisfaction by employment characteristics, 2019 (%)



2.2 Employer satisfaction by institution

This report combines results from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 Employer Satisfaction Surveys to publish results for Table A and B universities at institution level as shown in Table 7. This is consistent with the approach utilised on the QILT website where results are pooled across surveys to increase the number of responses and confidence intervals are published to improve the robustness and validity of the data. The number of employer responses in the 2017 to 2019 surveys across institutions is shown in Appendix 3. There are over 14,700 employer responses across universities, ranging from over 858 responses for The University of Melbourne down to 45 responses for University of Divinity. The QILT reports and website do not publish results where there are fewer than 25 survey responses. For this reason, results for individual non-university higher education institution (NUHEIs) are not shown since for most NUHEIs the number of employer responses is too small.

Table 7 demonstrates that employer satisfaction is consistently high across Australia's Table A and B universities, with overall satisfaction ranging from 95 per cent to 76 per cent across universities. In general, employer satisfaction appears broadly similar across most institutions. For example, employer satisfaction with graduates from Bond University was rated highest at 95 per cent. Other universities rated highly by employers include University of Divinity, Australian Catholic University and University of Wollongong, all reporting 90 per cent overall satisfaction by employers. Note, however, the small number of responses for University of Divinity means there is a wide confidence interval associated with this estimate and as a result employer satisfaction cannot be said to be significantly higher at this institution than at other institutions.

The results shown in Table 7 demonstrate the ESS has the capacity to discriminate across universities. Other employer surveys of Australian higher education graduates are much smaller in scale, lack transparency in methodology and rely on the views of persons who may have had little or no direct contact with graduates. For example, the QS Graduate Employability Rankings are based on the views of approximately 900 employers while the 2018 Times Higher Education Global University Employability Ranking is based on 150 responses.

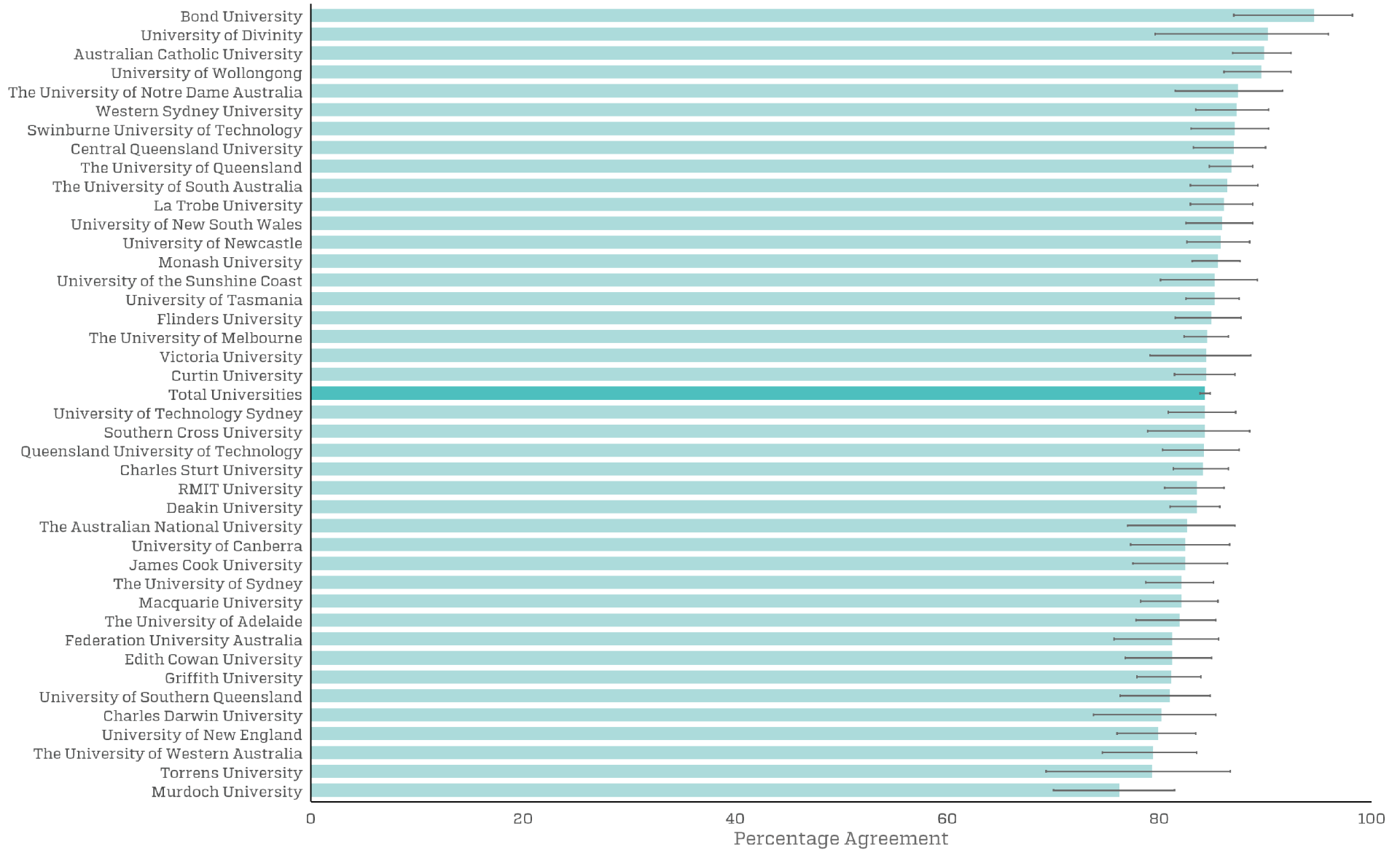
Employer satisfaction is consistently high across Australia's Table A and B universities, ranging from 95% to 76%.

Table 7 Employer satisfaction by institution (universities only), 2017 - 2019

	Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
Australian Catholic University	93.6	(91.0, 95.5)	87.1	(83.7, 89.8)	86.4	(82.9, 89.2)	92.2	(89.3, 94.3)	83.5	(79.8, 86.7)	89.9	(86.9, 92.4)
Bond University	96.4	(89.1, 99.3)	94.2	(86.0, 98.1)	96.3	(88.9, 99.2)	96.3	(88.9, 99.2)	94.2	(86.0, 98.1)	94.6	(87.0, 98.2)
Central Queensland University	94.0	(91.0, 96.0)	92.4	(89.3, 94.7)	89.0	(85.4, 91.8)	95.0	(92.3, 96.9)	86.9	(83.0, 90.0)	87.0	(83.2, 90.0)
Charles Darwin University	94.0	(89.5, 96.7)	87.6	(82.0, 91.7)	89.7	(84.5, 93.3)	95.5	(91.3, 97.8)	84.4	(78.3, 89.0)	80.2	(73.8, 85.3)
Charles Sturt University	93.7	(91.7, 95.2)	92.4	(90.3, 94.1)	87.1	(84.5, 89.3)	94.3	(92.3, 95.7)	87.2	(84.6, 89.4)	84.1	(81.3, 86.5)
Curtin University	92.6	(90.3, 94.4)	87.7	(84.8, 90.0)	87.2	(84.3, 89.6)	92.8	(90.5, 94.6)	84.2	(81.1, 86.9)	84.4	(81.4, 87.1)
Deakin University	93.1	(91.3, 94.5)	90.9	(88.9, 92.6)	87.9	(85.7, 89.8)	94.4	(92.7, 95.7)	87.0	(84.7, 89.0)	83.5	(81.0, 85.7)
Edith Cowan University	95.1	(92.2, 96.9)	93.0	(89.7, 95.3)	91.4	(87.9, 93.9)	94.5	(91.5, 96.5)	86.6	(82.6, 89.8)	81.2	(76.8, 84.9)
Federation University Australia	93.5	(89.5, 96.0)	89.6	(85.0, 93.0)	88.0	(83.2, 91.6)	92.1	(87.8, 95.0)	90.4	(85.9, 93.6)	81.2	(75.7, 85.6)
Flinders University	93.2	(90.6, 95.0)	89.7	(86.7, 92.1)	86.9	(83.7, 89.5)	94.2	(91.8, 95.9)	84.5	(81.0, 87.4)	84.9	(81.5, 87.7)
Griffith University	90.8	(88.3, 92.7)	87.9	(85.2, 90.2)	84.4	(81.4, 86.9)	92.2	(89.9, 94.0)	83.3	(80.2, 86.0)	81.1	(77.9, 83.9)
James Cook University	94.0	(90.5, 96.3)	89.9	(85.9, 93.0)	89.5	(85.4, 92.6)	95.5	(92.3, 97.4)	87.8	(83.3, 91.1)	82.4	(77.5, 86.4)
La Trobe University	94.4	(92.1, 96.1)	92.2	(89.6, 94.2)	86.9	(83.7, 89.5)	94.0	(91.6, 95.8)	85.6	(82.2, 88.3)	86.1	(82.9, 88.8)
Macquarie University	94.5	(91.9, 96.3)	89.9	(86.6, 92.4)	85.9	(82.3, 88.9)	93.9	(91.1, 95.8)	86.8	(83.2, 89.8)	82.1	(78.2, 85.5)
Monash University	93.7	(91.9, 95.1)	90.0	(87.9, 91.8)	87.6	(85.4, 89.6)	93.3	(91.5, 94.7)	86.2	(83.8, 88.3)	85.5	(83.1, 87.6)
Murdoch University	94.0	(89.8, 96.5)	90.7	(85.8, 94.1)	85.7	(80.3, 89.9)	95.7	(91.9, 97.9)	84.9	(79.2, 89.3)	76.2	(70.0, 81.4)
Queensland University of Technology	95.0	(92.4, 96.8)	91.2	(88.0, 93.7)	87.3	(83.6, 90.2)	94.0	(91.1, 96.0)	87.2	(83.4, 90.3)	84.2	(80.3, 87.5)
RMIT University	91.4	(89.0, 93.3)	87.6	(84.9, 89.9)	87.6	(84.9, 89.9)	91.5	(89.1, 93.4)	84.3	(81.4, 86.9)	83.5	(80.5, 86.1)
Southern Cross University	90.2	(85.7, 93.5)	87.1	(82.1, 90.9)	86.9	(82.0, 90.6)	89.6	(84.9, 92.9)	84.2	(79.0, 88.4)	84.3	(78.9, 88.5)
Swinburne University of Technology	92.7	(89.4, 95.1)	92.2	(88.8, 94.7)	90.6	(86.9, 93.3)	94.3	(91.2, 96.4)	89.4	(85.6, 92.4)	87.1	(83.0, 90.3)
The Australian National University	93.5	(89.4, 96.2)	91.4	(86.8, 94.5)	86.9	(81.8, 90.8)	93.4	(89.1, 96.1)	83.7	(78.0, 88.1)	82.6	(77.0, 87.1)
The University of Adelaide	95.7	(93.2, 97.4)	92.8	(89.7, 95.0)	91.0	(87.7, 93.5)	96.0	(93.6, 97.6)	90.1	(86.6, 92.8)	81.9	(77.8, 85.3)
The University of Melbourne	93.3	(91.7, 94.6)	89.0	(87.0, 90.7)	86.9	(84.8, 88.7)	92.0	(90.3, 93.5)	84.3	(82.0, 86.3)	84.5	(82.3, 86.5)

	Foundation		Adaptive		Collaborative		Technical		Employability		Overall satisfaction	
	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
The University of Notre Dame Australia	91.1	(85.8, 94.5)	90.9	(85.6, 94.4)	89.2	(83.5, 93.1)	90.8	(85.3, 94.4)	88.3	(82.6, 92.4)	87.4	(81.5, 91.6)
The University of Queensland	95.4	(94.0, 96.5)	90.2	(88.2, 91.9)	88.4	(86.3, 90.2)	94.8	(93.2, 96.0)	85.3	(83.0, 87.4)	86.8	(84.7, 88.8)
The University of South Australia	92.9	(90.1, 94.9)	87.5	(84.1, 90.3)	89.3	(86.1, 91.8)	94.2	(91.6, 96.1)	88.7	(85.3, 91.3)	86.4	(82.9, 89.3)
The University of Sydney	92.8	(90.3, 94.7)	87.9	(84.9, 90.4)	89.6	(86.8, 91.9)	94.5	(92.2, 96.2)	82.8	(79.3, 85.8)	82.1	(78.7, 85.1)
The University of Western Australia	95.6	(92.7, 97.4)	92.0	(88.4, 94.5)	89.1	(85.3, 92.1)	94.5	(91.4, 96.6)	85.7	(81.3, 89.1)	79.4	(74.6, 83.5)
Torrens University	87.9	(79.0, 93.5)	86.0	(76.6, 92.1)	91.4	(83.1, 96.0)	89.8	(81.3, 94.9)	82.8	(73.1, 89.5)	79.3	(69.3, 86.7)
University of Canberra	91.2	(87.1, 94.1)	86.0	(81.2, 89.8)	87.0	(82.4, 90.6)	88.8	(84.2, 92.1)	84.7	(79.7, 88.7)	82.4	(77.3, 86.6)
University of Divinity	97.6	(89.0, 100.0)	97.6	(89.0, 100.0)	88.4	(77.7, 94.5)	88.4	(77.7, 94.5)	88.1	(77.2, 94.4)	90.2	(79.6, 95.9)
University of New England	93.3	(90.6, 95.3)	90.7	(87.7, 93.1)	84.4	(80.8, 87.4)	95.0	(92.6, 96.7)	85.4	(81.8, 88.4)	79.9	(76.0, 83.4)
University of New South Wales	92.8	(90.1, 94.8)	91.7	(88.9, 93.9)	87.0	(83.7, 89.7)	92.8	(90.1, 94.9)	87.0	(83.6, 89.7)	85.9	(82.5, 88.8)
University of Newcastle	94.7	(92.4, 96.3)	91.2	(88.5, 93.4)	88.4	(85.4, 90.8)	94.7	(92.4, 96.3)	88.1	(85.0, 90.6)	85.8	(82.6, 88.5)
University of Southern Queensland	91.1	(87.5, 93.7)	85.3	(81.0, 88.7)	80.5	(75.9, 84.5)	92.2	(88.8, 94.7)	82.5	(78.0, 86.3)	81.0	(76.3, 84.8)
University of Tasmania	90.6	(88.3, 92.5)	88.6	(86.2, 90.7)	84.6	(81.9, 87.0)	90.2	(87.9, 92.2)	82.9	(80.0, 85.5)	85.2	(82.5, 87.5)
University of Technology Sydney	93.0	(90.4, 94.9)	90.3	(87.4, 92.6)	90.5	(87.6, 92.8)	94.3	(91.9, 96.1)	86.3	(83.0, 89.0)	84.3	(80.8, 87.2)
University of the Sunshine Coast	93.5	(89.5, 96.0)	90.9	(86.4, 94.0)	90.4	(85.9, 93.6)	93.2	(89.1, 95.9)	86.0	(80.8, 90.0)	85.2	(80.1, 89.2)
University of Wollongong	94.2	(91.3, 96.2)	89.2	(85.6, 92.1)	93.4	(90.3, 95.5)	94.4	(91.5, 96.4)	86.9	(83.0, 90.1)	89.6	(86.1, 92.4)
Victoria University	93.8	(89.9, 96.4)	91.8	(87.4, 94.8)	92.7	(88.5, 95.4)	93.8	(89.7, 96.3)	91.7	(87.3, 94.7)	84.4	(79.1, 88.6)
Western Sydney University	94.0	(91.0, 96.0)	89.0	(85.4, 91.8)	92.0	(88.7, 94.4)	94.6	(91.7, 96.5)	86.2	(82.3, 89.4)	87.3	(83.4, 90.3)
Total Universities	93.3	(92.9, 93.7)	89.9	(89.4, 90.3)	87.9	(87.4, 88.3)	93.5	(93.1, 93.8)	85.8	(85.3, 86.3)	84.3	(83.8, 84.8)

Figure 8 Overall satisfaction by institution (universities only), 2017 to 2019 (%)



2.3 Skills relevance and utilisation

With the rapid expansion in student enrolments in recent years, concerns have been expressed that this may be leading to an oversupply of higher education graduates. This oversupply can manifest itself in the 'over-education' of graduates where they may not be fully utilising their skills or qualifications in their present position. There is a considerable literature on qualification related underemployment¹. The Employer Satisfaction Survey provides valuable evidence on employers' perceptions on the relevance and utilisation of higher education graduates' skills and qualifications. It remains important to monitor these assessments over time.

Overall, graduates tend to view their qualification as less important for their current employment than do their supervisors, as shown by Table 8. Over half of the graduates, 53 per cent, considered their qualification to be 'very important' or 'important' to their current job. Almost one in eight graduates, 13 per cent, felt that it was 'not at all important'.

¹ For example, see Mavromaras, K., McGuinness, S., & O'Leary, N. (2009). Job mismatches and labour market outcomes, 1-26. Retrieved from <http://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/50157> on the match between graduates and their jobs.

On the other hand, around 62 per cent of supervisors indicated that the qualification was 'very important' or 'important' and only 8 per cent indicated that it was 'not at all important' for the graduate's current job. Given that a little over half of the graduates had been employed for less than one year after completing their qualification, their relative lack of work experience may explain why they did not fully comprehend the extent to which their qualification is important for their job.

Health and Education qualifications were rated by graduates and supervisors as being significantly more important for their current position than most other fields of education. This is consistent with these qualifications being a requirement for employment in many instances. For example, 70 per cent of graduates and 79 per cent of supervisors thought that Health qualifications were important for current employment, as shown by Table 9. Similarly, 69 per cent of graduates and 78 per cent of supervisors thought that Education qualifications were important for current employment.

Table 8 Importance of qualification for current employment, 2019

	Graduates		Supervisors	
	%	CI	%	CI
Very important	34.9	(33.7, 36.1)	38.8	(37.7, 40.0)
Important	18.3	(17.4, 19.3)	23.5	(22.5, 24.5)
Fairly important	17.2	(16.3, 18.2)	16.5	(15.6, 17.4)
Not that important	16.4	(15.5, 17.4)	13.5	(12.7, 14.3)
Not at all important	13.1	(12.3, 14.0)	7.7	(7.1, 8.4)
Total	100.0		100.0	

Supervisors of Creative arts, Information technology and Management and commerce graduates were least likely to think that the qualification was important for current employment at 44 per cent, 48 per cent and 48 per cent respectively. The largest discrepancy between the views of graduates and employers was in Agriculture, environmental and related studies where 44 per cent of graduates rated their qualification as being important compared with 60 per cent of supervisors, a difference of 16 percentage points. Other areas where supervisors rated the qualification substantially higher than graduates was in Engineering and related technologies, Natural and physical sciences and Creative arts with gaps of over 10 percentage points. Architecture and building had the lowest difference between graduate and employer assessments of the importance of the qualification to current work with a gap of only 1 percentage point.

Graduates and supervisors of those working in Professional occupations were most likely to state that the qualification was important for the job at 65 per cent and 76 per cent respectively. This is consistent with the ABS classification of occupations where managerial and professional jobs are defined at Skill Level 1 being commensurate with qualifications at bachelor level or higher. Graduates and supervisors working in lower skill level jobs, that is, technicians and trade workers and below, were unsurprisingly much less likely to state that the qualification was important for the job.

Graduates and their supervisors were also asked to indicate the extent to which the recent qualification prepared the graduate for their job. A high proportion of graduates and supervisors, 87 per cent and 92 per cent respectively, thought the qualification prepared the graduate for the job, as shown in Table 11.

The proportion of supervisors who thought the qualification prepared the graduate for the job has remained consistently high since the employer survey was first conducted in 2016, ranging between 92 and 93 per cent in rounded terms.

Overall, there appears to be a strong relationship between skills and knowledge acquired by higher education graduates and the requirements of their jobs after graduation. This result strongly affirms the value of higher education qualifications in terms of preparation for work.

87%

graduates indicating their qualification was important for their current job

92%

supervisors indicating the graduate's qualification was important for their current job

Table 9 Importance of qualification for current employment by broad field of education, 2019*

	Graduates		Supervisors	
	%	CI	%	CI
Natural and Physical Sciences	47.2	(42.7, 51.8)	60.1	(55.6, 64.4)
Information Technology	41.1	(35.3, 47.0)	48.4	(42.8, 54.0)
Engineering and Related Technologies	56.0	(51.6, 60.4)	69.9	(65.8, 73.7)
Architecture and Building	60.4	(52.2, 68.0)	61.4	(53.7, 68.6)
Agriculture and Environmental Studies	44.3	(36.3, 52.7)	59.8	(51.7, 67.4)
Health	70.2	(67.7, 72.6)	79.2	(77.0, 81.2)
Education	69.1	(65.8, 72.2)	77.7	(74.8, 80.3)
Management and Commerce	42.3	(39.5, 45.2)	48.1	(45.3, 50.9)
Society and Culture	44.2	(41.4, 47.0)	53.2	(50.5, 55.9)
Creative Arts	32.3	(27.3, 37.7)	44.2	(39.0, 49.5)
Total	53.2	(52.0, 54.5)	62.3	(61.1, 63.5)
Standard deviation (percentage points)	12.6		12.3	

*Refers to the percentage of graduates and supervisors rating the qualification as 'very important' or 'important' for current employment.

Table 10 Importance of qualification for current employment, by occupation group, 2019*

	Graduates		Supervisors	
	%	CI	%	CI
Managers	41.5	(37.5, 45.6)	49.2	(45.2, 53.2)
Professionals	65.4	(63.9, 66.9)	75.5	(74.2, 76.8)
Technicians and trades workers	34.4	(28.4, 40.9)	42.7	(36.5, 49.1)
Community and personal service workers	34.6	(30.2, 39.2)	42.5	(38.1, 47.0)
Clerical and administrative workers	30.5	(26.9, 34.4)	41.0	(37.1, 44.9)
Other workers	15.8	(12.5, 19.7)	19.8	(16.4, 23.6)
Total	53.2	(52.0, 54.5)	62.3	(61.1, 63.5)
Standard Deviation	16.3		17.9	

*Refers to the percentage of graduates and supervisors rating the qualification as 'very important' or 'important' for current employment.

Taken in conjunction with the findings regarding the importance of the qualification, it seems to be the case that importance could be related to domain-specific skills or knowledge whereas preparedness is a broader concept, encapsulating generic skills and potentially basic employability. Alternatively, as almost half of graduates had been employed in their current position before they completed their qualification, it is understandable that a higher education qualification could be perceived as being less important while still preparing the graduate for employment by broadening or deepening existing skills and knowledge.

In general, graduates across all fields of education, with the exception of Architecture and building, were less likely than their supervisors to indicate they felt their qualification prepared them for their current job, as shown by Table 12. Creative arts graduates, 76 per cent, Natural and physical sciences graduates, 82 per cent and Society and culture graduates, 84 per cent, were least likely to state that their qualification prepared them for

their job. Supervisors in each of these areas were more likely to state that the course had prepared the graduate well or very well for their current employment with Natural and physical sciences supervisors rating preparedness almost 12 percentage points higher than graduates. Supervisors of graduates from the Society and culture and Creative arts fields of education also rated preparedness higher than graduates by 7 and 5 percentage points respectively.

It should also be noted there was less variation across fields of education among supervisors stating the qualification prepared the graduate for current employment, 4 percentage points, than among those stating the qualification was important for the job, 12 percentage points (see Table 9). This seems to support the previous observation that while higher education qualifications may not be 'important' in the sense they are not 'mandatory' or 'required', they nevertheless prepare graduates for employment very well.

Table 11 Extent to which qualification prepared graduate for current employment, 2019

	Graduates		Supervisors	
	%	CI	%	CI
Very well	42.2	(40.9, 43.5)	50.8	(49.5, 52.0)
Well	44.9	(43.6, 46.2)	41.4	(40.2, 42.7)
Not well	5.9	(5.3, 6.6)	4.2	(3.8, 4.8)
Not at all	7.0	(6.4, 7.7)	3.6	(3.1, 4.1)
Total	100.0		100.0	

Table 12 Extent to which qualification prepared graduate well or very well for current employment, by broad field of education, 2019*

	Graduates		Supervisors	
	%	CI	%	CI
Natural and Physical Sciences	81.8	(77.8, 85.3)	93.7	(90.9, 95.6)
Information Technology	84.4	(79.3, 88.4)	90.4	(86.2, 93.4)
Engineering and Related Technologies	87.5	(84.1, 90.2)	92.7	(90.0, 94.7)
Architecture and Building	93.7	(88.1, 96.9)	90.3	(84.3, 94.2)
Agriculture and Environmental Studies	85.1	(77.6, 90.4)	89.6	(83.2, 93.8)
Health	89.9	(88.1, 91.4)	94.9	(93.6, 95.9)
Education	92.3	(90.3, 94.0)	94.3	(92.5, 95.7)
Management and Commerce	87.7	(85.6, 89.6)	92.1	(90.4, 93.6)
Society and Culture	83.5	(81.2, 85.6)	90.7	(88.9, 92.3)
Creative Arts	76.2	(70.7, 81.0)	81.4	(76.6, 85.5)
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	n/a		n/a	
Total	87.1	(86.2, 87.9)	92.2	(91.5, 92.9)
Standard deviation	5.2		3.8	

* n/a indicates suppression due to the number of responses being less than 25.

Table 13 shows that supervisors of graduates working in Managerial and Professional occupations were most likely, at 95 per cent, to state that the qualification had prepared the graduate well or very well for current employment. The difference in ratings of preparedness by graduates and supervisors for graduates in Professional and Technical and trades occupations was quite low at around 3 to 4 percentage points, whereas differences for Community and personal service workers with 11 percentage points, and graduates in “Other” occupations with 18 percentage points seems to indicate that those employed in lower skill occupations were less confident in how well their course had prepared them for work compared with their immediate supervisors.

Supervisors were also offered the opportunity to provide feedback on the main ways that the qualification had prepared the graduate for employment, as shown by Table 14, and there were around 5,400 comments in eight themes. Overall, 33 per cent of supervisors reported favourably on graduates’ Domain specific skills and knowledge.

A substantial number of comments were also made that expanded on the quantitative ratings of graduate attributes including Adaptive skills, 32 per cent, Employability and enterprise skills, 31 per cent, Technical and professional skills, 26 per cent, and Foundation skills, 22 per cent. Positive feedback was also provided in relation to the Personal attributes, 9 per cent, Teamwork and interpersonal skills, 8 per cent, and Institutional and course attributes with 6 per cent.

There were substantially fewer comments, around 2,000, in relation to ways in which the qualification could have better prepared the graduate for employment suggesting the majority of supervisors felt that the graduate had been well prepared for the workplace, as shown by Table 15. These observations are consistent with the generally very positive supervisor ratings of graduate preparation.

95%

supervisors of graduates working in Managerial and Professional occupations who stated that the qualification had prepared the graduate well or very well for employment.

Table 13 Extent to which qualification prepared graduate well or very well for current employment, by occupation, 2019 (%)

	Graduates		Supervisors	
	%	CI	%	CI
Managers	88.5	(85.4, 91.0)	95.1	(92.8, 96.7)
Professionals	91.4	(90.5, 92.3)	94.8	(94.1, 95.5)
Technicians and trades workers	82.0	(75.8, 86.8)	86.1	(80.7, 90.2)
Community and personal service workers	76.5	(71.9, 80.6)	87.8	(84.3, 90.6)
Clerical and administrative workers	81.8	(78.2, 84.9)	87.8	(84.7, 90.3)
Other workers	57.8	(52.3, 63.2)	75.4	(70.8, 79.5)
Total	87.1	(86.2, 87.9)	92.2	(91.5, 92.9)
Standard Deviation	11.9		7.2	

The greatest number of comments related to the ways in which graduates could have been better prepared for employment were made in relation Technical and professional skills, 31 per cent, Domain specific skills and knowledge, 30 per cent, and Employability and enterprise skills, 25 per cent.

Supervisor feedback regarding how to better prepare graduates for employment also referenced Institutional and course attributes, 16 per cent, Foundation skills 11 per cent, Teamwork and interpersonal skills, 6 per cent and Personal attributes, 4 per cent.

Table 14 **Main ways that the qualification prepared the graduate for employment, 2019***

	%	CI
Domain specific skills and knowledge	33.4	(32.1, 34.8)
Adaptive skills	31.6	(30.2, 32.9)
Employability and enterprise skills	31.1	(29.7, 32.4)
Technical and professional skills	26.0	(24.8, 27.3)
Foundation skills	22.0	(20.8, 23.2)
Personal attributes	9.4	(8.6, 10.2)
Teamwork and interpersonal skills	8.4	(7.6, 9.2)
Institutional and course attributes	5.5	(4.9, 6.2)

*Does not add to 100 per cent. Supervisors were able to provide more than one comment.

Table 15 **Main ways that the qualification could have better prepared the graduate for employment, 2019***

	%	CI
Technical and professional skills	31.1	(29.2, 33.1)
Domain specific skills and knowledge	30.4	(28.5, 32.4)
Employability and enterprise skills	25.4	(23.7, 27.3)
Institutional and course attributes	16.2	(14.7, 17.8)
Foundation skills	11.0	(9.8, 12.4)
Adaptive skills	7.3	(6.3, 8.5)
Teamwork and interpersonal skills	6.1	(5.2, 7.2)
Personal attributes	3.7	(3.0, 4.6)

*Does not add to 100 per cent. Supervisors were able to provide more than one comment.

3 Methodology

3.1 Methodology overview

The 2019 ESS was primarily conducted as a national online survey among supervisors of graduates of 109 higher education institutions, including all 41 Table A and B universities, and 68 Non-University Higher Education Institutions (NUHEIs).

The population frame for the 2019 ESS comprised 102,804 graduates, domestic and international, who responded in the 2019 GOS and indicated that they were employed. Of these, 10,494 employed graduates provided sufficient contact details to approach 9,731 supervisors, yielding a supervisor referral rate of 9.5 per cent. This is marginally lower than the 10.7 per cent supervisor referral rate achieved in the 2018 ESS, and higher than the 9.3 per cent and 7.7 per cent supervisor referral rate achieved in 2017 and 2016 respectively.

As in previous years, there remains a reluctance among graduates to pass on their supervisor contact details. Establishment of the QILT brand allied with efforts to promote the QILT surveys and especially the ESS among companies that are known employers of graduates may help to lift the supervisor referral rate over time.

In the 2019 ESS, a total of 4,689 valid survey responses from direct supervisors were collected across all study levels, representing a supervisor response rate of 48.2 per cent. This is lower than the 52.0 per cent supervisor response rate achieved in 2018 and equal to the 48.2 per cent achieved in 2017, but higher than the 44.5 per cent supervisor response rate achieved in 2016.

Further information on survey methodology and institutional responses is included at Appendices 1 and 3, and a copy of the generic survey items (i.e. excluding any department or institution specific items) is included at Appendix 2.

3.2 Response bias

The tables that follow compare the course, demographic and labour market characteristics of employed graduate respondents to the GOS, with the characteristics of graduates whose supervisors responded to the ESS to detect possible bias in the ESS. That is, these tables identify the extent to which the ESS departs from being a representative survey of employers of recent graduates. Employed graduate respondents to the GOS were asked to provide contact details of their supervisors and as such represent the population frame for the ESS.

Comparison of employed graduates with supervisor responses by field of education shows that Education graduates are overrepresented by 3.4 percentage points in the survey while Management and commerce, Society and culture and Creative arts are underrepresented in the ESS, as shown by Table 16.

From Table 3, supervisors of Education graduates recorded higher than average ratings while supervisors of Management and commerce, Society and culture and Creative arts graduates reported lower than average satisfaction ratings. Therefore, the bias in supervisor responses by field of education, all other things equal, raises reported overall satisfaction.

Table 16 Respondents by broad field of education, 2019*

	Employed graduates			Supervisors		
	n	%	CI	n	%	CI
Natural and Physical Sciences	7,253	7.1	(6.9, 7.2)	320	6.8	(6.2, 7.5)
Information Technology	4,884	4.8	(4.6, 4.9)	212	4.5	(4.0, 5.0)
Engineering and Related Technologies	6,505	6.3	(6.2, 6.5)	358	7.6	(7.0, 8.3)
Architecture and Building	2,367	2.3	(2.2, 2.4)	115	2.5	(2.1, 2.9)
Agriculture and Environmental Studies	1,648	1.6	(1.5, 1.7)	103	2.2	(1.9, 2.6)
Health	21,893	21.3	(21.1, 21.5)	1,028	21.9	(20.9, 22.9)
Education	9,762	9.5	(9.3, 9.6)	606	12.9	(12.1, 13.8)
Management and Commerce	20,314	19.8	(19.6, 20.0)	820	17.5	(16.6, 18.4)
Society and Culture	21,798	21.2	(21.0, 21.4)	889	19.0	(18.0, 19.9)
Creative Arts	6,323	6.2	(6.0, 6.3)	235	5.0	(4.5, 5.6)
Total	102,804	100.0		4,689	100.0	

*Total includes a small number of responses in Food, Hospitality and Personal Services. Note that total figures by broad field of education shown elsewhere in this report include Food, Hospitality and Personal Services.

Table 17 suggests there is a slight underrepresentation of non-university responses to the survey. While employers of NUHEI graduates report lower satisfaction, since they represent a small fraction of responses, this is expected to lead to only a very small upwards bias in reported overall satisfaction.

There is a disproportionately higher level of responses from supervisors of external graduates in the ESS by 5.4 percentage points as seen in Table 17. Supervisors of external graduates report lower overall satisfaction (see Table 4) so that overrepresentation of the supervisors of external graduates would lead to a downward bias in reported overall satisfaction in the 2019 ESS.

Supervisors of postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates are somewhat over-represented by 2.9 percentage points and 3.0 percentage points respectively while undergraduates are underrepresented by 5.9 percentage points. Since employers report lower satisfaction with postgraduate coursework graduates this is anticipated to lead to a downward

bias in reported employer satisfaction. This would be offset, in part, by overrepresentation of postgraduate research graduates who report higher employer satisfaction. However, the population of postgraduate research graduates is much smaller, likely resulting in smaller bias for postgraduate compared with undergraduate responses.

Table 18 compares the demographic characteristics of employed graduate respondents to the GOS with the demographic characteristics of graduates whose supervisors actually responded to the ESS. Supervisors of male graduates are overrepresented in the ESS by around 4.2 percentage points as seen in Table 18 and they reported slightly higher overall satisfaction, as shown by Table 5. However, differences in employer satisfaction with male and female graduates are not significant so the overrepresentation of employers of male graduates is unlikely to materially impact on reported overall satisfaction.

Table 17 Respondents by type of institution and course characteristics, 2019

		Employed graduates			Supervisors		
		n	%	CI	n	%	CI
Type of institution	University	95,604	93.0	(92.9, 93.1)	4,371	93.2	(92.6, 93.8)
	NUHEI	7,200	7.0	(6.9, 7.1)	318	6.8	(6.2, 7.4)
Mode	Internal	83,275	81.0	(80.8, 81.2)	3,548	75.7	(74.6, 76.7)
	External	19,452	18.9	(18.7, 19.1)	1,138	24.3	(23.3, 25.3)
Course level	Undergraduate	57,161	55.6	(55.4, 55.9)	2,332	49.7	(48.5, 50.9)
	Postgraduate coursework	40,327	39.2	(39.0, 39.5)	1,973	42.1	(40.9, 43.3)
	Postgraduate research	5,316	5.2	(5.1, 5.3)	384	8.2	(7.6, 8.9)

Supervisors of graduates aged 30 years and over are overrepresented in the ESS by 13.3 percentage points. This is consistent with the overrepresentation of supervisors of postgraduate coursework graduates as shown in Table 17. Employers of older graduates reported slightly lower overall satisfaction, so the overrepresentation of older graduates is likely to lead to a small downward bias in reported overall satisfaction. However, note there was no significant difference in employers' overall satisfaction between younger and older graduates.

Supervisors of graduates working in Professional occupations are overrepresented by 5.9 percentage points in the ESS. From Table 6 earlier, supervisors of graduates working in Professional occupations reported higher overall satisfaction. All other things equal, this would lead to an upward bias in the reported overall satisfaction in the 2019 ESS.

Supervisors of graduates employed full-time are overrepresented in the ESS by 4.2 percentage points. From Table 6 earlier, there was little significant difference in reported overall satisfaction among supervisors of graduates who worked either full-time or part-time. Supervisors of graduates who have worked in their current job for between three months and one year are over-represented in the 2019 ESS by around 3.7 percentage points. Satisfaction with this group was higher than for those who had been employed for under three months and so their overrepresentation may lead to an upward bias in employer satisfaction.

Table 18 Respondents by demographic characteristics, 2019

		Employed graduates			Supervisors		
		n	%	CI	n	%	CI
Gender	Male	39,051	38.0	(37.7, 38.2)	1,978	42.2	(41.0, 43.4)
	Female	63,646	61.9	(61.7, 62.2)	2,708	57.8	(56.6, 58.9)
Age	30 years or under	71,501	69.6	(69.3, 69.8)	2,641	56.3	(55.1, 57.5)
	Over 30 years	31,303	30.4	(30.2, 30.7)	2,048	43.7	(42.5, 44.9)
Indigenous	Indigenous	1,071	1.0	(1.0, 1.1)	68	1.5	(1.2, 1.8)
	Not Indigenous	101,733	99.0	(98.9, 99.0)	4,621	98.5	(98.2, 98.8)
Home language	English	87,252	84.9	(84.7, 85.1)	4,106	87.6	(86.8, 88.3)
	Other than English	15,552	15.1	(14.9, 15.3)	583	12.4	(11.7, 13.2)
Disability	Reported disability	5,899	5.7	(5.6, 5.9)	283	6.0	(5.5, 6.6)
	No disability	96,828	94.2	(94.1, 94.3)	4,403	93.9	(93.3, 94.5)

In summary, over-representation of responses from employers of graduates in Education courses, graduates working in Professional occupations and graduates employed between 3 months and one year, is likely to lead to an upward bias in reported employer satisfaction.

On the other hand, over-representation of the supervisors of postgraduate coursework and external graduates is likely to lead to a downward bias in reported employer satisfaction.

Table 19 Respondents by labour market characteristics, 2019

		Employed graduates			Supervisors		
		n	%	CI	n	%	CI
Occupation	Managers	8,628	8.7	(8.6, 8.9)	421	9.1	(8.4, 9.8)
	Professionals	57,052	57.6	(57.4, 57.9)	2,939	63.5	(62.3, 64.7)
	Technicians and trades workers	3,225	3.3	(3.2, 3.4)	165	3.6	(3.1, 4.0)
	Community and personal service workers	9,968	10.1	(9.9, 10.2)	337	7.3	(6.7, 7.9)
	Clerical and administrative workers	9,067	9.2	(9.0, 9.3)	434	9.4	(8.7, 10.1)
	Other workers	11,071	11.2	(11.0, 11.4)	332	7.2	(6.6, 7.8)
	Total	99,011	100.0		4,628	100.0	
Employment status	Full-time	68,942	67.1	(66.8, 67.3)	3,342	71.3	(70.2, 72.4)
	Part-time	33,862	32.9	(32.7, 33.2)	1,347	28.7	(27.7, 29.8)
	Total	102,804	100.0		4,689	100.0	
Duration of job with current employer*	Less than 3 months	12,395	13.2	(13.0, 13.4)	490	10.5	(9.8, 11.2)
	3 months to < 1 year	36,302	38.6	(38.3, 38.8)	1,979	42.3	(41.1, 43.5)
	1 year or more	45,441	48.3	(48.0, 48.5)	2,209	47.2	(46.0, 48.4)
Total	94,138	100.0		4,678	100.0		

*Graduates refers to duration of job with current employer while data for supervisors refers to duration of job with current supervisor.

3.3 Graduate Attributes Scale - Employer (GAS-E)

The Graduate Attributes Scale – Employer (GAS-E) was developed as part of the original 2013–14 Trial of the Employer Satisfaction Survey. The project team synthesised a number of frameworks relevant to the skills of university graduates and identified a number of general attributes. The GAS-E has been designed to assess common rather than specific graduate attributes, within a limited workplace context. The items were further tested and refined during a 2015 trial of the instrument. The five graduate attribute domains identified, as noted earlier, include:

- Foundation skills
- Adaptive skills
- Collaborative skills
- Technical skills
- Employability skills.

The GAS-E forms the core of the Employer Satisfaction Survey.

Graduates responding to the GOS were asked to assess their Foundation, Adaptive and Collaborative skills. This enables assessment of the likely impact of the low graduate referral rate, one of the major continuing methodological challenges facing the

current ESS, by comparing graduate self-assessment of attributes among graduates that did or did not provide supervisor contact details.

Table 20 shows that graduates who provided contact details for their supervisor rated their Foundation, Adaptive and Collaborative skills more highly than graduates who elected not to offer contact information. Even though the ratings for these groups of skills is high for both groups, it would appear that graduates who were more positive about the skills they had acquired would be more comfortable having their supervisor participate in the ESS. This could be expected to lead to upward bias in reported levels of employer satisfaction in the 2019 ESS.

For purposes of comparison, supervisor assessment of these graduate attributes is repeated in Table 20 below. While noting the potential for upward bias in reported employer satisfaction, it is worth repeating the overall high rating of graduate attributes by both categories of graduates that did or did not provide supervisor contact details and also by supervisors. While graduates not providing supervisor contact details showed lower ratings of graduate attributes, Table 20 demonstrates this was not of a substantially lower order of magnitude. Notwithstanding potential upward bias in reported employer satisfaction, results in the 2019 ESS continues to provide evidence of the likely high quality of graduates from the Australian higher education system.

Table 20 Graduate attributes of graduates who did and did not provide contact details, 2019

	Graduates not providing supervisor details		Graduates providing supervisor details		Supervisors	
	%	CI	%	CI	%	CI
Foundation skills	84.2	(84.0, 84.4)	88.6	(88.1, 89.1)	92.7	(92.0, 93.3)
Adaptive skills	82.9	(82.7, 83.2)	87.5	(87.0, 88.1)	89.3	(88.5, 90.1)
Collaborative skills	76.4	(76.2, 76.7)	80.1	(79.5, 80.8)	87.8	(86.9, 88.5)



Appendices

Appendix 1

2019 ESS

methodological summary

Overview

The population frame for the 2019 ESS comprised 102,804 graduates, domestic and international, who responded to the 2019 GOS and indicated they were employed. Of these, 10,494 employed graduates provided sufficient contact details to approach 9,731 supervisors yielding a supervisor referral rate of 9.5 per cent. This is marginally lower than the 10.7 per cent supervisor referral rate achieved in the 2018 ESS, and higher than the 9.3 per cent and 7.7 per cent supervisor referral rate achieved in 2017 and 2016 respectively.

The collection periods for the 2019 ESS were November 2018 to February 2019 and May to July 2019, with a minor collection taking place in February 2019 to April 2019 to accommodate institutions running a trimester academic calendar. For reporting purposes, the November and February collection period outcomes are combined.

Graduates of 109 higher education institutions, including all 41 Table A and B universities, and 68 Non-University Higher Education Institutions (NUHEIs), were in scope to provide supervisors to participate in the 2019 ESS. In all, supervisors responded with data for 41 universities and 50 NUHEIs.

A total of 4,689 valid survey responses from direct supervisors were collected for the 2019 ESS across all study levels, representing a supervisor response rate of 48.2 per cent. This is lower than the 52.0 per cent achieved in 2018 but the same as the supervisor response rate achieved in 2017 and higher than the 44.5 per cent supervisor response rate achieved in 2016 (not shown in Table 21).

ESS sample build

The collection of supervisor details occurred each round at the end of the Graduate Outcomes Survey. All graduates in employment (but not self-employed or working in a family business) were asked to provide details (name, email and/or phone number) of their current supervisor so that the supervisor could be invited to take part in the ESS.

A number of strategies were implemented in an attempt to increase the number of graduates providing valid contact details for their supervisor, such as calls to graduates to correct inaccurate or incomplete supervisor contact information, and follow up calls to graduates who requested more information prior to agreeing to provide supervisor contact details.

There remains a reluctance among graduates to pass on their supervisor contact details. Establishment of the QILT brand allied with efforts to promote the QILT surveys and especially the ESS among companies that are known employers of graduates may help to lift the supervisor referral rate over time.

Mode of collection and contact strategy

Online was the primary mode of collection for the ESS, with Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) a secondary mode.

If a valid email address was provided by the graduate, the supervisor would receive an email invitation to the online ESS on the following working day. If the graduate only provided a phone number for their supervisor, the supervisor was called in an attempt to complete the ESS via CATI.

The email invitation was followed by up to two reminder emails to non-responding supervisors, the first reminder sent three business days following the invitation and the second reminder sent seven business days following the first reminder email.

Where a phone number as well as an email address was provided by the graduate, non-responding supervisors after the second reminder email were channelled into the CATI workflow.

For the November and February collection periods, non-responding supervisors were channelled into the CATI workflow five business days after the second reminder email, and for the May collection period, non-responding supervisors were channelled into the CATI workflow two business days after the second reminder email.

Table 21 ESS project overview, 2017 - 2019

Project element	November 2016 ¹	May 2017	Total	November 2017 ¹	May 2018	Total	November 2018 ¹	May 2019	Total
Number of supervisors²	3,311	5,711	9,022	2,317	7,899	10,216	2,889	6,842	9,731
Number of completed surveys	1,689	2,659	4,348	1,113	4,198	5,311	1,428	3,261	4,689
Supervisor response rate (%)	51.0	46.6	48.2	48.0	53.2	52.0	49.4	47.7	48.2
Data collection period	November 2016 – February 2017 ³	May – July 2017	2016–2017	November 2017 – February 2018 ³	May – July 2018	2017–2018	November 2018 – February 2019 ³	May – August 2019	2018–2019
Data collection mode	Online and CATI			Online and CATI			Online and CATI		
Analytic unit	Supervisor			Supervisor			Supervisor		

1 Includes February supplementary round outcomes.

2 Excludes opt outs, disqualified and out of scope surveys

3 February data collection took place from February to April

Appendix 2

Summary of 2019 ESQ items

Variable	Item name	Item label	Base – detail	Values
Module	Module A: Screening and confirmation			
		First we have a few questions about your role and <E403>'s role, so we can understand your relationship to <E403>.		
QS1	SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIP	Just to check, do you currently supervise <E403>?	*(ALL)	1. Yes 2. No, but I used to be their supervisor 3. No, I have never been their supervisor (GO TO TERM)
QS2	SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIP DURATION	And, how long have you been <E403>'s supervisor?	*(CURRENT OR PREVIOUS SUPERVISOR)	1. Less than 1 month 2. At least 1 month but less than 3 months 3. At least 3 months but less than 1 year 4. 1 year or more
QS3	AWARENESS OF INSTITUTION	Before today, were you aware that <E403> completed a qualification from <E306C>?	*(ALL)	1. Yes 2. No
QS4	AWARENESS OF INSTITUTION	And, before today, were you aware that the qualification <E403> completed was a <E308>?	*(ALL)	1. Yes 2. No
QS5	GRADUATE'S OCCUPATION	What is <E403>'s occupation in your business?	*(ALL)	(VERBATIM RSEPNSE TEXT BOX)
QS6	GRADUATE TASKS	What are the main tasks that they usually perform in their job?	*(ALL)	(VERBATIM RESPONSE TEXT BOX)
QS7	EMPLOYER OCCUPATION	What is your occupation in your business?	*(ALL)	(VERBATIM RESPONSE TEXT BOX)
QS8	EMPLOYER DUTIES	What are the main tasks that you usually perform in this job?	*(ALL)	(VERBATIM RESPONSE TEXT BOX)

Variable	Item name	Item label	Base – detail	Values
Module	Module B: Overall graduate preparation			
Text	The next set of questions asks about the skills and attributes you think are important for recent graduates to have when coming into your organisation. Please answer them in relation to the job currently performed by <E403>			
QOP1	FORMAL REQUIREMENT	Is a <E308> or similar qualification a formal requirement for <E403> to do their job?	*(ALL)	1. Yes 2. No
QOP2	IMPORTANCE OF QUALIFICATION	To what extent is it important for <E403> to have a <E308> or similar qualification to being able to do the job well? Is it...		1. Not at all important 2. Not that important 3. Fairly important 4. Important 5. Very important
QOP3	OVERALL PREPARATION	Overall, how well did <E403>'s <qualfinal> prepare <him/her> for their job?	*(ALL)	1. Not at all prepared 2. Not well prepared 3. Well prepared 4. Very well prepared 5. Don't know unsure
QOP4	OPEN (POSITIVE)	What are the MAIN ways that <E306C> prepared <E403> for employment?	*(ALL)	1. Don't know/unsure (VERBATIM RESPONSE TEXT BOX)
QOP5	OPEN (IMPROVE)	And what are the MAIN ways that <E306C> could have better prepared <E403> for employment?	*(ALL)	1. Don't know/unsure (VERBATIM RESPONSE TEXT BOX)
QS11	OVERALL RATING	Based on your experience with <E403>, how likely are you to consider hiring another <qualfinal> graduate from <E30 6C>, if you had a relevant vacancy? Would you say	*(ALL)	1. Very unlikely to consider 2. Unlikely to consider 3. Neither unlikely nor likely to consider 4. Likely to consider 5. Very likely to consider 6. Don't know/unsure

Variable	Item name	Item label	Base – detail	Values
Module	Module C: Graduate attributes scale			
Text	The following questions ask about specific skills and attributes that may be important for employees to have in your organisation.			
GAS Stem		For each skill or attribute, to what extent do you agree or disagree that <E403>'s <E308> from <E306C> prepared them for their job? If the skill is not required by <E403> in their role, you can answer 'Not applicable'.	*(ALL)	
GAS	FOUNDATION SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oral communication skills 2. Written communication skills 3. Numeracy skills 4. Ability to develop relevant knowledge 5. Ability to develop relevant skills 6. Ability to solve problems 7. Ability to integrate knowledge 8. Ability to think independently about problems 	*(ALL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither disagree nor agree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree 9. Not applicable
GAS	ADAPTIVE SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Broad background knowledge 10. Ability to develop innovative ideas 11. Ability to identify new opportunities 12. Ability to adapt knowledge to different contexts 13. Ability to apply skills in different contexts 14. Capacity to work independently 	*(ALL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither disagree nor agree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree 9. Not applicable
GAS	TEAMWORK SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Working well in a team 16. Getting on well with others in the workplace 17. Working collaboratively with colleagues to complete tasks 18. Understanding different points of view 19. Ability to interact with co-workers from different or multi-cultural backgrounds 	*(ALL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither disagree nor agree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree 9. Not applicable

Variable	Item name	Item label	Base – detail	Values
Module	Module C: Graduate attributes scale			
GAS	TECHNICAL SKILLS	20. Applying professional knowledge to job tasks 21. Using technology effectively 22. Applying technical skills in the workplace 23. Maintaining professional standards 24. Observing ethical standards 25. Using research skills to gather evidence	*(ALL)	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither disagree nor agree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree 9. Not applicable
GAS	EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS	26. Ability to work under pressure 27. Capacity to be flexible in the workplace 28. Ability to meet deadlines 29. Understanding the nature of your business or organisation 30. Demonstrating leadership skills 31. Demonstrating management skills 32. Taking responsibility for personal professional development 33. Demonstrating initiative in the workplace	*(ALL)	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither disagree nor agree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree 9. Not applicable
Module	Module D: Emerging policy issues			
Module	Module E: Institution specific issues			
Module	Module F: Close			
Text	Thank you for your assistance with this survey. We would like to provide some feedback to participants about the outcomes of the study. We anticipate finishing the study in early 2015			
C1	RESULTS FEEDBACK	Would you like to receive a one page summary of the outcomes of the study?	*(ALL)	1. Yes 2. No
C3	SURVEY FEEDBACK	Would you like to be notified when the national data is released on the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) website?	*(ALL)	1. Yes 2. No
C4	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	Would you like your organisation to be acknowledged on the QILT website for supporting this important research? If you are unsure please select yes, as you will be able to opt out of this during our follow up with you.	*(ALL)	1. Yes 2. No

Variable	Item name	Item label	Base – detail	Values
Module	Module F: Close			
C2	SUPERVISOR EMAIL (CONFIRM)	Can we confirm the best email address to contact you on?	*(EMPLOYERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE CONTACTED REGARDING RESEARCH SUMMARIES OR WISH TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED ON THE QILT WEBSITE)	1. My email address is <supemail> 2. The best email address to contact me on is: <VERBATIM RESPONSE TEXT BOX>
C5	FOLLOW UP	So that we can properly acknowledge your business on the QILT website, can you please confirm your business name as you would like it to appear on the site?	*(EMPLOYERS WHO WANT TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED ON THE QILT WEBSITE)	1. My business name is: (VERBATIM RESPONSE TEXT BOX)
Text	END	Thank you for your time today and support in ensuring that graduates complete their qualifications well equipped to meet the needs of organisations like yours. If you would like further information about the ESS, including previous year's results you can go to https://www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/employer-satisfaction .		
	(TERMINATED – NOT SUPERVISOR OF GRADUATE)	Thank you for your willingness to complete the Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS). You have indicated that you are not the supervisor of <E403>. If you incorrectly selected this option or your workplace still wishes to take part with another supervisory person please call The Social Research Centre's helpdesk on 1800 023 040. You can also email us at ess@srcentre.com.au .	*IF (QS1=3)	

Appendix 3

Institutional participation

The tables below show institutions that participated in the Graduate Outcomes Survey with one or more responses in the Employer Satisfaction Survey.

Table A3a University participation 2017 - 2019

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
Australian Catholic University	112	114	110	336
Bond University	16	19	21	56
Central Queensland University	115	85	82	282
Charles Darwin University	40	58	42	140
Charles Sturt University	179	238	140	557
Curtin University	191	155	120	466
Deakin University	234	267	223	724
Edith Cowan University	101	91	68	260
Federation University Australia	61	72	46	179
Flinders University	122	152	110	384
Griffith University	180	170	141	491
James Cook University	53	76	76	205
La Trobe University	105	136	148	389
Macquarie University	90	116	113	319
Monash University	192	268	235	695
Murdoch University	47	73	36	156
Queensland University of Technology	102	110	80	292

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
RMIT University	106	200	189	495
Southern Cross University	49	56	65	170
Swinburne University of Technology	81	84	80	245
The Australian National University	50	63	47	160
The University of Adelaide	86	111	91	288
The University of Melbourne	208	329	321	858
The University of Notre Dame Australia	40	44	43	127
The University of Queensland	233	333	204	770
The University of South Australia	99	113	119	331
The University of Sydney	87	171	143	401
The University of Western Australia	93	91	49	233
Torrens University	5	23	34	62
University of Canberra	61	60	73	194
University of Divinity	10	15	20	45
University of New England	108	125	108	341
University of New South Wales	155	128	75	358
University of Newcastle	123	135	134	392

Table A3a continued **University participation 2017 - 2019**

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
University of Southern Queensland	93	40	114	247
University of Tasmania	123	200	236	559
University of Technology Sydney	95	136	136	367
University of the Sunshine Coast	55	70	50	175

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
University of Wollongong	66	125	77	268
Victoria University	60	49	61	170
Western Sydney University	68	92	111	271

Table A3b **NUHEI participation 2017 - 2019**

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
Academy of Information Technology		4	3	7
ACAP	19	6	16	41
Adelaide Central School of Art			2	2
Adelaide College of Divinity		4	2	6
Alphacrucis College		8	7	15
Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts	1		1	2
Australian College of Nursing			9	9
Australian College of Theology Limited	24	25	7	56
Australian Institute of Business Pty Ltd	23	37	63	123
Australian Institute of Management Education & Training	2		2	4
Avondale University College	16	13	13	42

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
Box Hill Institute	1	2	1	4
Chisholm Institute			1	1
Christian Heritage College	5	12	8	25
Collarts (Australian College of the Arts)	2	3	4	9
Eastern College Australia	5	3	3	11
Endeavour College of Natural Health	4	10	6	20
Excelsia College	3	2	1	6
Health Education & Training Institute		5	1	6
Holmes Institute	2	11	11	24
Holmesglen Institute	3	4	5	12
INSEARCH	1	3	3	7

Table A3b continued **NUHEI participation**

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
International College of Hotel Management		3	5	8
International College of Management, Sydney	5	3	4	12
Kaplan Business School	15	8	10	33
Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd	20	10	8	38
King's Own Institute		13	7	20
Le Cordon Bleu Australia	2	2	6	10
Leo Cussen Centre for Law			2	2
Macleay College	3	3	2	8
Marcus Oldham College		8	8	16
Melbourne Institute of Technology	2	7	6	15
Melbourne Polytechnic	4	3	4	11
Moore Theological College		23	7	30
Morling College	2		1	3
National Art School	2	3	1	6

Institution	2017	2018	2019	Total
Perth Bible College	2	1	1	4
Photography Studies College (Melbourne)	1		1	2
SAE Institute	5	12	9	26
Sydney College of Divinity	10	7	8	25
Tabor College of Higher Education	5	8	6	19
TAFE NSW	11	5	5	21
TAFE Queensland	1	1	4	6
TAFE South Australia			1	1
The Australian College of Physical Education		3	1	4
The Australian Institute of Music	3	2	1	6
The Cairnmillar Institute		2	2	4
The College of Law Limited	30	26	35	91
Think Education		5	3	8
William Angliss Institute	9	2	1	12

