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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## One in five graduates aren't fully using their degree three years after finishing their degree

New data released today suggests more than one in five graduates feel 'overqualified' for their current job.

Australia's annual Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal (GOS-L) follows graduates three years after they finish their degree. In 2025, more than 48,000 graduates from 127 higher education institutions – including all 43 Australian universities – took part.

In 2025, of graduates who were working three years after finishing their degree, over 90% were in full-time employment.

The median salary for domestic graduates was \$91,000, an increase of 31.9% on their salary three years before, in 2022, after finishing their undergraduate degree. This indicates strong demand for higher education qualifications in Australia's tight jobs market.

However, more than one in five graduates said that they felt overqualified for their job, with their skills and education not being fully utilised three years on from completing their course.

"I feel overqualified in my role. However, it's difficult obtaining jobs at a higher level without prior experience," said one respondent.

Dr Angela Baker of the Social Research Centre, which conducts the GOS-L for the Australian Government Department of Education, reflected that the overall picture for graduate skills utilisation was complex.

"Some graduates said they felt 'overqualified', but added that they were sticking with the job because they were happy with it, or because they were making a career transition," Dr Baker said. For these graduates, the roles provide an opportunity to consolidate what they learned in higher education through practical, on-the-job experience.

"Others reported they are in jobs below what they're capable of because they are undertaking further study, and the job fits in with that. In the future, it's likely they'll continue to draw on more skills from their degrees as their careers progress."

The GOS-L also showed that a relatively high proportion of people with an undergraduate degree felt their skills and education were not being fully utilised three years out because they lacked work experience.

“More industry placement and internship opportunities would have given me a better idea of the soft and technical skills I need to develop in order to improve my employability, as well as allow me to explore various roles and industries prior to graduating,” said a respondent.

Dr Baker said: “Institutions may need to look at more or better ways to include work-integrated learning in degrees. Having students apply their learning to real-world problems in ‘capstone projects’ is also valuable.”

### About the 2025 Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal (GOS-L)

Australia’s annual GOS-L follows graduates three years after they finish their degree.

The GOS-L is part of the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) program, conducted by the Social Research Centre for the Australian Government Department of Education.

In 2025, more than 48,000 graduates from 127 higher education institutions – including all 43 Australian universities – took part in the GOS-L. These graduates had also completed a survey in 2022 shortly after they completed their course. This allows for short- and medium-term comparisons about their employment and further study activities.

### Other key findings

- Employment outcomes in the short-term were stronger for graduates from more ‘vocational’ study areas, but this gap narrowed after three years. For example, more than 90% of undergraduates from areas such as Rehabilitation, Pharmacy, and Teacher education were employed full-time in managerial or professional jobs shortly after they finished their course.
- By contrast, 54.0% of full-time employed undergraduates from Law and paralegal studies were working in managerial or professional jobs in the short-term – but this increased to 78.9% after three years. (“As well as perhaps taking longer to get established, these differences may be driven by specific accreditation requirements or a need for further studies – not necessarily weaker demand for these graduates,” Dr Baker said.)
- Employment rates for international graduates of Australian institutions lagged those of domestic students in the short-term, but the difference narrowed after three years. For example, domestic undergraduates had full-time employment of 79.5% in the short term, compared to 60.5% for international undergraduates. This narrowed to 91.7% versus 84.7% after three years.
- International undergraduates reported lower median salaries than their domestic peers in the short-term – \$62,000 versus \$69,000. The gap *widened* after three years, with salaries growing 31.9% for domestic undergraduate students (to \$91,000) and 29.8% for international undergraduate students (to \$80,500). This is despite international undergraduates working in managerial or professional occupations at a similar rate to domestic undergraduates three years after finishing their degree.

### Media contact and further information

For further information, interviews, or media enquiries, please contact:

Anne Gerritsen  
Communications Manager  
Social Research Centre

E: [anne.gerritsen@srcentre.com.au](mailto:anne.gerritsen@srcentre.com.au)  
M: 0403 017 762  
[srcentre.com.au](http://srcentre.com.au) or [gilt.edu.au](http://gilt.edu.au)

The full 2025 GOS-L report and additional materials are available on the QILT website:  
[\*\*https://www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey---longitudinal-\(gos-l\)\*\*](https://www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey---longitudinal-(gos-l))

### **About the Social Research Centre**

The Social Research Centre is a leading Australian provider of social research and evaluation services, with deep expertise in education research. We work with government, education providers and institutions to deliver high-quality research that informs education policy, improves learning experiences and supports better outcomes for students and educators.