



2025

Graduate Outcomes Survey

NATIONAL REPORT JUNE 2026

Acknowledgments

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The Department and the Social Research Centre acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which this research was conducted. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

The Social Research Centre would like to thank the higher education institutions that contributed to the GOS in 2025. Without the enthusiastic and committed assistance of the survey managers and institutional planners, the 2025 GOS would not have been such a success.

We are also very grateful to the graduates who took the time to provide valuable feedback about their employment and further study outcomes, and their experience with their completed course. Institutions use GOS data for continuous improvement including exploring ways to monitor and improve the short-term labour force outcomes of graduates.

The 2025 GOS was led by Graham Challice, and the project team consisted of Dr Angela Baker, Lauren Spencer, Diana Nguyen, Samvedhya Girish, Cynthia Kim, Benjamin Desta, Brenwin Ang, Javed Mohib, Erika Sitnai, Rahul Bet, Josh Bach, Rawan Habibeh and Serena Kim.

For more information about the 2025 GOS, including how it was conducted, visit the QILT website: www.qilt.edu.au

Email the QILT team at qilt@srcentre.com.au

Terminology

'First Nations'

In recognition of the national scope of this research, this report uses the term 'First Nations' to encompass both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We deeply respect the rich diversity of communities, identities and clans among First Nations peoples and acknowledge there may be preferences to be known by a specific group name or Country, or as Traditional Owners and Custodians.

The terminology used in this report reflects a considered and deliberate approach to be inclusive by using 'non-Indigenous graduates' when referring to graduates who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person in Australia. This does not infer any disrespect to those who identify as an indigenous person from another country.

'Undergraduate'

This report uses the shorthand 'undergraduate' to refer to a respondent to the GOS who had recently **completed** an undergraduate qualification. This differs from the usual sense of 'undergraduate': a student who has not yet completed their first degree.



Executive summary

The Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) is a key component of the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) survey suite, capturing short-term labour market and further study outcomes for higher education graduates. Graduates are invited to take the GOS approximately 4 to 6 months after completion of their course. The 2025 GOS National Report presents findings for domestic graduates who completed the GOS between November 2024 and May 2025.

In 2025, more than 120,000 graduates from 136 higher education institutions – including 42 Australian universities – participated in the GOS.

Domestic graduate results

Labour force participation

Labour force participation rates have been relatively stable since the GOS commenced in 2016. However, in 2025, there was a notable decrease across all study levels. This decrease can be attributed to the way a change in this metric is calculated: respondents who were not currently working and only passively looking for work are no longer considered to be in the labour force. Both active and passive job search types were previously included (see **Appendix 1** for further information).

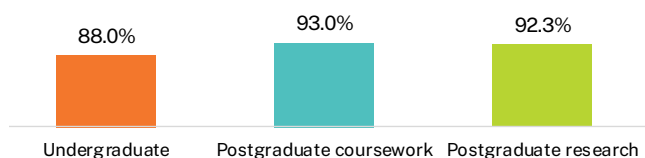
Department of Education analysis indicates this change resulted in downward pressure on labour force participation rates of around 2.5-3.5 percentage points for undergraduates, and downward pressure of less than 1.5 percentage points for postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates. This change also affected the 2025 full-time and overall employment rates presented in this report, and has implications on the comparability of 2025 data with historical data.

Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology.

The change in methodology had a more pronounced effect on the undergraduate labour force participation rate, as undergraduates are more likely to continue straight into further full-time study. This is demonstrated by 45.8 per cent of undergraduates that were not in the labour force reporting they were ‘studying or returning to studies’.

The relative differences in labour force participation rates across study levels continue in 2025, with undergraduates reporting a lower rate than both postgraduate coursework and research graduates (see **Figure i**).

Figure i / Labour force participation rate, 2025



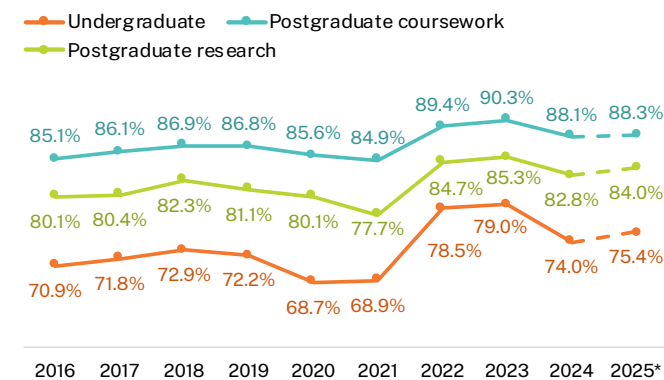
Full-time employment

Full-time employment rates rose sharply across all study levels from 2021 to 2022, when labour market tightness peaked following the removal of pandemic-related restrictions, and these continued to rise in 2023, before declining in 2024 (**Figure ii**). These movements are consistent with findings from the ABS Labour Force Survey.

Department of Education analysis indicates the change to how the labour force is defined in 2025 resulted in upward pressure on full-time employment rates of around 3.5-4.5 percentage points for undergraduates, upward pressure of less than 1.5 percentage points for postgraduate coursework graduates, and upward pressure of around 1.5-2.5 percentage points for postgraduate research graduates. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology.

The increase in full-time employment reported by undergraduates in 2025 is likely attributable to the change in methodology and not a reflection of more favourable labour market conditions. Similarly, for postgraduate coursework and research graduates, the broadly stable 2025 results compared to 2024 are likely attributable to the change in methodology.

Figure ii / Full-time employment rate, 2016-25



* Full-time employment rates from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years due to a change to how the labour force is defined. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences in full-time employment rates between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

Overall employment

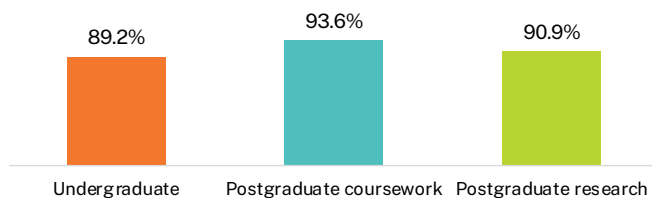
Trends in overall employment rates follow a similar pattern to full-time employment rates but year-on-year changes are typically less pronounced. There is also less variation in overall employment rates between study levels.

Overall employment rates were also impacted by the change in methodology in 2025.

Department of Education analysis indicates the change in methodology resulted in upward pressure on overall employment rates of around 2.5-3.5 percentage points for undergraduates, and upward pressure of less than 1.5 percentage points for postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates.

There was a greater impact on undergraduates, as they have a lower tendency to actively look for work due to their higher propensity to continue on to further full-time study. This resulted in an overall employment rate that is closer to postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research overall employment rates in 2025 (Figure iii).

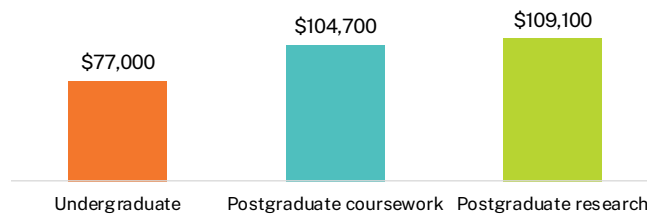
Figure iii / Overall employment rate, 2025



Median annual full-time salary

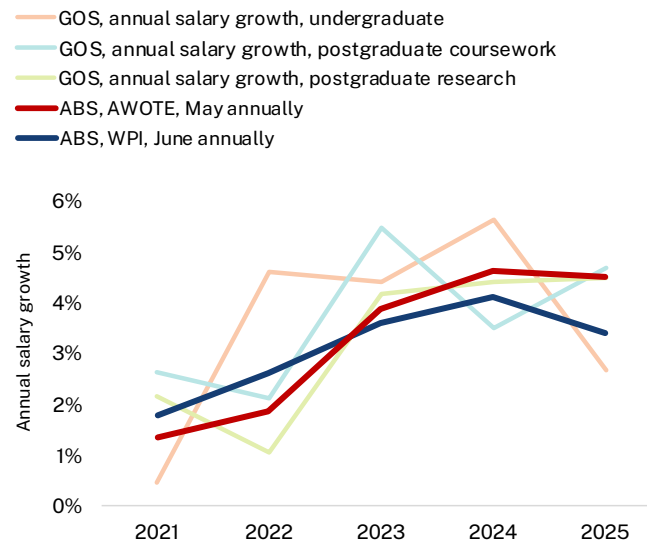
Postgraduate research graduates continued to report the highest median annual full-time salary, followed by postgraduate coursework graduates and undergraduates (Figure iv).

Figure iv / Median annual full-time salary, 2025



Annual growth in median salaries for all 3 study levels has followed broad trends in the ABS Wage Price Index (WPI) and Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE) for full-time adult employees (Figure v). Both ABS measures show a steady growth from 2021, that peaks around late 2023 and early 2024, but have since slowed.

Figure v / Comparison of annual salary growth from the GOS, the ABS WPI[†] and the ABS AWOTE[‡] by GOS collection period, 2021-25



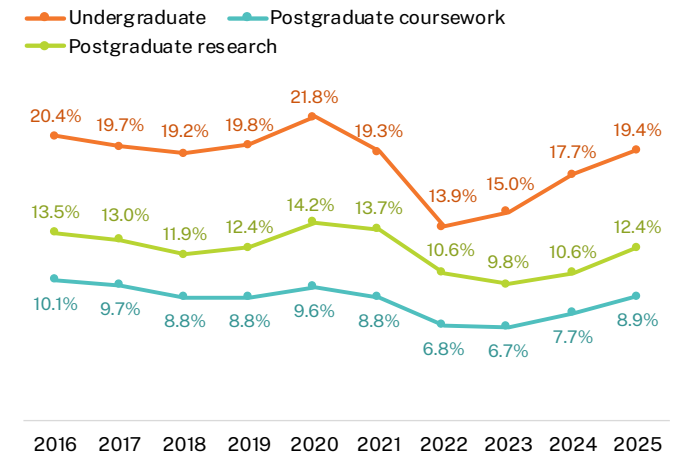
[†] ABS WPI sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics, Wage Price Index, Australia June 2025

[‡] ABS AWOTE sourced from Average Weekly Earnings, Australia May 2025

Underemployment

Underemployment rates rose for the third consecutive year. The rise in underemployment since 2023 is consistent with the fall in full-time employment rates as labour market tightness seen in 2022 and 2023 eased slightly but remained generally elevated (Figure vi). Note that increased full-time employment rates in 2025 are likely the result to changes made to the survey instrument and not a reflection of changes in labour market conditions. Despite the increase in 2025, underemployment rates remained within range of the levels seen prior to the pandemic and below the peak in 2020.

Figure vi / Underemployment rate, 2016-25 (% of those employed)



Skills utilisation

There has been a notable decline in the proportion of undergraduates working full-time in managerial and professional occupations since 2022 (Figure vii). This may be due to a rise in undergraduates undertaking further study while working full-time since 2021. Studying while working full-time likely limits the types of jobs graduates can do, leading to graduates working in jobs not commensurate with their undergraduate qualification.

The proportions of undergraduates and postgraduate coursework graduates reporting that they consider themselves overqualified in their current jobs has remained relatively stable over time. However, there has been a steady rise in perceived overqualification rates at the postgraduate research level (Figure viii).

Postgraduate research graduates who considered themselves overqualified were more than twice as likely to report 'no suitable jobs in my area of expertise' (22.0 per cent) than undergraduates (9.3 per cent) or postgraduate coursework graduates (9.9 per cent).

Figure vii / Undergraduate employment in managerial or professional occupations and further study rates, 2016–25 (% of those employed full-time)

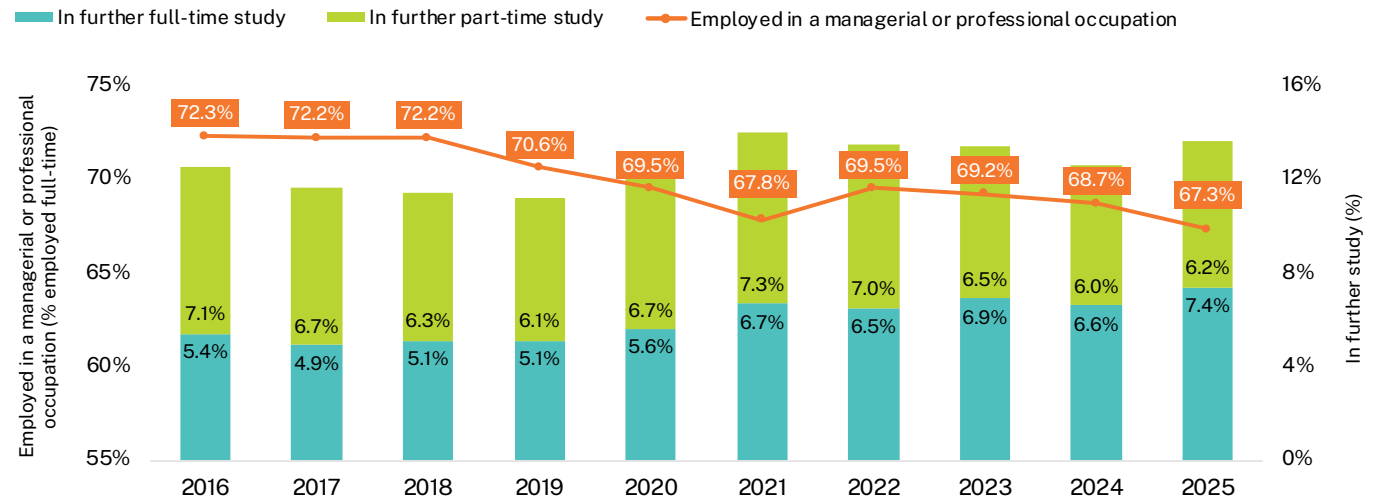
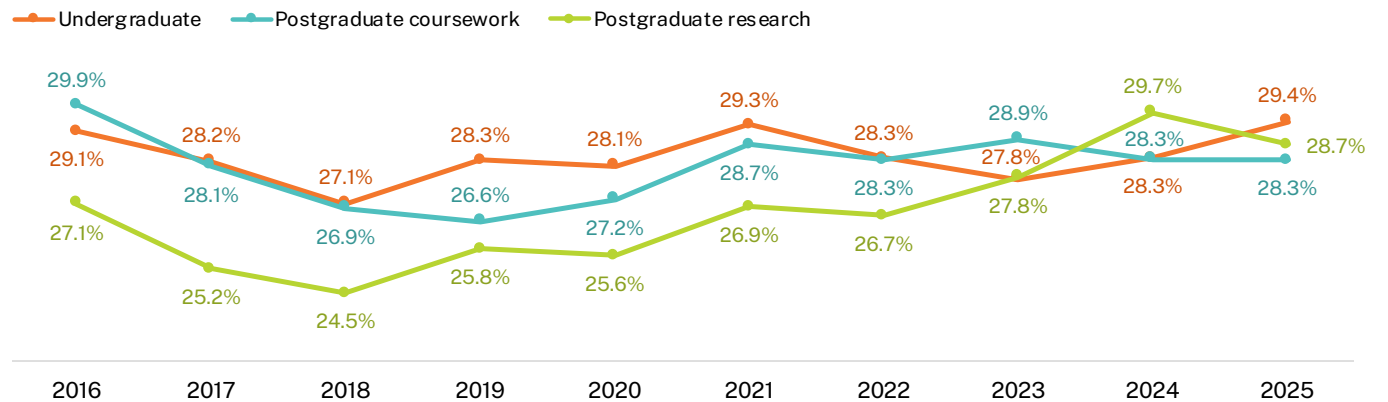


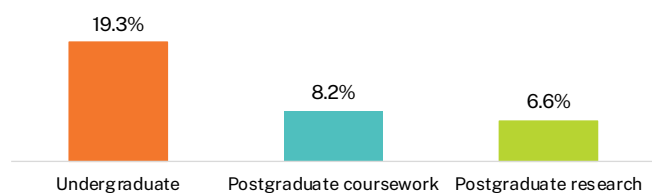
Figure viii / Perceived overqualification, 2016–25 (% of those full-time employed)



Further full-time study

Further full-time study rates increased across all study levels in 2025 but remained within ranges seen historically for undergraduates and postgraduate research graduates. The postgraduate coursework further full-time study rate rose to an all-time high of 8.2 per cent for this cohort (Figure ix).

Figure ix / Further full-time study rate, 2025



While the majority (81.7 per cent) of undergraduates continued to move into another undergraduate course or start postgraduate studies by coursework, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of undergraduates moving into certificate 1-4 or advanced diploma courses. From 2021 to 2023, approximately 5 per cent of undergraduates in further full-time study moved into a certificate 1-4 or advanced diploma course. By 2025, this had doubled to 10.0 per cent – potential evidence that recent efforts to improve integration between higher education and vocational education and training (VET) are having a positive impact.

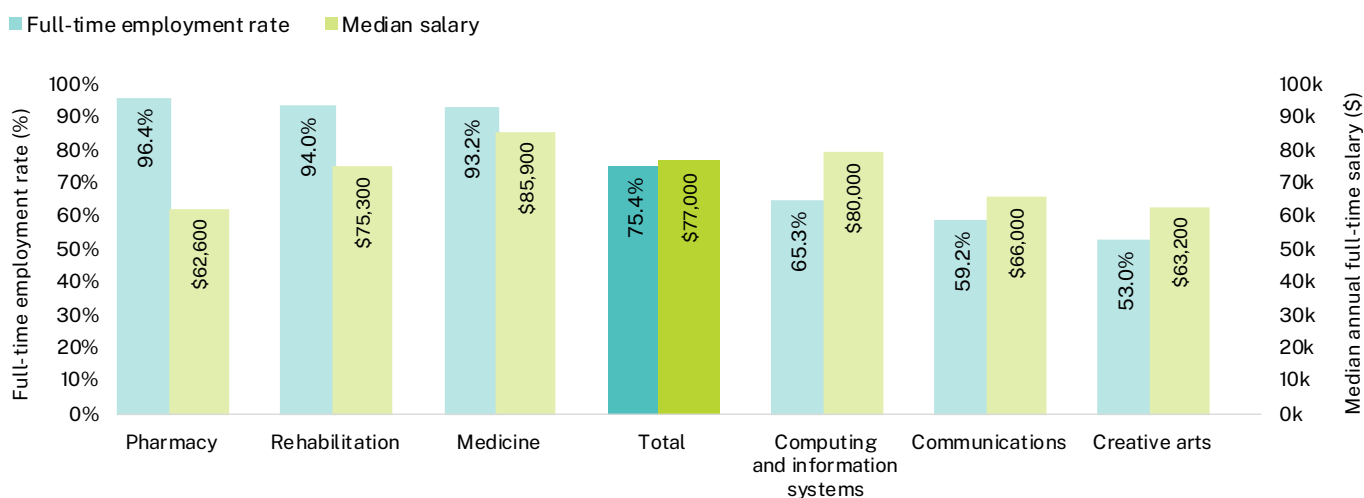
Undergraduate demographic and equity group key findings

- **Gender:** Females reported higher full-time and overall employment rates, but males had higher median salaries.
- **First Nations:** First Nations graduates reported a higher full-time employment rate (82.6 per cent) than non-Indigenous graduates (75.2 per cent), as well as a higher median salary than non-Indigenous graduates, \$80,600 and \$76,700 respectively. First Nations graduates tended to be older and were more likely to have studied externally which may partially explain these differences.
- **Language background:** Domestic graduates from non-English speaking backgrounds continued to report some of the lowest outcomes of all sub-groups – only 59.8 per cent were in full-time employment 4 to 6 months after course completion, compared to 75.8 per cent of domestic graduates from an English speaking background. These differences existed even within the same study areas.
- **Disability:** Undergraduates with disability reported lower rates of full-time employment than those without disability, however, there was very little difference in median salaries. This indicates that graduates with disability face challenges securing full-time hours but for those that do, they earn a median salary comparable to graduates without disability.
- **Regional / remoteness:** Graduates originally from regional or remote areas reported higher employment rates and median salaries than those originally from metropolitan areas, but this may be due in part to a greater propensity for graduates from metropolitan areas to pursue further full-time study.
- **Socio-economic status (SES):** There was less variation in employment and median salary outcomes by SES sub-groups compared to variation in other demographic sub-groups. Graduates from high SES areas were more likely to continue straight into further full-time study, but this may partly reflect the geographic location of high SES graduates, with 95.4 per cent originally from metropolitan areas.

Study area

Employment and median salary outcomes varied greatly by study area, and high employment outcomes did not necessarily equate to high median salaries. Graduates from vocationally-oriented study areas typically reported higher rates of full-time employment than graduates from more generalist study areas (Figure x).

Figure x / Select full-time employment (%) and median salaries (\$) by study area, undergraduate, 2025



Graduate course experience

Undergraduate overall course satisfaction ratings have been steadily declining from a high of 80.6 per cent positive in 2020 to 74.9 per cent in 2025. Postgraduate coursework ratings have remained comparatively stable over time, resulting in a widening gap between the two study levels. In 2025, 81.2 per cent of postgraduate coursework level graduates rated their overall course satisfaction positively, a difference of 6.3 percentage points.

Age, study mode and gender were key characteristics associated with ratings at both levels of study, with those aged over 30, graduates who studied externally and

females all more likely to rate their overall satisfaction higher than their counterparts. The greater proportions of respondents from these 3 sub-groups in the postgraduate coursework responding population may explain the higher overall ratings for this cohort.

Course satisfaction was also associated with labour market and further study outcomes. Employed graduates, those not in the labour force and those in further study rated their overall satisfaction higher than graduates who were unemployed, underemployed and not in further study. These findings suggest that graduates with a 'successful' labour market outcome, or graduates pursuing further study by choice, reflect on their course

more positively than graduates who had not secured employment or were working part-time but would prefer more hours.

Postgraduate research graduate ratings of their overall course satisfaction dropped in 2021 and besides an increase in 2022, have remained below pre-pandemic levels since (82.7 per cent positive in 2025). Similar patterns by age and study mode, as well labour market and further study outcomes were all associated with ratings at the postgraduate research level.

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1. About the GOS

Graduates are invited to take the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) approximately 4 to 6 months after completion of their course. The GOS captures information about their employment (and/or further study), occupation and salary. It also examines the extent to which graduates are using their skills and qualifications and their preparedness for their current work or study and asks them to rate their satisfaction with their completed course.

The GOS has been administered and reported on annually since 2016. Surveys are conducted 3 times a year – in November, February and May – to account for different academic calendars.

GOS reports, including this 2025 GOS National Report, provide robust, rich information to improve higher education. As well as examining short-term labour market outcomes (rates of full-time employment, overall employment, labour force participation and median salaries), the reports explore areas such as the gender pay gap, skills utilisation across graduate occupations, reasons for underemployment and how well qualifications have prepared graduates for their current jobs.

Note that this report captures graduate labour market outcomes, use of skills, information about further study and course experience for domestic graduates only.

1.1 Participation

The 2025 GOS was conducted as a national online survey among 136 higher education institutions, including 42 universities and 94 non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs).¹

A total of 129,220 valid survey responses were collected across all study levels, representing a response rate of 38.8 per cent, which is a slight increase from the 38.5 per cent achieved in 2024.

1.2 Series history

The GOS replaced the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) in 2016. The AGS comprised the Graduate Destinations Survey (GDS), in place since the 1970s, and the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) and Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ), in place since the 1990s.

Note that the introduction of the GOS in 2016 was a break in time series from the previous AGS. More information can be found in the [2016 GOS Methodological Report](#).

In 2025, the definition of labour force participation was updated to better align with ABS Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods, resulting in a break in time series for labour force participation, full-time employment and overall employment. Respondents who were not currently working and only passively looking for work are no longer considered to be in the labour force. Both active and passive job search types were previously included. As this slightly decreased the size of the labour force (by removing those that were only looking for work passively) it placed upward pressure on employment rates. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

1.3 Further detail

The GOS collects more detailed labour force breakdowns for themes beyond the scope of this report, including about graduates working in their own businesses, unpaid work, and unemployment levels.

2025 participation



136
participating institutions



365,959
invitations sent



129,220
completed surveys



38.8%
response rate

This report is supported by a [Power BI workbook](#), which allows readers to further explore the data. Static [Excel tables](#) also provide additional data and detail that may be of interest.

Results from the GOS for international graduates are published in an international report on the [QILT website](#). Although international graduates have always been included, labour market results for international graduates have only been published annually since 2021.

Visit [qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey-\(gos\)](http://qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey-(gos)) to access these resources.

¹ In December 2024, the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) changed the provider category in which the Australian University of Theology was registered to Australian University. Prior to this, the institution was known as the Australian College of Theology and was classified as a NUHEI. As data collection for the 2025 GOS commenced prior to the Australian University of Theology changing institution status, it is reported as a NUHEI in the 2025 GOS National Report.

2. Domestic graduate results

The definitions of graduate employment outcomes used by the GOS are informed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods.² This means graduates are considered employed if they work at least one hour in the survey reference week, or usually work at least one hour per week. Graduates are considered to be employed full-time if they actually work 35 hours per week or more (or usually work that many hours), across all their current jobs combined.

2.1 Labour force participation

The labour force participation rate³ for recent graduates had remained relatively stable across study levels since the GOS commenced in 2016 until 2024 (**Figure 1**). However, there was a notable decrease in the labour force participation rate across all study levels in 2025. This decrease can be attributed to a change to the way this metric is calculated.⁴

A key change was made to the way labour force participation was defined in 2025 to strengthen the alignment with the ABS Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods. Respondents who were not currently working and only *passively* looking for work are no longer considered to be in the labour force. Both active and passive job search types were previously included.

Department of Education analysis (outlined in **Appendix 1**) indicates this change resulted in downward pressure on labour force participation rates of around 2.5-3.5 percentage points for undergraduates, and downward pressure of less than 1.5 percentage points for postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates.

This change also affected the 2025 full-time and overall employment rates presented in this report, and has implications on the comparability of 2025 data with historical data. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology.

Despite underlying methodology change, the relative differences in labour force participation rates across study levels continue in 2025, with undergraduates reporting a lower rate (88.0 per cent) than both postgraduate coursework and research graduates (93.0 per cent and 92.3 per cent respectively).

Graduates were asked why they were not available to work, and the most common reason was because they were 'studying or returning to studies', particularly for undergraduates (**Figure 2**). Undergraduates are more likely to be in further full-time study 4 to 6 months after course completion (see [Further full-time study](#)), which explains why changes to the labour force definition in 2025 have had a greater impact on undergraduate rates compared to postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research rates.

Besides studying, undergraduates were more likely to report 'not enough work experience/skills/training' as a reason for not being available for employment. 'Studying or returning to studies' was the top reason postgraduate coursework graduates were not available for employment, but they were also twice as likely as undergraduates to report 'caring for children', which reflects the older age of this cohort.

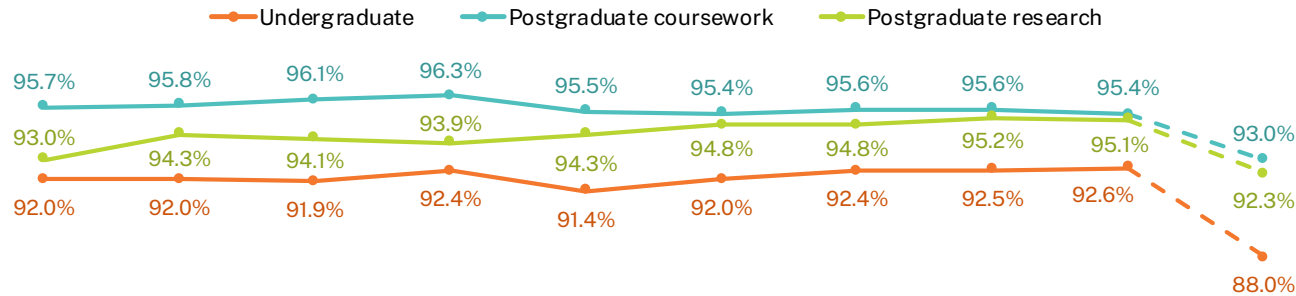
Notably, just under a quarter of postgraduate research graduates not available for employment reported being in retirement as their reason.

² Refer to **Appendix 2** for definitions of key indicators of labour market outcomes.

³ The labour force participation rate is a measure of those who are working or available to work as a proportion of all graduate respondents.

⁴ Prior to 2025, graduates were considered 'available for employment' if they were currently employed, waiting to start work or looking for work in the reference period. Changes made to the survey instrument in 2025 allow for identification of graduates *actively* and *passively* looking for work. 'Passively looking' includes searching newspapers, the internet, or notice boards, but not taking any specific action to obtain work from these sources. As a result, those not employed but only looking for work passively are no longer considered to be in the labour force, consistent with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

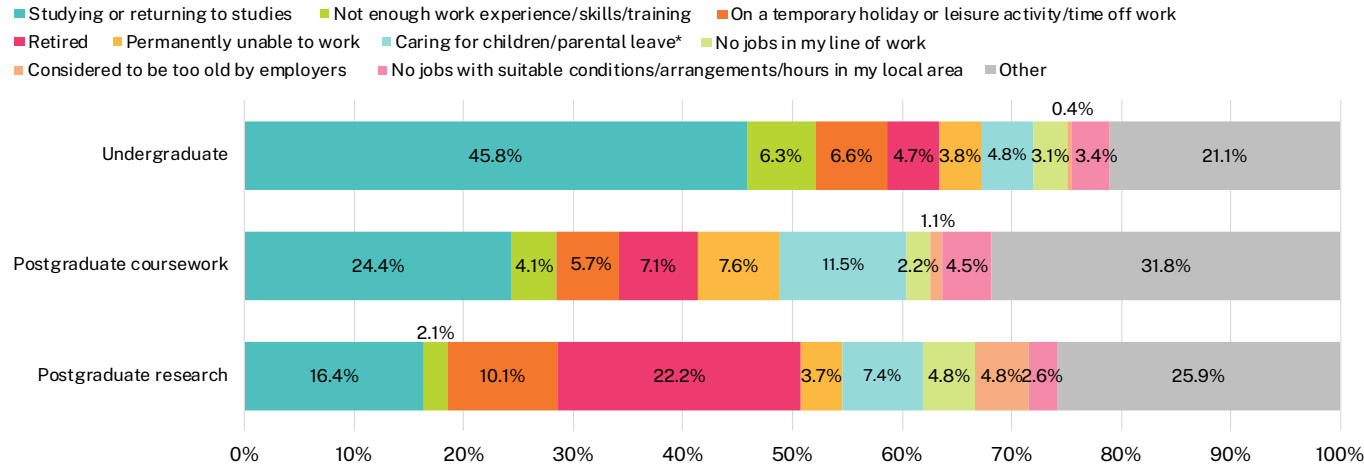
Figure 1 / Domestic graduate labour force participation rate by study level, 2016–25



2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025*

* Labour force participation rates from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years due to a change to how the labour force is defined. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences in labour force participation rates between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

Figure 2 / Reasons graduates are not in the labour force by study level, 2025



Note: Only selected reasons are presented in this figure. For the complete list of reasons by study levels, refer to worksheets RSNILF_UG_ALL_1Y, RSNILF_PGC_ALL_1Y and RSNILF_PGR_ALL_1Y in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

* 'Caring for children/parental leave' also includes the reason 'maternity leave or paternity leave'.

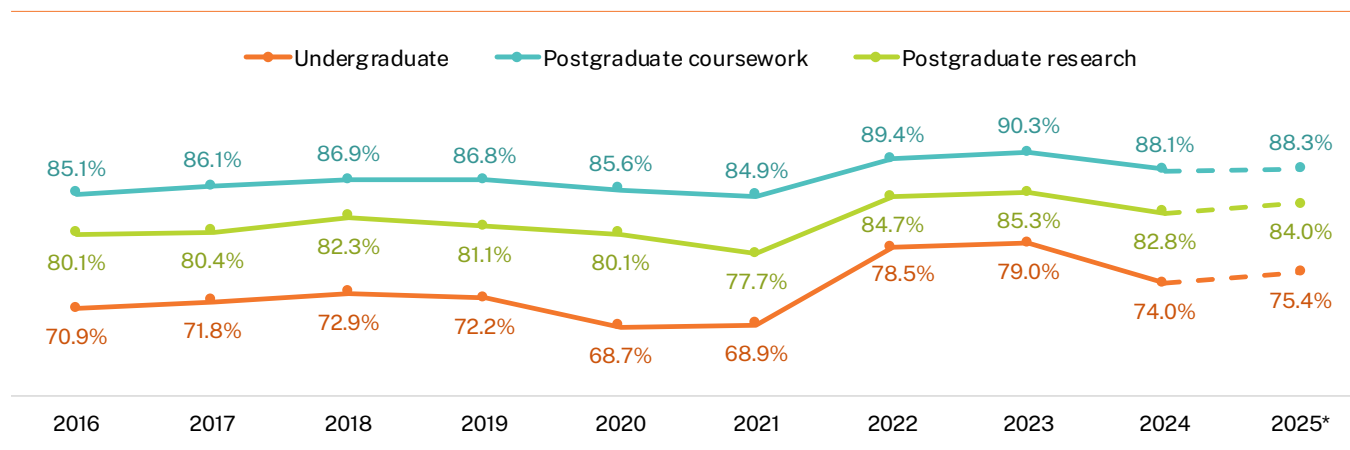
2.2 Full-time employment

Full-time employment rates⁵ for recent graduates increased sharply in 2022, consistent with favourable employment conditions following the removal of pandemic-related restrictions. There was a broad decline in graduate employment rates in 2024 as the labour market tightness experienced in 2022 and 2023 eased slightly but remained generally elevated.⁶

Figure 3 shows that while postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research full-time employment rates in 2025 remained relatively stable, the undergraduate full-time employment rate rose. However, these movements are likely attributable to the change to how the labour force is defined in 2025.

Analysis carried out by the Department of Education indicates the change in methodology resulted in upward pressure on full-time employment rates of 3.5-4.5 percentage points for undergraduates, upward pressure of less than 1.5 percentage points for postgraduate coursework graduates, and upward pressure of around 1.5-2.5 percentage points for postgraduate research graduates. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology. See **Appendix 1** for more information.

Figure 3 / Domestic graduate full-time employment rate by study level, 2016–25



* Full-time employment rates from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years due to a change to how the labour force is defined. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences in full-time employment rates between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

⁵ The full-time employment rate is defined as graduates who were usually or actually in paid employment for at least 35 hours per week, in the week before the survey as a proportion of those available for full-time work. Graduates are considered available for full-time work if they were employed full-time or looking for full-time employment in the week prior to the survey. Note that some graduates available for full-time work may be in part-time employment and looking for full-time work.

⁶ Based on the ratio of the number of job vacancies to the number of unemployed persons. Calculated using data sourced from: (i) ABS Job Vacancies, Australia, Table 1 and (ii) ABS Labour Force, Australia, Table 1.

2.3 Overall employment

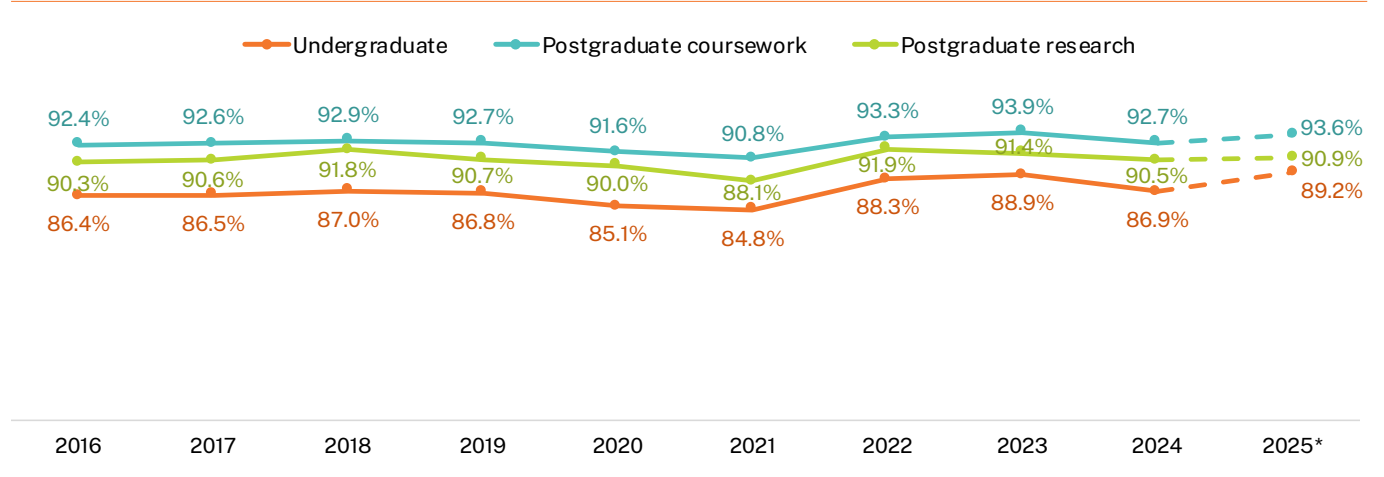
Trends in overall employment rates⁷ follow a similar pattern to full-time employment rates but year-on-year changes are typically less pronounced. There is also less variation in overall employment rates between study levels.

Like labour force participation and full-time employment rates, changes to overall employment rates in 2025 were also impacted by changes made to how the labour force is defined.

Department of Education analysis indicates this change resulted in upward pressure on overall employment rates of around 2.5-3.5 percentage points for undergraduates, and upward pressure of less than 1.5 percentage points for postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates.

The removal of ‘passive’ job seekers not currently working from the labour force definition has had a greater impact on the undergraduate cohort. They have a lower tendency to actively look for work due to their higher propensity to continue straight into further study following completion of the initial qualification. This explains the more pronounced change in undergraduate overall employment rates between 2024 to 2025, bringing their rate closer to the rates reported by postgraduates (both coursework and research) (Figure 4).

Figure 4 / Domestic graduate overall employment rate by study level, 2016–25



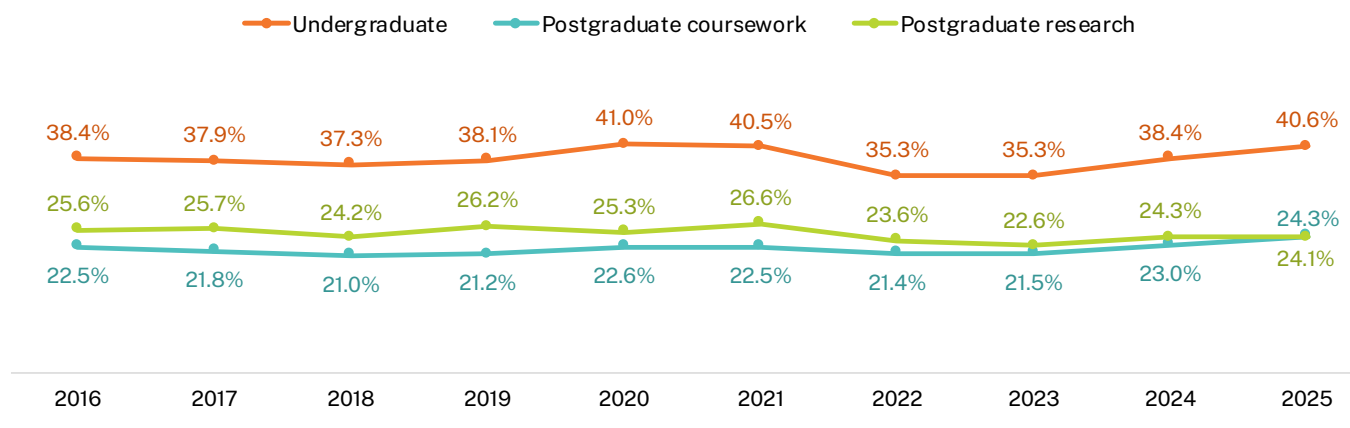
* Overall employment rates from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years due to a change to how the labour force is defined. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences in overall employment rates between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

⁷ The overall employment rate is defined as graduates who were usually or actually in paid employment for at least one hour per week, in the week before the survey, as a proportion of those available for work.

Since 2023, the proportion of employed graduates who were working part-time hours⁸ has increased for those with undergraduate and postgraduate coursework qualifications (**Figure 5**). In 2025, 40.6 per cent of employed undergraduates were working part-time hours – that is, at least one hour but less than 35 hours per week – which is consistent with the levels seen during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. This increase is also consistent with findings from the ABS Labour Force Survey.⁹

The proportion of employed postgraduate coursework graduates working part-time hours reached a high of 24.3 per cent in 2025. The proportion of employed graduates working part-time hours at the postgraduate research level has fluctuated over time, peaking at 26.6 per cent in 2021, but it has remained steady for 2 consecutive years (24.1 per cent in 2025).

Figure 5 / Share of graduates employed part-time by study level, 2016–25 (% of those employed)



⁸ Graduates are employed part-time if they are usually or actually in paid employment for at least one hour but less than 35 hours in the week before the survey.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (August 2025), [Labour Force, Australia](https://www.abs.gov.au/australian-bureau-of-statistics).

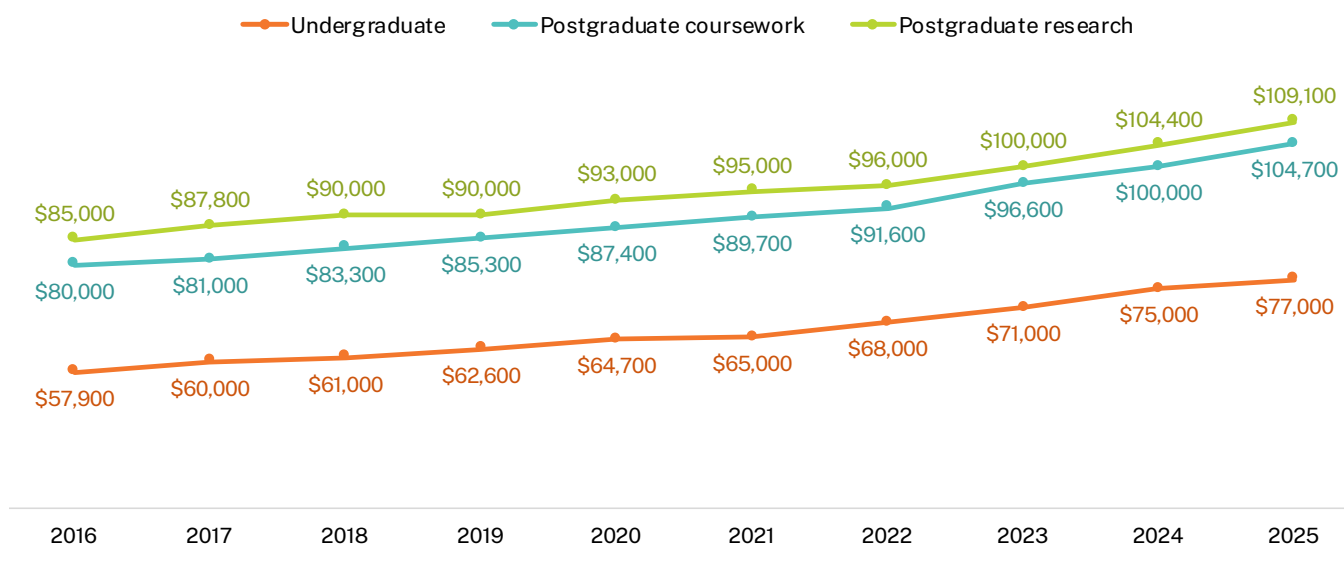
2.4 Median annual full-time salary

Graduates who completed postgraduate research qualifications continued to report the highest median salaries¹⁰ in 2025, closely followed by postgraduate coursework graduates (Figure 6).

Typically, undergraduates report a median salary approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000 less than postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates. In 2025, the median salary for undergraduates was \$77,000, compared to \$104,700 for postgraduate coursework graduates and \$109,100 for postgraduate research graduates.

Note that only graduates employed full-time in Australia are captured in median salaries reported by the GOS. This cohort is asked to report what they ‘actually’ or ‘usually’ earn in all their jobs combined. Self-reported salary data should be interpreted with some caution and other explanatory factors, such as time in employment and previous employment experience, are likely to vary between study levels.

Figure 6 / Domestic graduate median annual full-time salary by study level, 2016–25

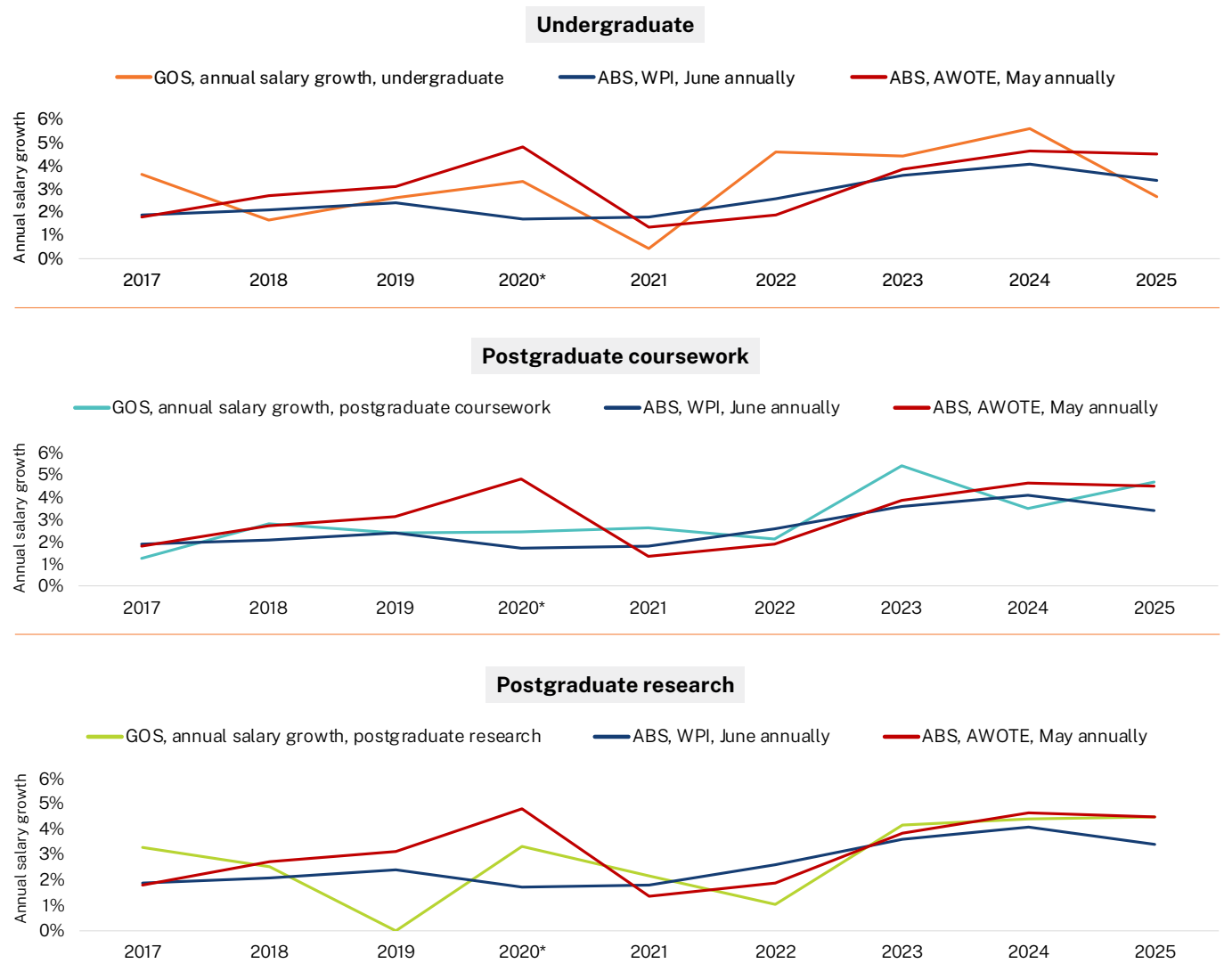


¹⁰ This report presents salaries in nominal terms. This means the salary amounts reflect the actual values as they existed in the respective year (that is, the values are not adjusted for inflation).

Annual growth in median salaries for all 3 study levels has followed broad trends in the ABS Wage Price Index (WPI)¹¹ and Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE)¹² for full-time adult employees (Figure 7). Both ABS measures show a steady growth from 2021, that peaks around late 2023 and early 2024, but have since slowed.

Movements in the ABS WPI reflect overall wage inflation and can provide insights into general wage pressures, which indirectly affect wages of entry-level roles. The sharp decline in undergraduate annual salary growth observed in 2025 is consistent with the ABS WPI decline that commenced in 2024. Recent postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research salary growth appears to be more closely aligned with the ABS AWOTE. Postgraduate-level graduates are typically older and more established in the labour market than undergraduates which may explain the closer alignment to AWOTE, reflecting both the inflationary aspect of wage growth as well as changes in the composition of labour.

Figure 7 / Comparison of annual salary growth from the GOS, the ABS WPI[†] and the ABS AWOTE[‡] by GOS collection period, 2017–25



¹¹ The Wage Price Index (WPI) is designed to measure the pure price change of wages and salaries by removing the effect of compositional factors such as wage changes resulting from changes in the quality or quantity of work performed, the nature of work performed, and the characteristics of the job occupant (such as age or experience).

¹² Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE) is a broader measure of labour earnings than the WPI. It is designed to measure the average level of labour costs per employee across the economy. This measure reflects changes in both the level of earnings (as per the WPI) and the composition of labour (such as the impact of workers moving to jobs with different levels of pay).

[†] ABS WPI sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics, Wage Price Index, Australia June 2025

[‡] ABS AWOTE sourced from Average Weekly Earnings, Australia May 2025

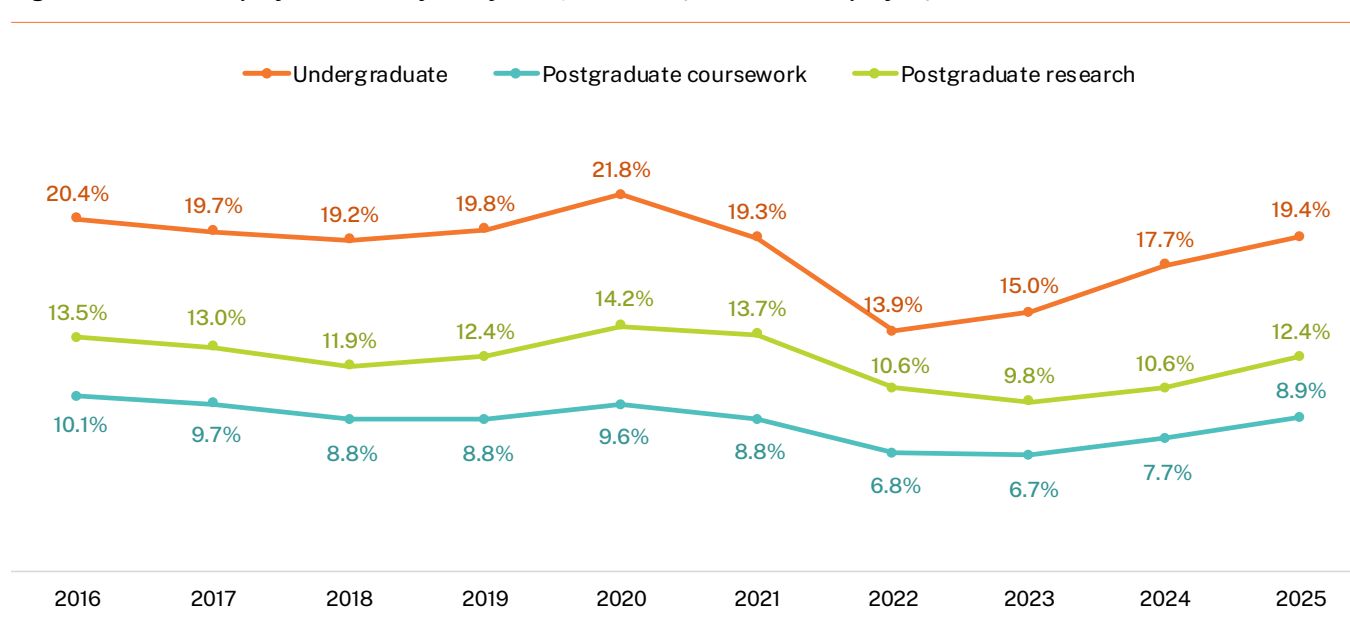
* The sharp rise in ABS AWOTE in 2020 was influenced by wide-spread changes in the composition of the labour market due to pandemic-related restrictions on business. For more information, see [Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, May 2020 | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

2.5 Underemployment

Underemployment rates¹³ continued to rise across all study levels in 2025 for the third consecutive year (**Figure 8**). The gradual rise in underemployment since 2023 is consistent with the fall in full-time employment rates as the labour market tightness seen in 2022 and 2023 eased slightly but remained generally elevated (see [Full-time employment](#)). Note the higher undergraduate full-time employment rate in 2025 is likely attributable to changes made to the survey instrument and not necessarily a reflection of changes in labour market conditions.

Underemployment rates have been most volatile at the undergraduate level. For instance, when labour market demand along with full-time employment peaked in 2022 and 2023, underemployment of undergraduates was at the lowest level since tracking began. This is consistent with previous findings that showed relatively high year-on-year undergraduate salary growth. In 2025, 19.4 per cent of employed undergraduates were underemployed, up for the third year in a row (**Figure 8**). This level is broadly in line with underemployment rates prior to the pandemic.

Figure 8 / Underemployment rate by study level, 2016–25 (% of those employed)



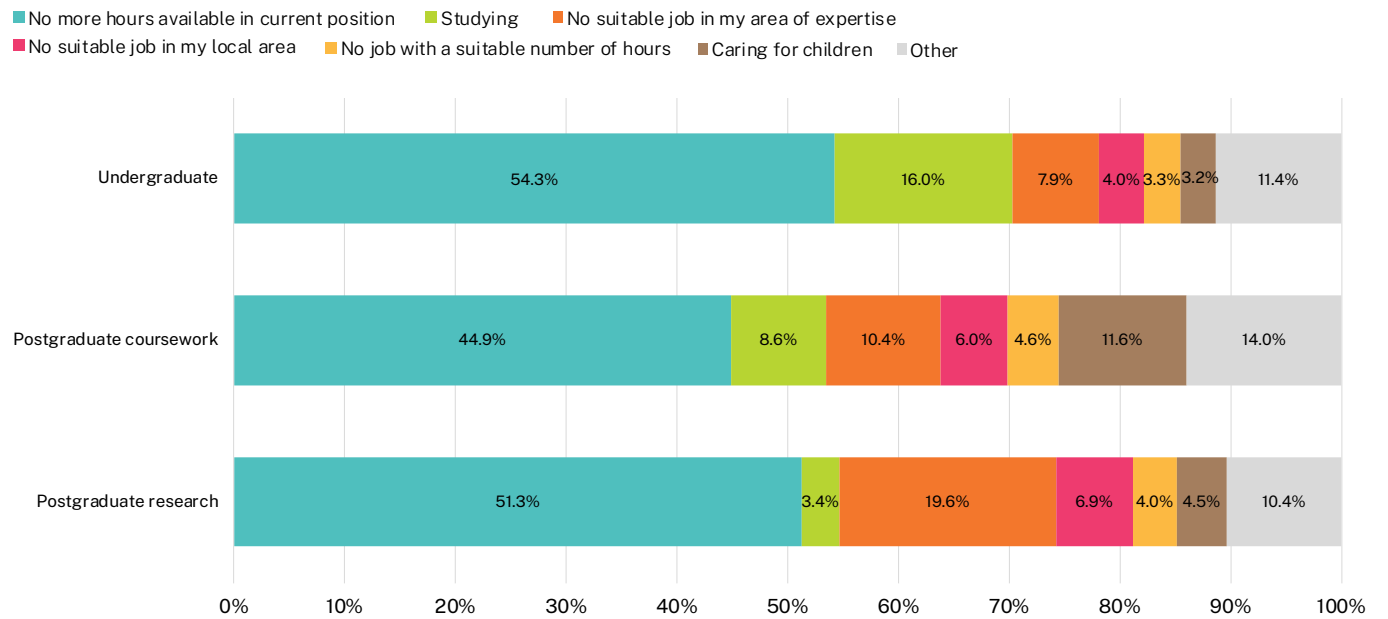
¹³ An 'underemployed' person is someone employed part-time (less than 35 hours per week) who would prefer to work more hours - regardless of if they are available to work those additional hours.

‘No more hours available in current position’ was the top reason cited by underemployed graduates for working the hours they currently do, across all study levels (Figure 9). ‘Studying’ was the second highest reason for undergraduates, and one that affected this cohort more than graduates at the postgraduate level. This is consistent with the higher rates of further full-time study reported by undergraduates (see [Further full-time study](#)).

Postgraduate coursework graduates were 3 times more likely than undergraduates and twice as likely as postgraduate research graduates to report ‘caring for children’ as their reason for working the hours they do. This aligns with the generally older age of this cohort and reflects a difference in life stage and competing priorities.

Notably, almost 1 in 5 postgraduate research graduates who were underemployed reported there were ‘no suitable jobs in my area of expertise’. This reason appears to have affected postgraduate research graduates more than undergraduates and postgraduate coursework graduates, and may point to potential mismatches between the highly specialised skills and knowledge acquired in these courses and demand in the labour market for such qualifications. It may also explain the relatively low overall course satisfaction reported by this cohort in 2025 (see [Postgraduate research experience](#)).

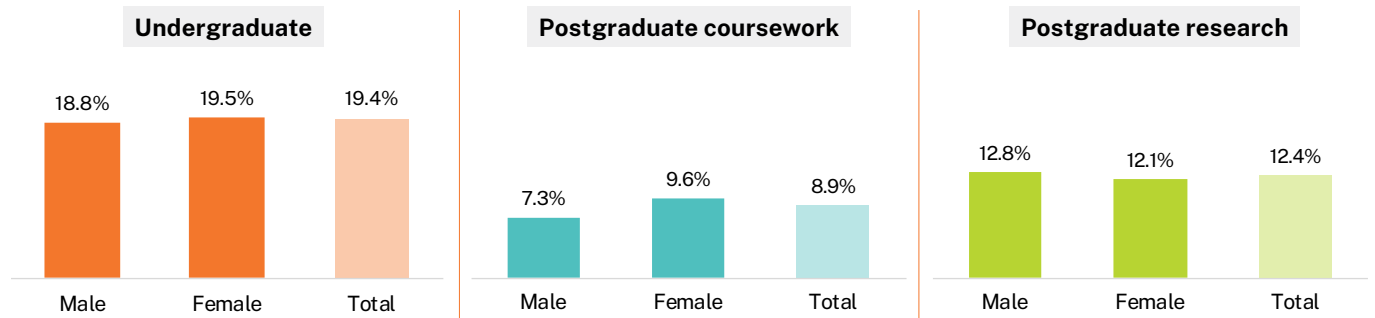
Figure 9 / Main reason graduates work the hours they do despite a preference to work more, by study level, 2025 (% employed part-time but would prefer more hours)



Underemployment by gender

Typically, female undergraduates and postgraduate coursework graduates are more likely to be underemployed than males, and this trend continued in 2025 (Figure 10). However, it is important to note that females are more likely to be employed part-time overall, with the proportion wishing to work more hours and the proportion satisfied with their hours both higher than their male counterparts. There is generally less variation at the postgraduate research level.

Figure 10 / Underemployment rate by study level and gender, 2025 (% of those employed)



Examining differences in reasons males and females report working the hours they do provides some insight into why there are differences in underemployment rates by gender. Given there was little variation at the postgraduate research level, reasons by gender have not been included in this report but they are available to download from the QILT website.¹⁴

Table 1 shows that underemployed females at both levels of study were more likely than males to report personal reasons for working the hours they do. A key point of difference was in ‘caring for children’, particularly at the postgraduate coursework level – 14.0 per cent of females cited ‘caring for children’ compared to only 4.2 per cent of males. The higher rates of ‘caring for children’ by both males and females at the postgraduate coursework level reflects the difference in age and life stage of this cohort.

Males were more likely to report labour market reasons for being underemployed, with males more likely to cite ‘no suitable jobs in my area of expertise’ than females at the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework levels.

However, ‘no more hours available in current position’ was the top reason for both females and males across all study levels. ‘Studying’ was another commonly reported reason, especially for undergraduates, that impacted females and males similarly.

Table 1 / Main reason graduates work the hours they do despite a preference to work more, by study level, 2025 (% employed part-time but would prefer more hours)

Reason type	Detailed reasons	Undergraduate			Postgraduate coursework		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Personal factors	Studying	15.5	16.3	16.0	9.2	8.4	8.6
	Caring for children	1.4	4.1	3.2	4.2	14.0	11.6
	Due to other commitments outside of main job	1.0	0.5	0.7	1.2	0.7	0.8
	Short-term illness or injury	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4
	Long-term health condition or disability	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.3
	Caring for family member with a health condition or disability	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Sub-total – Personal factors	18.3	21.6	20.4	15.3	24.2	21.9
Labour market factors	No more hours available in current position	52.3	55.3	54.3	45.9	44.6	44.9
	No suitable job in my area of expertise	10.3	6.7	7.9	15.3	8.7	10.4
	No suitable job in my local area	4.8	3.6	4.0	6.3	6.0	6.0
	No job with a suitable number of hours	3.7	3.1	3.3	4.4	4.7	4.6
	Considered to be too old by employers	1.0	1.2	1.1	2.9	1.5	1.8
	Considered to be too young by employers	1.2	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.1	0.3
	Due to visa restrictions / waiting for permanent residency	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Sub-total – Labour market factors	73.3	70.8	71.7	75.6	65.5	68.0
Other factors	8.4	7.6	7.9	9.2	10.3	10.1	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Underemployment rate (% of those employed)	18.8	19.5	19.4	7.3	9.6	8.9	

¹⁴ Refer to RSNO MORE_PGR_ALL_1Y_E315 worksheet in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

2.6 Skills utilisation

This section focuses on some common measures of skills utilisation (or the ‘quality’ of graduate jobs). These include the proportion of graduates employed in managerial and professional occupations and the proportion of graduates who believe their current job does not fully utilise their skills or education. These measures provide important assessments of the extent to which graduates are using their skills.

It is important to note that there are a range of factors beyond the quality of educational experience, that may influence occupational outcomes. These include the proportion of graduates undertaking further full-time study, registration or professional accreditation timelines and graduate choice of career, in addition to the personal characteristics of individual graduates.

2.6.1 Occupation type

The proportion of graduates working in managerial and professional occupations is a proxy measure of skills utilisation. This is because the classification of occupations¹⁵ used by the ABS suggests that most managerial and professional occupations have a skill level commensurate with qualifications at the bachelor level or higher.

As seen in **Table 2**, 67.3 per cent of undergraduates employed full-time were working in managerial or professional occupations in 2025, compared to 86.0 per cent of postgraduate coursework graduates and 93.3 per cent of postgraduate research graduates. Note that postgraduate coursework graduates are more likely to be already attached to the labour market before completing their studies as they are older on average and more likely to be studying externally.

The postgraduate research level had the highest proportions employed in managerial and professional occupations in both full-time employment and overall employment (including full- and part-time hours). This is likely due to many of these graduates continuing their employment in academia, which they would have commenced during their studies.

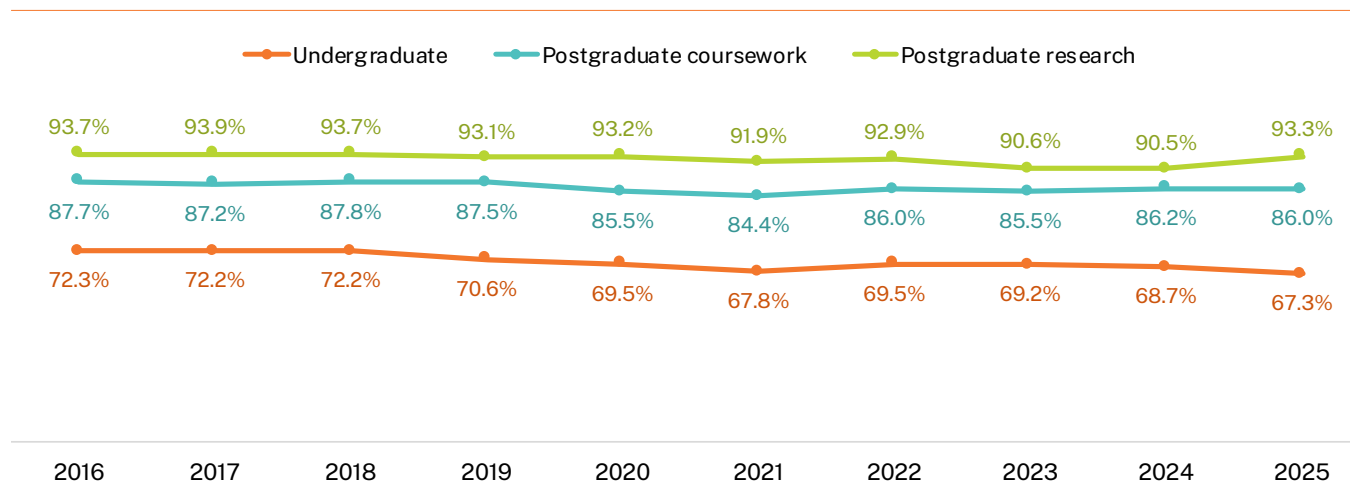
Rates were also high at the postgraduate coursework level. This is expected as these graduates tend to be older and established in the labour market by the time they complete their course. This is further evidenced by the high employment and median salary outcomes for this cohort (see [Full-time employment](#) and [Median annual full-time salary](#)).

Notably, the proportions of undergraduates employed full-time in managerial or professional occupations has been declining since 2018 (**Figure 11**).

Table 2 / **Domestic graduates employed in managerial and professional occupations by employment type and study level, 2025 (% of those employed)**

	Full-time employed	Overall employed
Undergraduate	67.3	55.2
Postgraduate coursework	86.0	83.9
Postgraduate research	93.3	91.6

Figure 11 / **Domestic graduates employed full-time in managerial and professional occupations by study level, 2016–25 (% of those employed full-time)**

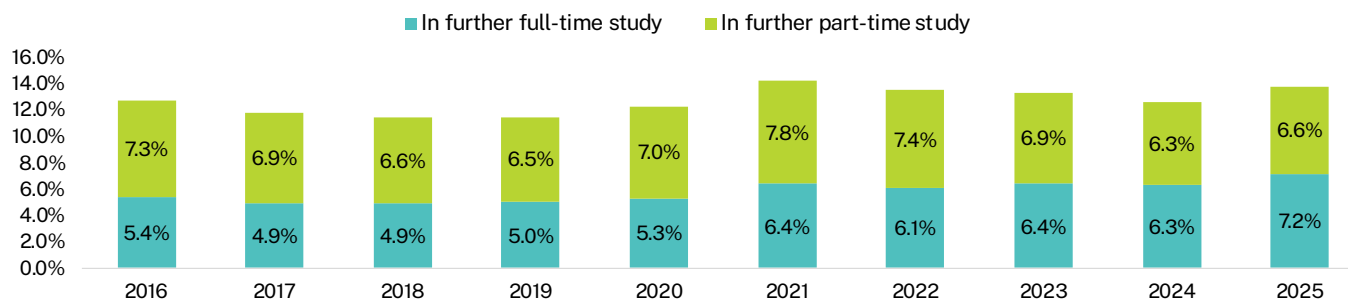


¹⁵ Based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). The ANZSCO was jointly developed by the ABS, Stats NZ and the then Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

The decline in undergraduates working full-time in managerial and professional occupations may be associated with a greater proportion of undergraduates undertaking further study while working full-time.

Figure 12 shows that the proportions of undergraduates employed full-time and in further study increased markedly in 2021 and has remained above pre-pandemic levels since. This corresponds with the lower rates of undergraduates working full-time in managerial and professional occupations during this same period (Figure 11). Studying while working full-time may limit the types of jobs graduates can do, leading to some working in jobs not commensurate with their undergraduate qualification.

Figure 12 / Domestic undergraduates employed full-time while in further study, 2016–25
(% of those employed full-time)



Around 30 per cent of higher education graduates reported working in full-time jobs that did not fully utilise their skills and education 4 to 6 months after course completion.

2.6.2 Perceived overqualification

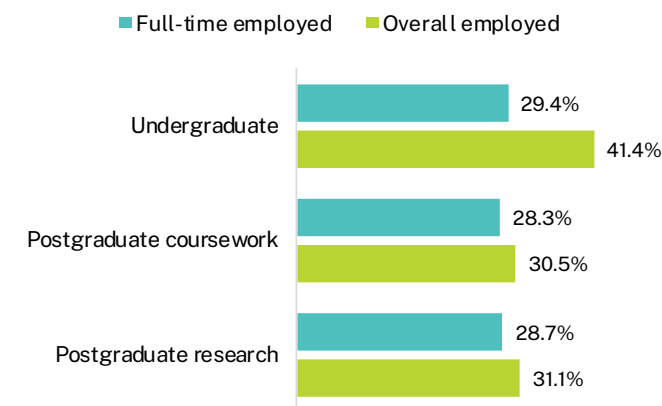
Graduates were also asked whether they believed they were working in a job that was not fully utilising their skills or education.

In 2025, 41.4 per cent of all employed undergraduates considered themselves overqualified¹⁶ for their current job (Figure 13). This compares to 30.5 per cent and 31.1 per cent of those who had completed a postgraduate coursework qualification and postgraduate by research qualification respectively.

However, rates of perceived overqualification were similar across study levels when looking only at those employed full-time: 29.4 per cent of undergraduates indicated that they were working in a job that did not fully utilise their skills or education, compared with 28.3 per cent and 28.7 per cent of those who had completed a postgraduate coursework qualification and a postgraduate research qualification respectively.

The higher rate of overall employed undergraduates may be due to a greater proportion of undergraduates undertaking further full-time study and, therefore, less likely to be working in their career jobs. There was less variation in perceived overqualification between employment types at the postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research levels. These graduates are often older, at a different life stage and often working the number of hours they do by choice or due to other priorities. As a result, there is less differentiation in perceived overqualification between those in full-time and overall employment at the postgraduate level.

Figure 13 / Perceived overqualification by employment type and study level, 2025
(% of those employed)

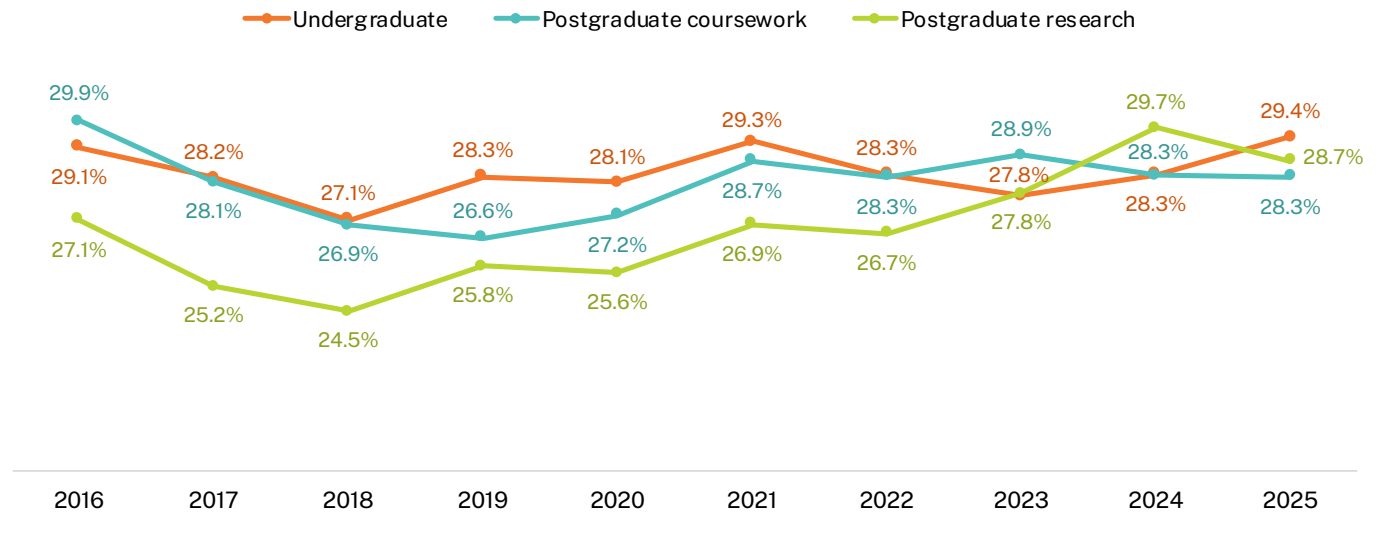


¹⁶ Overqualification is measured using the Scale of Perceived Overqualification (SPOQ), which assesses the extent to which graduates perceive their skills and education are not fully utilised in their current job. See the [GOS questionnaire](#) on the QILT website for the 8 items included in the SPOQ. This scale is a proxy indicator for the 'relevance' of graduate employment to graduates' study area.

The proportions of postgraduate research graduates employed full-time who consider themselves overqualified in their current jobs has increased over time.

Historically, rates of perceived overqualification for postgraduate research graduates employed full-time had been lower than at the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework levels (Figure 14) – that is, postgraduate research graduates were more likely to report working in jobs that *did* fully utilise their skills and education. While rates of perceived overqualification have remained relatively stable at the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework levels over time, the proportions of postgraduate research graduates have been steadily increasing.

Figure 14 / Perceived overqualification by study level, 2016–25 (% of those full-time employed)



Reasons graduates felt they were not utilising their skills and education in their current jobs varied by study level, and for some graduates, this was a personal choice (Table 3).

Perceived overqualification at the undergraduate and postgraduate research levels were associated more with labour market reasons than personal reasons. The main labour market reason reported by full-time employed undergraduates for working in a job not fully utilising their skills or education was that they were in an entry-level job or their job constituted a 'career stepping stone' (22.8 per cent). This was followed by 'not enough work experience' (12.1 per cent). These reflect the relative inexperience of early-career graduates who have completed undergraduate studies and may be entering the labour market for the first time. The highest personal reason was 'I'm satisfied with my current job' (12.9 per cent) followed by 'changing jobs/careers' (7.6 per cent).

Postgraduate research graduates faced different labour market challenges to undergraduates, particularly 'no suitable jobs in my area of expertise'. This was also a common reason for postgraduate research graduates who were underemployed (Figure 9). One in five postgraduate research graduates who perceived themselves to be overqualified said 'I'm satisfied with my current job' as the reason for this, which demonstrates that perceived overqualification is sometimes related to a personal choice (Table 3).

Postgraduate coursework graduates were the most likely to indicate a personal reason for not fully utilising their skills and education in their current job. Satisfaction with their current jobs, changing jobs/careers, financial reasons and caring for children or other family members were some of the top personal reasons provided by this cohort.

Table 3 / Main reason for working in a full-time job that does not fully use skills and education, by study level, 2025 (% of those perceived overqualified)

Reason type	Detailed reasons	Undergraduate	Postgraduate coursework	Postgraduate research
Personal factors	I'm satisfied with my current job	12.9	18.6	19.4
	Changing jobs/careers	7.6	12.3	7.0
	Studying	7.5	4.4	1.4
	For financial reasons	6.9	7.7	8.8
	Caring for children or family member	1.3	4.1	2.1
	Other personal factors	1.4	0.6	0.2
	Sub-total – Personal factors		37.6	47.8
Labour market factors	Entry level job/career stepping stone	22.8	11.3	11.3
	Not enough work experience	12.1	7.7	6.1
	No suitable jobs in my area of expertise	9.3	9.9	22.0
	No suitable jobs in my local area	7.4	9.6	11.3
	Considered to be too young by employers	2.4	2.5	1.9
	Other labour market factors	3.0	4.3	3.7
	Sub-total – Labour market factors		57.0	45.2
Other factors		3.4	4.8	4.1
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
Perceived overqualification (% of those employed full-time)		29.4	28.3	28.7

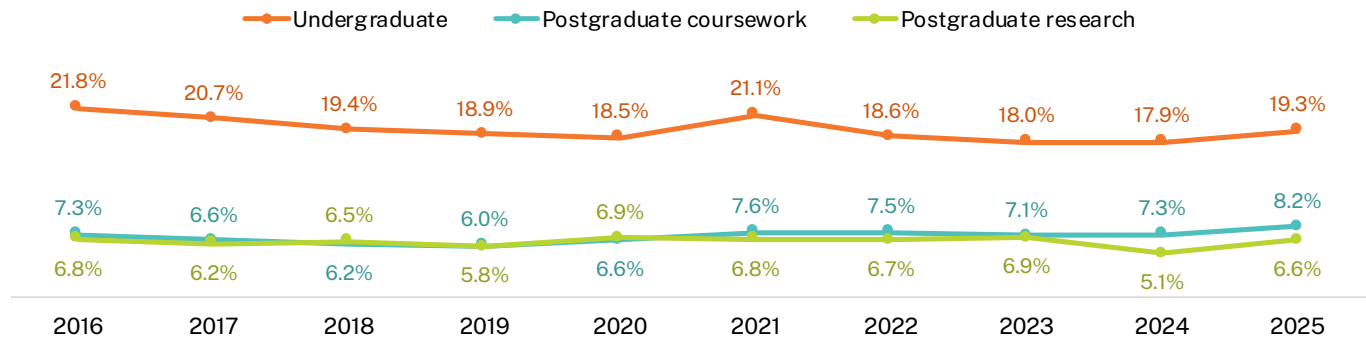
2.7 Further full-time study

Figure 15 represents the proportion of graduates who were enrolled in a full-time course at the time of the GOS, approximately 4 to 6 months after completion of their initial course.¹⁷

In 2025, further full-time study rates increased year-on-year across all study levels. Rates at the undergraduate and postgraduate research levels remained within ranges seen historically, however, the postgraduate coursework further full-time study rate rose to an all-time high for this cohort, with 8.2 per cent of graduates continuing through to further full-time study following course completion.

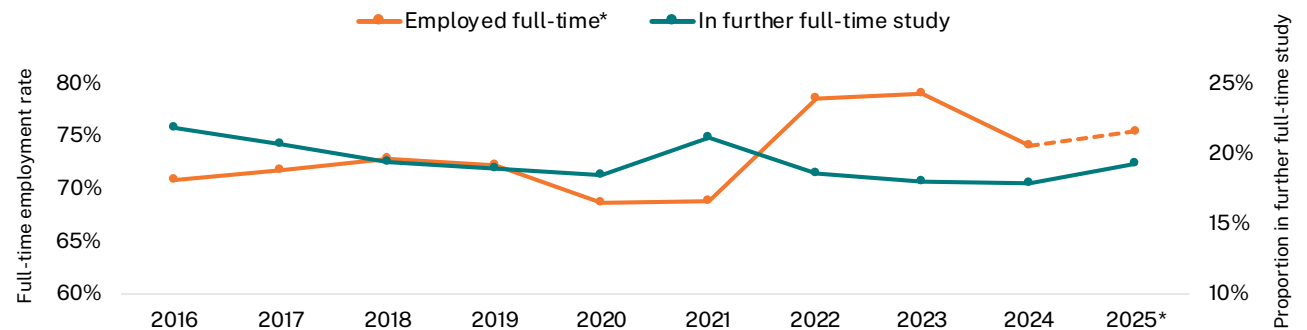
Shifts in higher education enrolments are often influenced by changing labour market conditions – strong labour market demand often leads to a decline in enrolments, and increased unemployment and underemployment lead to increased enrolments. This inverse relationship can also be seen in further full-time study rates and rates of employment presented in this report. For example, the two highest undergraduate further study rates recorded since the survey commenced were in 2016 (21.8 per cent) and in 2021 (21.1 per cent); these two periods also recorded some of the lowest undergraduate full-time employment rates on record, at 70.9 per cent and 68.9 per cent respectively (see [Full-time employment](#)). Examining further study attendance type (full or part-time) and age provide further insight into this relationship.

Figure 15 / Proportion of domestic graduates in further full-time study by study level, 2016–25



Enrolments are often influenced by changing labour market conditions, such as those seen during and shortly after the pandemic – strong labour market demand often leads to a decline in further full-time study rates, and when labour market demand weakens, further full-time study rates generally increase.

Inverse relationship between full-time employment and further full-time study rates



* Full-time employment rates from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years due to a change to how the labour force is defined. Caution should be exercised when interpreting differences in full-time employment rates between 2025 results and earlier years, as they partly reflect the change in methodology. See [Appendix 1](#) for further information.

¹⁷ For simplicity, 'initial course' refers to the course the graduate was asked about in the 2025 GOS; this may not necessarily be the first ever higher education course the graduate has completed.

The majority (77.5 per cent) of the undergraduate cohort in 2025 was aged 30 and under. Younger people are typically more adversely affected by changing labour market conditions. **Figure 16** shows that further full-time study rates for undergraduates aged 30 and under have fluctuated over time, and these fluctuations correspond to fluctuations in full-time employment rates (see [Full-time employment](#)). In contrast, further full-time study rates for undergraduates aged over 30 have remained relatively stable over time, indicating they are less influenced by changing labour market conditions.

In 2025, 21.2 per cent of undergraduates aged 30 and under continued on to further full-time study 4 to 6 months after course completion, compared to only 13.0 per cent of undergraduates aged over 30. Further, only 4.9 per cent of younger undergraduates went on to further part-time study compared to 12.7 per cent of older undergraduates. Older undergraduates tend to continue to full- and part-time study at similar rates.

2.7.1 Movement between study levels

Undergraduates continuing through to further full-time study typically move into another undergraduate course or go into a postgraduate coursework course, and this trend has remained relatively stable over time. In 2025, 37.7 per cent of undergraduates moving into further full-time study went on to undergraduate courses, and 44.0 per cent moved into postgraduate coursework level courses (**Figure 17**). A smaller proportion (8.3 per cent in 2025) started postgraduate research courses, however, this has fluctuated over time.

There has been a steady increase in the proportions of undergraduates moving into certificate 1-4 or advanced diplomas since the survey commenced in 2016 (**Figure 17**). From 2021 to 2023, this accounted for approximately 5 per cent of total undergraduates in further full-time study, but by 2025, this had doubled to 10.0 per cent. This may reflect recent efforts to improve integration between higher education and vocational education and training (VET) so that students can gain the skills and qualifications they need from both sectors.

Figure 16 / Proportion of domestic undergraduates in further full-time study by age group, 2016–25

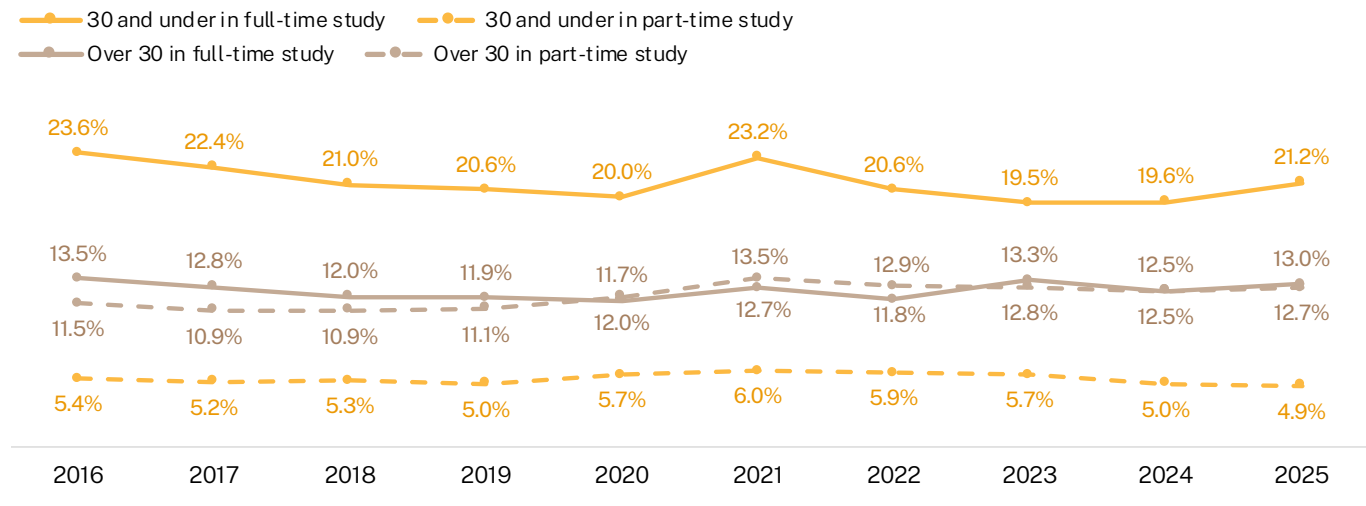
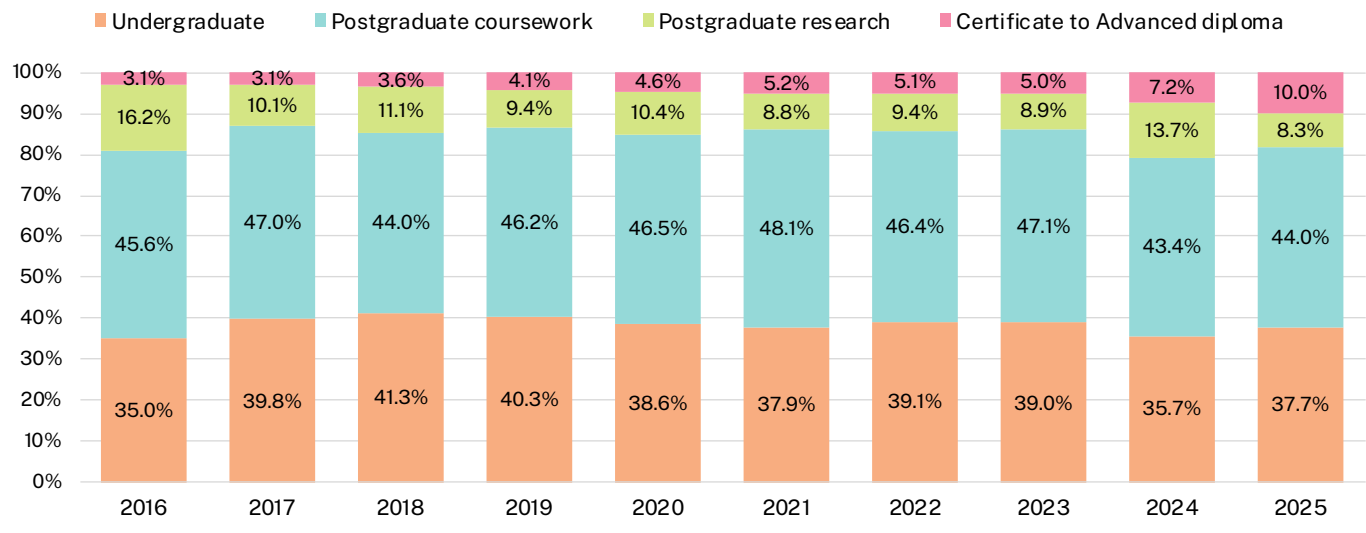
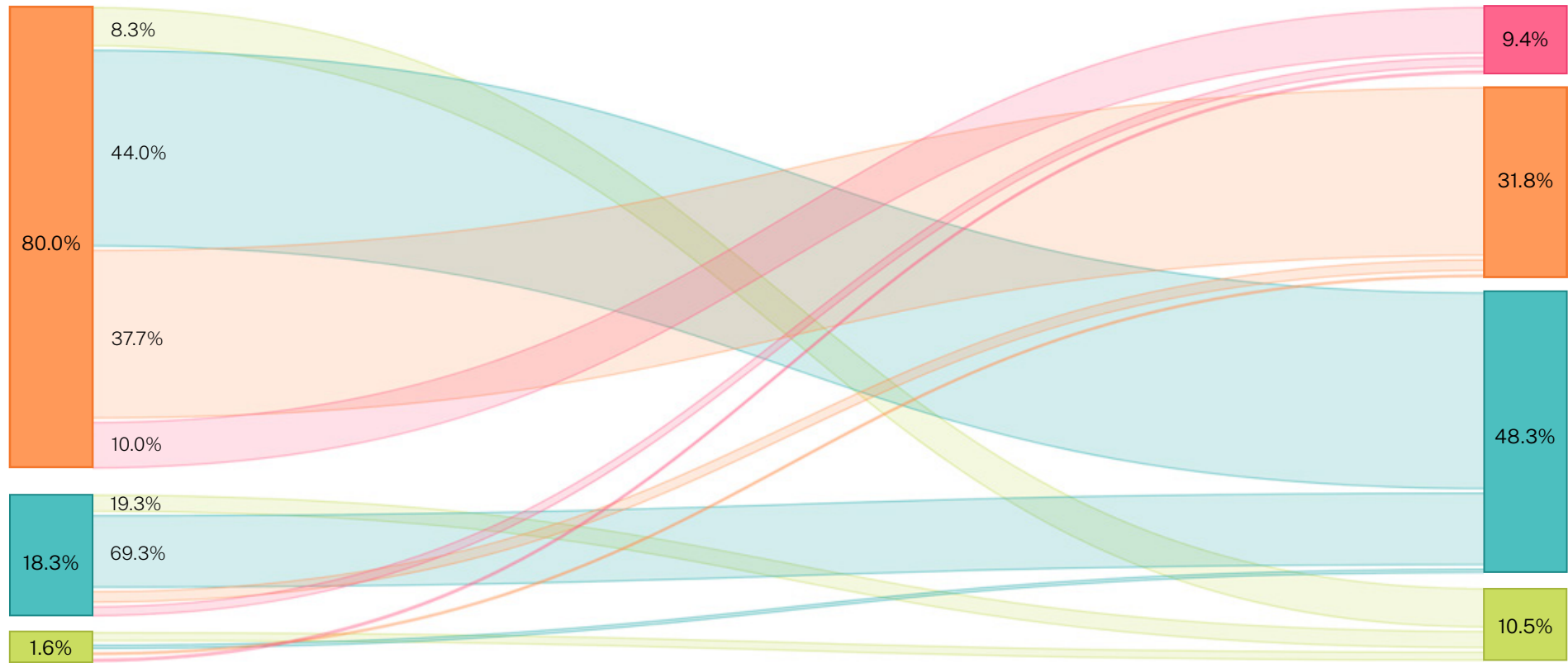


Figure 17 / Undergraduate further full-time study level destinations, 2016–25



Graduate movement from original study level to further full-time study level, 2025

■ Undergraduate
 ■ Postgraduate coursework
 ■ Postgraduate research
 ■ Certificate to Advanced Diploma

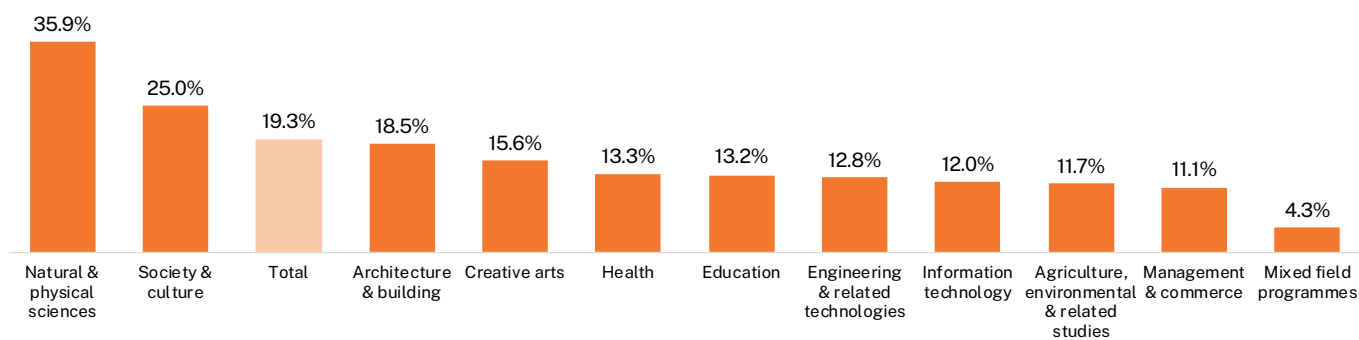


Note: Only selected proportions of original study level to further full-time study level are presented in this figure. For a complete breakdown of original study levels to further full-time study levels, refer to the FTS_ALL_ALL_1Y_FURLEVEL worksheet in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

2.7.2 Further full-time study by initial field of education

Rates of further full-time study varied by field of education.¹⁸ Over a third of undergraduates from the Natural and physical sciences field went on to further full-time study immediately following completion of their initial course, and a quarter of undergraduates from the Society and culture field did so as well (Figure 18). Undergraduates from some fields of education, such as Management and commerce, and Agriculture, environmental and related studies had a lower propensity to move into further full-time study after completing their initial course (11.1 per cent and 11.7 per cent respectively).

Figure 18 / Proportion of undergraduates engaged in further full-time study by initial broad field of education, 2025

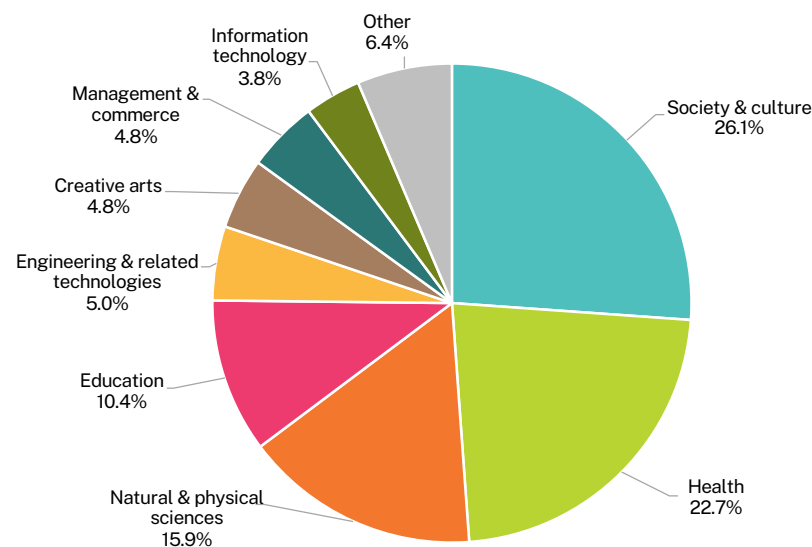


Note: Where a graduate completes combined degrees across two fields of study, their outcomes are included in both fields.

2.7.3 Further full-time study destinations

Graduates were also asked to indicate the field of their further study course. In 2025, Society and culture was the most common field of education destination for undergraduates, accounting for 26.1 per cent of graduates in further full-time study (Figure 19). This was followed by Health (22.7 per cent), Natural and physical sciences (15.9 per cent), and Education (10.4 per cent).

Figure 19 / Broad field of education destinations of undergraduates undertaking further full-time study, 2025



¹⁸ This section uses the Broad Field of Education (BFOE) categories from the ABS Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) to examine graduates' original and destination courses. For a concordance of study areas to BFOE see [Study areas](#) on the QILT website.

The majority (51.5 per cent) of Natural and physical sciences undergraduates who reported further full-time study remained in the same field of education, while 30.4 per cent moved into the Health field.

The biggest destination for undergraduates undertaking further full-time study, Society and culture, attracted students from a diverse range of fields. Not only did 66.9 per cent of Society and culture graduates remain in this field of study, 24.8 per cent from Management and commerce and 13.8 per cent from Creative arts moved into this field. See **Appendix 3 Table 16** for a detailed breakdown of undergraduate initial fields to destination fields in 2025.

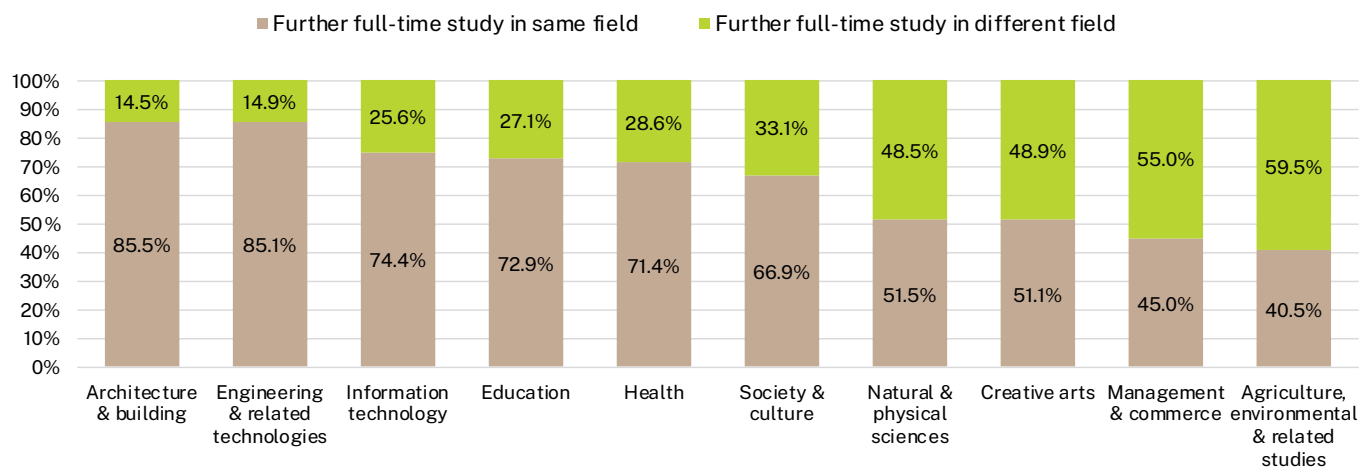
Less than half of undergraduates who completed courses in the fields of Management and commerce, and Agriculture, environmental and related studies, and continued straight on to further full-time study remained within the same fields (**Figure 20**). In comparison, more than 80 per cent undergraduates who completed studies in Architecture and building, and Engineering and related technologies and continued on to further full-time studies, remained within the same fields.

Postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduate results are available in supplementary tables on the QILT website.¹⁹

2.8 Demographic and equity groups

Labour market outcomes varied among demographic sub-groups at all study levels. This section describes results for undergraduates. Outcomes for postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates are available in supplementary tables on the QILT website.²⁰

Figure 20 / Whether destination field was the same or different from initial field, undergraduate, 2025 (% in further full-time study)



Gender is the *only* demographic variable where higher rates of undergraduate employment and higher salary outcomes are not commensurate. That is, female undergraduates have higher rates of full-time employment (and overall employment), but male undergraduates have higher median annual full-time salaries.

By contrast, graduates over 30 years of age, external graduates, First Nations graduates and graduates whose home language was English all had higher rates of employment and higher median annual full-time salaries than the other sub-group in that demographic category.

¹⁹ Refer to FTS_PGC_ALL_1Y_BFOE_FURFOE and FTS_PGR_ALL_1Y_BFOE_FURFOE worksheets in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

²⁰ Refer to the EMP_PGC_ALL_2Y_DG, SAL_PGC_ALL_2Y_DG, EMP_PGR_ALL_2Y_DG and SAL_PGR_ALL_2Y_DG worksheets in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

Age and study mode

There appears to be some association between age and study mode at the undergraduate level. Older graduates are more likely to be attached to the labour market during their studies, or at least have prior work experience, which leads to higher employment outcomes and median salaries 4 to 6 months after course completion compared to younger graduates. In contrast, younger graduates are more likely to go on to further full-time study.

The relative proportion of younger graduates (aged 30 and under) who completed internal or multi-mode studies was much larger than the proportion of undergraduates aged over 30: 88.7 per cent and 51.4 per cent respectively. As a result, undergraduate outcomes for internal/multi-mode graduates are influenced more by the outcomes of younger graduates, whereas external outcomes are more heavily influenced by the outcomes of older graduates in this cohort. These influences can be seen in **Figure 21** – the ‘total’ internal/multi-mode outcomes closely match those of the 30 and under cohort, while the ‘total’ external outcomes are similar to the over 30 cohort’s outcomes.

Undergraduate age profile by mode of study
(based on responses to the 2025 GOS)

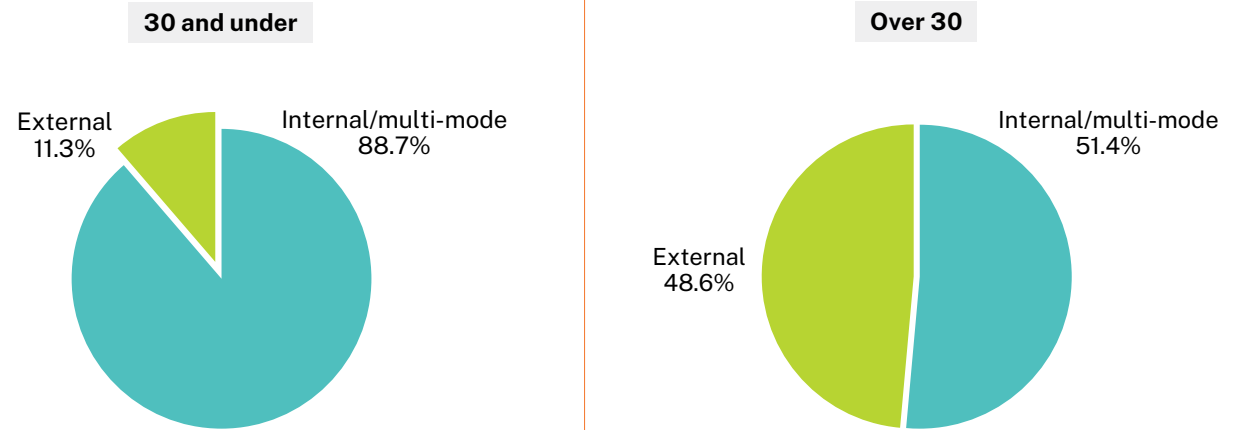
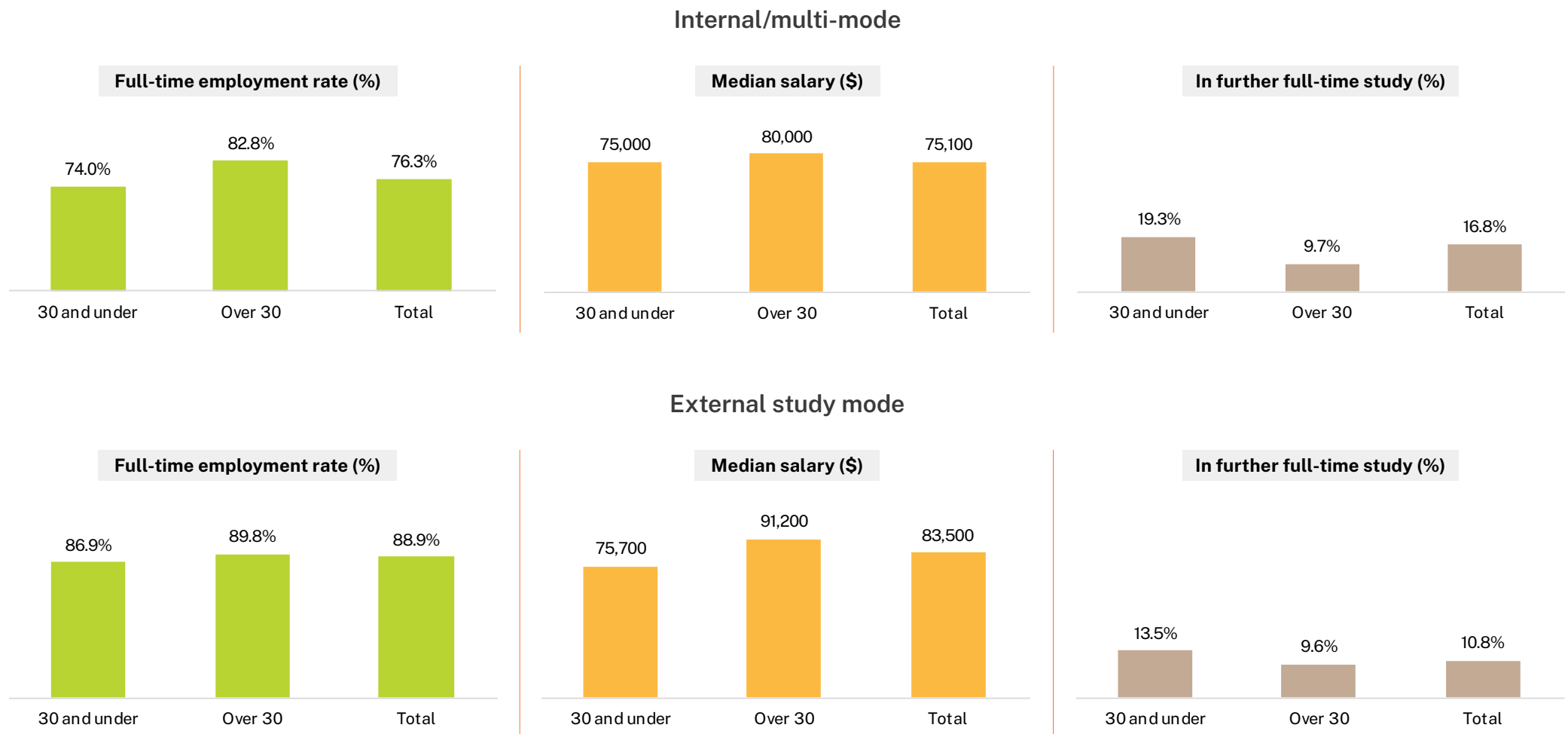


Figure 21 / Domestic undergraduate labour market and further study outcomes by study mode and age, 2025



First Nations graduates

First Nations undergraduates reported higher full-time employment rates than non-Indigenous undergraduates, at 82.6 per cent and 75.2 per cent respectively, and also had a higher overall employment rate, at 92.1 per cent and 89.1 per cent respectively (**Table 4**). The median salary of First Nations undergraduates was also higher than for non-Indigenous graduates, \$80,600 and \$76,700 respectively.

First Nations undergraduates tend to be older and are more likely to have studied externally than non-Indigenous graduates – two characteristics associated with better labour market outcomes – which may explain these results.

Language background

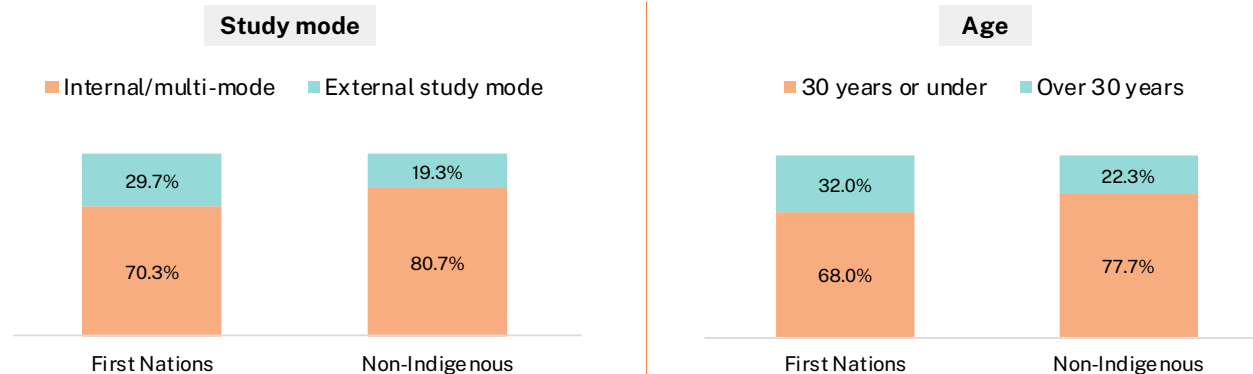
Domestic undergraduates from non-English speaking backgrounds have lower employment outcomes and median salaries than domestic undergraduates from English speaking backgrounds, even within the same study areas.

Domestic undergraduates from non-English speaking backgrounds continued to report some of the poorest outcomes of the sub-groups examined in this report. In 2025, only 59.8 per cent were in full-time employment 4 to 6 months after course completion, compared to 75.8 per cent of undergraduates from an English speaking background. Overall employment and labour force participation rates, as well as median salary were all lower for undergraduates from a non-English speaking background.

First Nations undergraduate profile

(based on responses to the 2025 GOS)

First Nations undergraduates were more likely to have studied externally and be aged over 30 compared to non-Indigenous undergraduates.



Age does not seem to be a factor underlying these differences, with around 78 per cent of undergraduates from both English speaking and non-English speaking backgrounds being aged 30 years and under. However, undergraduates from non-English speaking backgrounds were more likely to continue on to further full-time study, which may partially explain the lower employment outcomes and median salary for this cohort.

Undergraduates from non-English speaking backgrounds were more likely to undertake studies in the areas of Nursing, Computing and information systems, Science and mathematics, and Business and management, compared to their counterparts.

However, differences in study area profile also do not appear to explain the poorer outcomes for this cohort because these differences are evident even within the same study areas. For instance, the largest study area for non-English speaking graduates in 2025 was Nursing, which accounted for 16.5 per cent of this cohort,

compared to only 8.9 per cent of the domestic population. Domestic Nursing undergraduates from an English speaking background had a full-time employment rate of 81.6 per cent and a median salary of \$75,100. This compared to a full-time employment rate of only 68.2 per cent and a median salary of \$73,700 for domestic undergraduates from a non-English speaking background.

These findings suggest that domestic graduates from non-English speaking backgrounds may face unique challenges accessing the labour market and therefore likely require more targeted services to address their needs. In order to better support and equip graduates from non-English speaking backgrounds with the skills needed to secure relevant employment in their fields, it is important for institutions to develop a deep understanding of this cohort and take a more nuanced approach to careers support.

Disability

Undergraduates with disability had lower employment outcomes and higher further full-time study outcomes than their counterparts (Table 4). Although undergraduates without disability did have a slightly higher median salary of \$77,000, this difference was the narrowest of all comparison sub-groups. These findings indicate that graduates with disability may face challenges and barriers securing employment but for those in full-time employment, they do earn a median salary comparable to undergraduates without disability.

Regional / remoteness

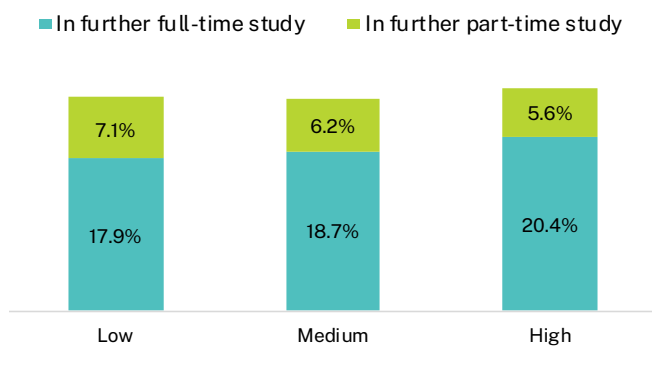
Full-time and overall employment rates of undergraduates who were originally from regional or remote areas were higher than for those from metropolitan areas in 2025. Undergraduates from regional or remote areas also reported a higher median salary of \$78,000 compared to \$76,000 for undergraduates from metropolitan areas. However, undergraduates from metropolitan areas were more likely to report being in further full-time study than undergraduates from regional or remote areas, which may explain the lower rates of employment and lower median salary.

Socio-economic status

There was generally less variation in employment outcomes between socio-economic status (SES) sub-groups compared to other demographic categories in 2025. However, undergraduates from high SES areas were more likely to continue on to further *full-time* study (20.4 per cent) compared to undergraduates from medium SES areas (18.7 per cent) and low SES areas (17.9 per cent). In contrast, undergraduates from medium and low SES areas were more likely to be further *part-time* study (Figure 22).

These differences in further study attendance type may reflect an increased capacity of high SES graduates to pursue further studies on a full-time basis compared to graduates from medium and low SES areas who may have to prioritise work over full-time study due to greater financial pressures.

Figure 22 / Undergraduates in further study by socio-economic status, 2025

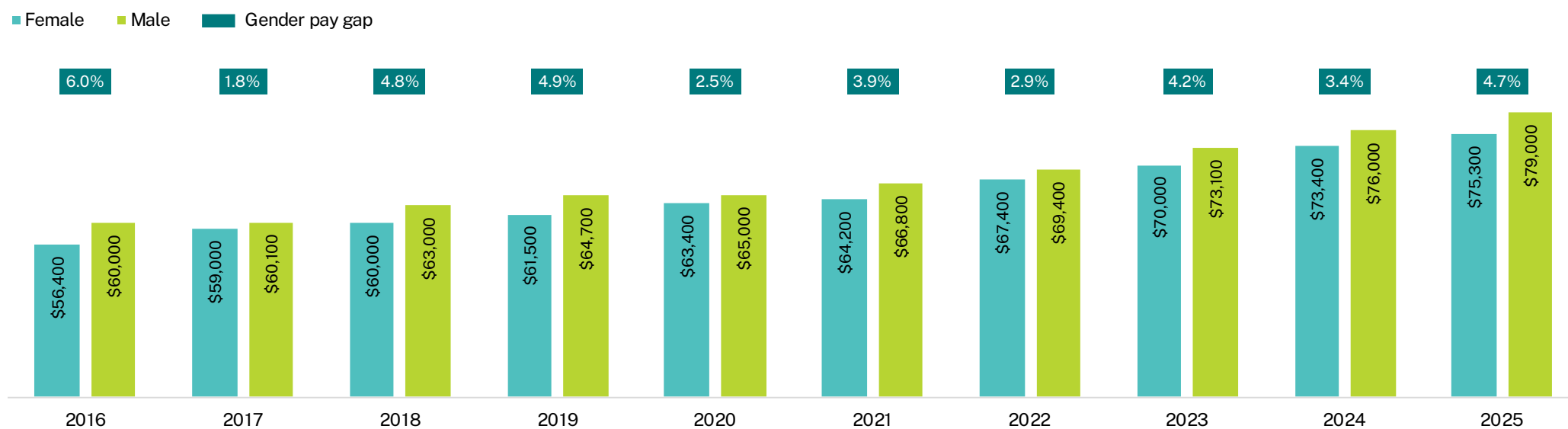


Gender

Compared to males, female undergraduates continue to report higher full-time and overall employment rates, as well as a higher labour force participation rate, but a lower median salary (Table 4).

The difference between male and female graduate median salaries has fluctuated over time, as shown by Figure 23. In 2025, males earned a median salary that was \$3,700 more on average than females, which equated to a gender pay gap²¹ of 4.7 per cent.

Figure 23 / Domestic undergraduate median annual full-time salary by gender, 2016–25



The gender pay gap is sometimes attributed to females being more likely to graduate from study areas that attract lower remuneration. However, analysis of undergraduate median salaries in the 2025 GOS shows that male graduates often earn more, on average, than females even within the same study areas. This suggests that there may be other factors at play, such as differences in the breadth of graduates' skillsets, differences in career progression and job switching, life-stage impacts (including caring responsibilities), and personal preferences.

The largest differences in median salaries in 2025 were in the areas of Architecture and built environment (\$6,800, or a gender pay gap of 8.6 per cent), Law and paralegal studies (\$6,000 or 7.2 per cent), and Science and mathematics (\$5,200 or 6.8 per cent).

Even in female-dominated study areas such as Nursing, male undergraduates reported a higher median salary than female undergraduates, earning on average \$2,000 more than females in 2025, or a gender pay gap of 2.6 per cent.

There were instances of females earning a higher median salary than male undergraduates in some study areas in 2025. These included Psychology, Communications and Creative arts. Notably, both male and female median salaries from Communications and Creative arts were below the 2025 average median salary of \$77,000.

Note that differences in median salary rates for males and females for different study areas are shown in **Appendix 3 Table 15**.

²¹ The gender pay gap is calculated as $100 \times (\text{Male salaries} - \text{Female salaries}) / \text{Male salaries}$ consistent with the methodology used by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)

Table 4 / Domestic undergraduate employment and further study outcomes by demographic sub-group, 2025

	Full-time Employment rate (%)	Overall employment rate (%)	Labour force participation rate (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)	In further full-time study (%)
Gender					
Male	73.8	86.9	87.7	79,000	19.1
Female	76.5	90.4	88.2	75,300	19.3
Age					
30 years or under	73.6	88.6	88.4	75,000	21.2
Over 30 years	81.8	91.2	86.5	85,000	13.0
Study mode*					
Internal/Multi-mode	72.9	88.5	88.3	75,100	20.6
External study mode	84.3	92.1	87.1	83,500	14.2
First Nations					
First Nations	82.6	92.1	88.6	80,600	19.7
Non-Indigenous	75.2	89.1	88.0	76,700	19.3
Disability‡					
Disability	67.8	85.3	83.7	76,000	22.7
No disability	76.4	89.7	88.7	77,000	18.7
Home language****					
English	75.8	89.4	88.1	77,000	19.0
Other	59.8	79.0	82.5	71,900	29.2

Table 4 / Domestic undergraduate employment and further study outcomes by demographic sub-group, 2025

(continued)

	Full-time Employment rate (%)	Overall employment rate (%)	Labour force participation rate (%)	Median annual full- time salary (\$)	In further full-time study (%)
First in family status**					
First in family	76.7	90.0	88.6	77,300	17.2
Not first in family	73.9	89.0	88.6	76,000	20.8
Socio-economic status***					
High	74.5	89.0	87.9	76,500	20.4
Medium	75.3	89.6	88.6	76,100	18.7
Low	75.7	88.8	87.9	77,500	17.9
Location*** †					
Metropolitan	73.2	88.4	88.0	76,000	19.7
Regional/remote	81.9	92.1	89.3	78,000	16.9
Total	75.4	89.2	88.0	77,000	19.3

* Internal mode of attendance is where (i) the study is undertaken through attendance at the higher education provider on a regular basis, or (ii) for higher degree unit enrolments, where regular attendance is not required but the student attends the higher education provider on an agreed schedule for the purposes of supervision and/or instruction. External mode of attendance is where lesson materials, assignments, etc. are delivered to the student, and any associated attendance at the institution is of an incidental, irregular, special or voluntary nature. Mixed mode of attendance is where study is undertaken partially on an internal mode of attendance and partially on an external mode of attendance.

** First in family refers to the graduate attaining a bachelor degree level qualification when their parent(s) or guardian(s) have not. Based on the highest level of educational attainment of a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) as identified by the student. This information is reported by institutions through the Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI) system.

*** Socio-economic status (SES) and location measures are area-based, associated with students' first permanent home address submitted when they commenced with their provider, as collected through the TCSI system. The SES is based on the ABS SEIFA Index of Education and Occupation.

**** Home language other than English refers to graduates who arrived in Australia less than 10 years prior to the year in which the data was collected, and comes from a home where a language other than English is spoken. This information is reported by institutions through the TCSI system.

‡ Disability information is reported by institutions through the Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI) system, reflecting a disability, impairment or long-term condition which may affect a graduate's studies.

† Location measures are calculated according to the proportion of metro and regional/remote categories.

2.9 Study area

Undergraduate full-time employment rates vary across study areas. In 2025, undergraduate full-time employment rates ranged from a high of 96.4 per cent for Pharmacy graduates, down to 53.0 per cent for Creative arts graduates (**Figure 24**).

In general, undergraduates who complete vocationally-oriented qualifications, that is, courses with a focus on practical skills for specific professions, have higher rates of full-time employment immediately following graduation. For example, in 2025, the top 3 study areas with the highest rates of undergraduate full-time employment were Pharmacy (96.4 per cent), Rehabilitation (94.0 per cent) and Medicine (93.2 per cent).

In contrast, undergraduate study areas with lower full-time employment rates included Creative arts (53.0 per cent), Communications (59.2 per cent), Computing and information systems (65.3 per cent), and Science and mathematics (65.4 per cent). These study areas with lower full-time employment rates tend to have more of a focus on a broad range of knowledge and skills that could be applied to a more diverse range of career paths, rather than focusing on the application of practical skills required for specific professions.

Figure 24 also includes undergraduate median salary data by study area. Study areas with high full-time employment rates did not necessarily have high median salaries. For instance, undergraduates from the Pharmacy study area reported the highest rate of full-time employment (96.4 per cent) but the lowest median salary of \$62,600. The strong demand for graduates with these qualifications suggests it is not their skills and knowledge,

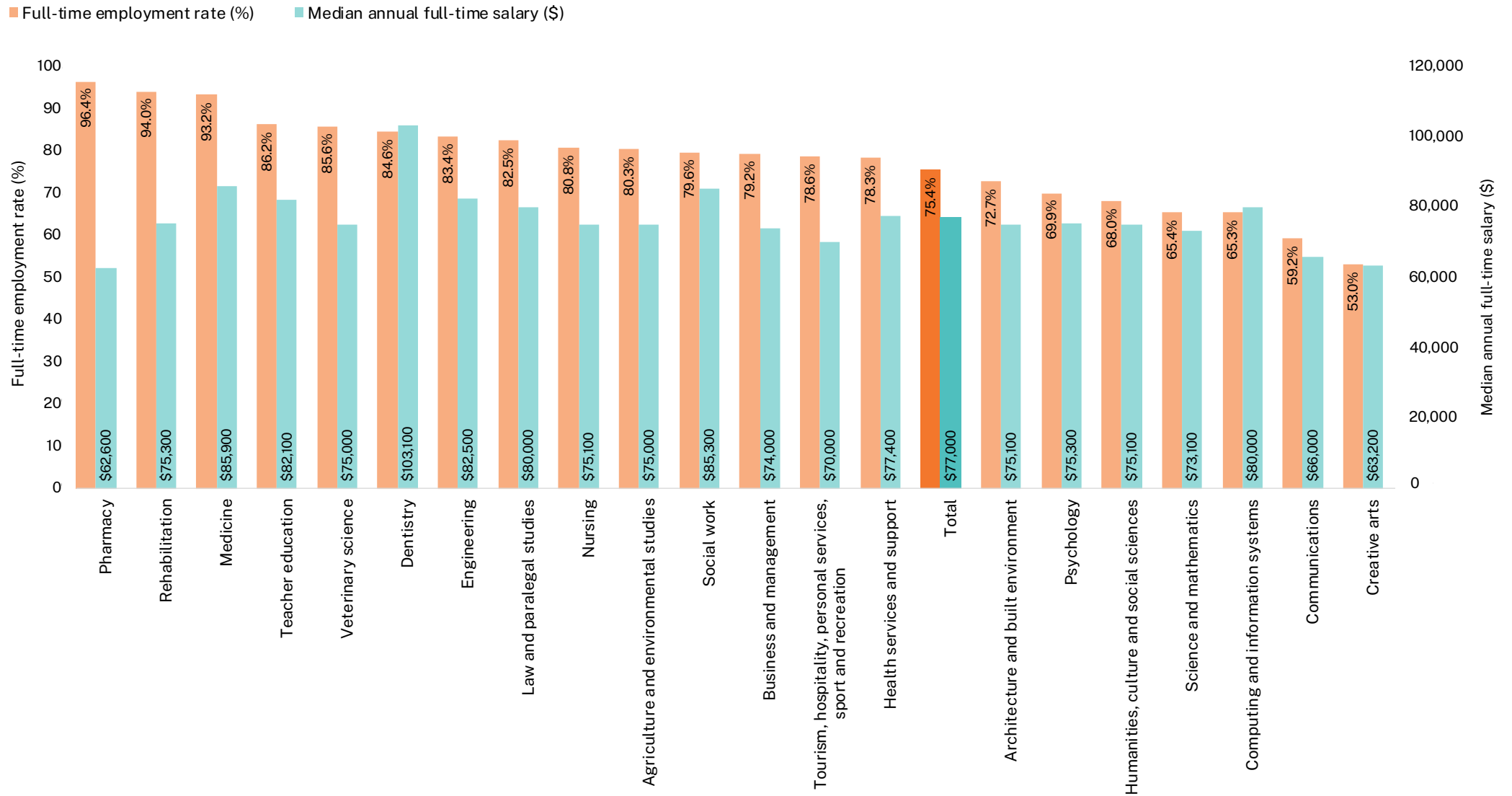
but perhaps the competitive dynamics in this industry that are influencing the below-average median salary 4 to 6 months after course completion (noting around 80 per cent of Pharmacy undergraduates typically report working as Pharmacists). Pharmacy undergraduates, however, do report one of the highest 3-year salary growth rates in the Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal (GOS-L), with most Pharmacy undergraduates continuing to report working as Pharmacists 3 years after course completion.²²

Dentistry undergraduates recorded a relatively high full-time employment rate (84.6 per cent) and the highest median salary (\$103,100) in 2025. Undergraduates from the Computing and information systems study area had a relatively low full-time employment rate (65.3 per cent) but an above-average median salary of \$80,000. These findings demonstrate that there is not a consistent direct relationship between employment rates and salaries.



²² The GOS-L surveys graduates 3 years after course completion, enabling comparisons in short- and medium-term labour market, further study and skills utilisation outcomes. For more information, visit [Graduate Outcomes Survey - Longitudinal](#)

Figure 24 / Undergraduate full-time employment rate and median annual full-time salary by study area, 2025



Examining labour force participation and further study rates helps explain why some study areas have lower full-time employment rates 4 to 6 months after course completion. For instance, Psychology and Science and mathematics graduates reported some of the lowest full-time employment rates in 2025, but these two study areas had the highest further full-time study rates, and labour force participation was also low for both cohorts (**Table 5**). It is likely that certain professions in these two areas of study require additional training or qualifications which is why labour force participation is low and further full-time study rates are so high. This is further evidenced by the below average proportions of graduates in these two study areas who were working in managerial or professional occupations.

Study area outcomes for postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates are available in supplementary tables available on the QILT website.²³

Table 5 / **Undergraduate employment and further study outcomes by study area, 2025**

Study area	Full-time Employment rate (%)	Overall employment rate (%)	Labour force participation rate (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)	In further full-time study (%)	Employed in managerial or professional occupation (% of those employed full-time)
Agriculture and environmental studies	80.3	92.0	88.4	75,000	11.7	57.1
Architecture and built environment	72.7	86.8	88.5	75,100	18.5	52.2
Business and management	79.2	89.5	92.1	74,000	11.6	65.9
Communications	59.2	83.6	84.0	66,000	12.8	59.1
Computing and information systems	65.3	79.2	88.7	80,000	12.0	75.8
Creative arts	53.0	82.4	83.7	63,200	17.6	51.0
Dentistry	84.6	94.0	90.1	103,100	10.4	48.6
Engineering	83.4	90.1	92.8	82,500	12.7	84.6
Health services and support	78.3	92.4	87.9	77,400	23.1	56.5
Humanities, culture and social sciences	68.0	86.8	85.4	75,100	23.9	53.8

²³ Refer to the EMP_PGC_ALL_2Y_AREA, SAL_PGC_ALL_2Y_AREA_E315, FTS_PGC_ALL_1Y_AREA_E315, OCCF_PGC_ALL_1Y_AREA, EMP_PGR_ALL_2Y_AREA, SAL_PGR_ALL_2Y_AREA_E315, FTS_PGR_ALL_1Y_AREA_E315 and OCCF_PGR_ALL_1Y_AREA worksheets in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

Table 5 / Undergraduate employment and further study outcomes by study area, 2025

(continued)

Study area	Full-time Employment rate (%)	Overall employment rate (%)	Labour force participation rate (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)	In further full-time study (%)	Employed in managerial or professional occupation (% of those employed full-time)
Law and paralegal studies	82.5	89.7	90.8	80,000	20.6	48.6
Medicine	93.2	96.4	89.2	85,900	20.1	74.8
Nursing	80.8	92.7	92.6	75,100	4.9	87.3
Pharmacy	96.4	96.3	93.0	62,600	18.0	91.8
Psychology	69.9	90.2	84.9	75,300	33.7	50.5
Rehabilitation	94.0	97.2	94.7	75,300	3.9	97.2
Science and mathematics	65.4	86.7	82.4	73,100	35.9	59.4
Social work	79.6	89.8	91.0	85,300	8.7	72.2
Teacher education	86.2	94.8	90.1	82,100	13.2	84.0
Tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation	78.6	90.1	90.5	70,000	20.4	60.2
Veterinary science	85.6	90.8	92.2	75,000	18.9	70.3
All study areas	75.4	89.2	88.0	77,000	19.3	67.3
Standard deviation	11.3	4.7	3.4	8,700		

Note: A blank cell indicates there is no data for that cell and n/a indicates a suppressed value (n<25). Where a graduate completes combined degrees across two study areas, their outcomes are included in both study areas. 'All study areas' figures count each graduate once only.

2.10 Institution

2.10.1 Institution type

In 2025, 94.1 per cent of total domestic respondents to the GOS completed a qualification at a university, while 5.9 per cent were from a non-university higher education institution (NUHEI).²⁴

In general, NUHEIs have greater proportions of postgraduates, international graduates and older graduates than universities. Graduates from NUHEIs also tend to cluster in fewer study areas.

Labour market outcomes – including rates of full-time employment, overall employment, labour force participation and median annual full-time salaries – were all higher for domestic undergraduates from universities compared with those from NUHEIs in 2025 (Table 6). University undergraduates were also more likely to be engaged in further full-time study than NUHEI undergraduates.

However, graduates who completed a postgraduate degree by coursework at a NUHEI had a higher full-time employment rate, while overall employment rates between the two were similar. The median salary of university postgraduate coursework graduates was higher than that of NUHEI graduates.

A key point of difference likely influencing outcomes between undergraduates studying at universities compared to NUHEIs is the study area profile of graduates from the two institution types. For instance, in 2025, 62.1 per cent of the NUHEI undergraduate respondent population were from 3 study areas: Creative arts (27.4 per cent), Humanities, culture and social sciences (19.4 per cent), and Health services and support (15.3 per cent). In comparison, these 3 study areas only accounted for 21.4 per cent of the equivalent university population. Furthermore, Creative arts, Humanities, culture and social sciences, and Health services and support all recorded below average to average full-time employment rates and median salaries for undergraduates overall in 2025 (see [Study area](#)).

Table 6 / Domestic graduate labour market outcomes by level of study and institution type, 2025

	Universities	NUHEIs
Full-time employment rate (%)		
Undergraduate	75.6	66.3
Postgraduate coursework	88.0	91.0
Overall employment rate (%)		
Undergraduate	89.3	85.1
Postgraduate coursework	93.6	94.0
Labour force participation rate (%)		
Undergraduate	88.2	81.5
Postgraduate coursework	93.2	91.4
Median annual full-time salary (\$)		
Undergraduate	77,000	71,300
Postgraduate coursework	105,000	100,000
In further full-time study (%)		
Undergraduate	19.4	15.9
Postgraduate coursework	8.4	6.6

Note: Postgraduate research results are not included in this table due to the small population at NUHEIs.

²⁴ The GOS has included non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs) since its inception in 2016. The number of NUHEIs participating in the GOS has been increasing, and in 2025 NUHEIs accounted for 94 of the 136 registered institutions that participated in the GOS. These institutions include TAFE institutions and several specialist international, creative arts and theological colleges.

2.10.2 Comparative institution outcomes

Employment and salary outcomes vary across institutions. Note that factors beyond the quality of teaching, careers advice and other internal influences can affect results for institutions. These include study area offerings, study mode, the composition of the student population and variations in state/territory and regional labour markets.

To assist interpretation of results, 90 per cent confidence intervals are included in the figures that follow, which indicate the confidence intervals for the survey estimates. Note that where confidence intervals for institution estimates overlap, it cannot be inferred that there is or is not a significant difference in outcomes in a statistical sense.²⁵

Notwithstanding differences in course offerings, student populations and local labour markets, it appears there is some differentiation among institutions, with some achieving higher rates of full-time employment and median salaries than others.

Universities

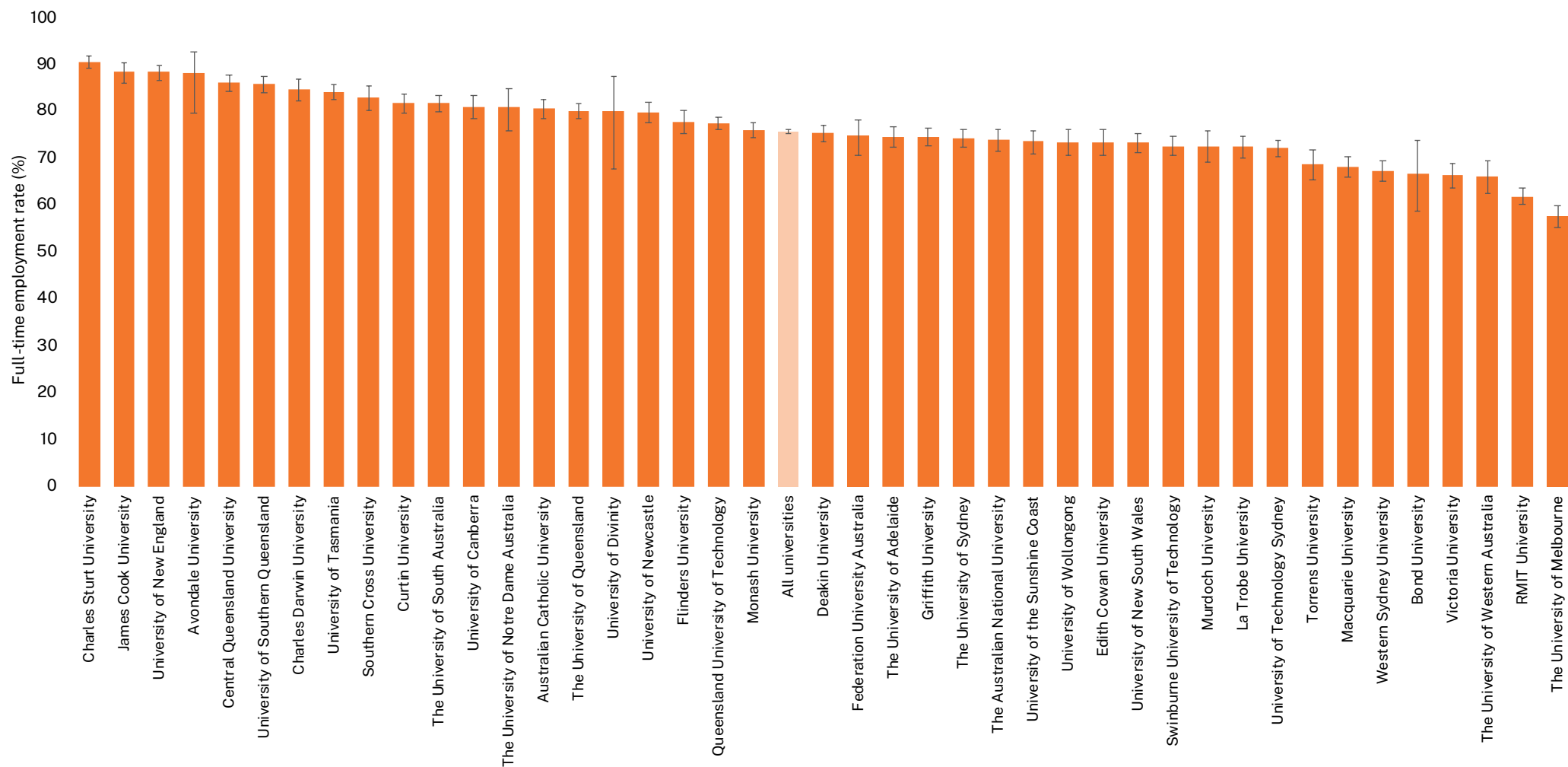
In 2025, undergraduate full-time employment rates varied across universities. The full-time employment rate for undergraduates from Charles Sturt University was 90.6 per cent compared to 57.6 per cent for those from The University of Melbourne (**Figure 25**).

Median annual full-time salaries for undergraduates also varied, from \$87,100 at the University of Southern Queensland to \$67,800 at Torrens University (**Figure 26**). As with the full-time employment rates, a range of factors beyond the institution itself may also affect salary outcomes.

²⁵ The calculation of confidence intervals is detailed in [Construction of confidence intervals in QILT surveys](#). Confidence intervals may be wider where the number of survey responses for a given institution is relatively small. Where confidence intervals for institution estimates do not overlap, this broadly implies the difference in labour market outcomes is statistically significant. Where confidence intervals overlap it cannot be inferred that the difference either is, or is not, statistically significant.

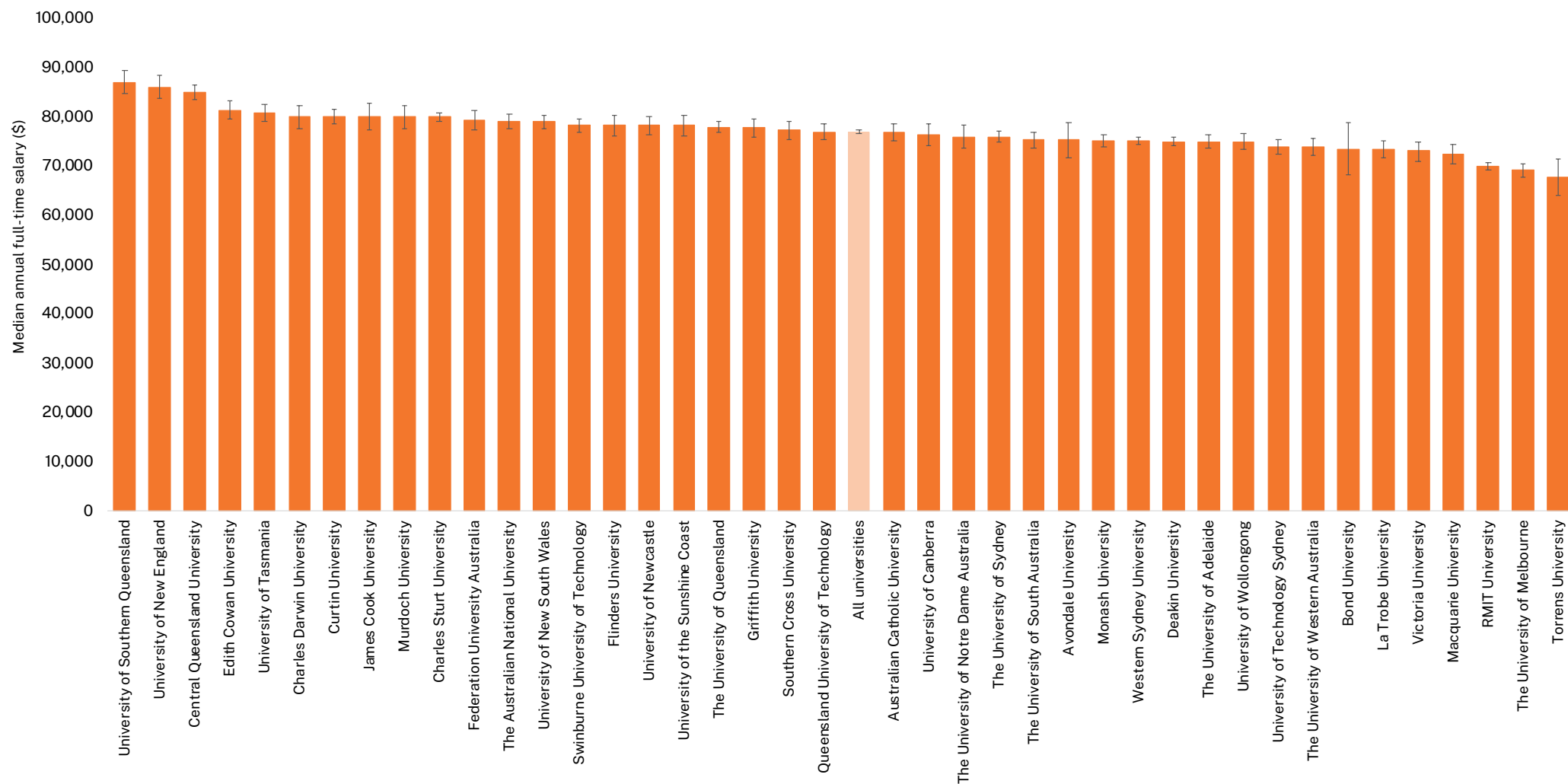


Figure 25 / Undergraduate full-time employment rate by university, 2025 (% of those available for full-time work, with 90 per cent confidence intervals)



* Only institutions with sufficient data (i.e. n≥25) are presented in this figure. For the complete table, refer to worksheet LF_UG_UNI_1Y_INST_CI in the 2025 GOS National Tables on the QILT website.

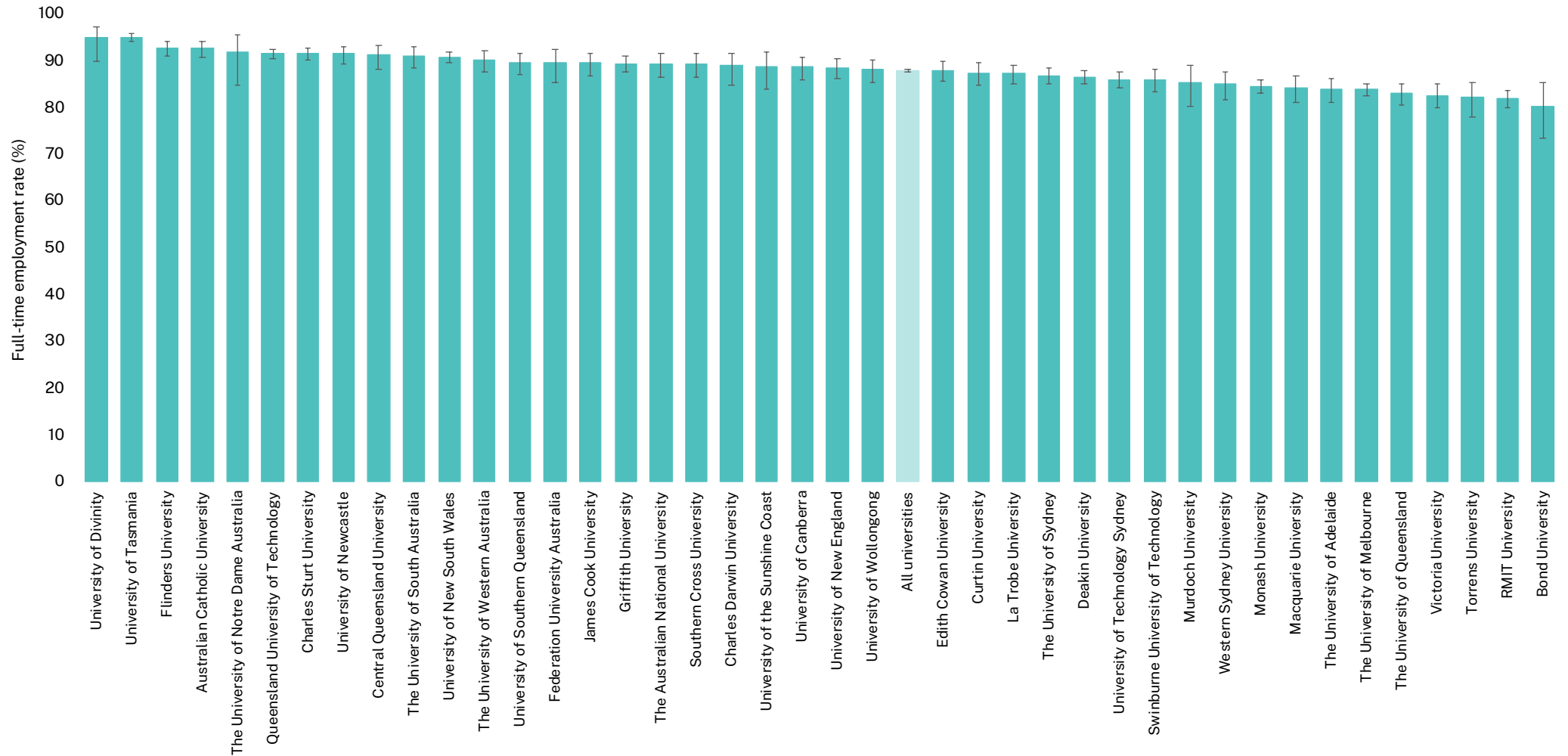
Figure 26 / Undergraduate median annual full-time salary (\$) by university, 2025 (with 90 per cent confidence intervals)



* Only institutions with sufficient data (i.e. n≥25) are presented in this figure. For the complete table, refer to worksheet LF_UG_UNI_1Y_INST_CI in the 2025 GOS National Tables on the QILT website.

There was less variation at the postgraduate coursework level, where full-time employment rates varied from 95.1 per cent at the University of Divinity and University of Tasmania to 80.4 per cent at Bond University (Figure 27).

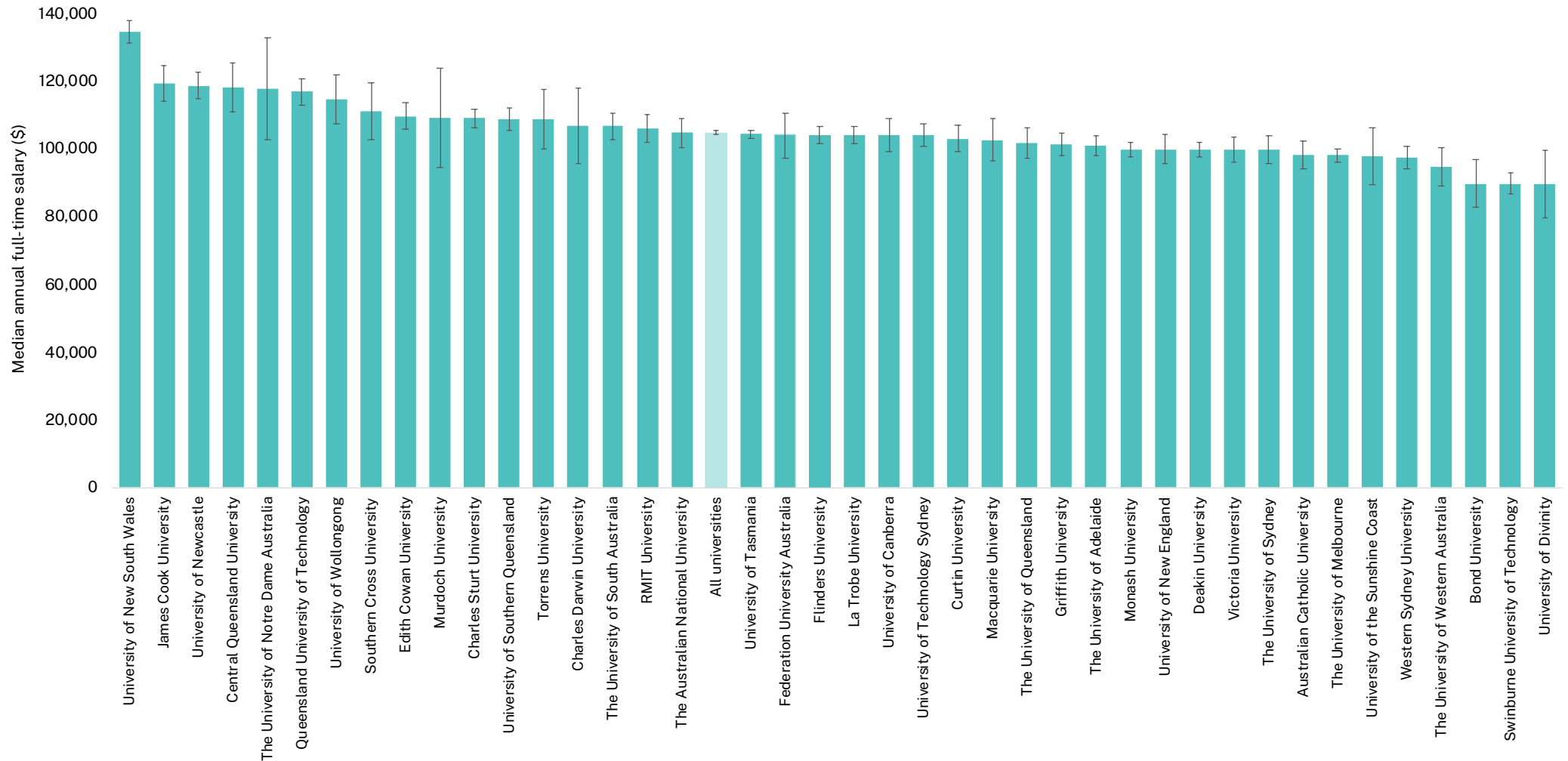
Figure 27 / Postgraduate coursework full-time employment rate by university, 2025 (% of those available for full-time work, with 90 per cent confidence intervals)



* Only institutions with sufficient data (i.e. n≥25) are presented in this figure. For the complete table, refer to worksheet LF_PGC_UNI_1Y_INST_CI in the 2025 GOS National Tables on the QILT website.

Postgraduate coursework median annual full-time salaries ranged from \$135,000 for University of New South Wales graduates to \$90,000 for those from Bond University, Swinburne University of Technology and University of Divinity (Figure 28). However, the size, location, student profile and course offerings at these universities differ greatly and should be considered when interpreting results.

Figure 28 / Postgraduate coursework median annual full-time salary (\$) by university, 2025 (with 90 per cent confidence intervals)



* Only institutions with sufficient data (i.e. n≥25) are presented in this figure. For the complete table, refer to worksheet LF_PGC_UNI_1Y_INST_CI in the 2025 GOS National Tables on the QILT website.

NUHEIs

Table 7 shows the full-time employment rates and median annual full-time salaries for undergraduates and postgraduate coursework graduates of NUHEIs. The same caveats about interpreting labour market outcomes at the institution level apply. This is even more important among NUHEIs because of the greater specialisation in course offerings by level of education and study area than among universities.

As indicated earlier, the number of students enrolled in individual NUHEIs tends to be much smaller than at universities, therefore data for individual NUHEIs has been pooled across the 2023, 2024 and 2025 surveys to improve its robustness and validity, as presented on the [ComparED website](#).

Consequently, these results for NUHEIs are not directly comparable with those presented for universities and they are less sensitive to changes in labour market conditions due to being aggregated over a 3-year period.

Table 7 / Full-time employment rate (%) and median annual full-time salary (\$) by study level and NUHEI, pooled 2023–25 (with 90 per cent confidence intervals)

Non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs)	Undergraduate		Postgraduate coursework	
	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)
ACAP University College	72.6 (67.5, 77.1)	76,300 (72,100, 80,500)	73.9 (70.2, 77.2)	93,500 (88,600, 98,400)
Academy of Interactive Technology	60.6 (54.7, 66.2)	70,000 (65,000, 75,000)		
Alphacrucis University College	80.0 (74.5, 84.5)	72,000 (67,500, 76,500)	89.4 (83.9, 93.0)	92,700 (81,600, 103,700)
Australasian College of Health and Wellness	75.0 (67.8, 80.9)	71,300 (67,700, 75,000)		
Australian College of Nursing			95.9 (94.2, 97.1)	98,700 (95,700, 101,800)
Australian Institute of Business			93.9 (92.7, 94.8)	130,000 (126,800, 133,200)
Australian Institute of Management Education & Training			94.2 (92.8, 95.2)	138,700 (133,200, 144,200)
Australian University College of Divinity	72.1 (60.1, 81.5)	73,100 (56,500, 89,600)	96.4 (91.4, 98.5)	100,000 (87,800, 112,200)
Australian University of Theology*	81.4 (75.5, 86.0)	68,400 (61,100, 75,700)	91.0 (88.3, 93.0)	80,900 (76,300, 85,400)
Box Hill Institute	51.2 (40.0, 62.3)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand			98.1 (97.1, 98.7)	90,000 (88,100, 91,900)
Chisholm Institute	n/a	n/a	90.5 (81.5, 94.6)	98,400 (90,300, 106,400)

Table 7 / Full-time employment rate (%) and median annual full-time salary (\$) by study level and NUHEI, pooled 2023–25 (with 90 per cent confidence intervals)

(continued)

Non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs)	Undergraduate		Postgraduate coursework	
	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)
Christian Heritage College	81.1 (69.1, 88.8)	n/a	96.4 (89.9, 98.5)	90,700 (79,100, 102,300)
Collarts (Australian College of the Arts)	44.9 (39.1, 50.8)	59,200 (54,600, 63,800)	n/a	n/a
Endeavour College of Natural Health	70.8 (65.8, 75.3)	71,000 (64,600, 77,300)		
Engineering Institute of Technology	n/a	n/a	96.2 (89.9, 98.0)	120,000 (102,900, 137,100)
Excelsia University College	n/a	n/a	89.7 (79.8, 94.5)	95,100 (75,500, 114,600)
Gestalt Therapy Brisbane			81.5 (67.8, 89.5)	n/a
Governance Institute of Australia			93.9 (89.7, 96.5)	173,000 (152,600, 193,400)
HEPCO The Tax Institute Higher Education ^a			100.0	125,500 (112,600, 138,400)
Health Education & Training Institute			94.9 (89.2, 96.7)	103,900 (97,500, 110,400)
Holmesglen Institute	77.3 (68.3, 84.1)	68,900 (63,500, 74,200)		
ISN Psychology	64.7 (51.7, 75.5)	n/a	79.6 (69.3, 86.7)	90,000 (85,600, 94,400)
Ikon Institute of Australia	52.8 (40.4, 64.7)	n/a		
Institute of Health & Management			61.3 (51.5, 69.3)	n/a
International College of Management, Sydney	80.4 (73.3, 85.8)	60,000 (56,300, 63,700)	n/a	n/a
Kaplan Business School	n/a	n/a	92.6 (85.3, 95.8)	107,700 (91,100, 124,300)
Kaplan Professional			97.2 (96.1, 97.9)	109,000 (104,400, 113,600)
LCI Melbourne	51.7 (44.2, 59.0)	n/a		

Table 7 / Full-time employment rate (%) and median annual full-time salary (\$) by study level and NUHEI, pooled 2023–25 (with 90 per cent confidence intervals)

(continued)

Non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs)	Undergraduate		Postgraduate coursework	
	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)
Leo Cussen Centre for Law			75.1 (71.1, 78.6)	78,000 (75,000, 81,000)
Marcus Oldham College	92.9 (88.7, 95.1)	78,300 (74,900, 81,600)	n/a	n/a
Melbourne Polytechnic	39.4 (28.0, 52.4)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Moore Theological College	89.9 (84.0, 93.1)	72,000 (66,800, 77,200)	n/a	n/a
Morling College			78.6 (64.5, 87.6)	n/a
National Art School	40.0 (28.6, 52.8)	n/a	n/a	n/a
SAE University College	43.8 (40.2, 47.4)	60,000 (56,100, 63,900)	n/a	n/a
TAFE NSW	67.5 (61.8, 72.6)	77,500 (71,200, 83,800)	n/a	n/a
TAFE Queensland	91.9 (82.3, 95.8)	70,000 (64,900, 75,100)		
Tabor College of Higher Education	74.1 (64.9, 81.2)	76,300 (71,600, 81,000)	78.2 (68.7, 85.0)	80,300 (73,200, 87,300)
The Australian College of Physical Education	66.7 (56.5, 75.3)	n/a	n/a	n/a
The Australian Institute of Music	56.3 (47.8, 64.4)	n/a	n/a	n/a
The Cairnmillar Institute			86.2 (81.4, 89.7)	105,000 (96,300, 113,700)
The College of Law			92.5 (91.7, 93.2)	85,000 (84,500, 85,500)
The Institute of Creative Arts and Technology	59.3 (49.1, 68.6)	n/a		
The Institute of Internal Auditors - Australia			87.7 (78.6, 93.4)	126,500 (111,600, 141,400)
The MIECAT Institute			77.8 (63.7, 86.8)	n/a

Table 7 / Full-time employment rate (%) and median annual full-time salary (\$) by study level and NUHEI, pooled 2023–25 (with 90 per cent confidence intervals)

Non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs)	Undergraduate		Postgraduate coursework	
	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)	Full-time employment (%)	Median annual full-time salary (\$)
Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia	45.4 (38.3, 52.7)	62,000 (58,000, 66,000)		
William Angliss Institute	58.1 (45.6, 69.2)	n/a	n/a	n/a
All NUHEIs	64.9 (63.5, 66.2)	70,000 (68,700, 71,300)	91.9 (91.4, 92.3)	97,000 (95,400, 98,600)
Standard deviation	21.2	17,500	21.2	27,300

Note: A blank cell indicates there is no data for that cell and n/a indicates a suppressed value (n<25). Only institutions with sufficient data (i.e. n≥25) for full-time employment or median annual salary are presented in this table. Median salary figures only include data for graduates working in Australia.

* In December 2024, the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) changed the provider category in which the Australian University of Theology was registered to Australian University. Prior to this, the institution was known as the Australian College of Theology and was classified as a NUHEI. As data collection for the 2025 GOS commenced prior to the Australian University of Theology changing institution status, it is reported as a NUHEI in the 2025 GOS National Report.

^ Estimates and confidence intervals become unreliable for very small sample sizes and for proportions close to 0 per cent and 100 per cent. Such occurrences are flagged and confidence intervals are not shown. Caution should be exercised when reporting and comparing proportions for these cases.

3. Graduate course experience

3.1 Undergraduate and postgraduate coursework satisfaction

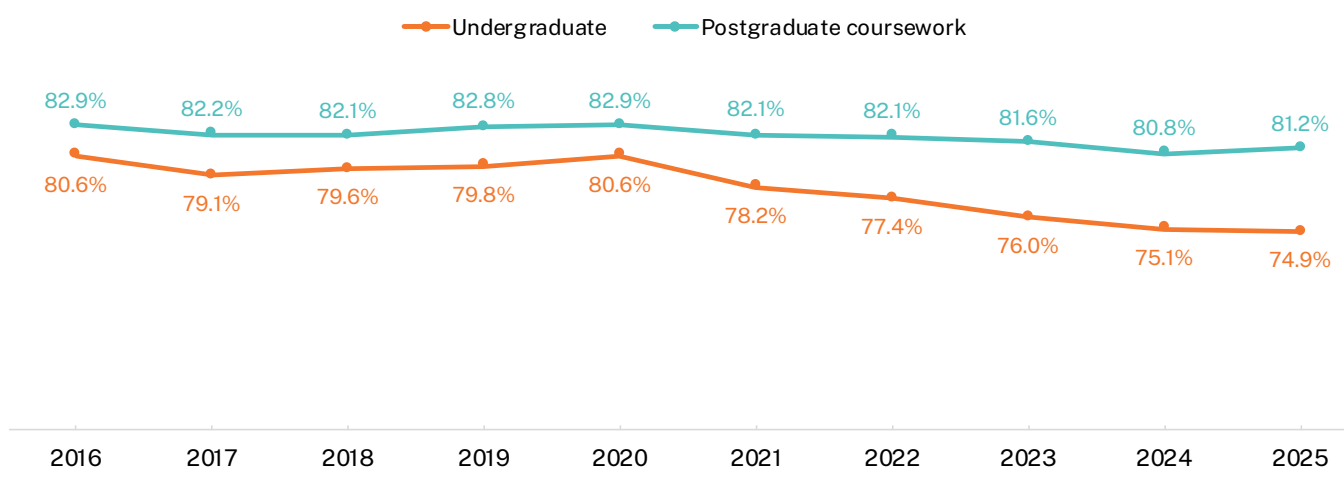
Undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduates were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the quality of their completed course, on a five-point scale, 4 to 6 months after course completion.

Domestic undergraduate overall course satisfaction ratings were relatively steady from 2016 to 2020 (Figure 29). However, since 2020, undergraduate ratings have declined year-on-year, from a top of 80.6 per cent positive in 2020 to the current low of 74.9 per cent positive in 2025.

Postgraduate coursework graduates continued to rate overall satisfaction with their course more highly than undergraduates in 2025. However, postgraduate coursework ratings have remained comparatively steady since a slight decline in 2021.

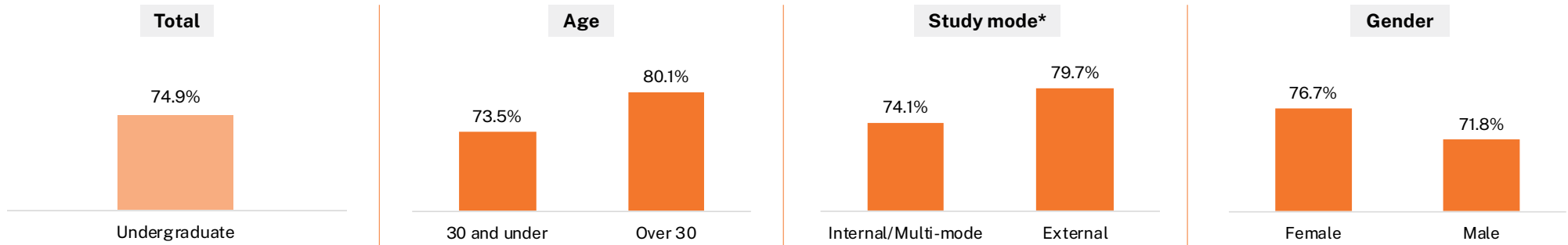
A range of factors, including labour market and further study outcomes, demographic characteristics and study area profile all influence graduate ratings of their overall course satisfaction.

Figure 29 / Domestic graduate overall course satisfaction by study level, 2016–25 (% positive rating)



Key domestic undergraduate characteristics influencing overall course satisfaction ratings included age, study mode and gender (Figure 30). The largest difference existed by age, with 80.1 per cent of undergraduates aged 30 and over rating their overall course satisfaction positively compared to 73.5 per cent of those aged 30 and under. In addition, females and graduates who studied externally rated their overall course satisfaction more highly than their counterparts.

Figure 30 / Domestic undergraduate overall course satisfaction by select demographic sub-groups, 2025 (% positive rating)

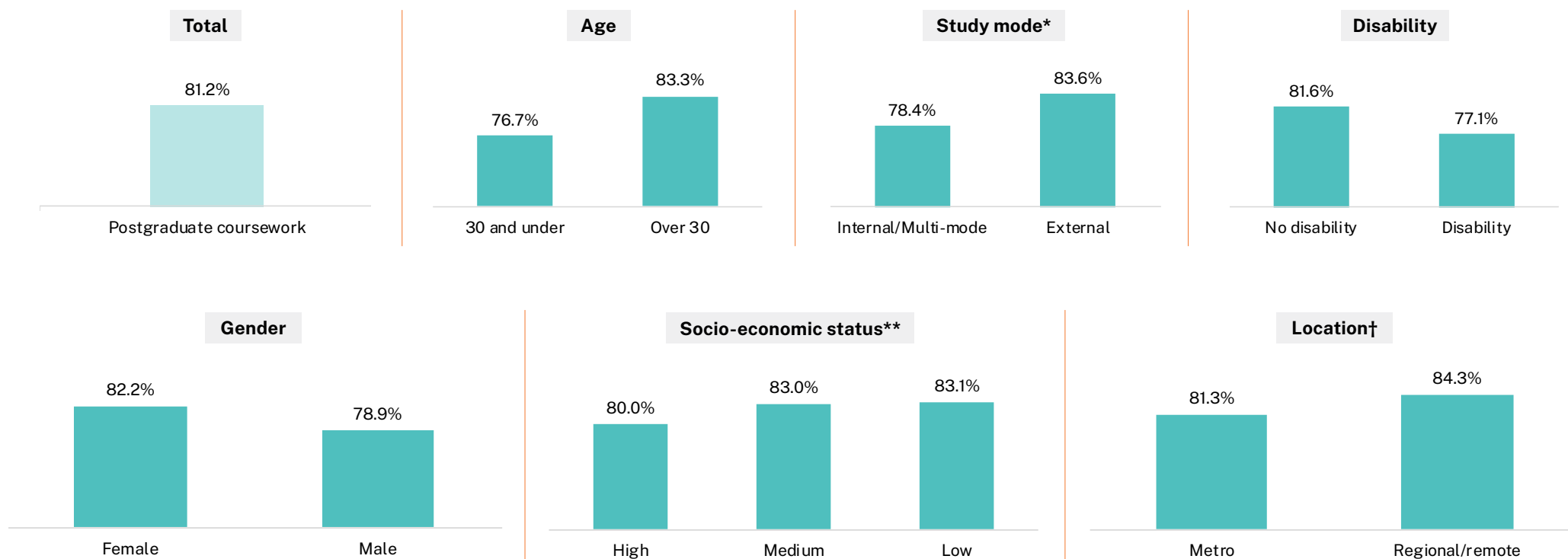


Note: Only select demographic sub-groups are presented in this figure. For the complete table of undergraduate demographic ratings, refer to worksheet SAT_UG_ALL_2Y_DOM_DG in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

* Internal mode of attendance is where (i) the study is undertaken through attendance at the higher education provider on a regular basis, or (ii) for higher degree unit enrolments, where regular attendance is not required but the student attends the higher education provider on an agreed schedule for the purposes of supervision and/or instruction. External mode of attendance is where lesson materials, assignments, etc are delivered to the student, and any associated attendance at the institution is of an incidental, irregular, special or voluntary nature. Mixed mode of attendance is where study is undertaken partially on an internal mode of attendance and partially on an external mode of attendance.

Among postgraduate coursework graduates, there were significant differences in overall course satisfaction among most demographic sub-groups examined. Like undergraduates, the largest difference in ratings at the postgraduate coursework level was between those aged 30 and under and those over 30 (76.7 per cent and 83.3 per cent respectively). Study mode and gender were also key characteristics influencing graduate ratings at the postgraduate coursework level. However, unlike at the undergraduate level, there were bigger differences in course satisfaction ratings by disability, socio-economic status and location (Figure 31).

Figure 31 / Domestic postgraduate coursework overall course satisfaction by select demographic sub-groups, 2025 (% positive rating)



Note: Only select demographic sub-groups are presented in this figure. For the complete table of postgraduate coursework demographic ratings, refer to worksheet SAT_PGC_ALL_2Y_DOM_DG in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

* Internal mode of attendance is where (i) the study is undertaken through attendance at the higher education provider on a regular basis, or (ii) for higher degree unit enrolments, where regular attendance is not required but the student attends the higher education provider on an agreed schedule for the purposes of supervision and/or instruction. External mode of attendance is where lesson materials, assignments, etc. are delivered to the student, and any associated attendance at the institution is of an incidental, irregular, special or voluntary nature. Mixed mode of attendance is where study is undertaken partially on an internal mode of attendance and partially on an external mode of attendance.

** Socio-economic status (SES) and location measures are area-based, associated with students' first permanent home address submitted when they commenced with their provider, as collected through the TCSI system. The SES is based on the ABS SEIFA Index of Education and Occupation.

† Location measures are calculated according to the proportion of metro and regional/remote categories.

The relationship between key demographic characteristics and propensity to report higher overall course satisfaction may help to explain, in part, the generally higher levels of satisfaction among postgraduate coursework graduates. For example, 67.8 per cent of postgraduate coursework graduates were aged over 30 in 2025, compared to only

22.5 per cent of undergraduates. Similarly, 58.5 per cent of postgraduate coursework graduates undertook studies externally, compared to 19.5 per cent of undergraduates.

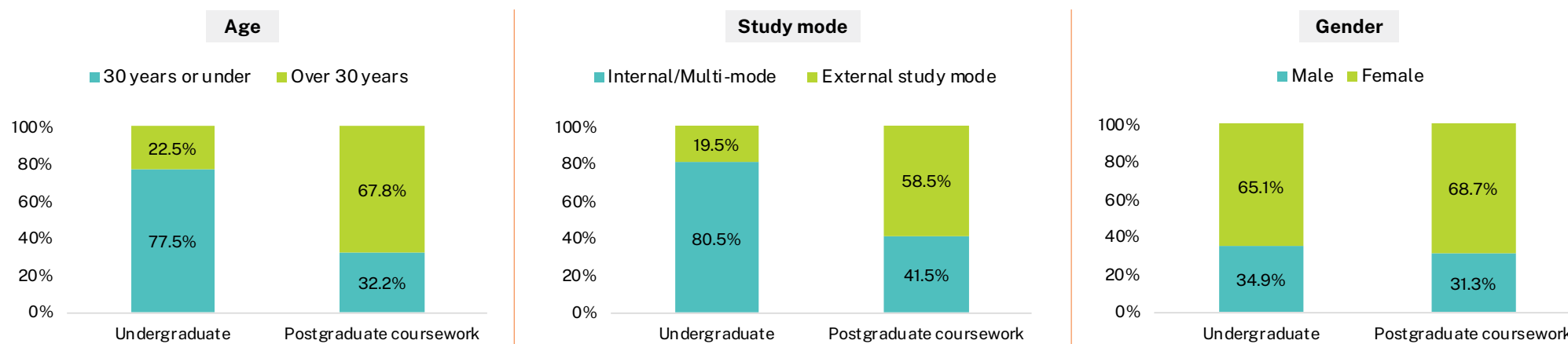
At both levels of study, females, graduates aged over 30, and those who studied externally rated their overall course satisfaction higher than their counterparts.

These findings are consistent with findings from the QILT Student Experience Survey (SES), which shows current students from the same demographic sub-groups also rate their 'Overall Educational Experience' more positively than their counterparts.²⁶

Undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduate profile differences

(based on responses to the 2025 GOS)

The postgraduate coursework graduate cohort had higher proportions of graduates aged over 30, graduates who studied externally and females – the top 3 characteristics associated with higher ratings of overall course satisfaction.



Labour market characteristics also appear to be associated with domestic undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduate ratings of overall course satisfaction. **Figure 32** shows at both levels of study, graduates who were employed (including those

working full-time or part-time hours) or not in the labour force 4 to 6 months after course completion, reported higher course satisfaction than graduates who were unemployed at the time of the survey. Many graduates, particularly at the undergraduate level, were not in the

labour force due to studying or returning to studies (see [Labour force participation](#)). Among those who were employed, graduates employed part-time and were satisfied with their hours reported the highest overall course satisfaction at both levels of study.

²⁶ See results from the 2024 Student Experience Survey National Report for further information regarding demographic sub-group ratings of Overall Educational Experience and other metrics. [Student Experience Survey](#)

Further, graduates who reported they were in further study (either full-time or part-time), also reported higher course satisfaction than those not in further study. These findings indicate that graduates with a 'successful' labour market outcome, or graduates working part-time or pursuing further study by choice reflect on their course more positively than graduates who are unemployed, or working part-time but would prefer more hours.

Figure 32 / Domestic undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduate overall course satisfaction by labour force and further study status, 2025 (% positive rating)

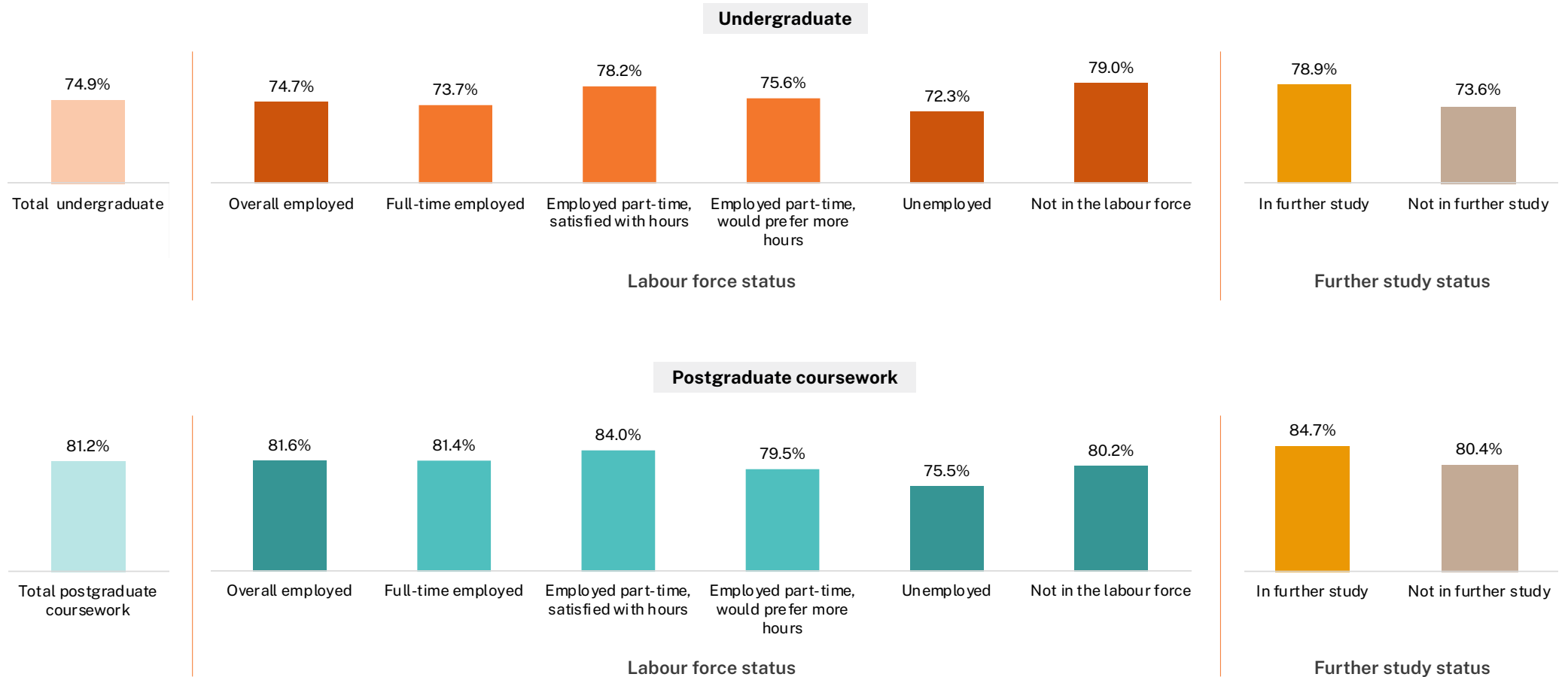


Table 8 shows ratings of overall course satisfaction by study area for undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduates. In 2025, overall course satisfaction among undergraduates ranged from 84.5 per cent for Agriculture and environmental studies to 67.4 per cent for Computing and information systems.

For postgraduate coursework graduates, overall satisfaction ranged from 86.1 per cent in Humanities, culture and social sciences to 63.2 per cent in Dentistry; a difference of 22.9 percentage points.

The notable variation in overall course satisfaction across study areas for both undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduates indicates that there is scope for improvement in the educational experience provided to students, particularly in some study areas.

Table 8 / Overall course satisfaction by study level and study area, 2025 (% positive rating)

Study area	Undergraduate	Postgraduate coursework
Agriculture and environmental studies	84.5	85.8
Architecture and built environment	69.4	71.8
Business and management	69.5	83.8
Communications	75.0	84.1
Computing and information systems	67.4	72.6
Creative arts	70.6	72.8
Dentistry	68.7	63.2
Engineering	68.6	77.3
Health services and support	76.5	84.3
Humanities, culture and social sciences	79.6	86.1
Law and paralegal studies	78.6	75.0
Medicine	83.7	76.0
Nursing	71.4	82.1
Pharmacy	79.4	82.4
Psychology	78.8	82.4
Rehabilitation	78.1	73.9
Science and mathematics	80.7	80.4
Social work	79.8	82.5
Teacher education	72.6	81.1

Table 8 / Overall course satisfaction by study level and study area, 2025 (% positive rating)

(continued)

Study area	Undergraduate	Postgraduate coursework
Tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation	79.6	n/a
Veterinary science	77.4	64.6
All study areas	74.9	81.2
Standard deviation	6.2	4.9

Note: A cell with n/a indicates a suppressed value (n<25).

3.2 Postgraduate research experience

The Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ) invites postgraduate research graduates to express their level of satisfaction with various aspects of their course, 4 to 6 months after course completion. The PREQ reports on overall satisfaction as well as other items, grouped thematically under Supervision, Intellectual Climate, Skills Development, Infrastructure, Thesis Examination, Goals and Expectations, and Industry and External Engagement.²⁷

Most aspects of the postgraduate research course experience remained stable from 2024 to 2025 (**Figure 33**). Notably, positive ratings of Infrastructure did increase from 67.7 per cent in 2024 to 70.2 per cent in 2025.

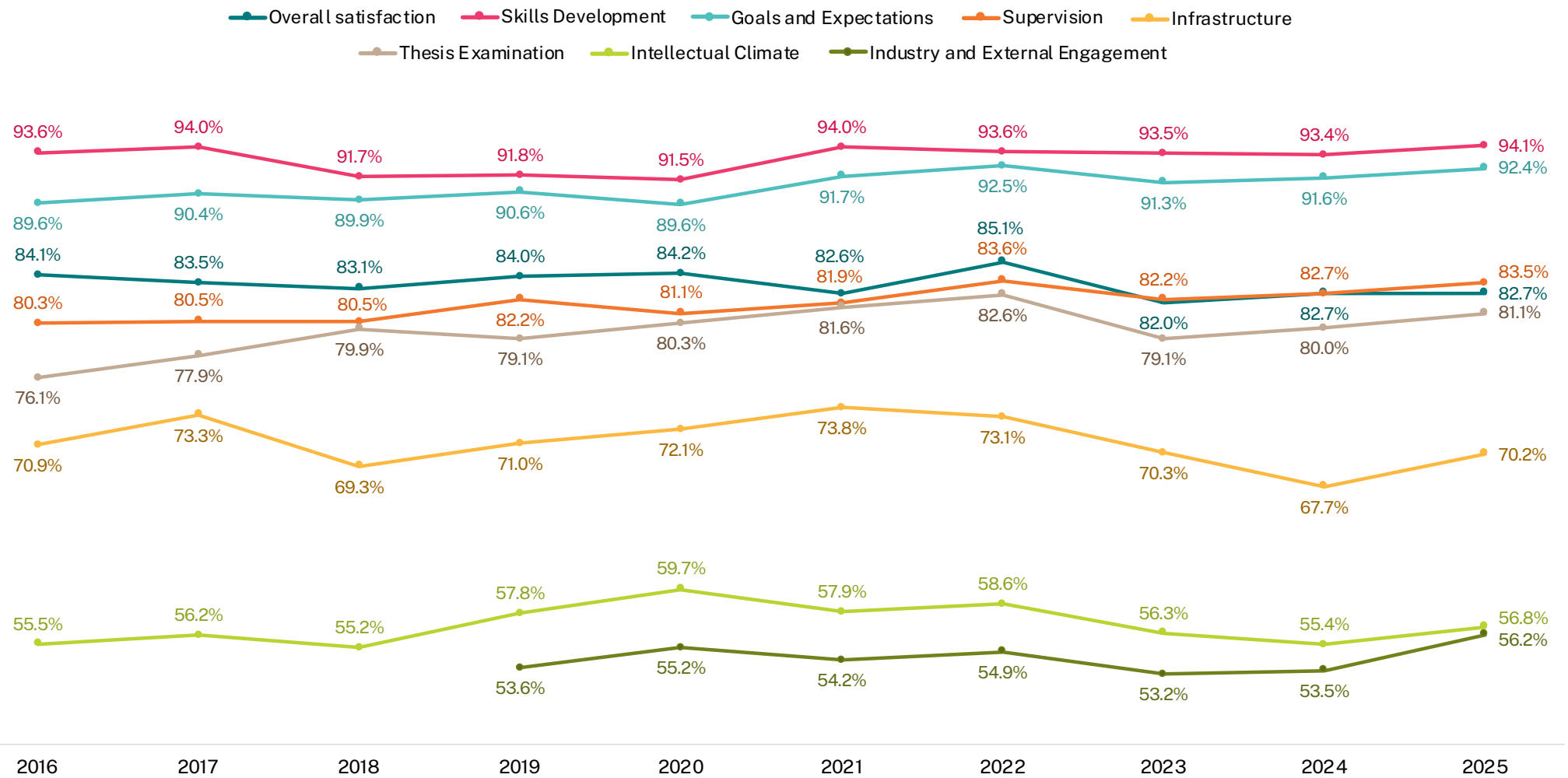
Graduates continued to rate Skills Development and Goals and Expectations highly at 94.1 per cent and 92.4 per cent positive.

Intellectual Climate and Industry and External Engagement continue to be the lowest rated aspects of the postgraduate research experience with 56.8 per cent and 56.2 per cent respectively rating this positively in 2025.

Graduate ratings of their overall satisfaction with the course have remained flat for the third consecutive year, after peaking at 85.1 per cent positive in 2022.

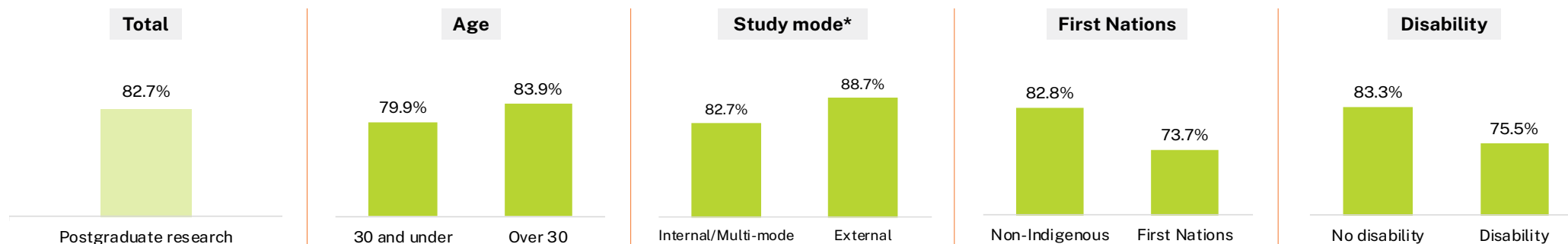
²⁷ See the [GOS questionnaire](#) on the QILT website for the 34 items included in the PREQ.

Figure 33 / Domestic postgraduate research course experience, 2016–25 (% positive rating)



Like graduates who completed undergraduate and postgraduate coursework qualifications, postgraduate research graduates who were aged over 30 and those who studied externally rated their overall satisfaction with their course higher than their counterparts. Notably, graduates with disability and First Nations graduates rated their overall satisfaction lower than their counterparts and below the average positive rating of 82.7 per cent.

Figure 34 / Domestic postgraduate research overall course satisfaction by select demographic sub-groups, 2025 (% positive rating)

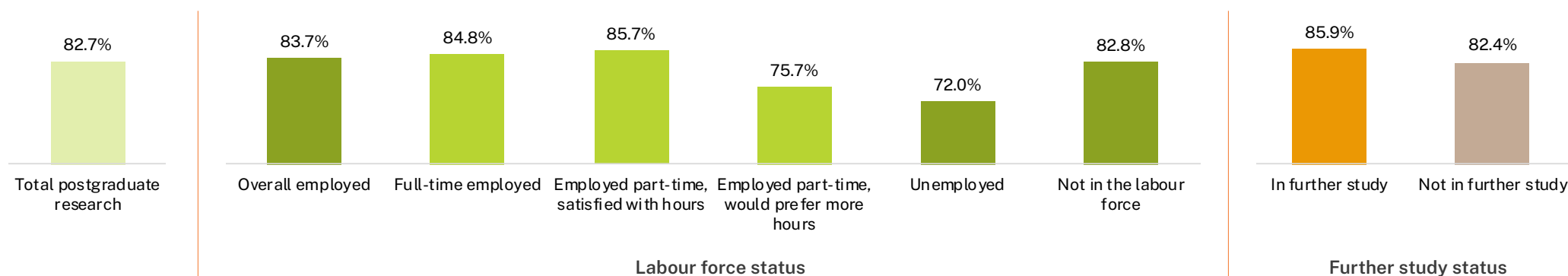


Note: Only select demographic sub-groups are presented in this figure. For the complete table of postgraduate research demographic ratings, refer to worksheet SAT_PGR_ALL_2Y_DOM_LF_FTS in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

* Internal mode of attendance is where (i) the study is undertaken through attendance at the higher education provider on a regular basis, or (ii) for higher degree unit enrolments, where regular attendance is not required but the student attends the higher education provider on an agreed schedule for the purposes of supervision and/or instruction. External mode of attendance is where lesson materials, assignments, etc. are delivered to the student, and any associated attendance at the institution is of an incidental, irregular, special or voluntary nature. Mixed mode of attendance is where study is undertaken partially on an internal mode of attendance and partially on an external mode of attendance.

Postgraduate research graduates who were employed 4 to 6 months after course completion rated their overall satisfaction higher than graduates who were unemployed: 83.7 per cent and 72.0 per cent respectively. Graduates not in the labour force also rated their overall satisfaction with their course highly. Just under 40 per cent of postgraduate research graduates not in the labour force in 2025 reported that they were either 'studying or returning to studies' (16.4 per cent) or 'retired' (22.2 per cent) (see [Labour force participation](#)). These findings are consistent with findings for undergraduates and postgraduate coursework graduates, and suggest that a graduate's status in terms of employment and further study, likely have some influence in how they rate their satisfaction with their course 4 to 6 months after course completion.

Figure 35 / Domestic postgraduate research graduate overall course satisfaction by labour force and further study status, 2025 (% positive rating)



Changes to labour force classification

The Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) and Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal (GOS-L) collect information about higher education graduates' employment and further study outcomes, as well as other information related to skills utilisation and course experience.

Key labour force indicators used in GOS and GOS-L reporting are informed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods.²⁸ Some variation in key indicator definitions has existed due to survey design differences. To enable greater alignment with the ABS labour force framework, a number of enhancements were made to the 2025 GOS and 2025 GOS-L instruments.

Improved alignment with ABS definitions of key labour force indicators used in GOS and GOS-L reporting allows for greater comparability with nationally reported figures and further enriches the data collected in the GOS and GOS-L, the only national sources of higher education graduate outcomes in Australia. However, while improvements made to key indicators in 2025 have strengthened these measures and allowed for greater comparability with national figures reported by the ABS, these changes do have implications on the comparability with historical data.

This appendix details the changes made to the questionnaire and key indicator definitions, and the impact this has on time series data.

A1.1 Changes made to the survey instrument

The following changes were made to the labour force module in the 2025 GOS and GOS-L to improve the comparability of key labour force indicators with ABS statistics, and to provide further insight into why graduates may be unemployed or not available for employment.

- Modification to an existing question and the addition of new questions to identify graduates who are currently away from work but are considered to have a formal job attachment.
- Modification to existing questions and addition of new questions to align the GOS/GOS-L definition of unemployment with the ABS Labour Force Survey and allow for identification of graduates marginally attached to the labour force.
- New questions for full-time workers, whose actual hours were fewer than their usual hours, to identify the reason for the reduced hours and availability to work additional hours.
- For part-time workers preferring more hours, expand the 'availability to work' question to cover the four weeks following the survey, not just the reference week.
- The addition of a set of questions related to reasons graduates are unemployed or not in the labour force (i.e. not available for employment).

²⁸ [Concepts and sources | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

Away from work

The following questions relate to graduates who were away from work in the reference week. The expanded detail collected in this set of questions enables the identification of graduates who were away from work at the time of the survey but are considered to have a formal job attachment.

Table 9 / **Away from work questions**

Item	Question stem	Response options
AWAYWORK (modified in 2025)	Did you have a job, business or farm that you were away from because of holidays, sickness or any other reason?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes – away from work as a standard work or shift arrangement 2. Yes – away from a business that I own 3. Yes – on strike, locked out or in an industrial dispute 4. Yes, holidays, sickness, or other reason 5. No 6. Permanently not intending to work
AWAYLONG (new in 2025)	Up until the end of last week, how long had you been away from work?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less than 4 weeks 2. 1 to 3 months 3. More than 3 months
AWAYPAID (new in 2025)	Were you paid, or will you be paid, for any part of the last 4 weeks ?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, I received workers' compensation and expect to return to employer 2. Yes, I received workers' compensation and do not expect to return to employer 3. Yes, I received other form of payment from employer 4. No

Unemployment/marginal attachment to the labour force

This set of questions allow for identification of graduates who were unemployed but in the labour force versus those not in the labour force but marginally attached.

Changes to existing questions (LOOKFTWK and LOOKPTWK) enable identification of graduates who either actively or passively looked for work. Passive job seekers not employed at the time of the survey can now be excluded from the labour force, aligning with the ABS definition.

Table 10 / Attachment to labour force questions

Item	Question stem	Response options
LOOKFTWK (modified in 2025)	<p>At any time during the last 4 weeks have you been looking for full-time work?</p> <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Actively looking for work’ includes written, telephoned or applied to an employer; had an interview with an employer for work; answered an advertisement for a job; checked or registered with an employment agency; taken steps to purchase or start your own business; advertised or tendered for work; and contacted friends or relatives to find work. ‘Passively looking for work’ includes only looking in newspapers, the internet, or notice boards, and not taking any specific action to obtain work from these sources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, I have been actively looking for full-time work Yes, I have been passively looking for full-time work No Permanently not intending to work
LOOKPTWK (modified in 2025)	<p>Have you been looking for part-time work at any time during the last 4 weeks?</p> <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Actively looked for work’ includes written, telephoned or applied to an employer; had an interview with an employer for work; answered an advertisement for a job; checked or registered with an employment agency; taken steps to purchase or start your own business; advertised or tendered for work; and contacted friends or relatives to find work. ‘Passively looked for work’ includes only looking in newspapers, the internet, or notice boards, and not taking any specific action to obtain work from these sources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, I have been actively looking for part-time work Yes, I have been passively looking for part-time work No Permanently not intending to work

Item	Question stem	Response options
WAITWORKFU (new in 2025)	<p>You mentioned that you didn't look for work during the last 4 weeks. Was that because you were waiting to start work you had already obtained?</p> <p>Please note 'work you had already obtained' refers to new types of work that you have acquired but not yet commenced. This includes waiting for a graduate role to commence.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No
WANTJOB (new in 2025)	<p>Even though you are not currently working, would you like a paid job of any kind at the moment?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, I could start within 4 weeks if work was available 2. Yes, but I could not start within 4 weeks if work was available 3. No
STARTWKOB (new in 2025)	<p>Will you be starting that work in the next 4 weeks?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No
STARTNOWK (new in 2025)	<p>Could you have started last week if that work had been available?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No

Reasons for working less than usual hours and future availability

New questions to understand the reasons graduates worked less than their usual hours in the reference week, and to understand whether those who would prefer to work more hours would be available in the next 4 weeks.

Table 11 / **Reasons for working less than usual hours and future availability questions**

Item	Question stem	Response options
RSACTLHRS (modified in 2025)	<p>What was the main reason you worked less than your usual hours last week?</p> <p><i>Please select only one answer.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual leave/holidays/flextime/long service leave 2. Own illness or injury/sick leave 3. Standard work arrangements/shift work 4. Personal reasons/study/caring for sick/injured family 5. Maternity leave or paternity leave 6. Parental leave 7. No work/not enough work available 8. Stood down 9. Bad weather/plant breakdown 10. On strike/locked out/industrial dispute 11. Seasonal work/end of season 12. Began/left/lost job during the week 13. Other (Please specify)
AVFMHRS (new in 2025)	<p>In the next 4 weeks, would you be available to work more hours than you usually work?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No

Reasons for unemployment or non-participation in the labour force

The following questions provide insight into why graduates are unemployed or not available for employment. Reasons include both temporary and permanent reasons, as well as labour market specific reasons.

Table 12 / Reasons for unemployment or not available for employment

Item	Question stem	Response options
RSNILF1 (new in 2025)	<p>You mentioned that you are not currently working. What is the main reason you are not currently working?</p> <p><i>Please select only one answer.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No jobs or vacancies in local area 2. No jobs in my line of work 3. No jobs with suitable conditions/arrangements/hours in my local area 4. Not enough work experience/skills/training 5. Employers unwilling to hire me due to ill health or disability 6. Considered to be too old by employers 7. Retired 8. Difficulties with language or ethnic background 9. Waiting for accreditation/registration 10. Long-term health condition or disability 11. Short-term illness or injury 12. Caring for a person with a health condition or disability 13. Caring for children 14. Pregnancy 15. Performing home duties 16. Studying or returning to studies 17. On a temporary holiday or leisure activity 18. Lifestyle choice 19. Visa restrictions 20. Waiting for permanent residency 21. Other (Please specify)

Table 12 / Reasons for unemployment or not available for employment

(continued)

Item	Question stem	Response options
RSNILF2 (new in 2025)	<p>You mentioned that you are not intending to work permanently. What is the main reason you are not intending to work?</p> <p><i>Please select only one answer.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No jobs or vacancies in local area 2. No jobs in my line of work 3. No jobs with suitable conditions / arrangements / hours in my local area 4. Employers unwilling to hire me due to ill health or disability 5. Retired 6. Difficulties with language or ethnic background 7. Considered to be too old by employers 8. Long-term health condition or disability 9. Caring for a person with a health condition or disability 10. Caring for children 11. Pregnancy 12. Performing home duties 13. Lifestyle choice 14. Visa restrictions 15. Other (Please specify)
RSNOTWRK (new in 2025)	<p>You mentioned that you are not currently working and you have been away from your job for 1 month or more. What is the main reason you are not currently working?</p> <p><i>Please select only one answer.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time off work 2. Own illness or injury 3. Personal reasons 4. Study 5. Caring for sick/injured family 6. Maternity leave or paternity leave 7. Parental leave 8. No work/not enough work available 9. Stood down 10. Bad weather/plant breakdown 11. Seasonal work/end of season 12. Other (Please specify)

A1.2 Impact on the 2025 GOS and 2025 GOS-L data

Changes to existing questions LOOKFTWK (looked for full-time work) and LOOKPTWK (looked for part-time work) (**Table 10**), which are used in establishing whether unemployed graduates are considered available for employment and therefore in the labour force, led to a change in response patterns relative to prior years.

Previously, respondents could answer 'yes' or 'no' when asked if they had looked for full-time/part-time work. In 2025, respondents could answer 'yes, actively', 'yes, passively', or 'no'. The total proportion responding 'yes' (either actively or passively) was markedly higher compared to previous years and the proportion answering 'no' decreased substantially. These findings indicated that respondents who may have previously been searching for work passively were previously answering either 'yes' or 'no'.

Focussing on active job seekers shows a marked decrease in the proportion of respondents 'looking for work'. As a result, the improved alignment with ABS definitions have led to changes to the labour force participation rate, and the full-time and overall employment rates presented in the GOS and GOS-L.

A1.2.1 Changes to key labour market indicator definitions

Labour force participation rate

The labour force participation rate is defined as the proportion of graduates who were available for employment out of the total number of respondents. 'Available for employment' (and 'available for full-time employment') is defined as graduates who were (full-time) employed, looking for (full-time) employment or waiting to start a job in the week prior to the survey.

As discussed earlier, respondents who answered that they were passively looking for (full-time/part-time) work were classed as 'not in the labour force' in 2025, if the other criteria for 'available for employment' were not met. This has reduced the number of respondents considered available for employment which has resulted in a decreased labour force participation rate in 2025.

'Available for full-time employment' and 'available for employment' in general are key variables used in the calculation of the full-time and overall employment rates, respectively, and thus have implications on these measures.

Full-time employment rate

Graduates are considered full-time employed if they were usually or actually in paid employment for at least 35 hours per week in the week before the survey.

The full-time employment rate is defined as graduates employed full-time, as a proportion of those available for full-time employment. Given the proportion available for full-time employment was reduced in 2025, expected declines in the full-time employment rate in 2025 (consistent with ABS data) were not observed. This has had a greater impact on the undergraduate rate due to the greater likelihood of undergraduates not being available for employment due to their higher propensity for pursuing further studies.

Overall employment rate

Graduates are considered employed if they were usually or actually in paid employment for one or more hours in the week before the survey.

The overall employment rate is defined as employed graduates, as a proportion of those available for employment. Changes to those considered 'available for employment' have had a similar impact on the overall employment rate as the effect on the full-time employment rate.

A1.3 Analysis of time series break

The Department of Education undertook analysis of the propensities of graduates to search for work, and their characteristics, at the aggregate study level for each of the domestic and international graduate cohorts, in the GOS and GOS-L separately. This analysis focussed on an econometric approach that leveraged data available through the ABS *Labour Force, Australia* to estimate the propensities of graduates to search for work had the previous methodology continued in 2025. This approach enabled the impact of the methodology change to be estimated in a way that reflected the underlying labour market conditions in 2025, noting these conditions may affect the propensity for graduates to pursue employment or further study.

- There is a strong counter-cyclical relationship between higher education enrolments and labour market conditions.
- When there is a rise in unemployment, individuals often choose to return to study or postpone entry into the workforce. For example, during the initial period of the pandemic (2020 and 2021), higher unemployment and the business restrictions in place at the time contributed to an increase in higher education enrolments.
- Conversely, when employment conditions are favourable (especially for young individuals) higher education enrolments tend to decline. This is demonstrated by the recent strong labour markets (2022-2024) contributing to a decline in higher education commencements as more potential enrolments chose to pursue immediate employment opportunities.

Only the propensities for those reporting that they were not in employment and looking for work, or not in full-time employment but available for full-time employment, needed to be assessed. Due to the way the labour force framework filters individuals into the three mutually exclusive groups of employed, unemployed, and not in the labour force, these were the only groups that were affected by the methodology change, as those considered employed were taken as reported.

- The specific groups that required analysis were:
 - Unemployed looking for full-time work (LFCLASS=5),
 - Unemployed looking for part-time work (LFCLASS=6), and
 - Available for full-time work (AVAILFT=1), via the subsets of:
 - Employed part-time, but available for full-time work,
 - Not employed, but available for full-time work (under the GOS and GOS-L this is the same group as LFCLASS=5), and
 - Employed full-time, and available for full-time work (these were unaffected by the change in methodology and were taken as reported).
- Those considered unemployed and waiting to start work (LFCLASS=7), were unaffected by the change in methodology and were taken as reported.
- Those considered not in the labour force (LFCLASS=8) were calculated as a balancing item based on estimated changes to LFCLASS=5 and LFCLASS=6.

Initial analysis was performed to support the identification of appropriate data from the *ABS Labour Force, Australia*. This included the assessment of graduate age profiles for each of the analysed labour force classifications to identify the key age groups, by study level for each of the domestic and international graduate cohorts, in the GOS and GOS-L separately. For international graduates in each study level, additional analysis was conducted that verified the majority of graduates in these labour force classifications remained in Australia, in both the GOS and GOS-L.

The estimates of propensities to search for work involved using predictors selected from the *ABS Labour Force, Australia* data that were consistent with each of the labour force classifications analysed²⁹, by study level, for each of the domestic and international graduate cohorts, in the GOS and GOS-L separately. These data were accessed through TableBuilder as well as select tables available through the *Labour Force, Australia* publication, including data on the flows into and out of employment (GM1) and data on labour force status by the level of highest educational attainment (LQ1). Data were selected to align to survey fieldwork periods for the GOS and GOS-L separately. Dummy variables were incorporated to reflect border closures and business restrictions in place during the pandemic.

Quality controls were used to ensure the estimates generated for each of the assessed labour force classifications were credible. This included validating each of the estimates against the expected range of results, specifically, a slightly higher count of respondents than the reported active job seekers, but notably less than the total count of those responding they were either actively or passively searching for work. The estimated proportional

breakdown of respondents by labour force classification were also compared to historical proportions.

The analysis generated estimated impacts of the methodology change by study level, for each of the domestic and international graduate cohorts, in the GOS and GOS-L separately (see **Table 13**).

A direction of change is shown for each impact. These directions indicate that labour force participation rates are relatively lower under the new methodology, while full-time and overall employment rates are relatively higher.

A1.4 Conclusion

The changes to the 2025 GOS and 2025 GOS-L instruments represent a step toward improved alignment with ABS labour force definitions. These changes did, however, impact comparability of key labour market indicators with prior years and are considered to be a break in the time series.

Analysis of differences in labour force participation rates, full-time employment rates, and overall employment rates between 2016–2024 and 2025 data should be approached with caution, as they partly reflect the change in methodology. Estimates of the impact of the change in methodology for each study level for domestic and international graduates have been provided to assist users with their interpretation.

²⁹ For example, the predictor used for the estimation of domestic undergraduates that were employed part-time, but available for full-time work in the GOS was ABS Labour Force data on individuals employed part-time, but preferred to work full-time, that were aged 20-29 years and had a bachelor degree as the highest level of educational attainment.

Table 13 / **Estimated impact of methodology change**

Study level	Indicator	Direction of change	GOS		GOS-L	
			Domestic	International	Domestic	International
Undergraduate	Labour force participation rate	Down	2.5-3.5 ppts	2.5-3.5 ppts	<1 ppt	1.5-2.5 ppts
	Full-time employment rate	Up	3.5-4.5 ppts	2.5-3.5 ppts	<1.5 ppts	1-2 ppts
	Overall employment rate	Up	2.5-3.5 ppts	2.5-3.5 ppts	<1 ppt	1.5-2.5 ppts
Postgraduate coursework	Labour force participation rate	Down	<1.5 ppts	<1 ppt	<1 ppt	<1.5 ppts
	Full-time employment rate	Up	<1.5 ppts	<1.5 ppts	<1 ppt	1-2 ppts
	Overall employment rate	Up	<1.5 ppts	<1 ppt	<1 ppt	<1.5 ppts
Postgraduate research	Labour force participation rate	Down	<1.5 ppts	<1 ppt	1.5-2.5 ppts	<1.5 ppts
	Full-time employment rate	Up	1.5-2.5 ppts	<1 ppt	1.5-2.5 ppts	<1 ppts
	Overall employment rate	Up	<1.5 ppts	<1 ppt	1.5-2.5 ppts	<1.5 ppts

Note: 'ppts' refers to percentage points, indicating the absolute change between two percentage values.

Appendix 2

Labour market and graduate satisfaction definitions

The 2025 GOS uses labour force indicator definitions informed by the Standards for Labour Force Statistics used by the ABS. Definitions for indicators used throughout this report are presented in **Table 14**.

Table 14 / **Indicator definitions**

Indicator/element	Definition
Available for employment [†]	Graduates who were employed, <i>actively</i> looking for employment or waiting to start a job in the week prior to the survey.
Available for full-time employment [†]	Graduates who were employed full-time or <i>actively</i> looking for full-time employment in the week prior to the survey. This includes those in part-time employment and looking for full-time work in the week prior to the survey.
Employed	Graduates who were usually or actually in paid employment for one or more hours in the week before the survey.
Employed full-time	Graduates who were usually or actually in paid employment for at least 35 hours per week in the week before the survey.
Employed part-time	Graduates who were usually or actually in paid employment for at least one hour but less than 35 hours in the week before the survey.
Full-time employment rate	Graduates employed full-time, as a proportion of those available for full-time work. Note that some graduates available for full-time work may be in part-time employment and looking for full-time work.
Further full-time study rate	Graduates who reported being in further full-time study, as a proportion of all graduates.
Labour force participation rate	Graduates available for employment, as a proportion of all graduates.
Median salary	The median annual salary of graduates employed full-time.
Overall course satisfaction indicator (Undergraduate and postgraduate coursework)	The proportion of graduates who 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they were satisfied with the overall quality of their course.
Overall employment rate	Graduates employed for one or more hours, as a proportion of those available for employment.

Table 14 / Indicator definitions

(continued)

Indicator/element	Definition
<p>Postgraduate research graduate satisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall satisfaction • Intellectual climate • Infrastructure • Goals and expectations • Supervision • Skills development • Thesis examination and industry, and • External engagement. 	<p>Calculated from multiple survey items, representing the proportion of graduates who gave a positive response to items associated with each aspect of their higher degree by research (HDR) experience.</p>
<p>Underemployed</p>	<p>Graduates who were usually or actually in paid employment for fewer than 35 hours per week, in the week before the survey, and who would prefer to work additional hours regardless of if they were available to work those additional hours.</p>

† From 2025 onwards, respondents who were not currently working and only passively looking for work are no longer considered to be available for employment. Prior to 2025, both active and passive job search types were included.

A2.1 Examples of graduate labour market outcomes

The names and examples used in this report are fictitious and are provided for illustrative purposes only.

Amy works 37 hours a week. Amy is both ‘available for employment’ and ‘available for full-time employment’, as well as both ‘employed’ and ‘employed full-time’. Amy is counted towards the labour force participation rate. Amy’s usual salary is counted towards the median salary figure.

Bryan works 20 hours a week while also studying full-time. He does not want to work additional hours. Bryan is ‘available for employment’, ‘employed’ and ‘employed part-time’ but is not ‘available for full-time work’ or ‘employed full-time’. Bryan is counted towards the full-time study rate, overall employment rate and the labour force participation rate. Bryan’s salary is not counted towards the median salary figure. Bryan is not considered ‘underemployed’.

Krishna works 6 hours a week but would prefer to work 40 hours per week. Krishna is both ‘available for employment’ and ‘available for full-time employment’. Krishna is ‘employed’ and ‘employed part-time’ but not ‘employed full-time’. Krishna is also considered ‘underemployed’. Krishna is counted towards the labour force participation rate. Krishna’s salary is not counted towards the median salary figure.

Dilek is studying full-time and is neither working nor looking for work. Dilek is ‘not available for employment’ and therefore is not counted towards the labour force participation rate. However, Dilek is counted towards the full-time study rate.

Emily is not working but she has been actively looking for full-time work. Emily is both ‘available for employment’ and ‘available for full-time employment’. Emily is counted towards the labour force participation rate. However, Emily is neither ‘employed’ nor ‘employed full-time’ and can also be referred to as ‘unemployed’.

Xavier is studying full-time and not currently working. He occasionally looks at job ads online but he has not actively looked for a job, such as registered with an employment agency, submitted an application, or asked friends and relatives for assistance in finding a job. Xavier is counted towards the full-time study rate but he is not considered ‘available for employment’ or ‘available for full-time employment’, and he is not counted towards the labour force participation rate.

Appendix 3

Detailed tables

A3.1 Median salaries by gender and study area

Table 15 / Undergraduate median annual full-time salaries by gender and study area, 2025 (\$)

Study area	Female	Male	Total
Agriculture and environmental studies	75,000	75,000	75,000
Architecture and built environment	72,500	79,300	75,100
Business and management	72,500	75,000	74,000
Communications	66,500	65,300	66,000
Computing and information systems	79,200	80,000	80,000
Creative arts	64,200	62,500	63,200
Dentistry	100,400	n/a	103,100
Engineering	80,400	83,000	82,500
Health services and support	76,200	80,000	77,400
Humanities, culture and social sciences	75,000	78,300	75,100
Law and paralegal studies	77,000	83,000	80,000
Medicine	85,800	86,700	85,900
Nursing	75,100	77,100	75,100
Pharmacy	62,600	63,400	62,600
Psychology	77,000	72,000	75,300

Table 15 / Undergraduate median annual full-time salaries by gender and study area, 2025 (\$)

(continued)

Study area	Female	Male	Total
Rehabilitation	75,100	76,200	75,300
Science and mathematics	71,800	77,000	73,100
Social work	85,300	85,100	85,300
Teacher education	81,000	84,100	82,100
Tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation	n/a	70,000	70,000
Veterinary science	75,000	77,800	75,000
All study areas	75,300	79,000	77,000
Standard deviation	8,300	11,700	8,700

Note: A blank cell indicates there is no data for that cell and n/a indicates a suppressed value (n<25).

A3.2 Further full-time study

Table 16 / Proportion of undergraduates from initial field of education in destination field, 2025

Initial field of education	Destination field of education	%
Agriculture, environmental and related studies	Agriculture, environmental & related studies	40.5
	Natural & physical sciences	20.7
	Health	13.2
	Education	9.1
	Mixed field programmes	5.0
	Architecture & building	4.1
	Engineering & related technologies	3.3
Architecture and building	Architecture and building	85.5
	Engineering & related technologies	3.2
Creative arts	Creative arts	51.1
	Society & culture	13.8
	Education	13.0
	Management & commerce	5.4
	Mixed field programmes	3.4
	Information technology	3.1
	Health	3.0
Education	Education	72.9
	Health	10.6
	Society & culture	6.0

Table 16 / Proportion of undergraduates from initial field of education in destination field, 2025

(continued)

Initial field of education	Destination field of education	%
Engineering and related technologies	Engineering and related technologies	85.1
Health	Health	71.4
	Natural & physical sciences	14.5
	Society & culture	5.9
	Education	4.5
Information technology	Information technology	74.4
	Engineering & related technologies	9.3
	Management & commerce	4.2
	Natural & physical sciences	3.1
	Society & culture	3.1
Management and commerce	Management & commerce	45.0
	Society & culture	24.8
	Education	6.6
	Health	4.3
	Information technology	3.9
	Natural & physical sciences	3.4
	Engineering & related technologies	3.0

Table 16 / **Proportion of undergraduates from initial field of education in destination field, 2025**

(continued)

Initial field of education	Destination field of education	%
Natural and physical sciences	Natural & physical sciences	51.5
	Health	30.4
	Agriculture, environmental & related studies	4.4
	Education	3.9
	Society & culture	3.5
Society and culture	Society & culture	66.9
	Health	10.8
	Education	10.2

Note: Only destination fields with 3 per cent or more are presented in this table. For a complete breakdown of destination fields, refer to FTS_UG_ALL_1Y_BFOE_FURFOE worksheet in the 2025 GOS National Report Tables available on the QILT website.

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For more information on the conduct and results of the 2025 GOS see the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) website: qilt.edu.au.
The QILT team can be contacted by email at: qilt@srcentre.com.au.

