



2015 BACCALAUREATE GRADUATES SURVEY

# **report of findings**

*The Class of 2013 Two Years After Graduation*

*The 2015 Baccalaureate Graduates Survey Report of Findings: The Class of 2013 Two Years After Graduation* has been prepared by BC Stats for the BC Student Outcomes Research Forum.

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## Acknowledgments

The Baccalaureate Graduates Survey (BGS) is directed at graduates from all public degree-granting institutions in British Columbia. It is one of the annual surveys that make up [BC Student Outcomes](#). These surveys are conducted with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education, the Industry Training Authority, and the participating British Columbia post-secondary institutions.

The Ministry of Advanced Education, the Research Universities' Council of British Columbia, and the [BC Student Outcomes Research Forum](#) (the Forum) collaborate on the BGS. The Forum oversees the Student Outcomes program, from questionnaire design through data collection to the reporting of survey results. The Forum represents a longstanding partnership among the ministry responsible for post-secondary education, participating post-secondary institutions, and system-wide organizations, such as the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer, the Council of Senior Student Affairs Leaders, and the BC Registrars' Association.

BC Stats acts as steward of the Student Outcomes data and is responsible for providing operational support, day-to-day management, advice, and reports, as directed by the Forum.

# Highlights

## *Baccalaureate Graduates Survey*

Nineteen public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia participated in the 2015 Baccalaureate Graduates Survey (BGS). There were 22,495 baccalaureate graduates eligible for the survey.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 9,964 graduates participated, resulting in a response rate of 44 percent. The following are highlights from the survey, which was conducted from early September 2015 through January 2016.

### *Who are the 2013 baccalaureate graduates?*

- 23% were Social Sciences graduates
- 60% were female
- 27 was the median age at the time of the survey
- 63% lived in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region of B.C. at the time of the survey
- 26% moved from their study region after graduating
- 47% said family or friends were a top funding source for their education; 44% said employment was a top funding source

### *What did they say about their education?*

- Baccalaureate graduates generally found that their courses were *very helpful* or *helpful* with their development of the following skills:
  - Analyse and think critically: 92%
  - Learn independently: 90%
  - Read and comprehend material: 87%
  - Write clearly and concisely: 83%
- 48% participated in program-related work experience
- 89% gave the core program of required courses positive ratings
- 85% of those employed said their education was *very* or *somewhat useful* in their work
- 92% were *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their baccalaureate education
- 93% gave positive ratings to the quality of their course instruction
- 75% would select the same program again
- 44% had difficulty scheduling required courses

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<sup>1</sup> Starting in 2014, international students were eligible to participate in the BGS. There were 2,265 international students in the 2015 cohort (representing 10 percent of eligible graduates). Of these, 680 participated in the survey.

## *What are they doing now?*

- 47% had taken or were taking other formal post-secondary education or training since graduating with their baccalaureate
  - Of those who pursued further education, 30% entered a graduate program; 19% enrolled in another undergraduate degree program
- 47% incurred debt to pay for the program they graduated from in 2013
- \$25,000 was the median amount of incurred debt from all sources, by those who borrowed
- 36% of graduates received government student loans
- \$23,000 was the median amount of government student loans borrowed by respondents who used this funding source
- 25% of graduates who had used government student loans to help fund their education had no student loans left to repay two years post-graduation
- 89% were in the labour force at the time of the survey
- 7.1% of those in the labour force were unemployed
- 83% of respondents were employed
- Of employed respondents:
  - 85% were working full-time
  - 94% were salaried workers
  - 20% were employed at two or more jobs
  - \$50,000 was their median income from full-time employment in their main job
  - 72% said their main job was *very related* or *somewhat related* to their program of study
  - 53% were employed in professional occupations and 9% were in management occupations

# Introduction

A baccalaureate education in British Columbia provides students with an opportunity to develop a firm understanding of their field of choice and the skills and tools needed to seek employment and better their financial situation. Each year, baccalaureate graduates from B.C. public post-secondary institutions provide feedback on their education satisfaction, employment outcomes, further education, and sources of funding and student debt. By obtaining this information about graduates' educational experiences and post-graduation outcomes, government and institutions can make informed policy and program decisions and prospective students can plan for their future.

## *About the Baccalaureate Graduates Survey*

The Baccalaureate Graduates Survey (BGS) is part of BC Student Outcomes, which is an ongoing research program that gathers student outcomes information for B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions and the Province of British Columbia. Since 2000, the BGS has been tracking the outcomes of baccalaureate graduates, both two and five years post-graduation.

The 2015 BGS is the 16th annual survey of former baccalaureate graduates. The survey is designed to gather information to meet the following objectives:

- meet the demand for post-secondary accountability at the system level in British Columbia;
- gather timely and relevant data for use in program evaluation and planning processes at the institution level; and
- ensure that new, continuing, and prospective students are provided with information they can use to help them make informed decisions about education.

These objectives are met through a rigorous process of data collection, data management, and outcomes reporting. Outcomes data are collected from graduates through a mixed-mode survey (telephone and web). This report presents a summary of the main findings from the 2015 survey of 2013 baccalaureate graduates.

The two-year-out BGS survey instrument employs a set of standardized questions. The core questionnaire areas are:

- Education Evaluation and Skill Development
- Participation in Further Education Since Graduation
- Labour Market Participation
- Education Financing and Debt

In 2015, 19 public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia participated in the BGS. Eleven of the institutions were classified as universities, six were colleges, and two were institutes. The majority of respondents were from universities (90 percent), and graduates from the three largest universities in B.C. made up 66 percent of respondents overall.

There were a total of 22,495 graduates who were eligible and invited to participate in the survey. Of these, 9,964 graduates completed the survey for an overall response rate of 44 percent.<sup>2</sup>

## About the Report

Baccalaureate programs were organized into 10 program areas based on Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.<sup>3</sup> Four of these program areas—Social Sciences, Humanities, Biological Science & Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences & Math—fall under Arts & Sciences. Graduates were most likely to have taken Social Sciences or Business & Management programs.

Program Area	Program areas	
	Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Business & Management	1,782	18%
Education	601	6%
Engineering & Applied Sciences	1,145	11%
Health	1,012	10%
Human & Social Services	625	6%
Visual & Performing Arts	483	5%
<b>Arts &amp; Sciences:</b>		
Social Sciences	2,325	23%
Humanities	894	9%
Biological Science & Life Sciences	783	8%
Physical Sciences & Math	314	3%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>9,964</b>	<b>100%</b>

*The most common program area was Social Sciences.*

This report presents a summary of the findings from the 2015 Baccalaureate Graduates Survey of 2013 graduates. This report does not include an analysis of the results by institution; data for each institution were distributed to the respective participating institutions in April 2016 and are available in aggregate form on the [BC Student Outcomes](#) website.

System-wide summary analyses for the 10 post-secondary program areas are provided in this report. Included are the respondents' demographic characteristics, evaluation of their education, further education, labour force outcomes, and education financing and debt incurred.

The percentages presented may not add to 100 or to associated subtotals, due to rounding.

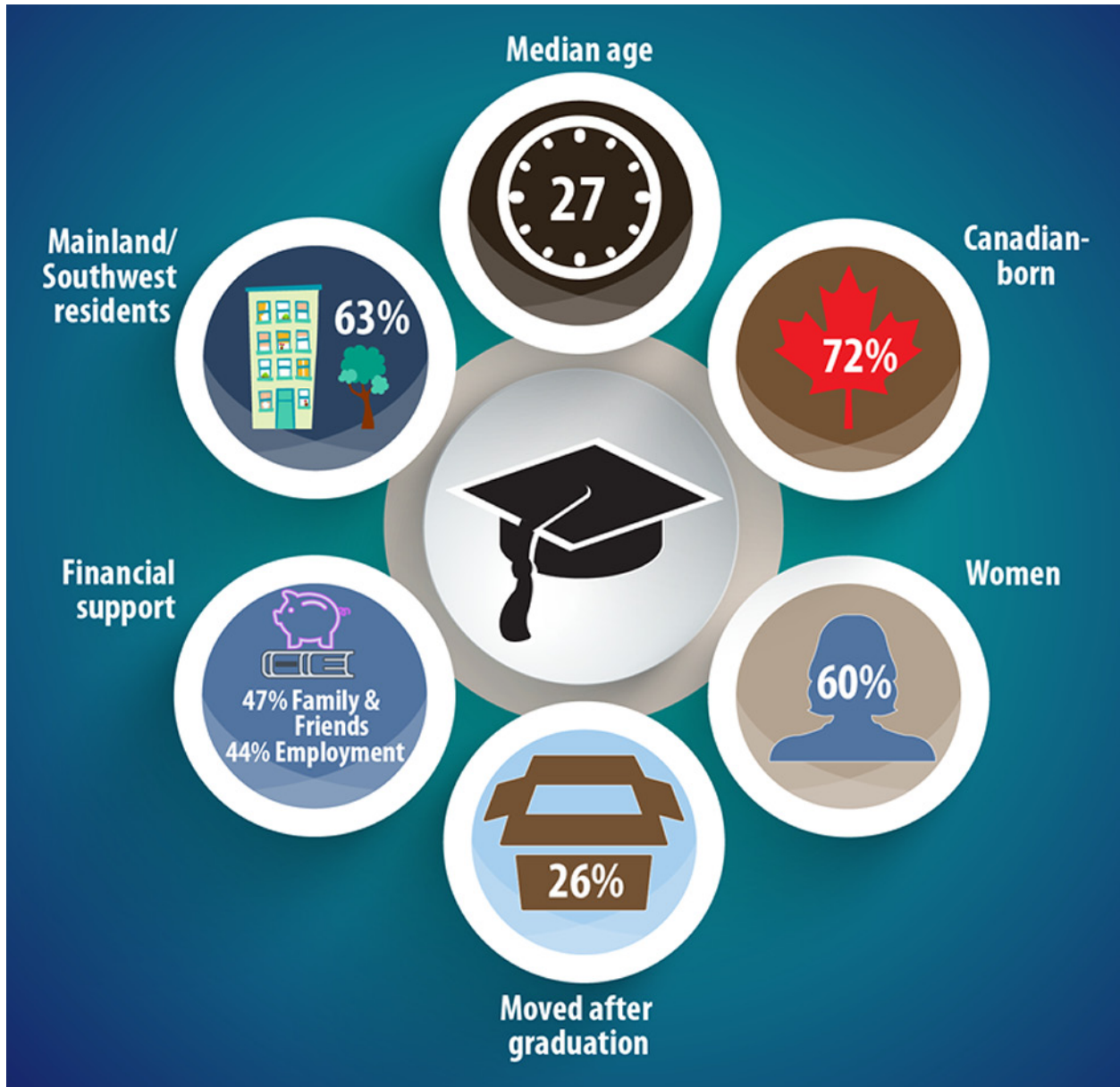
Throughout this report, the word *graduates* is often used instead of *respondents*. For the purposes of this report, the two are synonymous.

<sup>2</sup> There were 2,265 international students in the cohort (representing 10 percent of eligible graduates). Of these, 680 participated in the survey.

<sup>3</sup> The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) is a standard taxonomy used to describe educational programs. A standard method of grouping CIP codes into CIP clusters has been developed for use by the B.C. public post-secondary system. For more information about the CIP, visit: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/subjects/standard/cip/2011/introduction>.

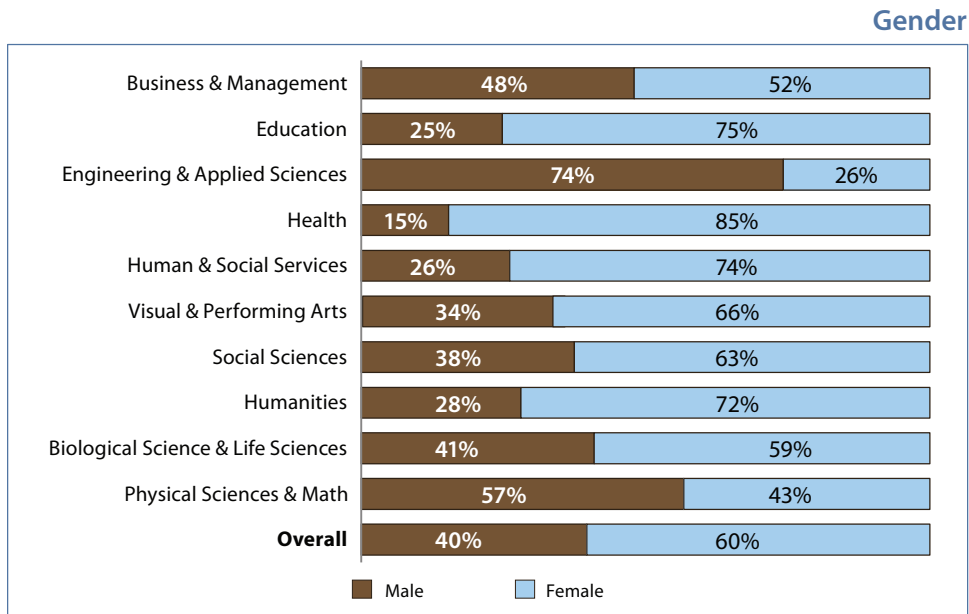


# Who are the 2013 baccalaureate graduates?



## Demographic Breakdown

Overall, and in most program areas, baccalaureate graduates were predominantly women. Men made up the majority in Engineering & Applied Sciences and Physical Sciences & Math.



*Graduates from most program areas were predominantly women.*

Graduates' median age at the time of the survey was 27, and ranged from 21 to 78. Education, Health, and Human & Social Services graduates tended to be older than others in their cohort.

**Median age**

Program Area	Years
Business & Management	27
Education	30
Engineering & Applied Sciences	27
Health	29
Human & Social Services	29
Visual & Performing Arts	27
Social Sciences	26
Humanities	27
Biological Science & Life Sciences	26
Physical Sciences & Math	26
<b>Overall</b>	<b>27</b>

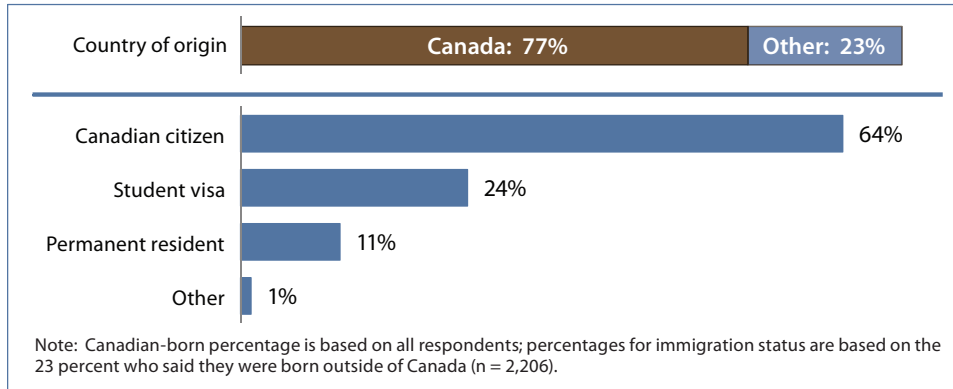
*Education graduates were typically older than those from other program areas.*

Note: Age is at the time of the survey.

Respondents were also asked if they had a long-term physical or mental health condition that limited the kind of activities that they could perform on a daily basis. Overall, 4 percent said that they did.

More than three-quarters of respondents were born in Canada. Of those whose country of origin was not Canada, three-quarters were naturalized citizens or permanent residents and almost one-quarter had a student visa at the time of their studies.

### Country of origin & immigration status

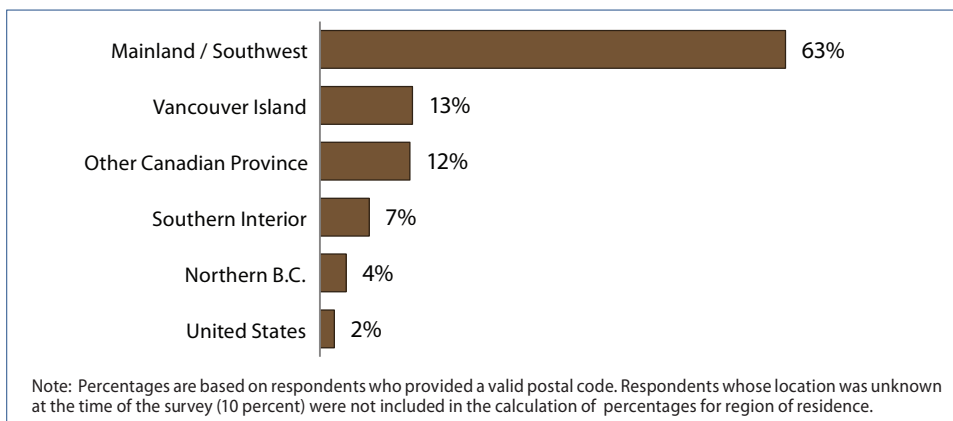


*The majority of graduates were born in Canada.*

Four percent of Canadian-born graduates identified themselves as an Aboriginal person (that is, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit). Human & Social Services programs had the largest proportion of graduates (7 percent) who self-identified as Aboriginal persons.

When asked where they were currently living, the majority of respondents were living in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region two years after graduation. More than one out of ten who received a baccalaureate in B.C. were living elsewhere in Canada at the time of the survey.<sup>4</sup>

### Current region of residence

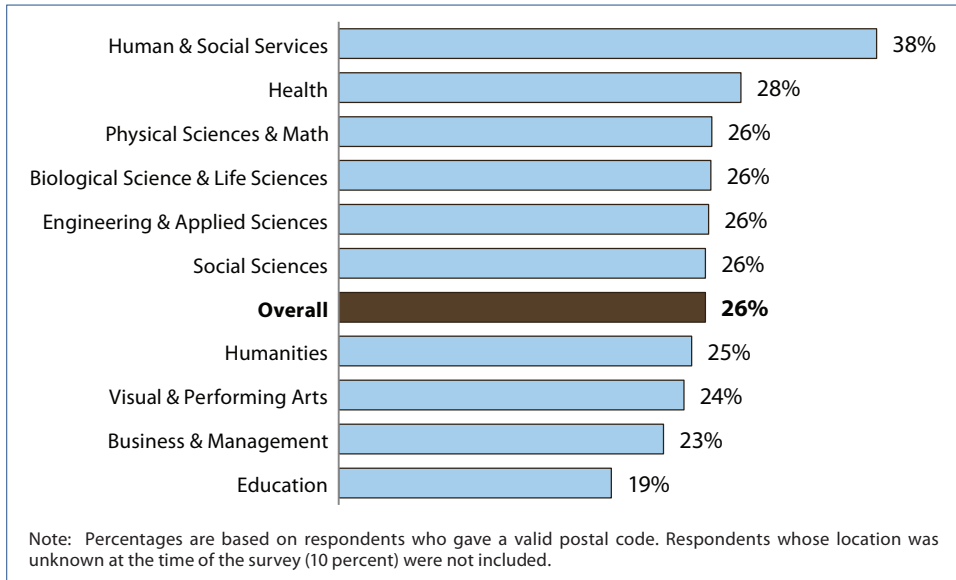


*Almost two-thirds of respondents were living in the Mainland/Southwest region two years post-graduation.*

At the time of the survey, one-quarter of respondents had moved away from the region where they completed their studies. Human & Social Services graduates were most likely to report moving post-graduation.

<sup>4</sup> Note: Students who left their study region may have been returning to the region they lived in prior to attending school. Also, students who remained in B.C. might have been easier to locate to participate in the survey.

Post-graduation mobility

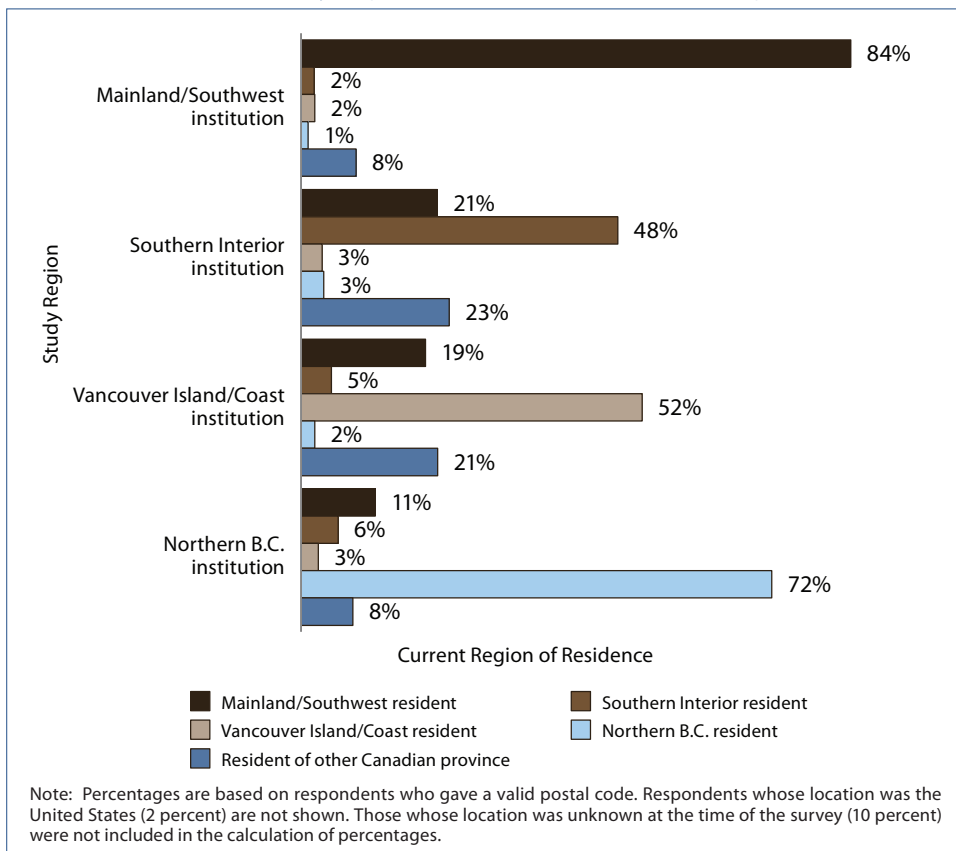


*One-quarter of graduates moved after completing their degree.*

The majority of respondents who graduated from an institution in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region remained in this region two years post-graduation. Almost three-quarters of Northern B.C. graduates stayed in that area after they graduated.

Southern Interior and Vancouver Island graduates were most likely to move to another Canadian province.

Study region compared with current region of residence



*Graduates from Mainland/Southwest institutions and those in Northern B.C. were most likely to remain in their study region after completing their degree.*

Overall, almost one out of ten graduates (9 percent) had taken preparatory classes (i.e., upgrading, access, bridging, or other classes) during or prior to the baccalaureate program. Five percent had taken basic education or upgrading courses, 4 percent had taken English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, and fewer than half a percent had taken both Adult Basic Education and ESL courses.

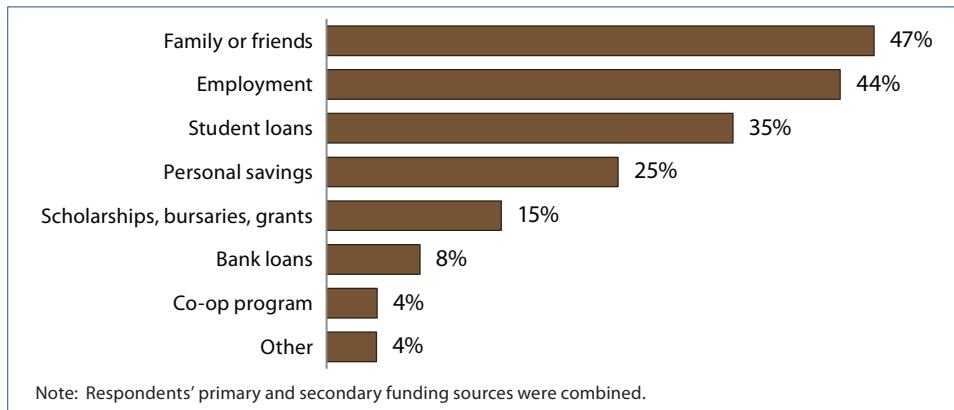
*Almost one out of ten graduates took some preparatory courses during or prior to their degree program.*

Health graduates were most likely to have taken basic education or upgrading courses (15 percent). Business & Management graduates and those from Engineering & Applied Sciences were the most likely to have taken ESL classes (8 percent and 6 percent, respectively).

## Funding

Graduates were asked to identify the primary and secondary sources of funding that they relied on to help pay for the education they completed in 2013. Family or friends, employment, and student loans were the most commonly mentioned top sources of funding.

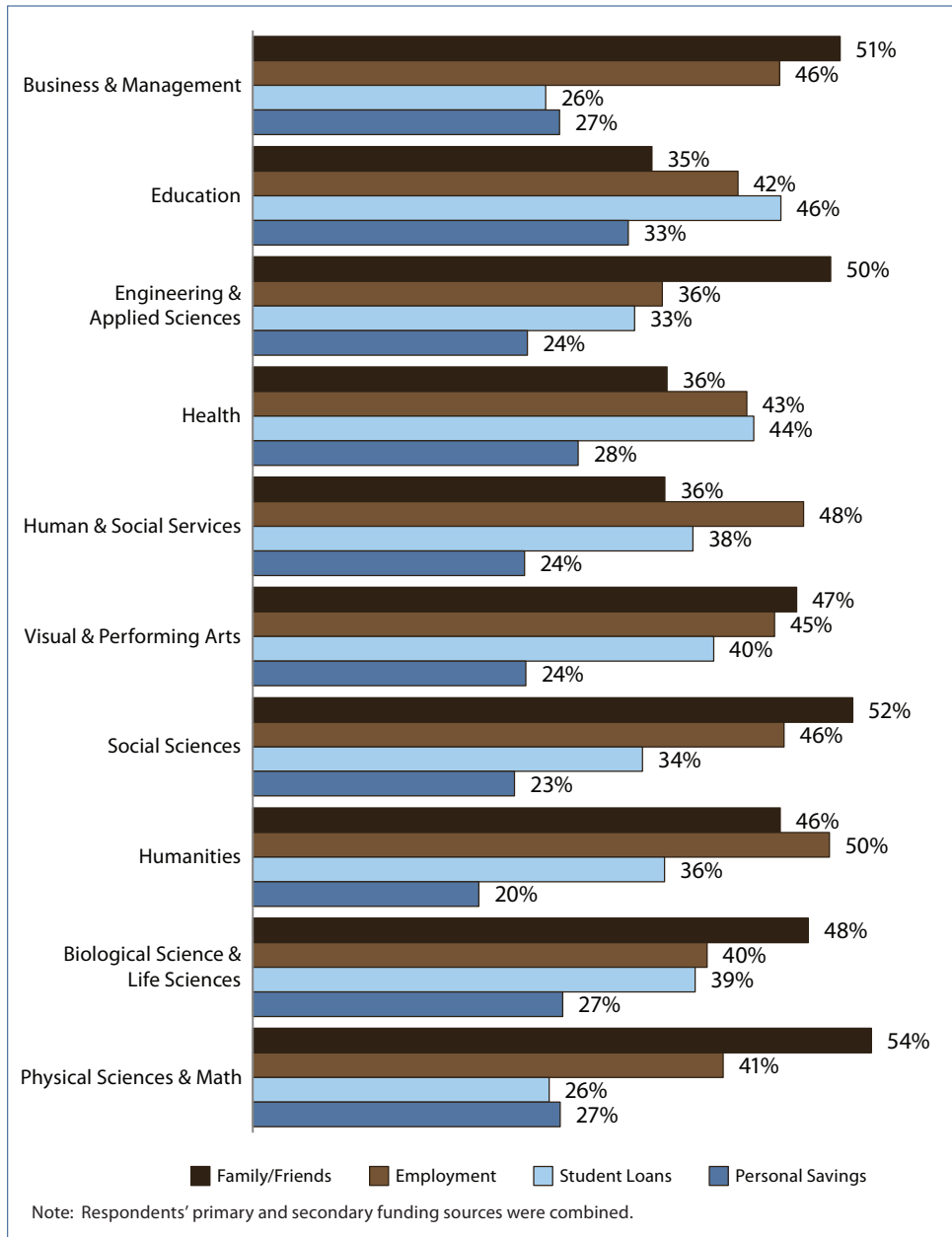
**Top funding sources—overall**



*Family or friends were a top funding source for almost half of the graduates.*

The top funding sources varied across program areas. For example, Physical Sciences & Math graduates tended to rely on family or friends, while Humanities graduates said employment was their main funding source. Almost half of Education graduates counted on student loans compared with one-quarter of Business & Management and Physical Sciences & Math graduates. Personal savings were a top source of funding for one-third of Education graduates; Humanities graduates were less likely to rely on personal savings.

Top funding sources

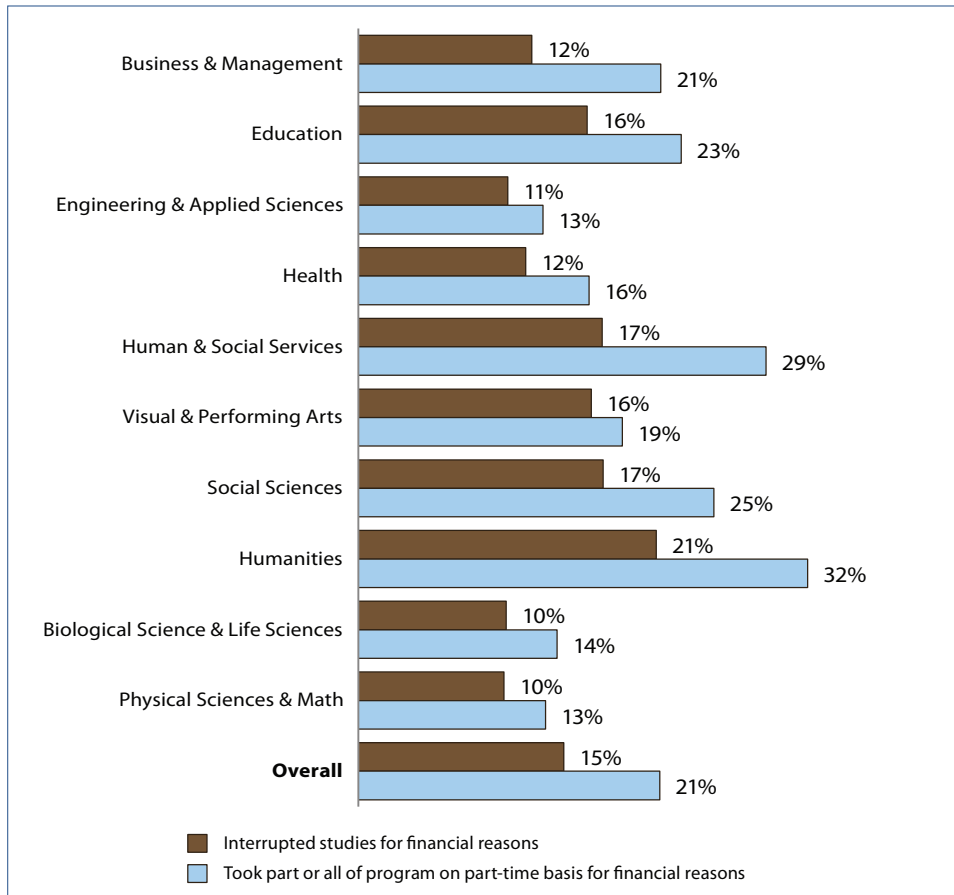


*Top funding sources were different across program areas.*

Financial strain can result in a student suspending his or her studies. One out of ten graduates said they had interrupted their studies for financial reasons, and one out of five said that they had to take at least some of their program on a part-time basis due to finances.

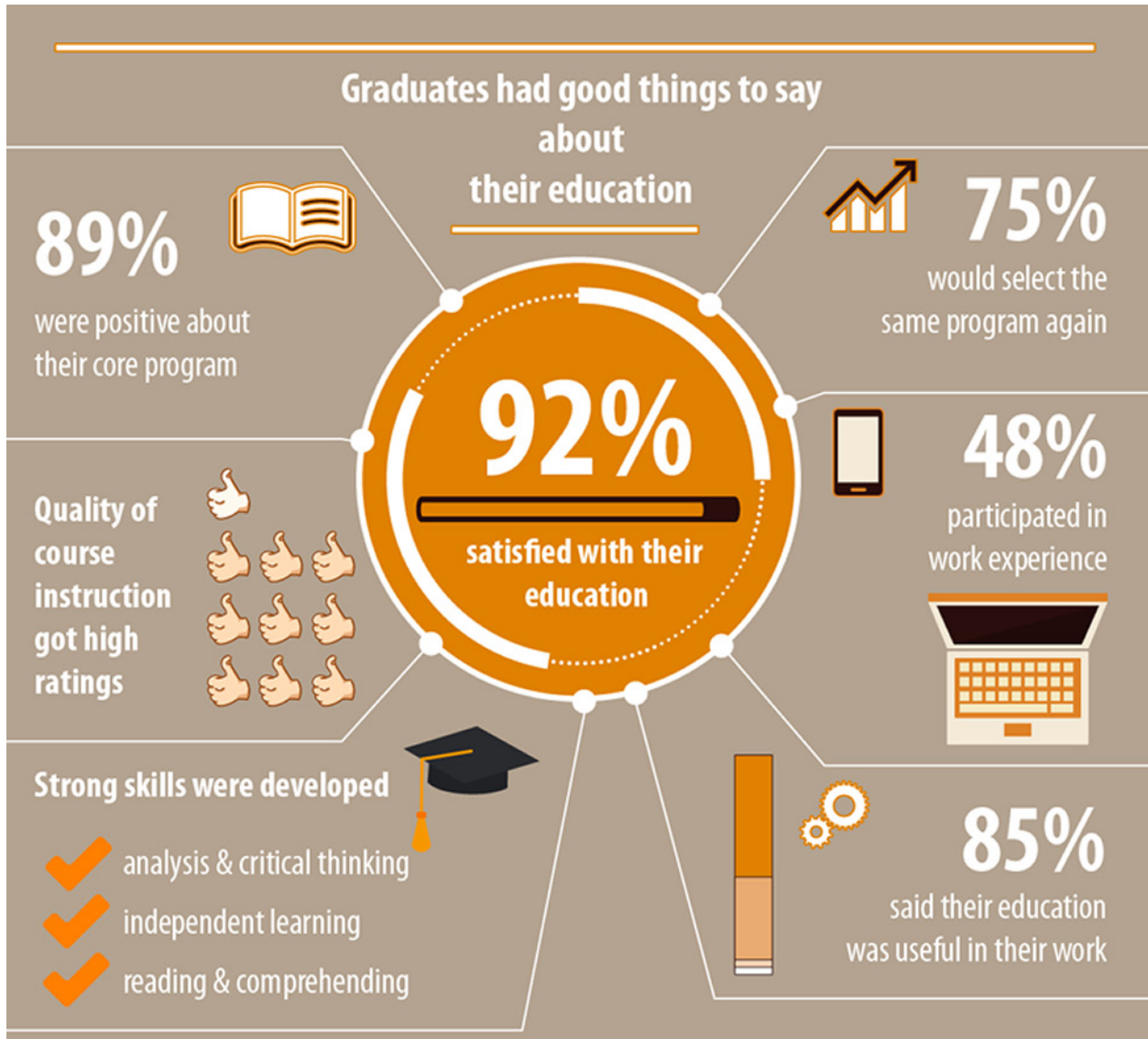
The need of students to make adjustments to their studying due to finances varied across program areas. For example, Physical Sciences & Math graduates and those from Biological Science & Life Sciences were among the least likely to report having to modify their studies for financial reasons. Humanities graduates were most likely to experience financial challenges, with two out of ten having interrupted their studies and almost one-third taking at least part of their program on a part-time basis for financial reasons.

### Changes to studies for financial reasons



*Humanities graduates were most likely to report having adjusted their studies for financial reasons.*

## What did they say about their education?

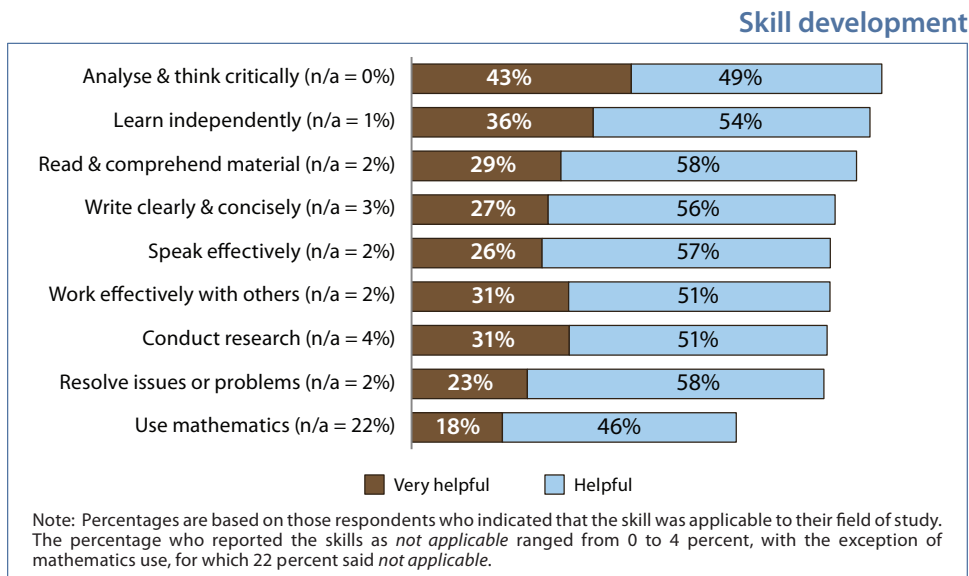




## Skill Development

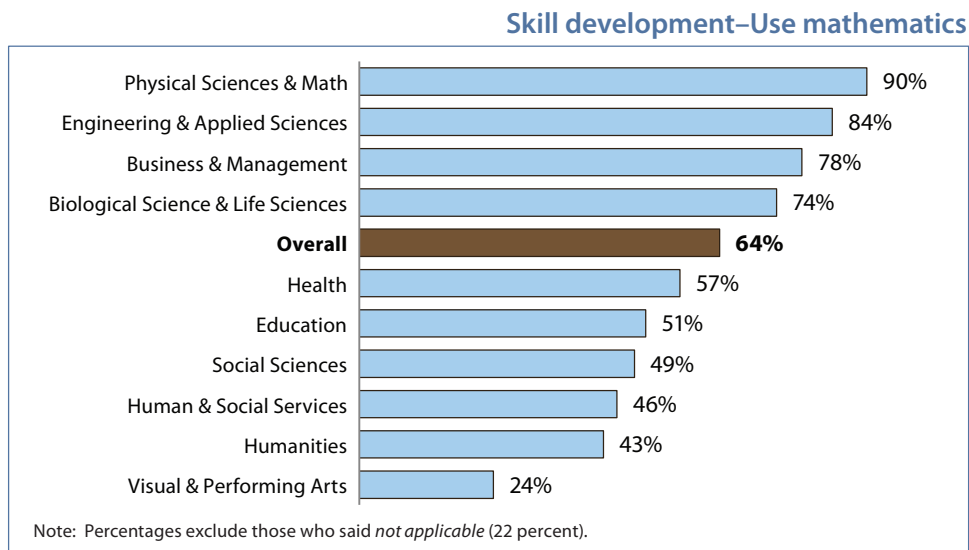
Part of a student’s baccalaureate education is developing professional and social skills. The majority of respondents said that their institution was *very helpful* or *helpful* in their development of a variety of important skills, with the ability to analyse & think critically and learn independently receiving the highest ratings.

Respondents provided ratings for only those skills that they saw as being applicable to their field. Graduates were most likely to say that the use of mathematics was *not applicable* to their field (22 percent). Of those who saw mathematics as a relevant skill, almost two-thirds said their institution was helpful in their development of this skill.



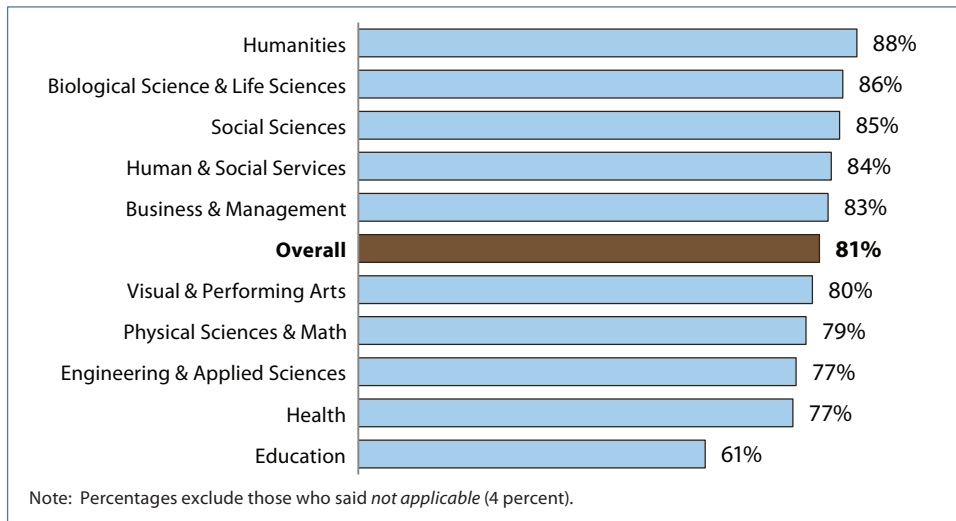
*The majority of graduates said their institution helped them develop a number of skills.*

Skill ratings varied widely across program areas. When the *very helpful* and *helpful* ratings were combined and compared by program area, the variation ranged from an 8 percentage point difference for the independent learning skill (85 to 93 percent) to a 66 percentage point difference associated with using field-appropriate mathematics (24 to 90 percent). The range was greatest for use of field-appropriate mathematics, followed by writing clearly & concisely, conducting research, working effectively with others, and reading & comprehension.



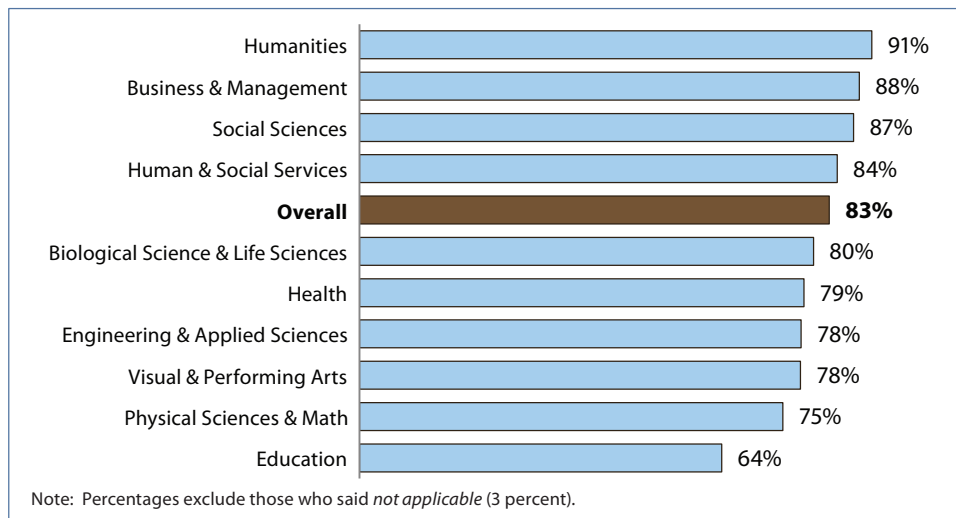
*Ratings associated with mathematics skill development ranged widely.*

### Skill development–Conduct research



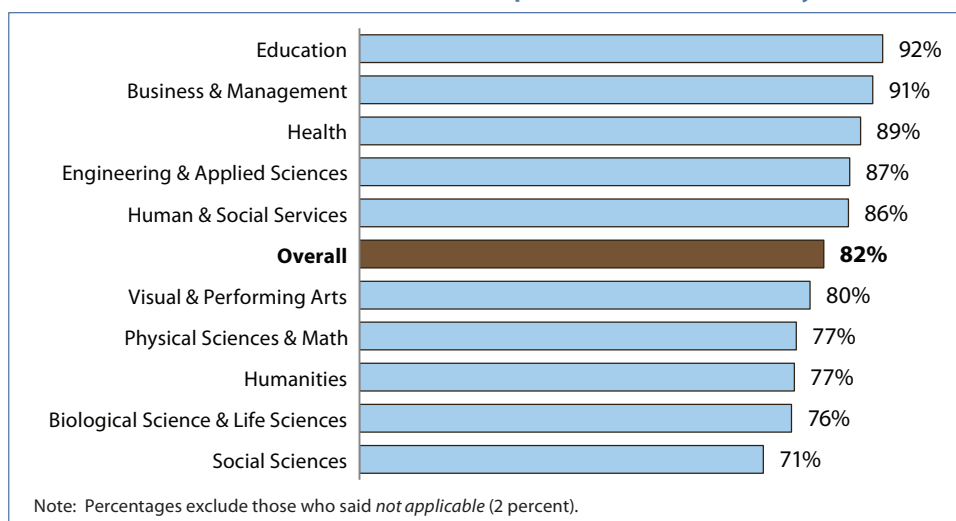
*Humanities graduates were most likely to say their institution helped them develop research skills.*

### Skill development–Write clearly & concisely



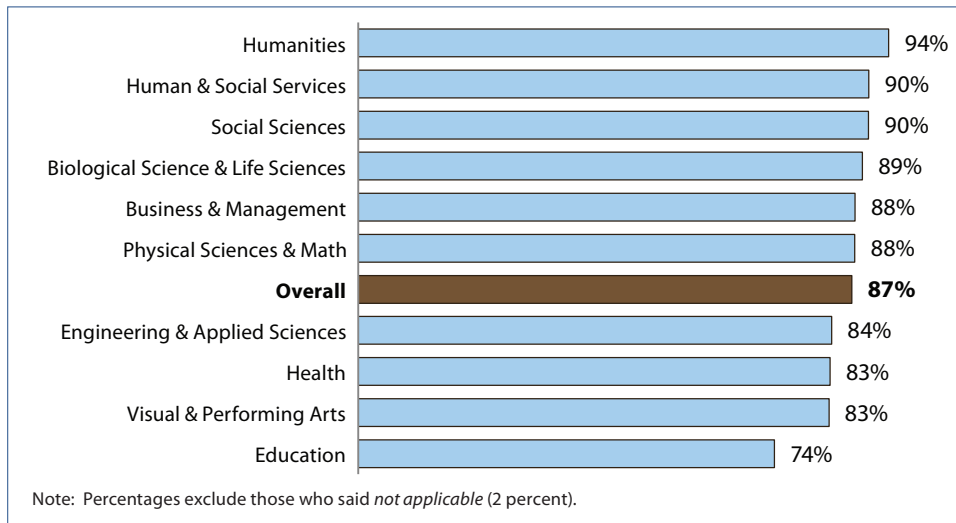
*Humanities programs ranked the highest in the development of writing skills.*

### Skill development–Work effectively with others



*Education and Business & Management programs were seen as helpful in developing the ability to work effectively with others.*

### Skill development—Read & comprehend material



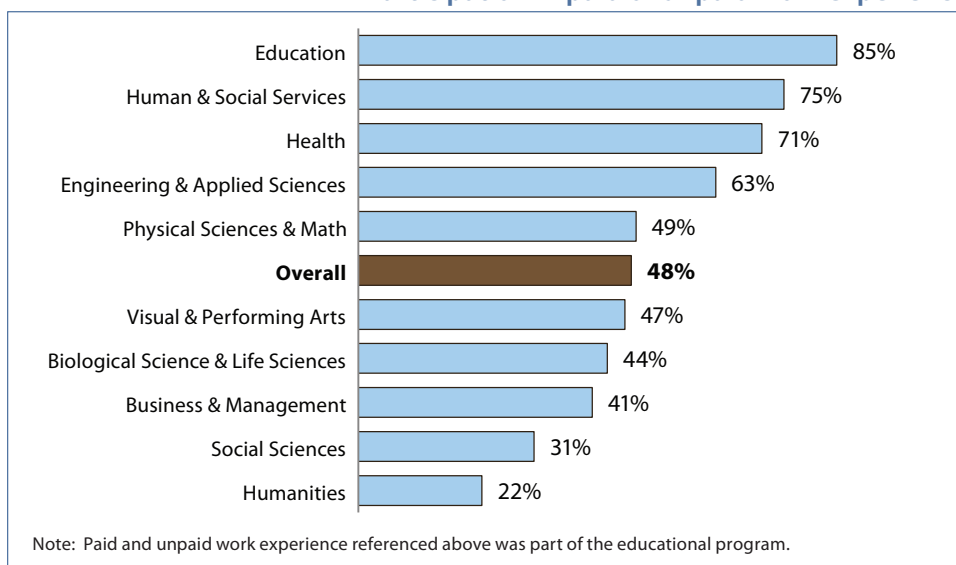
*Humanities programs received high ratings for reading & comprehension development.*

There were several patterns evident in the skill development results. The highest ratings in each skill development area—with the exception of the skill of working effectively with others, which received the highest ratings from Education graduates—were given by Humanities or Physical Sciences & Math graduates.<sup>5</sup> In six of the nine skill development areas, Education graduates were least likely to assign high ratings when asked about their skill development.

### Work Experience

Almost half of the graduates participated in paid or unpaid work experience (e.g., internship, co-op term, job shadow, practicum, volunteer requirement) as part of their program. Program-related work experience was most common in Education, Human & Social Services, and Health programs. It was less frequent in Humanities and Social Sciences programs.

### Participation in paid or unpaid work experience



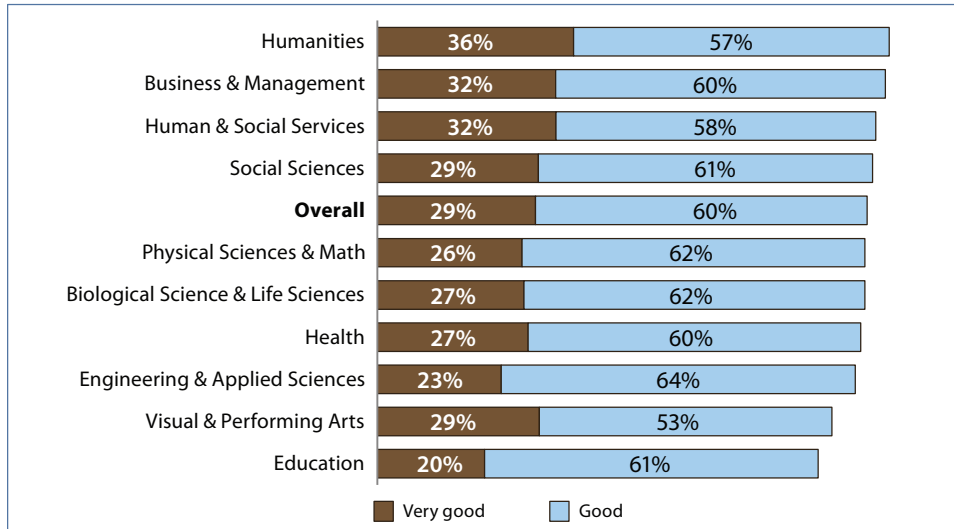
*Program-related work experience was fairly common in some program areas.*

<sup>5</sup> Compared with those in other program areas, Humanities graduates were most likely to give high ratings to the following skill development areas: write clearly & concisely, speak effectively, read & comprehend material, conduct research, and learn independently. Physical Sciences & Math graduates were most likely to give high ratings to the following skill development areas: analyse & think critically, resolve issues or problems, and use mathematics.

## Quality of Education

Graduates were asked to evaluate how well the core program of required courses provided a comprehensive understanding of their field of study. The majority of graduates said their core program was *very good* or *good*. Ratings varied by program area, with Humanities graduates most likely to give positive ratings when asked about their core program.

Quality of core program

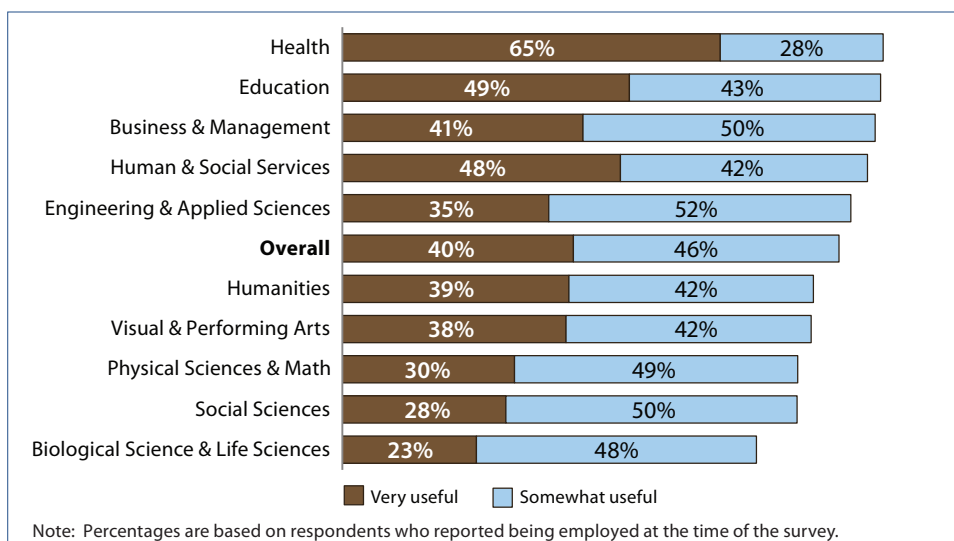


*Humanities graduates were the most likely to rate the quality of their core program highly.*

Employed respondents rated the usefulness of knowledge, skills, and abilities they acquired during their baccalaureate education in their work. The majority of graduates said that what they learned was *very useful* or *somewhat useful* in their work.

More than nine out of ten Health, Education, and Business & Management graduates said that the knowledge, skills, and abilities they acquired were *very useful* or *somewhat useful* in their work, while fewer than three-quarters of Biological Science & Life Sciences graduates thought that what they acquired during their studies was useful in their work.

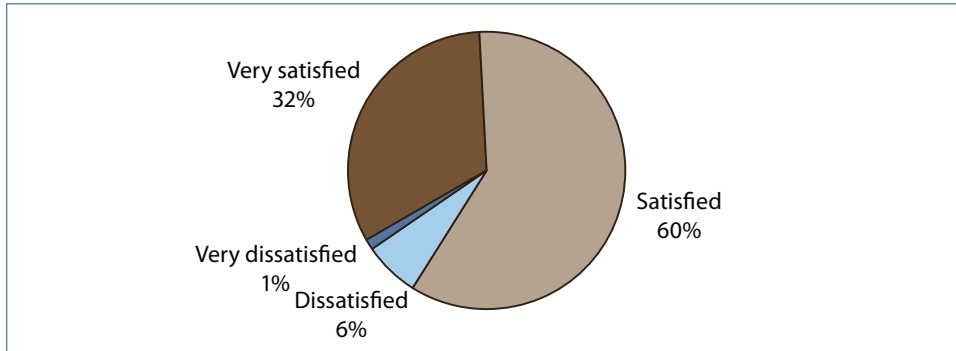
Usefulness of education in work



*The majority of employed graduates said that their education is useful in their work.*

Two years after completing their degrees, most graduates said they were *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their baccalaureate education.

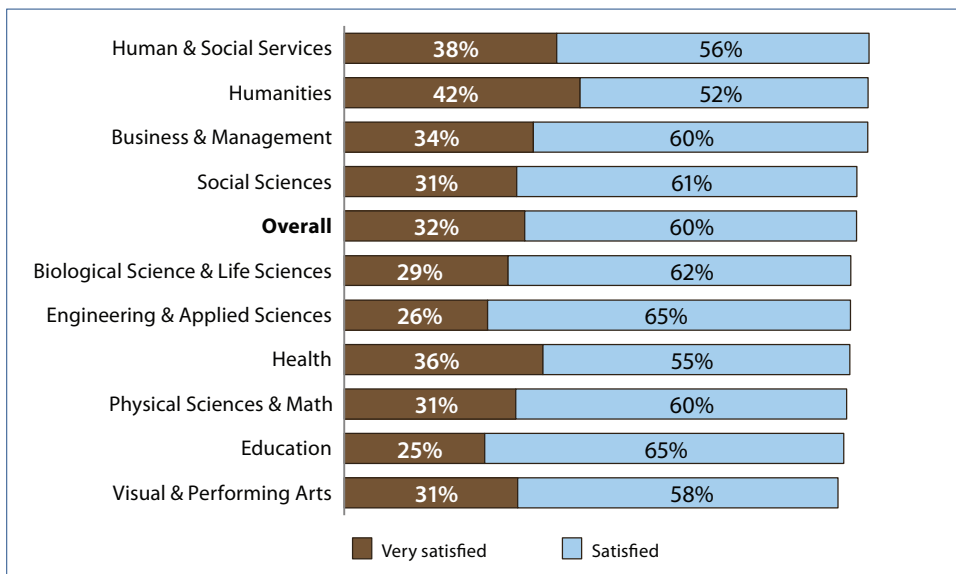
**Satisfaction with education—overall**



*Most graduates were satisfied with their education.*

Humanities and Business & Management graduates were most likely to report satisfaction with their education. Humanities graduates were also most likely to report being *very satisfied*.

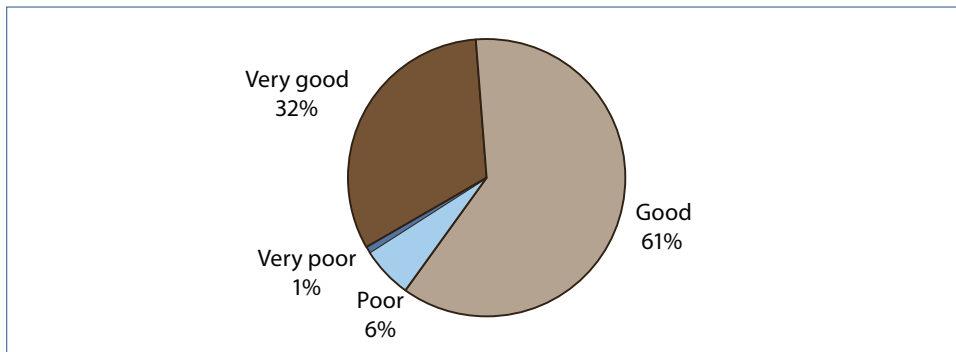
**Satisfaction with education**



*Graduates' satisfaction with their education was high in all program areas.*

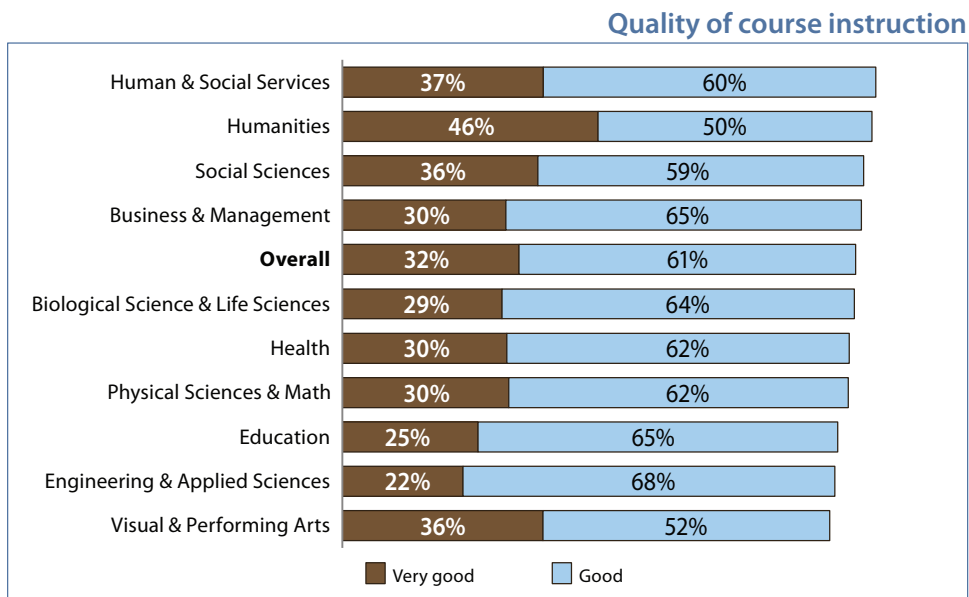
The quality of course instruction impacts students' educational experience. Most graduates said the quality of the course instruction they received was *very good* or *good*.

**Quality of course instruction –overall**



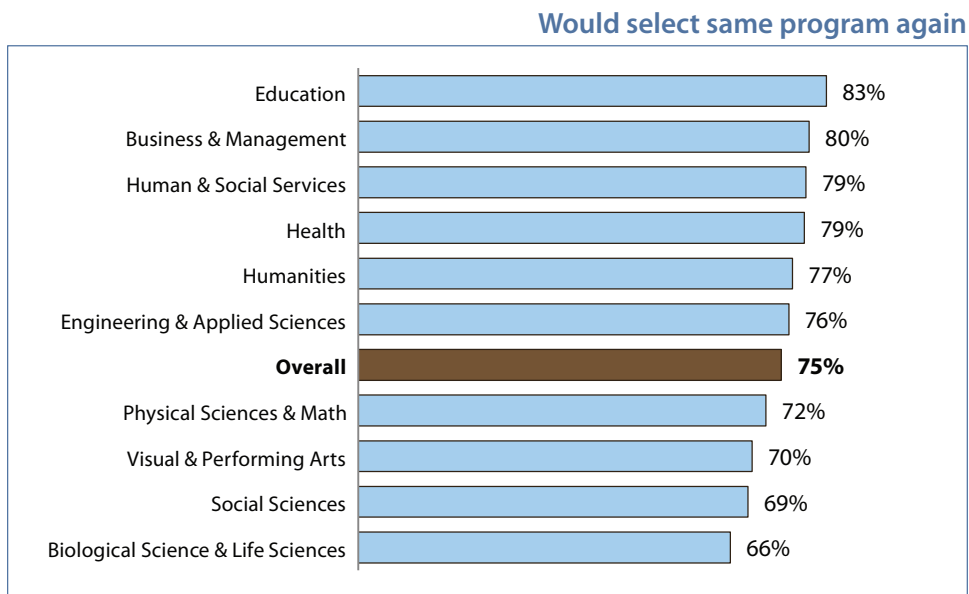
*Graduates gave high marks to the quality of their course instruction.*

Course instruction ratings were high across program areas. In particular, Humanities graduates were most likely to say that instruction was *very good*.



*Graduates from all program areas spoke highly of the quality of course instruction.*

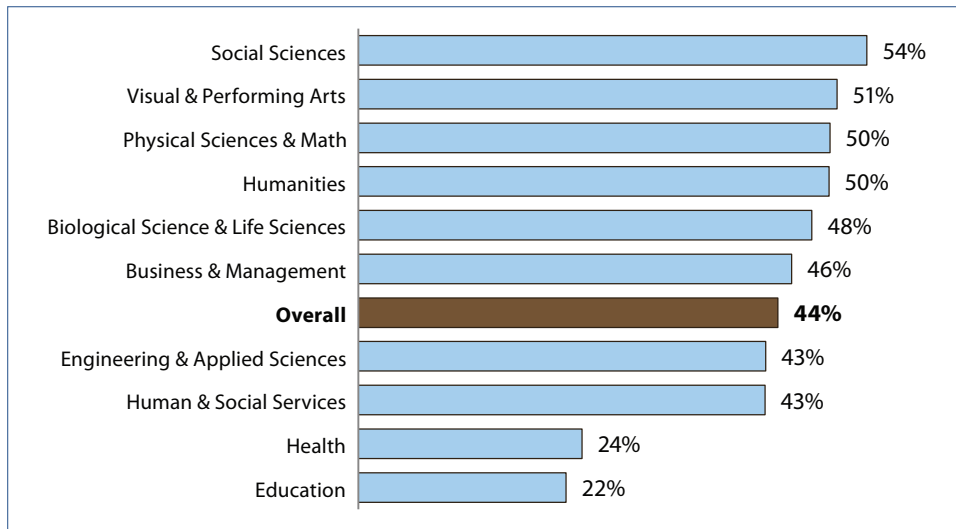
Three-quarters of baccalaureate graduates said that given their experiences in their program, they would select the same program again. In particular, more than eight out of ten Education graduates reported that they would choose the same program again.



*Education graduates were most likely to say they would choose the same program again.*

Four out of ten graduates experienced difficulty scheduling required courses because they were either not available, not offered, always full, or had limited enrolment policies. The prevalence of scheduling problems varied widely by program area, with the issue most often reported by Visual & Performing Arts graduates and those from Arts and Sciences programs, particularly Social Sciences. Scheduling issues were not as frequently reported by Education and Health graduates.

### Difficulty scheduling required courses



*Course scheduling problems were common in several program areas.*

## What are they doing now?

**47%**  **continued their education**

Almost half had taken or were taking other formal post-secondary studies since graduating with their baccalaureate degree.



**26%**

**currently enrolled**

More than one-quarter were enrolled in studies at the time of the survey.



**21%**

**formerly enrolled**

Over one-fifth had taken further studies since graduating with their baccalaureate.



**9%**

**currently enrolled part-time**



**17%**

**currently enrolled full-time**



9 out of 10 in the labour force

**83% employed**



**7.1% unemployed**



**85% full-time**



**\$50K median salary**



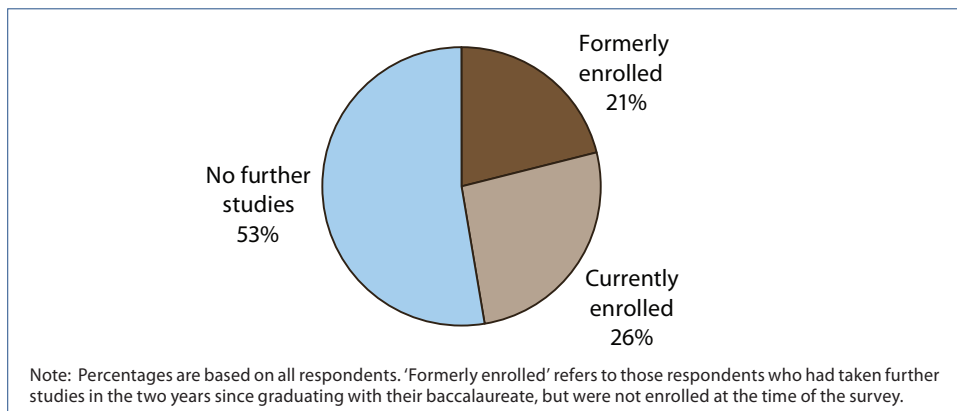
**72% program-related job**



## Further Studies

At the time of the survey, almost half of the respondents reported that they were taking or had taken other formal post-secondary education or training since getting their baccalaureate.

### Further studies

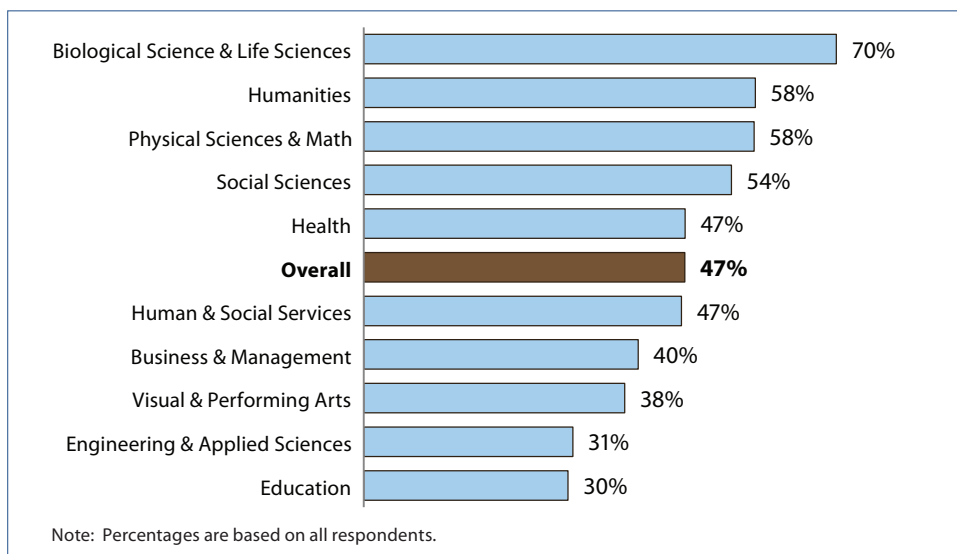


*Almost half of the respondents had enrolled in further studies since receiving their baccalaureate.*

Of those who had enrolled in further studies (n = 4,695), more than half (56 percent) were currently enrolled in a program; two-thirds (67 percent) of those currently enrolled (n = 2,564) were studying full-time.

Enrolment in further studies post-graduation varied by program area. Arts & Sciences program graduates—particularly those from Biological Science & Life Sciences—were most likely to have pursued further education, while those from Education and Engineering & Applied Sciences were least likely.

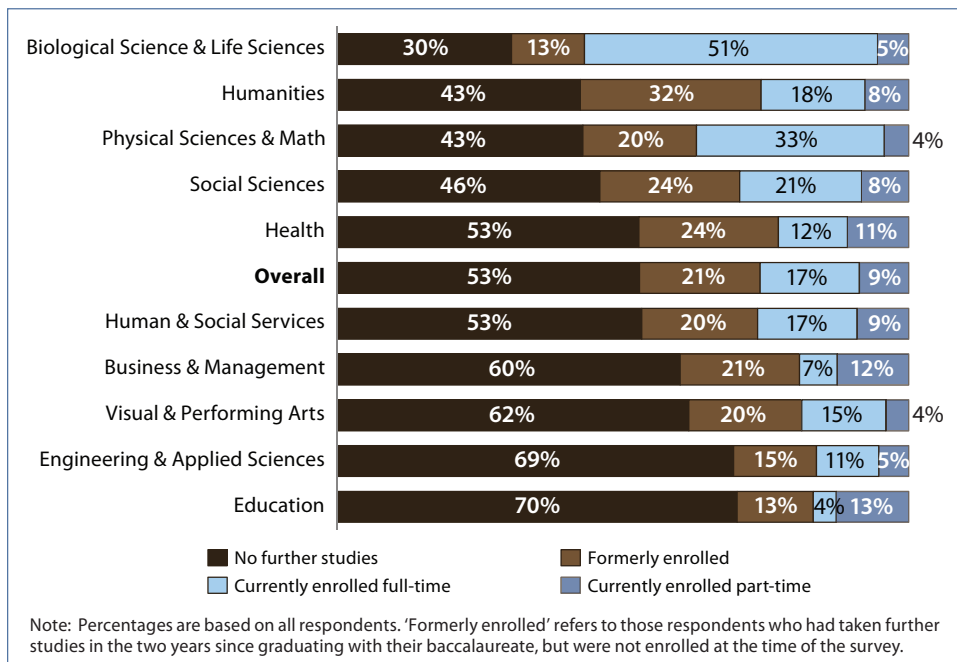
### Enrolment in further studies post-graduation



*Graduates from Arts & Sciences programs tended to enrol in further education.*

Graduates from Biological & Life Sciences were the most likely to be in school *at the time of the survey* and Engineering & Applied Sciences graduates were least likely. In most program areas, at least two-thirds of those who were currently enrolled were studying full-time. However, Education graduates and those who graduated from Business & Management programs were more likely to be pursuing their education on a part-time basis.

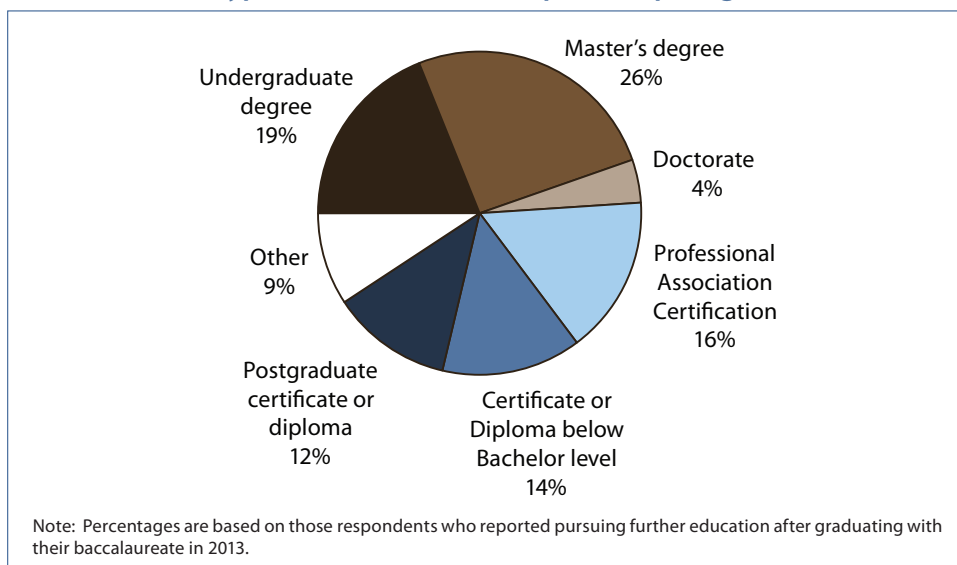
**Enrolment status**



*Currently enrolled students were typically studying full-time.*

Respondents pursued a variety of educational opportunities after graduating with their baccalaureate. Of those who reported they had taken or were taking further education or training, one-quarter were working on (or had completed) a master's degree and one out of five were pursuing another undergraduate degree.

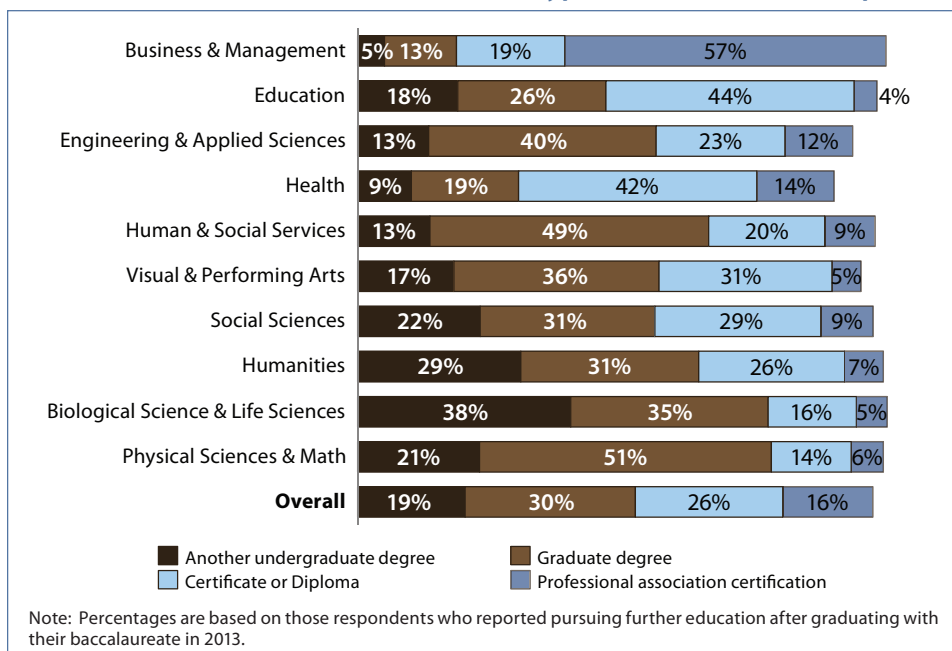
**Type of further education pursued post-graduation—Overall**



*One out of five of those pursuing further education were in another undergraduate degree program.*

The educational opportunities pursued by baccalaureate graduates varied by program area. Professional association certification was popular among Business & Management graduates, while graduates from Physical Sciences & Math, Human & Social Services, and Engineering and Applied Sciences were more apt to take on a graduate degree. Additional undergraduate degrees were most commonly sought by Biological Science & Life Sciences graduates.

### Type of further education pursued

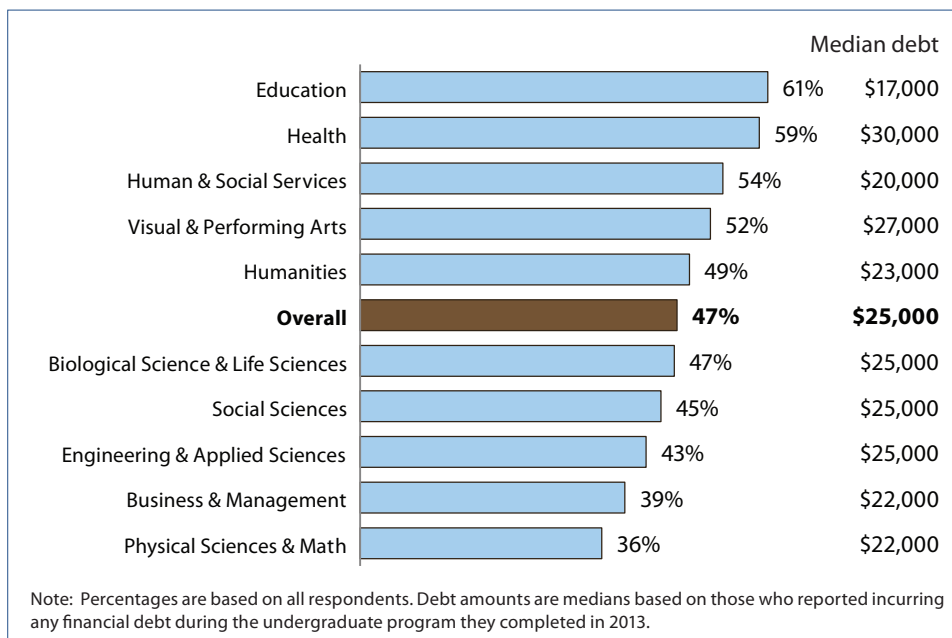


*Physical Sciences & Math graduates were most likely to pursue another undergraduate degree.*

### Incurred and Remaining Debt

More than half of the baccalaureate graduates surveyed did not incur debt to pay for the study and living expenses associated with the program they graduated from in 2013. This was not consistent across program areas. Education graduates and those from Health programs were most likely to have borrowed from any source, while Physical Sciences & Math and Business & Management graduates were least likely to have incurred any debt. Median incurred debt ranged from \$17,000 for Education graduates to \$30,000 for those from Health programs.

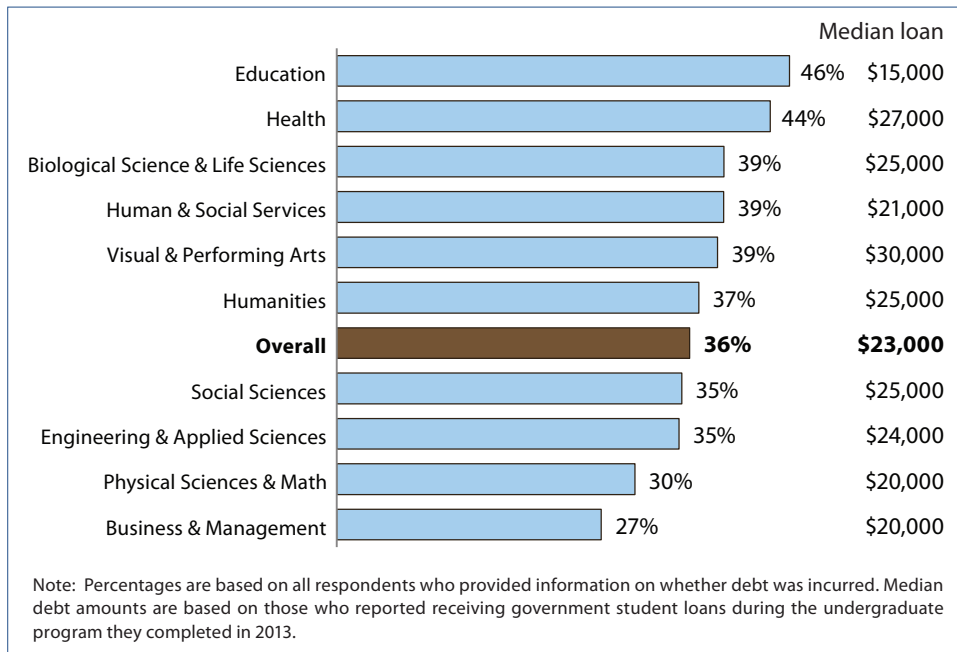
### Incurred debt—All sources



*Education and Health graduates were the most likely to incur debt, with Education graduates incurring the lowest median debt and those from Health incurring the highest.*

An important source of funding for undergraduate students is government student loans. More than one-third of graduates reported receiving government student loans. For those who had government student loans, the median amount borrowed by respondents who graduated in 2013 was \$23,000. Education and Health graduates were the most likely to incur government student loan debt (the latter also borrowed the second highest amount from government). Education graduates borrowed the least amount in the form of government student loans, while those from Visual & Performing Arts borrowed the highest amount.

### Government student loan debt incurred

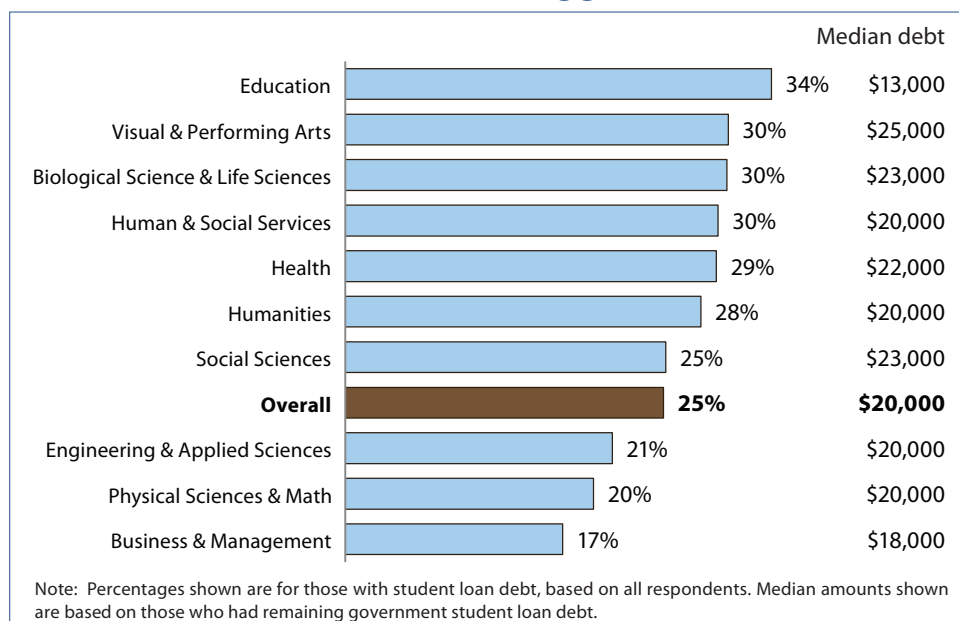


*More than one-third of graduates had borrowed from the government loan program.*

*They borrowed a median amount of \$23,000.*

Two years post-graduation, three-quarters of graduates had no government student loan debt—they had either repaid their debt or had not borrowed any government student loans. Among those with remaining debt, the median balance owing was \$20,000. Business & Management graduates were least likely to have outstanding student loan debt. Visual & Performing Arts graduates had the highest median amount of remaining government student loan debt, and Education graduates had the lowest median amount of remaining debt.

### Remaining government student loan debt



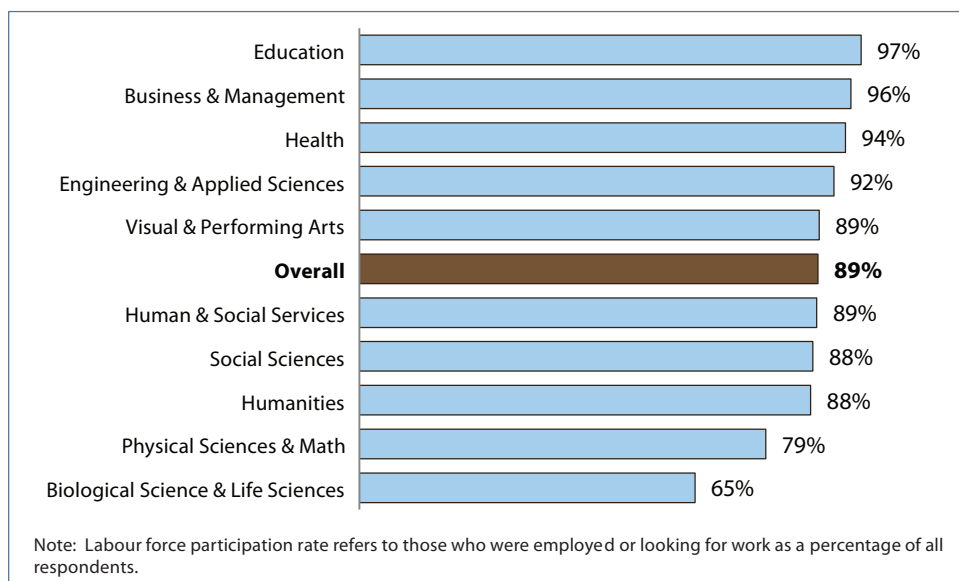
*Two years post-graduation, one-quarter had student loan debt from their programs.*

*Government student loan borrowers with remaining debt had a median amount owing of \$20,000.*

### Labour Force Participation

At the time of the survey, nine out of ten graduates were in the labour force (that is, employed or looking for work). Labour force participation was highest among Education and Business & Management graduates. Biological Science & Life Sciences graduates were least likely to be participating in the labour force. This is not unexpected; seven out of ten Biological Science & Life Sciences graduates went on to take further education after attaining their undergraduate degree in 2013.

### Labour force participation

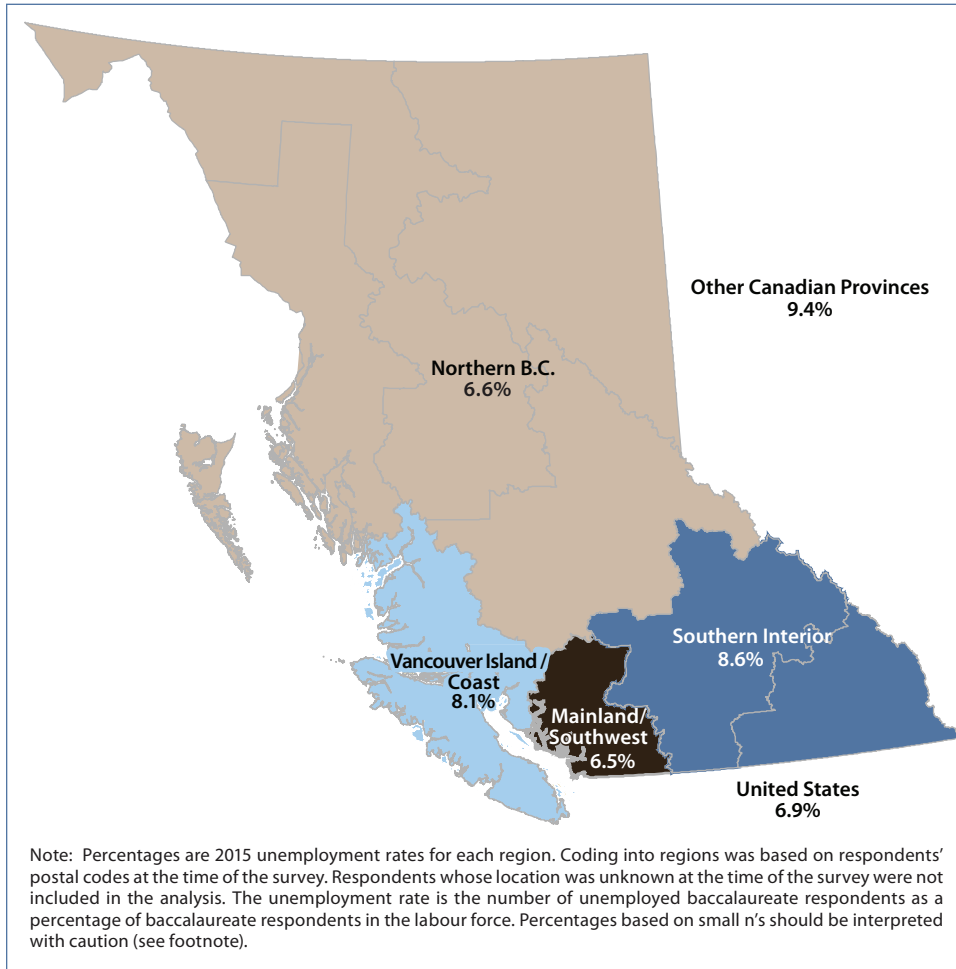


*There were high labour force participation rates in most program areas.*

The unemployment rate—the number unemployed as a percentage of baccalaureate respondents in the labour force—was 7.1 percent.

The unemployment rate varied by region. It ranged from 9.4 percent for respondents living in other Canadian provinces to 6.5 percent for those in the Mainland/Southwest of British Columbia.<sup>6,7</sup>

### Unemployment rate



*Unemployment rates varied by region.*

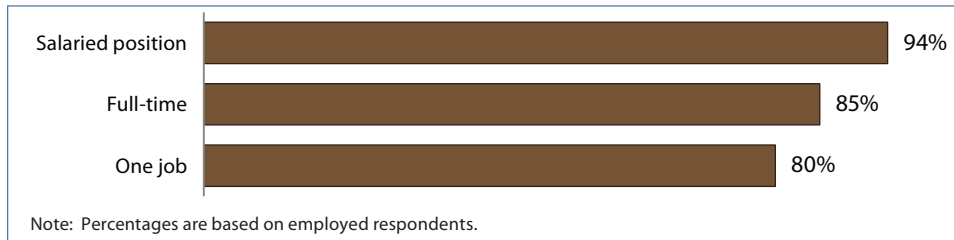
6 The regions are based on the B.C. Development Regions, described here: <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Geography/ReferenceMaps/DRs.aspx>.

7 Mainland/Southwest: n = 326; Southern Interior: n = 46; Vancouver Island/Coast: n = 79; Northern B.C.: n = 19; Other Canadian Provinces: n = 90; United States: n = 10. Percentages based on small n's should be interpreted with caution (n = number of respondents).

## Employment

At the time of the survey, eight out of ten graduates were employed. The majority of employed graduates held a single, full-time job (full-time is 30 or more hours a week). Most were employed by someone else rather than being self-employed.

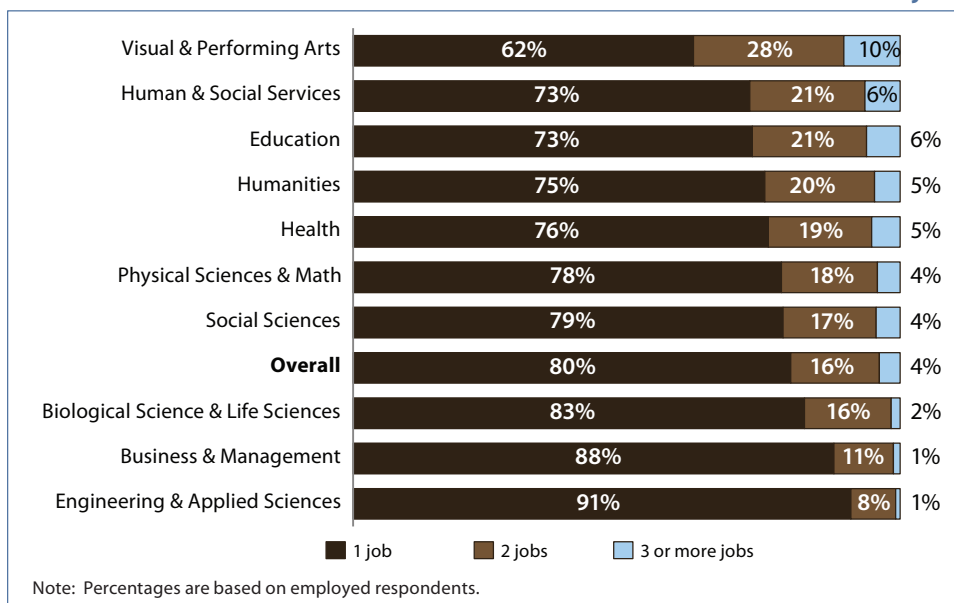
### Employment outcomes



*Employed graduates tended to have a single, full-time salaried position.*

Among employed respondents, one out of five had two or more jobs. Two or more jobs were most common among Visual & Performing Arts graduates, and uncommon among Engineering & Applied Sciences graduates and those from Business & Management programs.

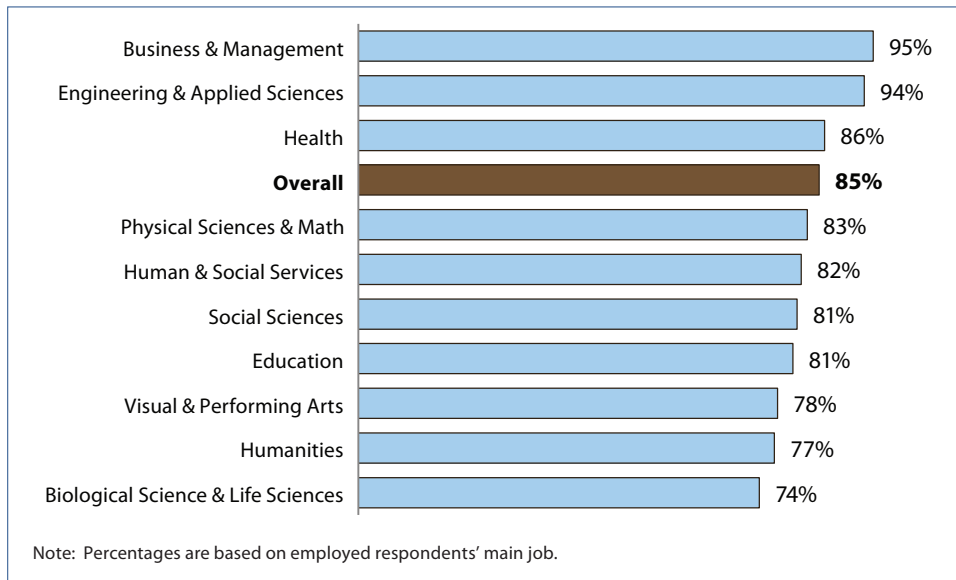
### Number of jobs



*Visual & Performing Arts graduates were most likely to have two or more jobs; Engineering & Applied Sciences graduates were least likely.*

Almost all employed respondents who graduated from Business & Management and Engineering & Applied Sciences programs were working full-time at the time of the survey.

### Full-time employment

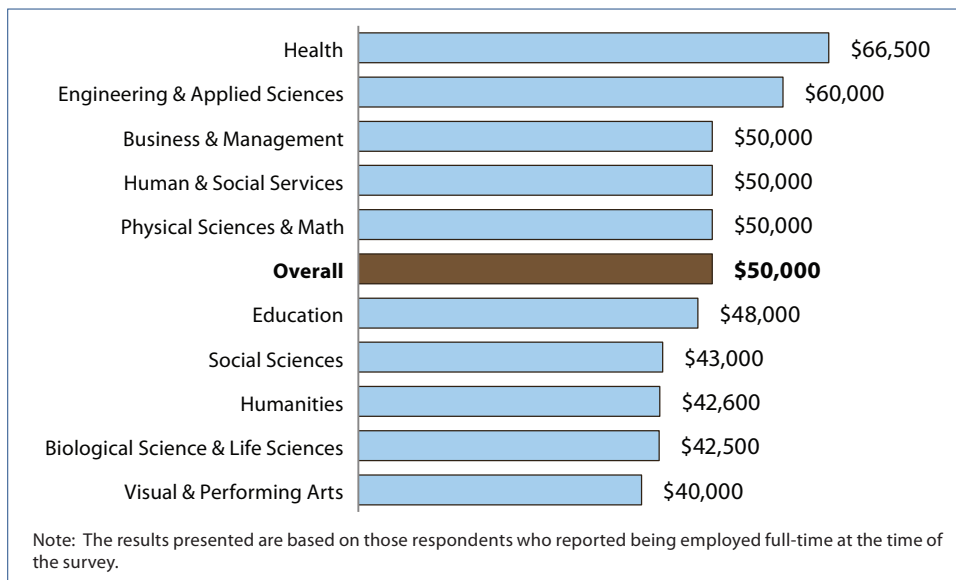


*The majority of employed graduates were working full-time.*

### Income

In 2015, two years post-graduation, baccalaureate graduates who were working full-time earned a median income of \$50,000 from their main job. Health graduates earned the highest median income, while those from Visual & Performing Arts reported the lowest annual earnings from their main job.

### Median income



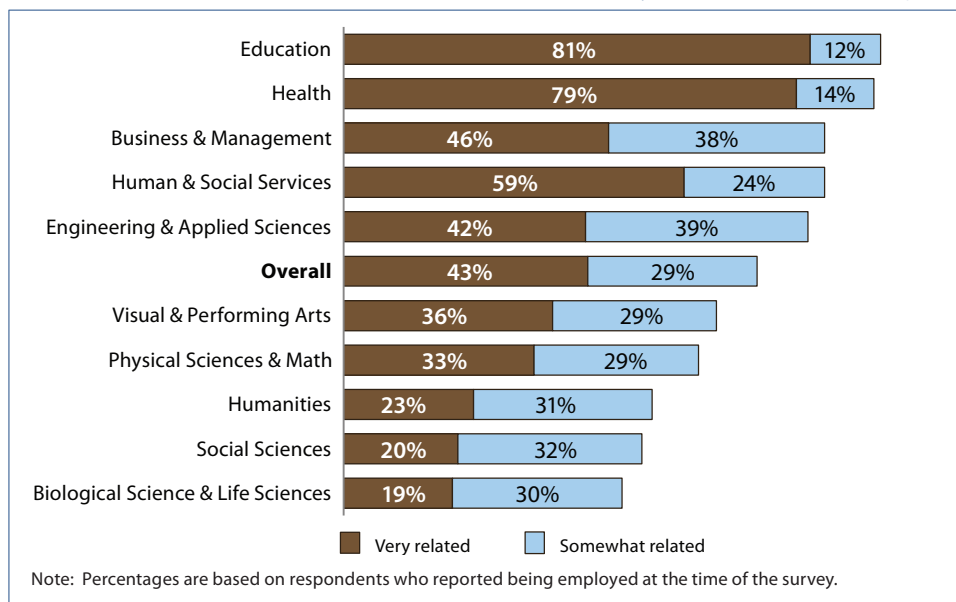
*Two years post-graduation, Health graduates reported the highest median income.*



## Program-Related Employment

Employed graduates typically said that their job was *very related* or *somewhat related* to their program of study. The degree to which graduates' jobs and programs were related ranged widely across program areas. While most Education and Health graduates said their job was related to the program they studied, those from Arts & Sciences programs (that is, Social Sciences, Humanities, Biological Science & Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences & Math) were least likely to report that their jobs were related to their program of study.

Employment related to program



*In Arts & Sciences programs, graduates' jobs were less likely to be related to their program of study.*

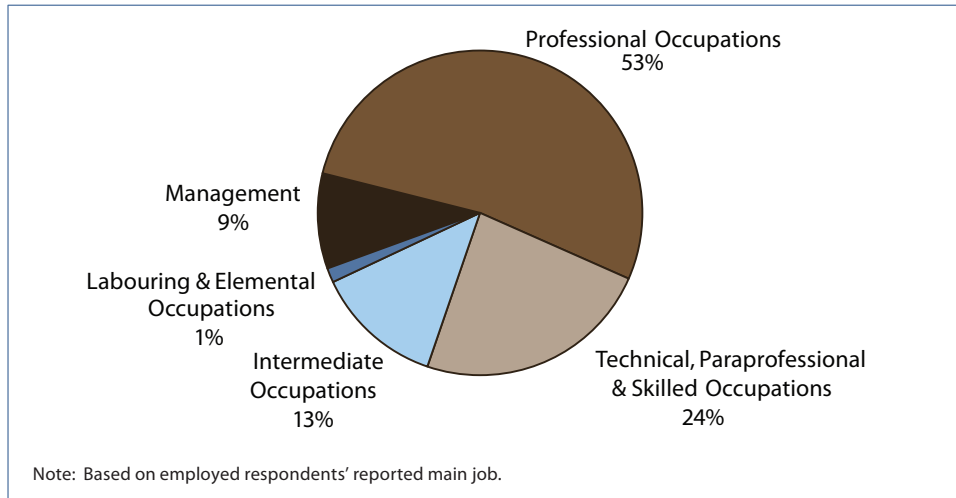
## Skill Level of Jobs

The National Occupational Classification (NOC) provides a standardized language for describing the work performed by Canadians in the labour market. It provides statisticians, labour market analysts, career counselors, employers, and individual job seekers with a consistent way to collect data and describe and understand the nature of work. The NOC is used to classify occupations into one of four skill levels that correspond to the training or education (kind and/or amount) required for going into an occupation.<sup>8</sup> Though not designated in the NOC skill levels, management occupations are displayed here for descriptive purposes.

More than half of employed graduates had professional occupations at the time of the survey. About one-quarter were in technical, paraprofessional, and skilled occupations two years post-graduation, and about one out of ten were in management.

<sup>8</sup> Professional occupations (Skill Level A) are occupations that usually require a university education. Technical, paraprofessional, and skilled occupations (Skill Level B) are those that usually require a college education or apprenticeship training. Intermediate occupations (Skill Level C) are those that usually require secondary school and/or occupation-specific training. Labouring and elemental occupations (Skill Level D) are occupations for which on-the-job training is usually provided. More information about the 2011 NOC can be found at: <http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/home.aspx>. The NOC matrix is available at: <http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/NOC/Matrix2011.aspx>.

**Skill level of main job**



*Employed graduates tended to be in professional occupations.*

## Conclusion

Graduates from 19 public post-secondary institutions participated in the 2015 Baccalaureate Graduates Survey (BGS). This feedback provides important evaluation information to institutions and government and helps prospective students make decisions.

The typical graduate respondent was a 27 year old female living in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region of British Columbia, which was likely also her study region two years previously. While at school, almost a quarter of respondents were in Social Sciences programs and many relied on family or friends and employment for funding. Some had to interrupt their studies for financial reasons or take at least part of their program on a part-time basis due to their finances.

Graduates gave high ratings when asked about their education overall and when asked about the quality of their course instruction and their core program of required courses. A majority said that they would select the same program again.

Generally, graduates agreed that their institution had helped them to develop a number of professional and social skills, particularly analysis and critical thinking, independent learning, and reading and comprehending material.

Since graduating with their bachelor's degree, almost half had taken or were taking other formal post-secondary education or training. Almost half of those who pursued further education went on to a graduate degree or another undergraduate degree.

Almost half incurred debt to pay for the program they graduated from in 2013, with a median of \$25,000 borrowed. More than one-third had taken out government student loans to fund their education, borrowing a median amount of \$23,000 from this source. One-quarter of respondents had remaining government student loan debt. Those who still had government student loan debt at the time of the survey owed a median amount of \$20,000.

Two years post-graduation, eight out of ten respondents were employed. The majority of employed graduates were full-time, salaried workers, in a job related to their program. Graduates who were employed full-time were earning a median annual income of \$50,000, mainly from professional occupations.

Baccalaureate graduates from public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia reported being highly satisfied with their education, being well-prepared with useful skills and abilities, and experiencing positive labour market outcomes.

## Appendix - Survey Methodology

### Cohort

The 2015 Baccalaureate Graduates Survey collected feedback from B.C. baccalaureate graduates two years after they completed their degree. The valid survey cohort consisted of 22,495 baccalaureate graduates from B.C. public universities, colleges, and institutes. As in 2014, international students were eligible to participate in the survey. There were 2,265 international students in the cohort, which represented 10 percent of eligible graduates. Graduates for whom no contact data were available were excluded.

There were 19 B.C. post-secondary institutions that participated in this project—eleven were classified as universities, six were colleges, and two were institutes. The following table lists the participating institutions, the number of graduates who were eligible for the survey, the number of respondents, and the response rate.

2015 Response rates by institution

Institution	Cohort	Respondents	Response rate
University of British Columbia	7,273	2,923	40%
Simon Fraser University	5,026	2,254	45%
University of Victoria	3,389	1,402	41%
Thompson Rivers University	885	391	44%
University of the Fraser Valley	857	431	50%
British Columbia Institute of Technology	785	409	52%
Vancouver Island University	783	393	50%
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	726	352	48%
University of Northern British Columbia	608	300	49%
Capilano University	400	184	46%
Emily Carr University of Art and Design	383	176	46%
Douglas College	322	144	45%
Royal Roads University	291	160	55%
Langara College	223	135	61%
Okanagan College	187	102	55%
Camosun College	152	85	56%
Vancouver Community College	127	74	58%
North Island College	60	38	63%
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	18	11	61%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>22,495</b>	<b>9,964</b>	<b>44%</b>

Note: University of British Columbia includes both the Okanagan and Vancouver campuses.

## Data Collection

The 2015 survey was administered as a mixed-mode survey, with interviews conducted by telephone and online using an integrated Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)/Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI) system. A field test cohort of former students was randomly selected for the BGS survey from the available institutional samples. Full telephone survey administration, and online survey administration, was undertaken from September 2015 through January 2016.

A total of 9,964 survey completions were obtained, for a final response rate of 44 percent. There were 680 international student respondents.

More than two-thirds (68 percent) of all surveys were completed over the web. This is consistent with 2014 online completions.

## Analysis and Reporting

BC Stats was responsible for cleaning and validating the data received from the data collection contractor. Based on these data—the responses to the survey questionnaire—the necessary variables were derived for analysis and reporting. Results from the 2015 survey were first released in April 2016 and are available at [http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/BGS/BGS\\_Info.aspx](http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/BGS/BGS_Info.aspx).

Analysis for this report included frequencies, crosstabs, and comparisons of medians and means.

## Limitations

The former students who responded to the survey—44 percent of those who were eligible—were those from the cohort who could be located and who agreed to be surveyed. They may not be representative of all former students.

## Percentages

For consistency and ease of presentation, most percentages in the report text, tables, and charts have been rounded and may not always add to 100.

Unless otherwise noted, each percentage is based on the number of students who gave a valid response to the question—those who refused the question, or said *don't know*, were not included in calculations.



BCStats

Go to the [BC Student Outcomes](#) website for more information about the [Baccalaureate Graduates Survey](#).