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Media release

Australia releases 2014–2017 Higher Education Graduate Outcomes Longitudinal data

The Australian Government has released the 2017 Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal (GOS-L) report as part of the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) suite of surveys.

The GOS-L is an online survey of graduates who completed the 2014 Australian Graduate Survey (AGS), to see how their career or further study has progressed in the three years to 2017.

Participation in the GOS-L was open to graduates from any higher education institution that participated in the 2014 AGS. Fifty-five institutions chose to participate, including 39 universities and 16 non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs).

The 2017 GOS-L achieved an overall response rate of 42.2% across undergraduate, postgraduate coursework and postgraduate research graduates. This represents 38,591 responses across Australia.

In 2014, 67.5 per cent of undergraduates were in full-time employment, four months after completing their course. However, three years later in 2017, the proportion of the same cohort of graduates in full-time employment had risen to 89.3 per cent.

Graduates from more “generalist” fields of education such as Creative arts, Science and mathematics, Humanities, culture and social science, have weaker employment outcomes immediately upon graduation compared with those in more “vocational” degrees such as Medicine and Pharmacy. However, the gap in employment outcomes across study areas tends to narrow over time.

The GOS-L findings demonstrate the benefit of completing higher degrees, with 82.6 per cent of postgraduate by coursework graduates in full-time employment in the short term, increasing to 91.9 per cent three years later.

For those completing postgraduate by research qualifications, 77.1 per cent were in full-time employment in the short term, but this increased to 90.9 per cent by 2017. Postgraduate research graduates also earn substantially more over time, with a median salary of \$99,600 in 2017.

Notwithstanding differences in salaries between study areas, males tend to earn more than female graduates and older graduates (> 30 years of age) initially earn more than those under thirty years of age.

- Male undergraduates earn \$4,000 more than female undergraduates in the short term, which increases to a difference of \$6,000 three years later
- Male postgraduate coursework graduate median full-time salary is, in the short term, around \$18,000 more than female postgraduates, decreasing to \$15,000 three years later.
- Median salaries for male and female postgraduate research graduates are equivalent in the short term, with males earning \$10,000 more than their female counterparts three years later.
- Postgraduate coursework graduates over 30 years of age earn \$28,000 more in the short term and \$23,800 more than those under 30, three years later.

Key outcomes:

	Undergraduate		Postgraduate Coursework		Postgraduate Research	
	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017
Full-time employment	67.5	89.3	82.6	91.9	77.1	90.9
Overall employment	89.7	91.7	93.2	93.6	92.4	93.6
Labour Force Participation	89.3	91.7	94.3	94.3	93.3	93.5
Median Full-time Salary	\$56,000	\$68,700	\$80,000	\$90,000	\$80,000	\$99,600

Full results and tables are available on the QILT website at:

qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/graduate-employment

The 2017 GOS-L data was compiled by the Social Research Centre, a leading independent centre for the provision of services related to research design, survey management, statistical consulting and analytical thinking. The Social Research Centre is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Australian National University (ANU).

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QILT Media Contact:

Belinda Zipper, Marketing and Communications Specialist
Social Research Centre

bzipper@srcentre.com.au

qilt@srcentre.com.au

9236 8592