GRADUATE OUTCOMES FOR POSTGRADUATES 2017/18

Following the publication of HESA’s Higher Education Graduate Outcomes Statistics: UK, 2017/18, this UKCGE Policy Briefing provides a summary of graduate outcomes for Postgraduate (Research) and Postgraduate (Taught) respondents.

This briefing refers to HESA’s Statistical Bulletin released on 18 June 2020, which offers what HESA refers to as “experimental statistics” and covers UK higher education providers (HEPs). Data is collected from graduates approximately 15 months after HE course completion and includes data on “47% of the target population” (361,215). It is unclear whether this response rate is evenly distributed across graduates at different levels of study. The survey covers students who completed their studies between 1 August 2017 and 31st July 2018.

Summary

The Graduate Outcomes 2017-18 shows that a Doctorate or a Taught Masters qualification is beneficial on several different measures. On average, respondents with those postgraduate qualifications were:

- 9% more likely to be employed and 3% less likely to be unemployed than those with an undergraduate qualification
- 42% more likely to be earning £30k+
- And 6% more likely to agree that they are using what they learnt in their studies in their current activity.

However:

- 40% of Doctoral graduates were likely to be in fixed-term employment, compared with 18% of Taught Masters graduates and 19% of those with an Undergraduate qualification.
Employment by level of study

Doctoral graduates are 5% more likely to be in full-time employment than Taught Masters graduates, and 13% more likely than those graduating with an Undergraduate degree. Overall levels of employment are higher for Doctoral graduates and Taught Masters graduates than for those completing an undergraduate degree by 11% and 6% respectively.

Unemployment levels for those with Doctoral or Masters’ qualifications are equal at 8%, which includes respondents who are carers and/or who are retired.

Unemployment by level of study as a % of respondents

Unemployment by level of study as a % of respondents
Type of Employment

At 40%, Doctoral graduates are significantly more likely to be in fixed term employment than any other kind of graduate.

87% of Doctoral graduates were earning £30k+, as compared to 43% of Taught Masters graduates, and 23% of those with an Undergraduate degree.
Reflections on Qualification and Career

Doctoral and Taught Masters graduates were more likely to agree that their ‘current activity is meaningful’, that they are ‘utilising what they learnt in their studies’ and that their ‘current activity fits with their future plans’.

[diagram showing the percentage of graduates who strongly agree and agree with each statement]

[ENDS]

If you would like to comment on this or any other development in postgraduate education, please write to our Director at: owen.gower@ukcge.ac.uk