



Statistical Bulletin

Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education: Longitudinal Survey of 2004/05 graduates three and a half years on – Northern Ireland Analysis

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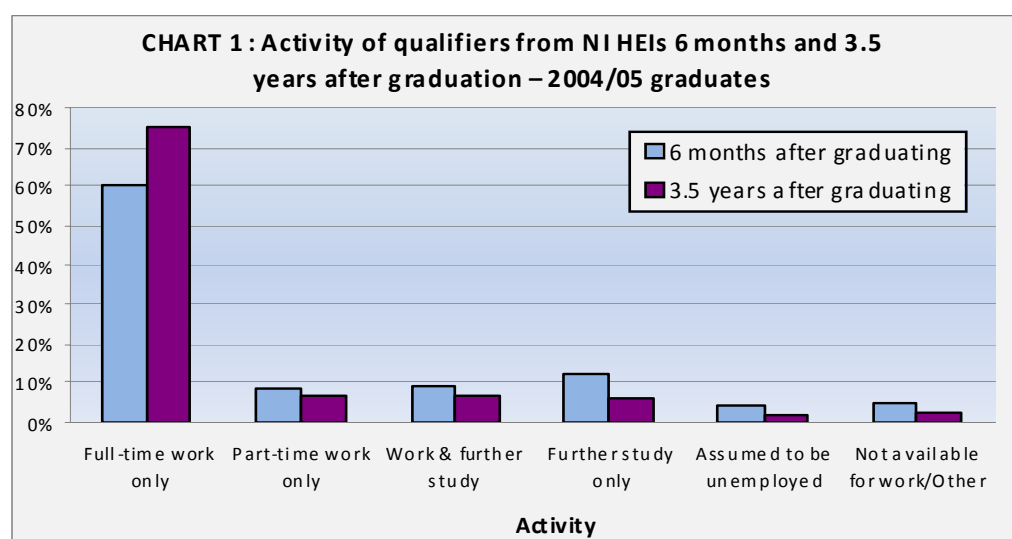
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This Statistical Bulletin presents Northern Ireland (NI) analysis from the 'Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Longitudinal Survey of 2004/05 graduates – three and a half years on'. The Bulletin reports on qualifiers from NI Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs. The survey was carried out among students who completed a HE course at a UK HEI in 2004/05. Qualifiers were first surveyed six months after graduation and then again three and a half years after graduation in the winter of 2008/2009. The aim of the surveys was to collect information on student activities after graduating. The second survey also explored satisfaction levels and HE experience. This Bulletin focuses on the results from the second survey. However, some comparisons have been made between the results of the two surveys.



KEY POINTS

Qualifiers from NI HEIs

- Three and a half years after graduation 83% of qualifiers from NI HEIs were in 'full-time work only' or 'part-time work only'. This has increased from 69% at six months after graduation. Only 2% of qualifiers were 'assumed to be unemployed', down from 4% at six months.
- The proportion of qualifiers in each activity (i.e. 'full-time work only', 'part-time work only', 'work and further study', 'further study only', 'assumed to be unemployed' and 'not available for employment'), three and a half years after graduation was broadly similar for qualifiers from NI, English, Scottish and Welsh HEIs.
- Approximately 89% of employed NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs were working in NI three and a half years after graduation, compared to 93% at six months. Only 26% of non NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were employed in NI, similar to the proportion six months after graduation.
- The majority (82%) of employed graduates from NI HEIs were employed in 'graduate' jobs three and a half years after graduation, compared to 75% at six months.
- Approximately 90% of qualifiers from NI HEIs said they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with their career to date, three and a half years after graduation.

NI Domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs (including NI HEIs)

- Approximately 81% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were in 'full-time work only' or 'part-time work only', three and a half years after graduation. This has increased from 69% at six months after graduation. Only 2% of qualifiers were 'assumed to be unemployed', down from 4% at six months.
- Of those NI domiciled qualifiers in employment, approximately 80% were employed in NI three and a half years after graduation, similar to the figure at six months (81%). NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were more likely to be employed in NI (89%) than NI domiciled qualifiers from GB HEIs (54%) three and a half years after graduation. At six months after graduation 93% of NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs and 43% of NI domiciled qualifiers from GB HEIs were employed in NI.
- Approximately 81% of NI domiciled qualifiers, in employment, were in a 'graduate' job three and a half years after graduation, compared to 74% at six months.
- 89% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs said that they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with their career to date, three and a half years after graduation.

SECTION 1 : QUALIFIERS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

This section presents the findings for qualifiers who graduated from a NI HEI in 2004/05. Over 90% of these qualifiers were domiciled in NI before entering HE. Differences reported between subgroups in this section are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level¹. Tables relating to this section can be found in Annex 1.

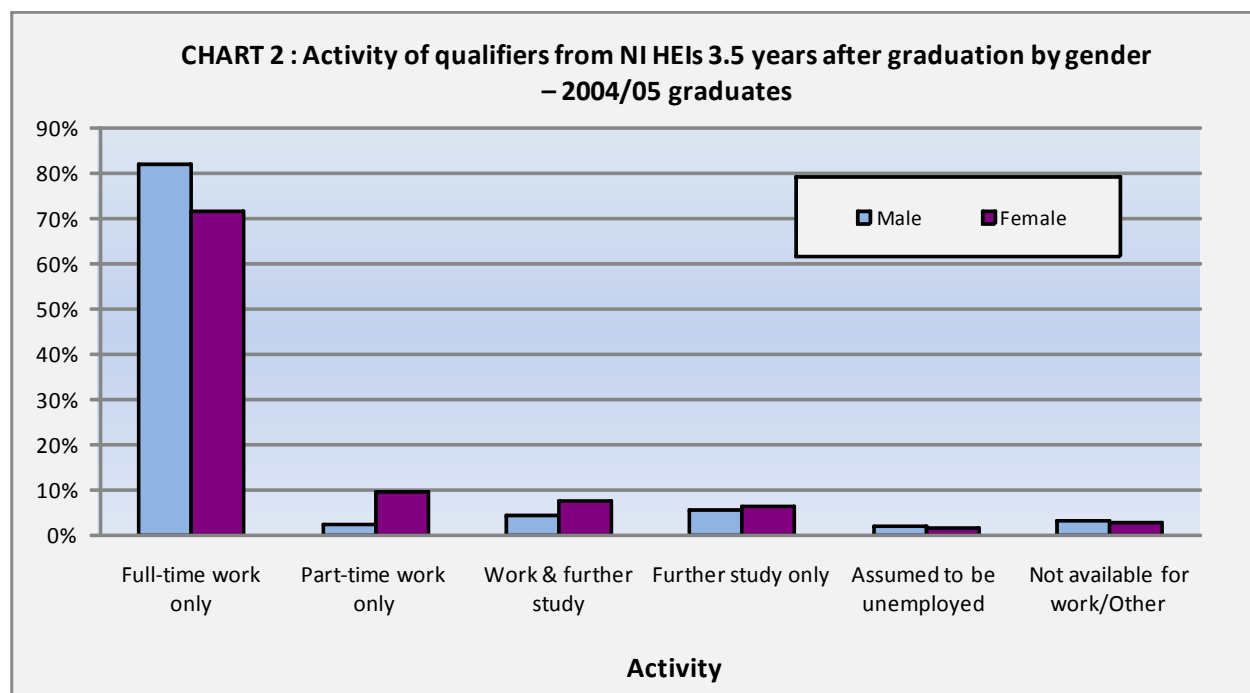
1.1 ACTIVITY THREE AND HALF YEARS AFTER GRADUATION

1.1.1 All Qualifiers (Table 1, Chart 1)

Three and a half years after graduation 83% of qualifiers from NI HEIs were in 'full-time work only' or 'part-time work only'. This has increased from 69% at six months after graduation. A further 7% of qualifiers were combining 'work and further study' compared to 9% at six months. There has been a decrease in the proportion of qualifiers who are in 'further study only', with 6% in this category, compared to 12% at six months. Only 2% of qualifiers were 'assumed to be unemployed', down from 4% at six months.

1.1.2 Gender (Table 1, Chart 2)

A greater percentage of males (82%) were in 'full-time work only', compared to 72% of females. At six months, 63% of males and 59% of females were in 'full-time work only'. Conversely, a larger percentage of females (10%) were in 'part-time work only', compared to 2% of males. At six months 10% of females and 6% of males were in 'part-time work only'.



¹ See notes to readers parts 9 to 13

1.1.3 Level of study (Table 2)

Approximately 75% of First Degree qualifiers from NI HEIs were in 'Full-time paid work only', three and a half years after graduation, up from 55% six months after graduating. Conversely 8% of First Degree qualifiers from NI HEIs were in 'Further study only' compared to 16% at six months.

1.1.4 Mode of study (Table 3)

Three and a half years after graduation, qualifiers who had studied part-time at a NI HEI were more likely to be in 'part-time work only' (12%) than full-time qualifiers (6%). A larger proportion of full-time qualifiers were in 'further study only' (7%), compared to part-time qualifiers (2%).

1.1.5 GB Comparison (Table 4)

The proportion of qualifiers from NI HEIs in 'full-time work only' or 'part-time work only', three and a half years after graduation, was on a par with qualifiers from English, Scottish and Welsh HEIs. In fact, the proportion of qualifiers in each activity, three and a half years after graduation, was broadly similar for each of the UK countries.

1.2 CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

1.2.1 Location of Employment (Table 5)

Overall, 84% of qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were working in NI, three and a half years after graduation.

Approximately 89% of employed NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs were working in NI three and a half years after graduation. This is lower than at the six months stage when 93% of this group were employed in NI. Only 26% of non NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were employed in NI. This is similar to the proportion six months after graduation.

1.2.2 Type of Job – Graduate or Non Graduate² (Table 6)

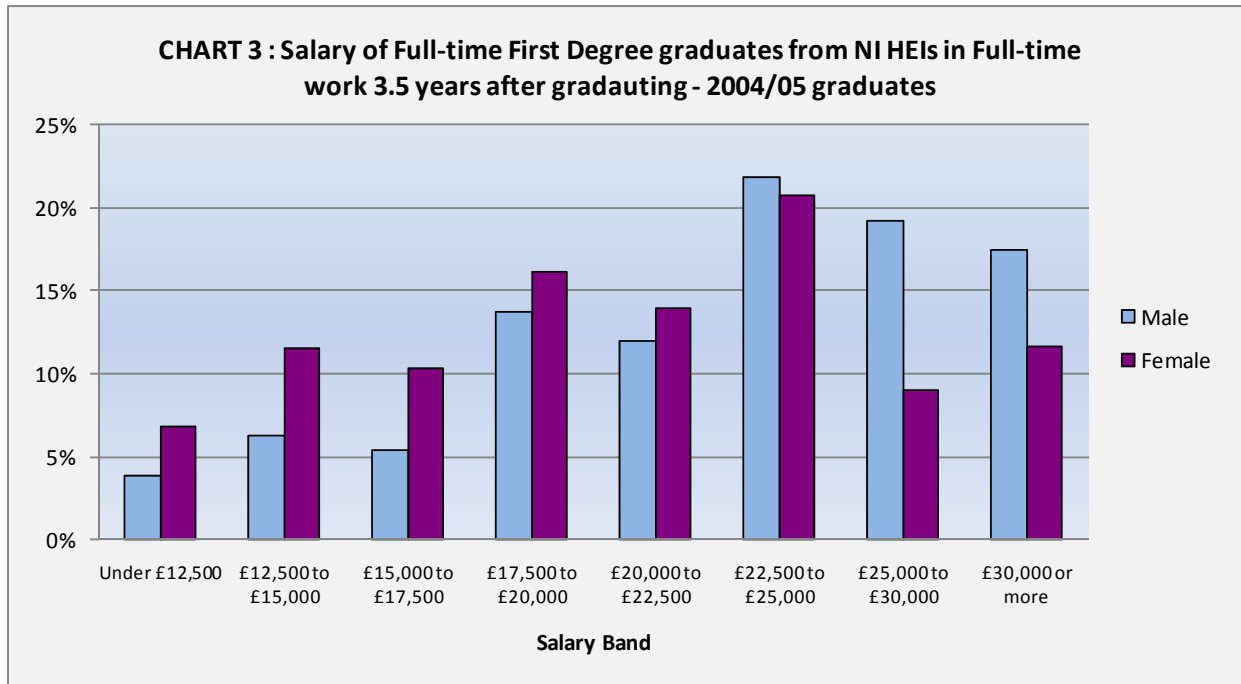
The majority (82%) of employed graduates from NI HEIs were employed in 'graduate' jobs three and a half years after graduation, an increase from 75% at six months after graduation. Qualifiers with a Postgraduate qualification were more likely (90%) to be in a 'graduate' job than First Degree qualifiers (78%), three and a half years after graduation.

² See notes to readers part 22

1.2.3 Salary (Table 7, Chart 3)

The median salary of full-time First Degree qualifiers from NI HEIs in 'full-time work only' three and a half years after graduation was £22,000.

Male qualifiers from full-time first degree courses at NI HEIs who were in 'full-time work only' were earning a median salary of £24,000, compared to a median salary of £21,099 for their female counterparts.

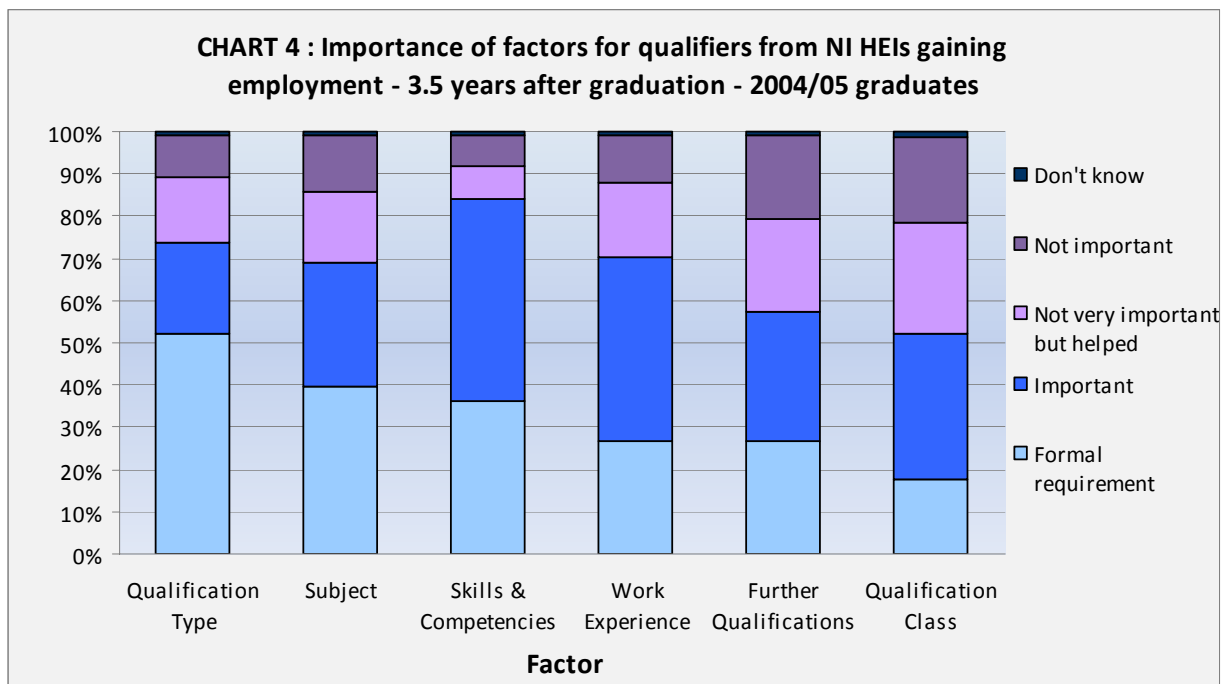


Qualifiers from full-time Postgraduate courses at NI HEIs who were in 'full-time work only' had a median salary of £25,898, three and a half years after graduation, with males (£27,940) again earning more than females (£25,000).

1.2.4 Factors in gaining employment (Table 8, Chart 4)

Qualifiers from NI HEIs who were in employment, three and a half years after graduation, were asked to rate the importance of various factors in gaining that employment, on a scale ranging from 'a formal requirement' to 'not important'.

Qualification type was more likely than other factors to have been rated as a 'formal requirement', with 52% of graduates reporting this to be the case, while a further 22% said it was 'important'. Around two in five graduates said that *subject studied* (40%) and *evidence of skills and competencies* (36%) were 'formal requirements', with a further 30% and 48% respectively rating them as 'important'. More than a quarter of graduates rated *relevant work experience* (27%) and *further qualifications obtained* (27%) as 'formal requirements', with 44% and 31% respectively rating them as 'important'. Only 18% of graduates rated *class of qualification* as a 'formal requirement', but a further 35% thought that it was 'important'.

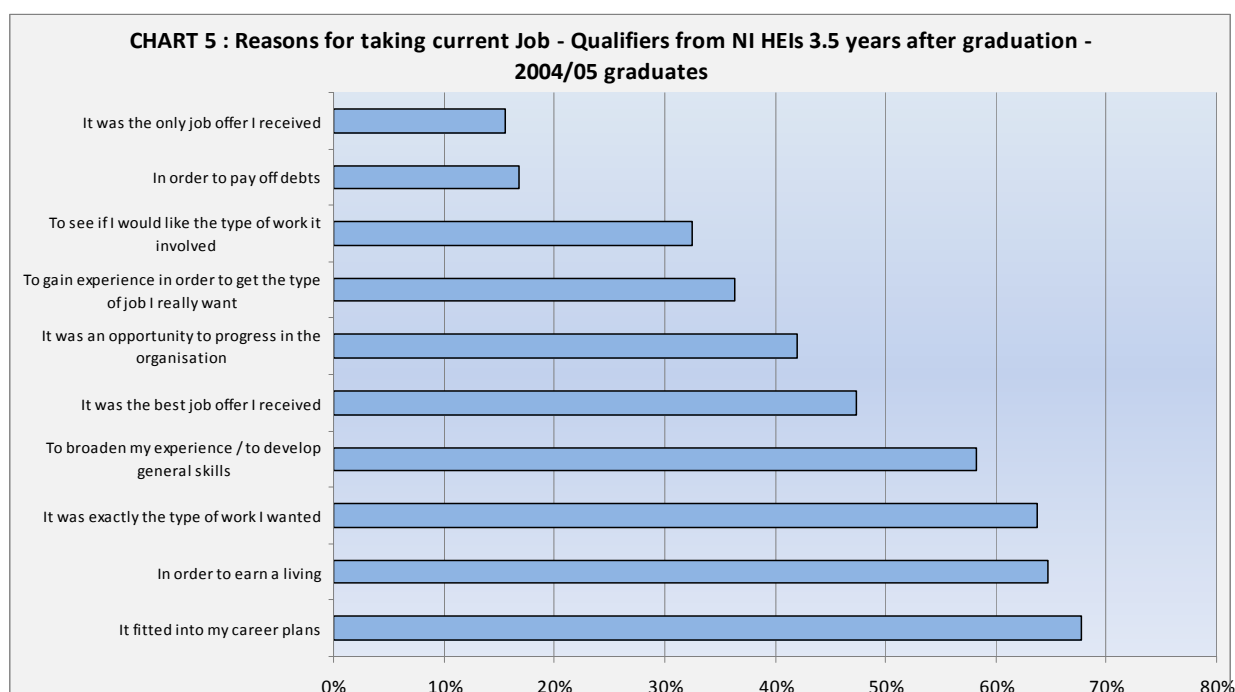


1.2.5 Reasons for taking current job (Table 9, Chart 5)

Qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment, three and a half years after graduation, were also asked to identify all the reasons that helped them in the decision to choose their current job.

The most common reasons given for taking their current job, were, 'It fitted in to my career plans', 'In order to earn a living', and 'It was exactly the type of work I wanted' with between 60% and 70% qualifiers from NI HEIs citing each of these as motivations. Almost 60% said that they chose their current job in order 'to broaden my experience / to develop general skills'.

Other popular reasons, reported by between 40% and 50% of qualifiers were, 'It was the best job offer I received' and 'It was an opportunity to progress in the organisation'.



1.2.6 How did you find out about your current job? (Table 10)

Employed qualifiers from NI HEIs, three and a half years after graduation, were then asked to identify all the sources that helped them find out about their current job.

The most common source for finding a job was a 'Newspaper/magazine advert or its website', with 43% of qualifiers from NI HEIs reporting this category. This was followed by 'Personal Contacts', 'Already/previously worked for organisation', 'Professional, work or educational contacts or networks' and 'Employers website' with between 18% and 19% of qualifiers reporting each of these categories. Other sources quoted are listed in Table 10.

1.3 FURTHER STUDY AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

1.3.1 Further study (Table 11)

Three and a half years after graduation 7% of qualifiers from NI HEIs were combining 'work and further study' and a further 6% were in 'further study only' (Table 1).

Of those in 'work or further study' or 'further study only':

- 58% were studying full-time and 42% were studying part-time;
- Almost 3 in 5 (58%) were studying for a postgraduate qualification, around 1 in 5 were studying for a Undergraduate (21%) or a Professional (18%) qualification and 3% were studying for other qualifications;
- Over half (54%) were engaged in a course with a duration of between 1 and 3 years. More than a quarter (27%) were on a course with a duration of more than three years and 1 in 5 (20%) for less than 1 year;
- The most common sources of funding for study were a 'Grant / Award', 'Self funded' and 'Employer support' with approximately 30% to 40% reporting each of these categories;
- The main reason given for undertaking further study was 'to change or improve my career options' with 78% citing this reason. Other popular reasons for undertaking further study were 'to develop a more specialist set of skills or knowledge', 'to develop a broader range of skills or knowledge', and 'because I was interested in the content of the course' with between 60% and 70% reporting each of these reasons. Between 30% and 40% reported that 'I wanted to continue studying' and 'because I had enjoyed my first course' as a reason and 8% said that they undertook further study because 'I had been unable to find a suitable job'.

1.3.2 Other qualifications (Table 12)

Qualifiers from NI HEIs were asked if they had obtained any other qualifications in the three and half years since completing their course in 2004/05. Approximately 2 in 5 (40%) reported that they had obtained a further qualification and 60% reported they hadn't obtained any further qualifications.

Of those 40% of qualifiers from NI HEIs who had obtained a further qualification:

- Almost 77% said they obtained one qualification, 15% said they obtained two and 9% said that obtained three or more qualifications;

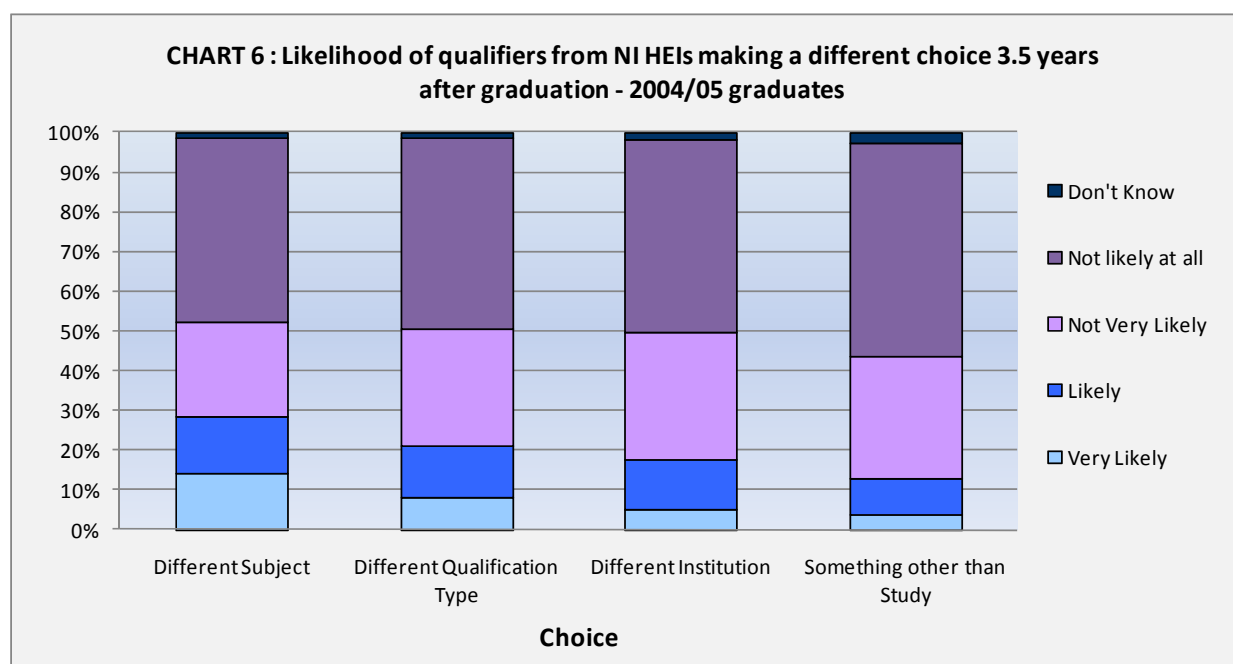
- 44% reported that the highest further qualification obtained was a Postgraduate qualification. Approximately one in four reported that their highest further qualification obtained was an Undergraduate (26%) or Professional qualification (23%) and 7% obtained other qualifications;
- The main source of funding reported for the highest further qualification obtained was 'Self funded' (46%) followed by 'Employer support' (37%), 'Grant / award' (13%) and 'Other funding' (5%).

1.4 SATISFACTION

Qualifiers from NI HEIs were asked to think about their Higher Education experience and how likely they would be to make different choices if they could do it all again. They were also asked to rate their overall satisfaction level with their career to date. Finally qualifiers were asked to state whether they agreed with the statement about their overall experience of the course they completed in 2004/05: 'My course was good value for money'.

1.4.1 Likelihood of making different choices (Table 13, Chart 6)

Almost 13% of qualifiers said that they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to *do something other than training, study or research*. A larger proportion of graduates (18%) said that they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to *study at a different institution*. Around 1 in 5 graduates (21%) said they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to *work toward a different type of qualification* and over 1 in 4 (28%) reported that they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to *choose a different subject*.

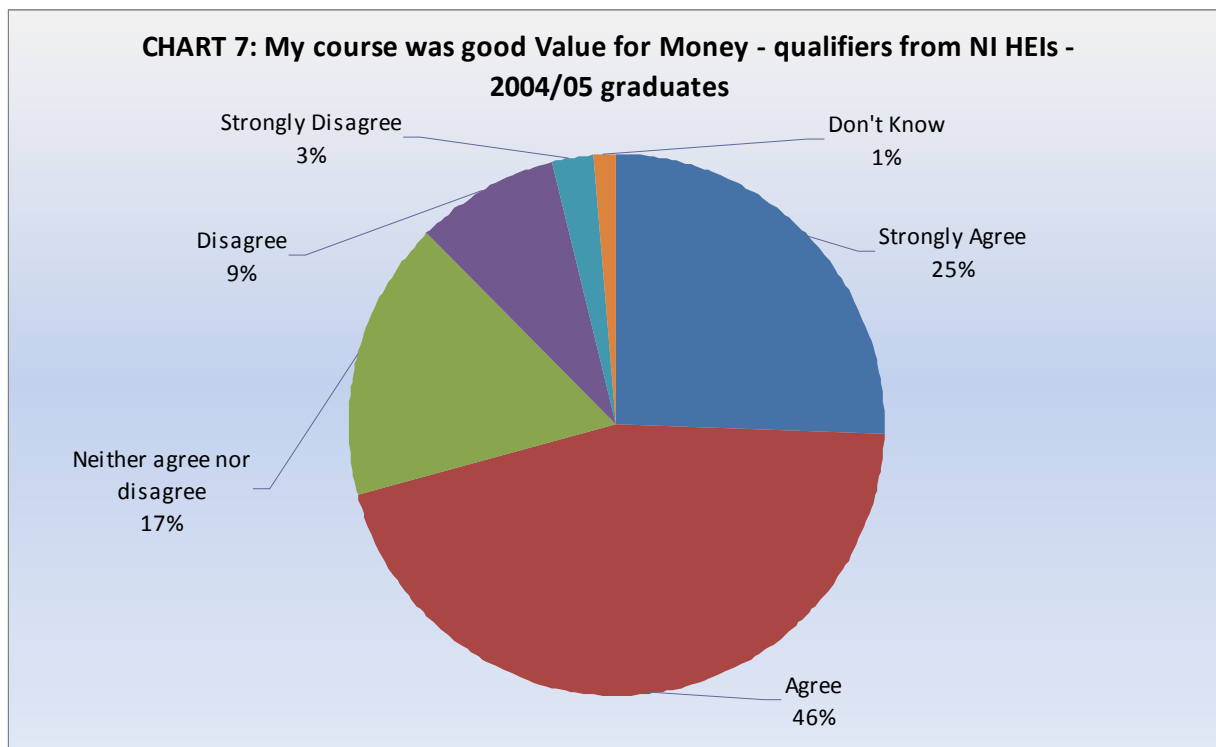


1.4.2 Satisfaction with Career to date (Table 14)

Three and a half years after graduations 90% of qualifiers from NI HEIs said they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with their career to date. 7% reported that they were 'not very satisfied' and 3% said they were 'not satisfied at all'.

1.4.3 Value for Money (Table 15, Chart 7)

The majority (71%) of qualifiers from NI HEIs said that they 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the statement that the course they completed in 2004/05 was good value for money.



Approximately eight in ten Postgraduate (80%) and Other Undergraduate (81%) qualifiers 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the value for money statement, compared to 67% of First Degree qualifiers.

Part-time (80%) qualifiers were more likely than full-time (68%) qualifiers to 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the value for money statement.

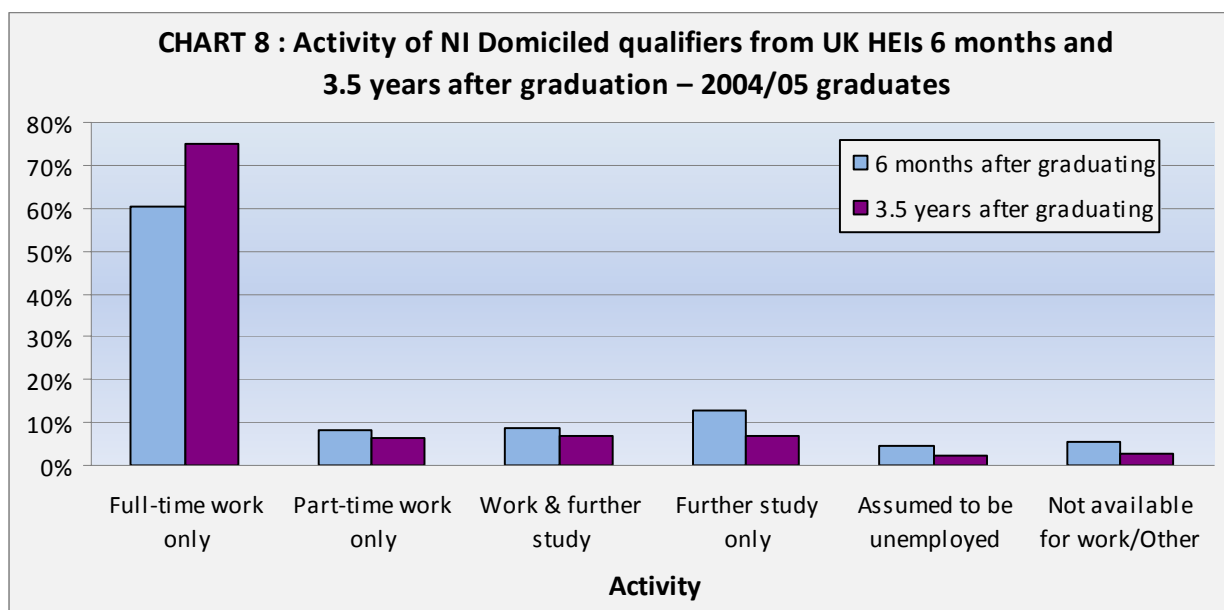
SECTION 2 : NORTHERN IRELAND DOMICILED QUALIFIERS FROM UK (INCLUDING NI) HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

This section presents the findings for qualifiers domiciled in NI who graduated from a UK HEI in 2004/05. Approximately 75% of these qualifiers graduated from a NI HEI. Differences reported between subgroups in this section are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level¹. Tables relating to this section can be found in Annex 1.

2.1 ACTIVITY THREE AND HALF YEARS AFTER GRADUATION

2.1.1 All Qualifiers (Table 16, Chart 8)

Three and a half years after graduation, 81% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were in 'full-time work only' or 'part-time work only', an increase from the 69% who were in these categories six months after graduation. A further 7% of qualifiers were 'combining work and further study' (9% at six months) and 7% were in 'further study only' (13% at six months). Only 2% of qualifiers were 'assumed to be unemployed' (4% at six months).



2.1.2 Gender (Table 16)

Males (80%) were more likely to have been in 'full-time work only', three and a half years after graduation, compared to females (72%). At 6 months 62% of males and 60% of females were in 'full-time work only'. Conversely, 9% of females were in 'part-time work only' compared to 3% of males.

At three and a half years after graduation, 8% of females were combining 'work & further study', compared to 5% of males.

¹ See notes to readers parts 9 to 13

2.1.3 Level of study (Table 17)

Approximately 74% of NI domiciled First Degree qualifiers from UK HEIs were in 'Full-time paid work only', three and a half years after graduation, up from 55% six months after graduating. Conversely 8% of NI domiciled First Degree qualifiers from UK HEIs were in 'Further study only' compared to 16% at six months

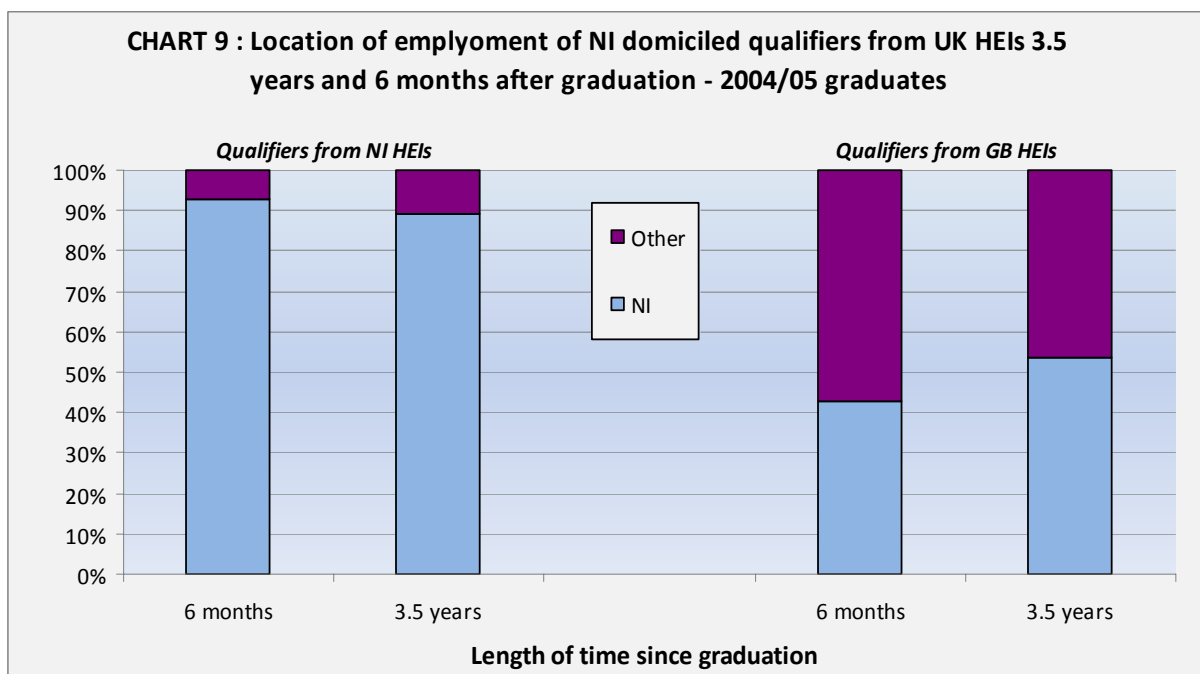
2.1.4 Mode of study (Table 18)

Three and a half years after graduation, NI domiciled qualifiers who had studied part-time at a UK HEI were more likely to be in 'part-time work only' (12%) than full-time qualifiers (5%). A larger proportion of full-time qualifiers were in 'further study only' (8%), compared to part-time qualifiers (2%).

2.2 CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

2.2.1 Location of Employment (Table 19, Chart 9)

Of those NI domiciled qualifiers in employment, approximately 80% were employed in NI three and a half years after graduation, similar to the figure at six months (81%). NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were more likely to be employed in NI (89%) than NI domiciled qualifiers from GB HEIs (54%) three and a half years after graduation. At six months after graduation 93% of NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs and 43% of NI domiciled qualifiers from GB HEIs were employed in NI.



2.2.2 Type of Job² (Table 20)

Approximately 81% of NI domiciled qualifiers, in employment, were in a 'graduate' job three and a half years after graduation, compared to 74% at six months after graduation.

Postgraduate qualifiers, in employment, were more likely to be in a 'graduate' job (91%) three and a half years after graduation than First Degree qualifiers (77%).

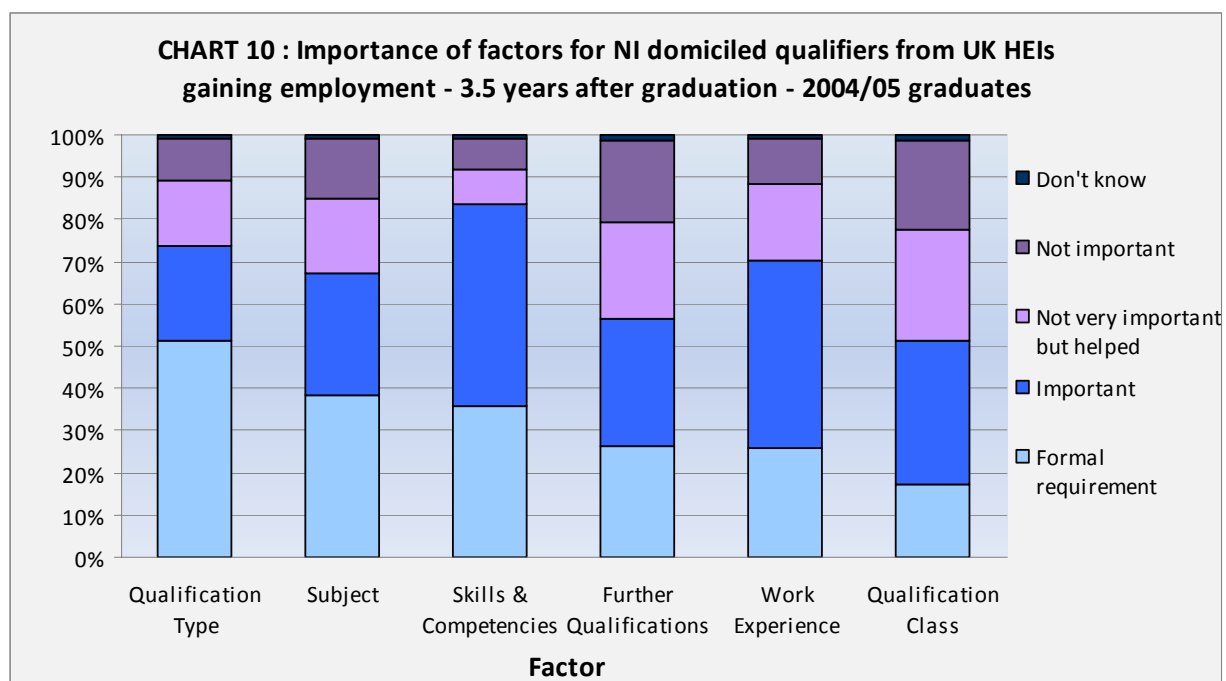
2.2.3 Salary (Table 21)

The median salary of NI domiciled full-time First Degree qualifiers from UK HEIs, in 'full-time work only', was £22,000, three and half years after graduation. This is less than full-time Postgraduate qualifiers in 'full-time work only', whose median salary was £25,000.

NI domiciled Male qualifiers from full-time first degree courses at UK HEIs who were in 'full-time work only' were earning a median salary of £24,000, compared to a median salary of £21,099 for their female counterparts.

2.2.4 Factors in gaining employment (Table 22, Chart 10)

NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs who were in employment, three and a half years after graduation, were asked to rate the importance of various factors in gaining that employment, on a scale ranging from 'a formal requirement' to 'not important'.



² See notes to readers part 22

Qualification type was more likely than other factors to have been rated as a ‘formal requirement’, with 51% of graduates reporting this to be the case, while a further 22% said it was ‘important’. Almost two in five graduates said that *subject studied* (39%) and *evidence of skills and competencies* (36%) were ‘formal requirements’, with a further 29% and 48% respectively, rating them as ‘important’. Approximately a quarter of graduates (26%) rated *relevant work experience* and *further qualifications obtained* as ‘formal requirements’, with 44% and 31% respectively, rating them as ‘important’. Only 17% of graduates rated *class of qualification* as a ‘formal requirement’, with a further 34% rating it as ‘important’.

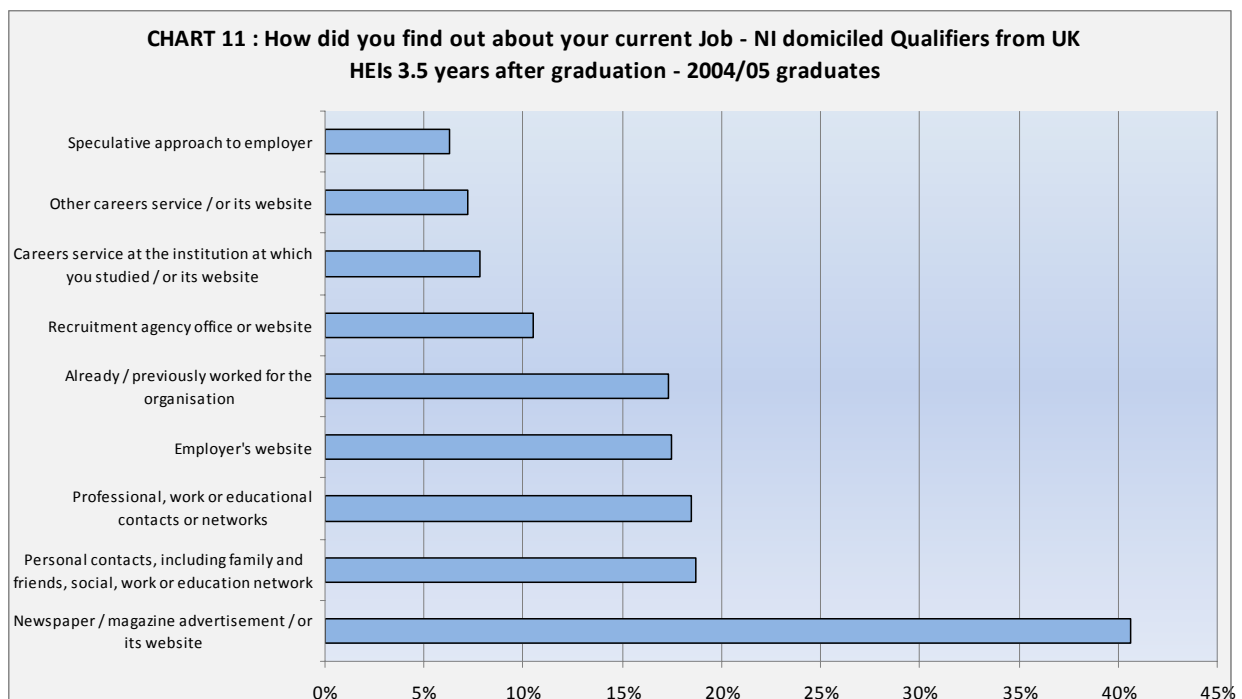
2.2.5 Reasons for taking current job (Table 23)

NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs in employment, three and a half years after graduation, were also asked to identify all the reasons that helped them in the decision to choose their current job.

The most common reasons given for taking their current job, were, ‘It fitted in to my career plans’, ‘In order to earn a living’, and ‘It was exactly the type of work I wanted’ with between 60% and 70% of NI domiciled qualifiers citing each of these as motivations. ‘To broaden my experience/to develop general skills’ was stated by 58% of NI domiciled qualifiers. Other popular reasons, reported by between 40% and 50% of qualifiers were, ‘It was the best job offer I received’, and ‘It was an opportunity to progress in the organisation’. Other reasons reported are listed in Table 23.

2.2.6 How did you find out about your current job? (Table 24, Chart 11)

NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs in employment, three and a half years after graduation, were then asked to identify all the sources that helped them find out about their current job.



The main source used by NI domiciled qualifiers in finding their current job was a 'Newspaper/magazine advertisement/or its website' with 41% quoting this category. 'Personal Contacts', 'Professional, work or educational contacts', 'Employer's website' and 'Already or previously worked for the organisation' were each important factors for between 17% and 19% of qualifiers. Other sources quoted are listed in Table 24 and Chart 11.

2.3 FURTHER STUDY AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

2.3.1 Further study (Table 25)

Three and a half years after graduation 7% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were combining 'work and further study' and a further 7% were in 'further study only' (Table 16).

Of those in 'work or further study' or 'further study only':

- 61% were studying full-time and 39% were studying part-time;
- Over half (56%) were studying for a postgraduate qualification, around 1 in 5 were studying for a Undergraduate (21%) or a Professional (18%) qualification and 5% were studying for other qualifications;
- Almost half (49%) were engaged in a course with a duration of between 1 and 3 years, 30% were on a course with a duration of more than three years and 1 in 5 (21%) for less than 1 year;
- The most common sources of funding for study were a 'Grant / Award', 'Self funded' and 'Employer support' with approximately 30% to 40% reporting each of these categories;
- The main reason given for undertaking further study was 'to change or improve my career options' with 76% citing this reason. Other popular reasons for undertaking further study were 'to develop a more specialist set of skills or knowledge', 'to develop a broader range of skills or knowledge', and 'because I was interested in the content of the course' with between approximately 55% and 65% reporting each of these reasons. Other reasons reported by between approximately 30% and 40% were 'I wanted to continue studying' and 'because I had enjoyed my first course' and 10% said that they undertook further study because 'I had been unable to find a suitable job'.

2.3.2 Other qualifications (Table 26)

NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were asked if they had obtained any other qualifications in the three and half years since completing their course in 2004/05. Approximately 2 in 5 (40%) reported that they had obtained a further qualification and 60% reported they hadn't obtained any further qualifications.

Of those 40% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs who had obtained a further qualification:

- Almost 75% said they obtained one qualification, 17% said they obtained two and 8% said that obtained three or more qualifications;
- 43% reported that the highest further qualification obtained was a Postgraduate qualification. Approximately one in four reported that their highest further qualification obtained was an Undergraduate (27%) or Professional qualification (24%) and 7% obtained other qualifications;
- The main source of funding report for the highest further qualification obtained was 'Self funded' (46%) followed by 'Employer support' (37%), 'Grant / award' (13%) and 'Other funding' (4%).

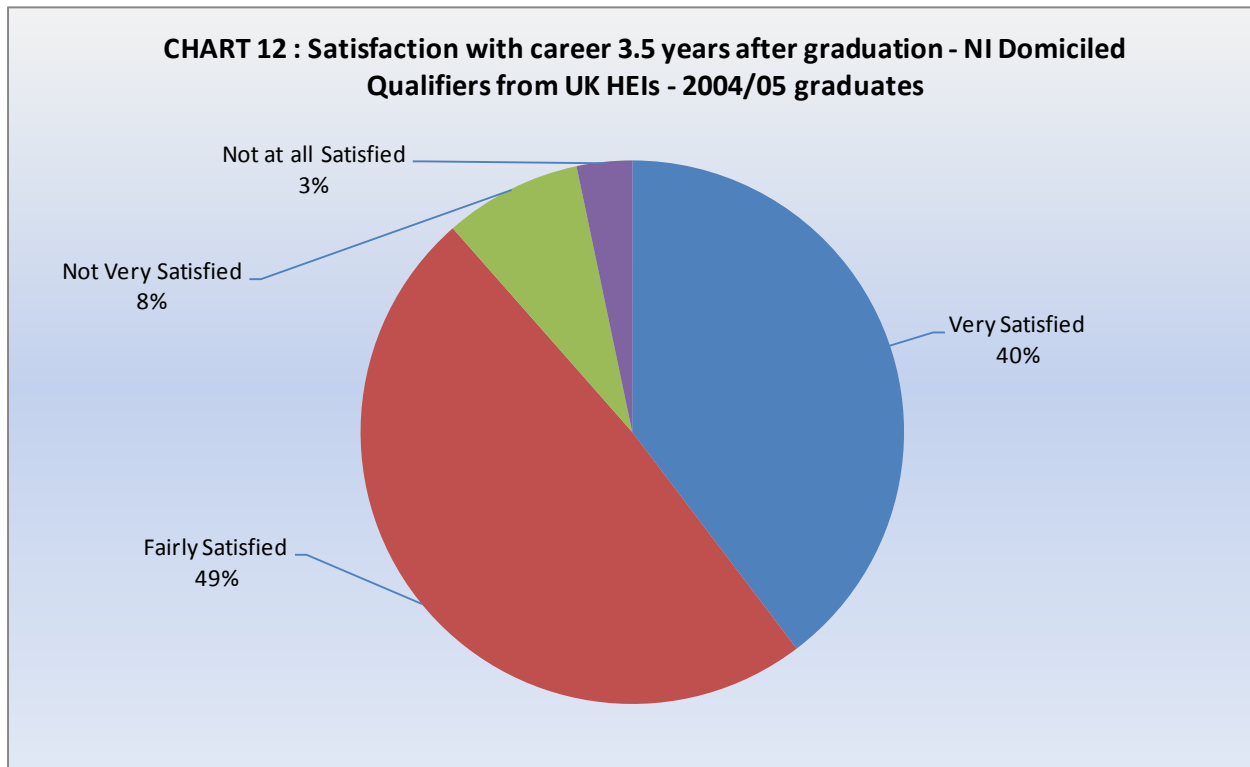
2.4 SATISFACTION

NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were asked to think about their Higher Education experience and how likely they would be to make different choices if they could do it all again. They were also asked to rate their overall satisfaction level with their career to date. Finally qualifiers were asked to state whether they agreed with the statement about their overall experience of the course they completed in 2004/05: 'My course was good value for money'.

2.4.1 Likelihood of making different choices (Table 27)

If NI domiciled qualifiers had the opportunity to make their choices again 27% said they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to *choose a different subject*, a fifth (21%) would *work towards a different type of qualification*; around 1 in 6 (17%) said they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to *study at different institution* and 13% said they would *do something other than training, study or research*.

2.4.2 Satisfaction with Career to date (Table 28, Chart 12)



Around 89% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs said that they were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with their career to date, three and a half years after graduation. Less than one in ten (8%) qualifiers reported that they were ‘not very satisfied’ and 3% said they were ‘not at all satisfied’.

NI domiciled female qualifiers from UK HEIs were more likely to be ‘very satisfied’ with their career to date than their male counterparts, with figures of 43% and 35% respectively.

2.4.3 Value for Money (Table 29)

The majority (70%) of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs said that they ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement that the course they completed in 2004/05 was good value for money.

Postgraduate (79%) and Other Undergraduate (79%) qualifiers were more likely to ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement than First Degree (66%) qualifiers.

67% of qualifiers who studied full-time ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the value for money statement, compared to 80% of part-time qualifiers.

NOTES TO READERS

Background

1. This Statistical Bulletin has been produced by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and presents Northern Ireland (NI) specific analysis from the 'Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Longitudinal Survey of 2004/05 graduates – three and a half years on'.
2. A UK wide report was published in September 2009 by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The UK report and further information on the survey can be downloaded from the [HESA website](#).
3. There are two stages to the survey:

- Early DLHE (six months after graduating)

The first stage is a census of EU domiciled graduates six months after they graduate from a UK HEI and is known as the Early DLHE. This survey replaced the First Destination record in 2002/03 and is carried out annually. A NI report on the 2004/05 Early DLHE can be downloaded from the [Department's website](#).

- Longitudinal DLHE (three and a half years after graduating)

The second stage of the survey is a follow up to the Early DLHE and is carried out three and a half years after graduation. It is conducted on a sample of individuals who responded to the Early DLHE and is known as the Longitudinal DLHE. The first Longitudinal DLHE was carried out in the winter of 2006/07 on the 2002/03 graduates and is currently a biennial survey.

4. The 2004/05 Longitudinal DLHE survey was carried out by IFF Research Ltd on behalf of the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and was co-funded by Higher Education Funding Council for England, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Scottish Funding Council, Department for Employment and Learning (NI), Training and Development Agency for Schools and the Department of Health and Research Councils UK.

Methodology for Longitudinal DLHE

Sample Design

5. The 2004/05 Longitudinal DLHE is based on two sub- samples of the 319,260 qualifiers who responded to the Early Survey in 2004/05. 71,390 qualifiers were selected from across virtually all UK HEIs with certain sub-groups oversampled, to provide adequate numbers for analysis. This cohort was known as Sample A and 26,245 responses were received.

In addition 89,605 of the remaining 247,870 graduates for whom an email address was available were contacted (Sample B) resulting in a further 15,155 responses to the survey. After some work to determine if it was feasible to do so, it was agreed by IFF Research and HESA that it was possible to combine Sample A and Sample B for analysis purposes. Therefore the total number of responses for the UK was 41,395.

6. Northern Ireland was one of the oversampled sub-groups in Sample A, with 60% of NI domiciled students and 60% of non NI domiciled students who studied at a NI HEI included in the sample. The total number of responses for NI HEIs was 2,355 (2,300 from sample A and 55 from sample B). The total number of responses from NI domiciled students was 2,860 (2,750 from Sample A and 110 from sample B). Both groups (NI domiciled qualifiers and qualifiers from NI HEIs) include the same 2,145 NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs.
7. The four main NI HEIs, namely Queen's University Belfast, University of Ulster, Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University College were all included in the survey.

Data Collection

8. The data collection was undertaken by IFF Research using a mixture of postal, telephone and online questionnaires. The approach used depended on the contact details provided by the HE institution. The different modes were used sequentially:

(i) All qualifiers in Sample A with an email address were invited by email to complete an online questionnaire. A week after the initial email, a reminder was sent out with another reminder sent a few days later. The same approach was taken for all qualifiers in Sample B with an email address.

(ii) Two weeks after the initial email, qualifiers in Sample A who did not respond to the questionnaire sent by email plus all other qualifiers (in Sample A) for whom a postal address was available were sent a postal questionnaire. A reminder and second questionnaire were sent out a month after the initial mailing.

(iii) Contact attempts were then made by telephone for qualifiers in Sample A who had not responded to the questionnaire online or by post and for whom a telephone number had been provided. Up to seven calls were made to each respondent.

Analysis

9. The Longitudinal DLHE data and hence results, are weighted to take account of the oversampling of subgroups and the effects of non-response bias. The application of weights is necessary to ensure that the final results are reasonably representative of the true population (i.e. EU domiciled graduates from UK HEIs in 2004/05 who responded to the Early DLHE). The tables attached in Annex 1 show both unweighted and weighted totals for each question, although all statistics in this bulletin are based on weighted data. The unweighted totals show the actual number of individuals who responded to each question. The weighted totals show the adjusted number of respondents after weights have been applied to take account of oversampling and non-response bias.
10. As with any survey the figures produced in this bulletin and in the tables attached in annex 1 are only estimates of the true population value. Even though the effects of non-response bias and oversampling have been taken into account, it is still likely that the estimates will not exactly represent the true population.
11. The level of certainty around the sample estimates are presented in the tables attached in Annex 1, by using 95% confidence intervals (labelled as 95% lower and 95% upper). That means that there is a 95% chance that the interval around each estimate contains the true population value. In other words, there is a 5% chance that the 95% confidence interval does not contain the true population value. The wider the confidence interval, the more uncertain the estimate.
12. Differences reported between subgroups in this bulletin are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
13. The 2004/05 Early DLHE was a census of all EU domiciled students at UK HEIs which achieved a relatively high response rate (75%). The statistics generated from this census are therefore treated as being representative of the total population of EU domiciled students at UK HEIs (i.e. no weights or confidence intervals are applied). This is the agreed protocol used by HESA.

Report / Table Conventions

14. This report has been divided into two sections. Section 1 looks at graduates from NI HEIs and Section 2 covers NI domiciled graduates from UK HEIs including NI. The majority of students in both sections are the NI domiciled students from NI HEIs and therefore the results in each section are relatively similar. Section 1 also includes GB and EU students who studied at NI HEIs and Section 2 includes NI domiciled students who studied at GB HEIs.
15. Unless otherwise stated, responses of 'don't know' and 'refusal to answer' have been excluded from the analysis.

16. Numbers in tables (Annex 1) and this bulletin have been rounded to the nearest 5. Due to rounding figures may not sum to totals.
17. Percentages in tables (Annex 1) and this bulletin may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
18. To adjust for outliers in salary information, the lowest and highest 0.5% of salaries were removed before analysis.

Definitions

19. *Other undergraduate courses* - includes undergraduate diplomas and certificates, HNDs, HNCs and foundation degrees.
20. *Postgraduate courses* are those leading to higher degrees, diplomas and certificates (including postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) and professional qualifications) which usually require a first degree as an entry qualification.
21. *First degree courses* include first degrees with or without eligibility to register to practise with a health or social care or veterinary statutory regulatory body, first degrees with qualified teacher status, enhanced first degrees, first degrees obtained concurrently with a diploma and intercalated first degrees.
22. *Type of Job* – each occupation was classified as being a ‘Graduate’ or ‘Non-graduate’ occupation according to the classification scheme devised by Elias and Purcell in their [2004 report](#) - ‘SOC (HE) A Classification of occupations for studying the graduated labour market’ (Institute of Employment Research, Warwick).
23. *Domicile* – a student’s place of residence prior to enrolment on a Higher Education course.
24. *Mean and Median Salaries* - The mean measures the average salary earned by individuals within a group. However in a skewed distribution, such as earnings, the mean is influenced by a small number of very high earners. The median measures the salary earned by the middle person within a group, i.e. 50% of individuals earned salaries above the median and 50% earned salaries below the median.

Further enquiries

More details about any of the statistics in this bulletin can be obtained from:

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