Statistical Bulletin

Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education:

Longitudinal Survey of 2008/09 qualifiers – Northern Ireland Analysis

December 2008



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| **Date of Publication:**  24 April 2014  **Frequency of Publication:**  Biennial  **Issued by:**  Statistics and Research Branch  Tertiary Education  Department for Employment  and Learning  Adelaide House  39-49 Adelaide Street  Belfast  BT2 8FD  **Public Enquiries:**  Statistics and Research Branch  Tertiary Education  (028) 90257897  **Statistician:**  David Patton  **Email:**  [analyticalservices@delni.gov.uk](mailto:analyticalservices@delni.gov.uk)  **Internet:**  [www.delni.gov.uk/ statsandresearch.htm](http://www.delni.gov.uk/statsandresearch.htm) | This statistical bulletin presents findings from the ‘Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Longitudinal Survey of 2008/09 qualifiers’. Qualifiers were first surveyed six months after completing their course and then after three and a half years. The aim of each survey was to collect information on the destinations of students after completing their course. The second survey also explored the qualifiers satisfaction levels and their higher education experience. This bulletin focuses on the results from the second survey, with comparisons made between the results of the two surveys where appropriate.     * After three and a half years, 87% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were in employment, an increase from 76% at six months. A further 7% were in further study only, 4% were unemployed and 3% were in other activities including those not available for work. * The majority of NI domiciled qualifiers in employment who studied in GB did not return to NI to work. Only 47% of this cohort was working in NI after three and a half years; however this has increased from 44% at six months. * 81% of qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were working in NI at three and a half years. This proportion differs significantly depending on the domicile of the student with 86% of NI domiciled qualifiers working in NI compared to only 27% of non NI domiciled qualifiers. * The majority (64%) of qualifiers from NI HEIs said that they ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement that the course they completed in 2008/09 was good value for money. |

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**INTRODUCTION**

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 2008/09 qualifiers’.

A UK wide longitudinal report was published in August 2013 by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The UK report and further information on the survey can be downloaded from the [HESA website](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/2974/).

There are two stages to the survey:

**Early Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE)**

The first stage, known as the Early DLHE, is a census of EU domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs. This census is administered annually approximately six months after students complete their course. A NI report on the 2008/09 Early DLHE can be downloaded from the [Department’s website](http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/publications/r-and-s-stats/he-destinations-of-leavers/destinations-of-leavers-from-uk-he-institutions-ni-analysis-0809.htm).

**Longitudinal DLHE**

The second stage of the survey is a follow up to the Early DLHE and is carried out three and a half years after completing their course. 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.

The 2008/09 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, the Department of Health and Research Councils UK.

**Structure of Bulletin**

The bulletin is divided into two sections. Section 1 focuses on NI domiciled qualifiers from HEIs in NI, England, Scotland or Wales. Section 2 concentrates on qualifiers from NI HEIs. The two sections overlap as they both include NI students at NI HEIs. This division into two sections reflects the two distinct policy and operational responsibilities of the Minister and the Department. Furthermore, it is clear from customer feedback, the nature of questions on HE asked in the Northern Ireland Assembly, and coverage of HE issues in the local media, for example, that these two aspects are of interest to readers. Therefore it has been decided to present breakdowns of information on HE along these two dimensions in this bulletin.

**Report Conventions**

Information in this bulletin relates to UK and EU domiciled students who gained relevant qualifications (see notes to readers for further details) from a UK HEI in 2008/09 – these students will be referred to as qualifiers in the remainder of this bulletin.

Unless otherwise stated, qualifiers in employment include those in full-time work, part-time work, voluntary work, those combining work and study and those in work whose mode of work is unknown.

Due to the small numbers in the ‘other undergraduate’ category, level of study comparisons have been generally made between ‘postgraduate’ qualifiers and ‘first degree’ qualifiers.

The longitudinal survey was conducted using a disproportionate stratified random sample. The results from this survey have therefore been weighted to take account of oversampling and the effects of non-response bias. The longitudinal tables show both the unweighted and weighted number of respondents for each question, however percentages in the tables are based on weighted data. The unweighted totals show the actual number of individuals who responded to each question, while the weighted totals show the adjusted number of respondents after weights, have been applied.

The figures relating to the 6 month survey are based on a census of qualifiers which achieved a high response rate of 81%. The results from this census are treated as being representative of the target population and therefore no weights or confidence intervals are applied.

Where differences between figures are highlighted as being higher or lower, these have been tested as statistically significant.

**KEY STATISTICS**

**Section 1 – Destinations of Northern Ireland domiciled qualifiers from UK Higher Education Institutions**

* After three and a half years, 87% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were in employment, an increase from 76% at six months. A further 7% were in further study only, 4% were unemployed and 3% were in other activities including those not available for work. (Table 2 & Chart 1).
* The majority of NI domiciled qualifiers in employment who studied in GB did not return to NI to work. Only 47% of this cohort was working in NI after three and a half years; however this has increased from 44% at six months. (Table 5 & Chart 2).
* The median salary of NI domiciled full-time first degree qualifiers from UK HEIs, in ‘full-time paid work only’, was £23,000, three and half years after graduation. This is less than full-time postgraduate qualifiers in ‘full-time paid work only’, whose median salary was £26,000. (Table 7).
* 82% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs said that they were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with their career to date, three and a half years after qualifying. (Table 14 & Chart 5).

**Section 2 – Destinations of qualifiers from Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions**

* After three and a half years, 87% of qualifiers from NI HEIs were in employment. This has increased from 76% at six months. A further 7% were in further study only, 3% were unemployed and 2% were in other activities including those not available for work. (Table 18 & Chart 6).
* 81% of qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were working in NI at three and a half years. This proportion differs significantly depending on the domicile of the student with 86% of NI domiciled qualifiers working in NI compared to only 27% of non NI domiciled qualifiers. (Table 22 & Chart 7).
* The median salary of full-time first degree qualifiers from NI HEIs in ‘full-time paid work only’ after three and a half years was £21,465. This is less than full-time postgraduate qualifiers in ‘full-time paid work only’, whose median salary was £25,550. (Table 24).
* The majority (64%) of qualifiers from NI HEIs said that they ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement that the course they completed in 2008/09 was good value for money. (Table 32 & Chart 11).

**SECTION 1: Destinations of Northern Ireland domiciled qualifiers from UK Higher Education Institutions (Tables 1 to 16)**

## This section presents the findings for NI students who qualified from a HEI in NI, England, Scotland or Wales in 2008/09. Tables relating to this section can be found in [Annex 1](#annex1).

**1.1 Comparison over time – 2002/03, 2004/05, 2006/07 & 2008/09 qualifiers (Table 1)**

The proportion of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs in employment1 after 3.5 years decreased year on year, from 90% for 2002/03 qualifiers to 87% for 2008/09 qualifiers. Over the same period the proportion of those unemployed increased from 2% to 4%.

**1.2 Destinations – 2008/09 qualifiers**

1.2.1 All Qualifiers (Table 2 & Chart 1)

After three and a half years, 87% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs in 2008/09 were in employment, an increase from 76% at six months. A further 7% were in ‘further study only’ compared to 14% at six months. Four percent of qualifiers were ‘assumed to be unemployed’ compared to 7% at six months. Three percent were in ‘other’ activities including those not available for work, similar to the proportion at six months.



1.2.2 Gender (Table 2)

Male qualifiers were more likely to be unemployed than females after three and a half years, with 5% recorded in this category, compared to 3% of females. These proportions have shown change from six months at which stage 10% of males and 6% of females were unemployed.

1 See definition point 14

Females (11%) were more likely to have been in ‘part-time paid work only’, than males (6%) after three and a half years. The proportions at six months were much closer with 13% of females in ‘part-time paid work only’ compared to 12% of males.

1.2.3 Level of study (Table 3)

The proportion of NI domiciled first degree qualifiers in employment increased from 72% at six months to 86% at three and a half years. Conversely the proportion in ‘Further study only’ decreased from 16% at six months to 8% at three and a half years.

The proportion of NI domiciled postgraduate qualifiers in employment increased from 88% at six months to 92% at three and a half years.

1.2.4 Mode of study (Table 4)

After three and a half years, NI domiciled qualifiers who had studied part-time at a UK HEI were more likely to be in ‘part-time paid work only’ (14%) than full-time qualifiers (8%). After 6 months, 10% of part-time qualifiers were in ‘part-time paid work only’ compared to 13% of full-time qualifiers.

A larger proportion of full-time qualifiers were in ‘further study only’ (7%), compared to part-time qualifiers (2%) after three and a half years. After 6 months, 15% of full-time qualifiers were in ‘further study only’ compared to 3% of part-time qualifiers.

**1.3 In Employment – 2008/09 qualifiers**

1.3.1 Location of Employment (Table 5, Chart 2)

The majority (53%) of NI domiciled qualifiers in employment, three and a half years after qualifying, who studied at a GB institution (including the Open University) did not return to NI to work. Only 47%, of this cohort were working in NI, however this has increased from 44% at six months.

After six months, 93% of NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were employed in NI. This has fallen to 86% at three and a half years.



1.3.2 Type of Job2 (Table 6)

The proportion of NI domiciled qualifiers in employment who were working in a ‘graduate’ level job increased from 67% at six months to 84% at three and a half years. Postgraduate qualifiers, in employment, were more likely to be in a ‘graduate’ job (93%) three and a half years after graduation than first degree qualifiers (81%).

First degree qualifiers have shown a greater change from the six month stage with the proportion of those in a ‘graduate’ job increasing by 22 percentage points, compared to a 2 percentage point increase for postgraduates.

1.3.3 Salary (Table 7)

The median salary of NI domiciled full-time first degree qualifiers from UK HEIs, in ‘full-time paid work only’, was £23,000, three and half years after graduation. This is higher than the six month figure of £19,000.

The median salary of NI domiciled postgraduate qualifiers in ‘full-time paid work only’, was £26,000, three and half years after graduation compared to £21,000 after six months.

NI domiciled male qualifiers from full-time first degree courses at UK HEIs who were in ‘full-time paid work only’ were earning a median salary of £23,500, compared to a median salary of £22,000 for their female counterparts. The equivalent figures after six months were £18,000 for males and £20,000 for females.

2 See definition point 18

1.3.4 Factors in gaining employment (Table 8, Chart 3)

Qualifiers, who were in employment three and a half years after qualifying, were asked to rate the importance of various factors in gaining that employment, on a scale ranging from ‘a formal requirement’ to ‘not important’. There was no comparison for this at six months.



*‘Evidence of skills and competencies’* was rated as a ‘formal requirement’ or ‘important’ in gaining employment by 81% of NI domiciled qualifiers. This was followed by ‘*relevant work experience’* (71%), ‘*qualification type’* (68%) and ‘*subject studied’* (65%). *‘Further qualifications obtained’* and *‘class of qualification’* were considered less important in gaining employment with 51% and 49% respectively rating them as a ‘formal requirement’ or ‘important’.

1.3.5 Reasons for taking current job (Table 9)

NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs in employment after three and a half years, were asked to identify all the reasons that helped them in the decision to choose their current job. No comparison is available at six months.

The most common reasons given for taking their current job, were, ‘*In order to earn a living’* (71%), and ‘*It fitted in with my career plan / It was exactly the type of work I wanted’* (70%). ‘*To broaden my experience/to develop general skills’* was stated by 65% of NI domiciled qualifiers. Other popular reasons reported were, ‘*It was the best /only job offer I received’* (56%), *‘It was an opportunity to progress in the organisation’* (47%) and *‘To gain experience in order to get the type of work I really wanted’* (46%).

1.3.6 How did you first find out about your current job? (Table 10, Chart 4)

The main source used by NI domiciled qualifiers in finding their current job was ‘Newspaper/magazine advertisement/or its website’ with 17% quoting this category. Other popular categories quoted by between 7% and 12 % of respondents were, ‘Personal Contacts’, ‘Employer’s website’, ‘Already or previously worked for the organisation’, ‘Professional, work or educational contacts’, ‘Own institution’s career service/website, ‘Other careers service’ or ‘Online/web-based recruitment agency’. No comparison is available at six months.



**1.4 In Further Study – 2008/09 qualifiers**

1.4.1 Further study (Table 2 & 11)

After three and a half years, 5% of NI domiciled qualifiers were combining ‘work and further study’ and a further 7% were in ‘further study only’. After six months 10% of NI domiciled qualifiers were combining ‘work and further study’ and a further 14% were in ‘further study only’.

Of those in ‘work or further study’ or ‘further study only’ after three and a half years:

* 68% were studying full-time and 32% were studying part-time;
* 69% were studying for a postgraduate qualification and 31% were studying for Undergraduate, Professional or other qualifications; and
* The main sources of funding for further study were ‘Grant / Award’ (42%) and ‘Self funded’ (39%). ‘Employer support’ was cited by 16% of respondents with 3% quoting ‘other’ sources.
* The main reasons given for undertaking further study three and a half years after qualifying were ‘to change or improve my career options’ (85%), ‘to develop a broader range of skills or knowledge’ (82%) and ‘because I was interested in the content of the course (79%). Forty-eight percent of respondents cited that ‘I had enjoyed my first course and wanted to continue studying’ as a reason for undertaking further study.

**1.5 Other activities since qualifying in 2008/09**

NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs were asked about what activities they had been involved in since completing their course in 2008/09. No comparison for six months was available for this section.

1.5.1 Employment (Table 12a&b)

In the three and a half years since qualifying, 58% of NI domiciled students said they had had 1 or more other jobs excluding their current job, if in work. Of those who had other job/jobs, 44% had one, 30% had two, 13% had three and a further 13% had four or more other jobs.

1.5.2 Unemployment (Table 12c&d)

Thirty-three percent of NI domiciled students had experienced at least one spell of unemployment since qualifying in 2008/09. Of those who had experienced unemployment, 60% had one spell of unemployment, 22% had two spells and 18% had three or more spells.

1.5.3 Further Qualifications (Table 12e,f,g,h)

In the three and a half years since graduating in 2008/09, 42% of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs had obtained a further qualification.

Of those who had obtained a further qualification:

* 71% said they obtained one qualification, 18% said they obtained two and 12% said that they obtained three or more qualifications;
* 51% reported that the highest further qualification obtained was a postgraduate qualification, 17% a professional qualification, 2% an undergraduate qualification and 30% obtained other qualifications; and
* The main source of funding reported for the highest further qualification obtained was ‘Self funded’ (55%) followed by ‘Employer support’ (25%), ‘Grant / award’ (16%) and ‘Other funding’ (4%).

**1.6 Satisfaction & Experience – 2008/09 qualifiers**

This section focuses on the qualifiers’ Higher Education experience and their career to date three and a half years after qualifying. Questions were asked in relation to making different choices, satisfaction with career, value for money and preparation for their career. No comparison for six months was available for this section.

1.6.1 Likelihood of making different choices (Table 13)

If NI domiciled qualifiers had the opportunity to make their choices again, 32% quoted ‘*choosing a different subject’* as being ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ and 31% ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to work ‘*towards a different type of qualification’*. Under a quarter (21%) quoted – ‘*study at a different institution’* as being ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’, while just over a quarter (26%) quoted - ‘*do something other than training, study or research’* as being ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’.

1.6.2 Satisfaction with Career to date (Table 14, Chart 5)

Eighty-two percent of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs said that they were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with their career to date, three and a half years after qualifying. Twelve percent of qualifiers reported that they were ‘not very satisfied’ and 5% said they were ‘not at all satisfied’.

A similar proportion of females (82%) and males (83%) said they were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with their careers to date. Postgraduate qualifiers recorded a high satisfaction level with 88% saying they were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ compared to 81% of first degree qualifiers. Part-time qualifiers had a higher satisfaction level than full-time qualifiers with 90% and 81% respectively reporting to be ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with their career.



1.6.3 Value for Money (Table 15)

The majority (66%) of NI domiciled qualifiers from UK HEIs said that they ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement that the course they completed in 2008/09 was good value for money.

Postgraduate (77%) qualifiers were more likely to ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement than first degree (63%) qualifiers. Sixty-three percent of qualifiers who studied full-time ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the value for money statement, compared to 82% of part-time qualifiers.

1.6.4 Preparation for career (Table 16)

After three and a half years since qualifying, 75% of NI domiciled qualifiers said that their HE experience had prepared them ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’ for their career.

First degree qualifiers (72%) were less likely than postgraduate qualifiers (85%) to report that their HE experience had prepared them ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’ for their career. Seventy-four percent of qualifiers who studied full-time reported that their HE experience had prepared them ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’ for their career, compared to 79% of part-time qualifiers.

**SECTION 2: Destinations of qualifiers from Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (Tables 17 to 33)**

This section presents the findings for students who qualified froma NI HEI in 2008/09. Tables relating to this section can be found in [Annex 1](#annex1).

**2.1 Comparison over time – 2002/03, 2004/05, 2006/07 & 2008/09 qualifiers (Table 17)**

The percentage of qualifiers in employment after three and a half years decreased from 90% for 2002/03 and 2004/05 qualifiers to 87% for 2006/07 and 2008/09 qualifiers. In contrast the proportion of those unemployed increased from 2% for 2002/03 and 2004/05 qualifiers to 3% for 2006/07 and 2008/09 qualifiers.

**2.2 Destinations – 2008/09 qualifiers**

2.2.1 All Qualifiers (Table 18, Chart 6)

After three and a half years 87% of qualifiers from NI HEIs were in employment. This increased from 76% at six months. There has been a decrease in the proportion of qualifiers who are in ‘further study only’, with 7% in this category, compared to 13% at six months. Three percent of qualifiers were ‘assumed to be unemployed’ and 2% were in ‘other’ activities including those not available for work, compared to 7% ‘assumed to be unemployed’ and 3% in ‘other’ activities including those not available for work at six months.



2.2.2 Gender (Table 18)

In comparison to six months, the proportion of males in employment increased by 15 percentage points from 72% to 87% and females have increased by 10 percentage points from 78% to 88% after three and a half years.

A greater percentage of males (75%) were in ‘full-time work only’ after three and a half years, compared to 70% of females. In terms of mode of work, females were more likely to be in part-time work than males, 11% compared to 7%, three and half years after qualifying.

2.2.3 Level of study (Table 19)

Eighty-six percent of first degree qualifiers from NI HEIs were in employment at three and a half years, up from 73% at six months. Over the same period the proportion of first degree qualifiers from NI HEIs in ‘further study only’ decreased from 16% to 8%.

The proportion of postgraduate qualifiers in employment was 92% at three and a half years compared to 88% at six months.

2.2.4 Mode of study (Table 20)

Qualifiers who had studied part-time at a NI HEI were more likely to be in employment at three and half years than full-time qualifiers, 95% compared to 86%. After six months 91% of part-time qualifiers were in employment compared to 73% of full-time qualifiers.

A larger proportion of full-time qualifiers were in ‘further study only’ (9%), compared to part-time qualifiers (1%) after three and a half years. After six months 15% of full-time qualifiers were in ‘further study only’ compared to 4% of part-time qualifiers.

2.2.5 GB Comparison (Table 21)

The proportion of qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment, 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.

**2.3 In Employment – 2008/09 qualifiers**

2.3.1 Location of Employment (Table 22, Chart 7)

Eighty-one percent of qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment were working in NI at three and a half years compared to 87% after six months.

The proportion differs depending on the domicile of the student with 86% of NI domiciled qualifiers working in NI compared to only 27% of non NI domiciled qualifiers three and a half years after qualifying. The corresponding figures after six months were 93% and 24% respectively.



2.3.2 Type of Job (Table 23)

The majority (82%) of employed qualifiers from NI HEIs were employed in a ‘graduate’ job after three and a half years, an increase from 66% at six months. Qualifiers with a postgraduate qualification were more likely (92%) to be in a ‘graduate’ job than first degree qualifiers (79%) after three and a half years.

First degree qualifiers have shown a greater change from the six month stage with the proportion of those in a ‘graduate’ job increasing by 22 percentage points, compared to a 2 percentage point increase for postgraduates.

2.3.3 Salary (Table 24)

The median salary of full-time first degree qualifiers from NI HEIs in ‘full-time work only’ after three and a half years was £21,465, an increase from £18,000 at six months.

Male qualifiers in ‘full-time work only’ were earning a median salary of £22,000, after three and a half years, compared to £21,000 for females. The equivalent figures after six months were £18,000 for males and £19,000 for females.

Qualifiers from full-time postgraduate courses at NI HEIs who were in ‘full-time work only’ after three and a half years, had a median salary of £25,550, an increase from £21,000 at six months.

Postgraduate female qualifiers were earning a median salary of £25,600 compared to £25,580 for males. The equivalent figure after six months was £21,000 for both males and females.

2.3.4 Factors in gaining employment (Table 25, Chart 8)

Qualifiers, who were in employment at three and a half years, were asked to rate the importance of various factors in gaining that employment, on a scale ranging from ‘a formal requirement’ to ‘not important’. There was no comparison for this at six months.



*‘Evidence of skills and competencies’* was rated as a ‘formal requirement’ or ‘important’ in gaining employment by 80% of qualifiers from NI HEIs. This was followed by ‘*relevant work experience,* *qualification type and subject studied’* which were each rated as a ‘formal requirement’ or ‘important’ by 71%, 67% and 64% of qualifiers respectively. ‘*Further qualifications obtained’* and *‘class of qualification’* were considered less important in gaining employment with 50% and 49% respectively rating them as a ‘formal requirement’ or ‘important’.

2.3.5 Reasons for taking current job (Table 26, Chart 9)

Qualifiers from NI HEIs in employment after three and a half years were asked to identify all the reasons that helped them in the decision to choose their current job. No comparison is available at six months.

The most common reason given was ‘*In order to earn a living’* with 77% of qualifiers reporting this reason. This was followed by ‘*It fitted in to my career plans/It was exactly the type of work I wanted*’ at 71% and ‘*to broaden my experience / to develop general skills’* at 70%. Other popular reasons reported were, ‘*It was the best / only job offer I received’* (60%) and ‘*It was an opportunity to progress in the organisation’* (52%).



2.3.6 How did you first find out about your current job? (Table 27)

The most common source given for finding their current job was a ‘*Newspaper/magazine advert or its website’*, with 19% of qualifiers from NI HEIs reporting this category. Other sources given by between 5% and 12% of qualifiers were, ‘*Already/previously worked for organisation’, ‘Personal Contacts’, ‘Employer’s website’*, *‘Own institution’s career service/website’, ‘Professional, work or educational contacts or networks’*, *’Other careers service/or its website’ and ‘Online/web-based recruitment agency’*. No comparison is available at six months.

**2.4 In Further Study – 2008/09 qualifiers**

2.4.1 Further study (Table 18 & 28)

After three and a half years, 5% of qualifiers from NI HEIs were combining ‘work and further study’ and a further 7% were in ‘further study only’. After six months, 10% of qualifiers from NI HEIs were combining ‘work and further study’ and a further 13% were in ‘further study only’.

Of those in ‘work or further study’ or ‘further study only’ after three and a half years:

* 69% were studying full-time and 31% were studying part-time;
* 68% were studying for a postgraduate qualification, 12% for a undergraduate qualification and 20% for a professional or other qualification;
* The main sources of funding for further study were ‘Grant / Award’ (48%) and ‘Self funded’ (34%). ‘Employer support’ was cited by 16% of respondents with 2% quoting ‘other’ sources; and
* The main reasons given for undertaking further study were ‘to change or improve my career options’ (85%), ‘to develop a broader range of skills or knowledge’ (84%) and ‘because I was interested in the content of the course’ (75%). Forty-eight percent of respondents cited that ‘I had enjoyed my first course and wanted to continue studying’ as a reason for undertaking further study.

**2.5 Other activities since qualifying in 2008/09**

Qualifiers from NI HEIs were asked about what activities they had been involved in since completing their course in 2008/09. No comparison for six months was available for this section.

2.5.1 Employment (Table 29a&b)

In the three and half years since qualifying, 56% of qualifiers from NI HEIs said they had had 1 or more other jobs excluding their current job, if in work. Of those who had other job/jobs 47% had one, 31% had two, 13% had three and 10% had four or more other jobs.

2.5.2 Unemployment (Table 29c&d)

Thirty percent of qualifiers from NI HEIs had experienced at least one spell of unemployment since qualifying in 2008/09. Of those who had experienced unemployment, 61% experienced one spell, 23% two spells and 17% three or more spells.

2.5.3 Further qualifications (Table 29e,f,g,h)

* In the three and a half years since finishing their course in 2008/09, 43% of qualifiers from NI HEIs had obtained a further qualification.

Of those who had obtained a further qualification:

* 69% said they obtained one qualification, 19% said they obtained two and 12% said they obtained three or more qualifications;
* 53% reported that the highest further qualification obtained was a postgraduate qualification, 15% a professional qualification, 3% an undergraduate qualification and 29% other qualifications; and
* The main source of funding reported for the highest further qualification obtained was ‘Self funded’ (54%) followed by ‘Employer support’ (25%), ‘Grant / award’ (17%) and ‘Other funding’ (4%).

**2.6 Satisfaction & Experience – 2008/09 qualifiers**

This section focuses on the qualifiers’ Higher Education experience and their career to date, three and a half years after qualifying. Questions were asked in relation to making different choices, satisfaction with career, value for money and preparation for their career. No comparison for six months was available for this section.

2.6.1 Likelihood of making different choices (Table 30, Chart 10)

If qualifiers from NI HEIs had the opportunity to make their choices again, 34% quoted ‘*choosing a different subject’* as being ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ and 33% quoted *‘working towards a different type of qualification’* as being ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’. A smaller proportion of qualifiers quoted each of the following options as being ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ – ‘*do something other than training, study or research’ (27%) or* ‘*study at a different institution’ (21%)*.



2.6.2 Satisfaction with Career to date (Table 31)

Eighty-three percent of qualifiers from NI HEIs said that they were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with their career to date, three and a half years after qualifying. Approximately one in eight (12%) qualifiers reported that they were ‘not very satisfied’ and 5% said they were ‘not at all satisfied’.

Female and male qualifiers were equally likely to be ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with their career. Postgraduate qualifiers recorded a very high satisfaction level with 88% saying they were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ compared to 81% of first degree qualifiers.

Part-time qualifiers had a higher satisfaction level than full-time qualifiers with 89% and 82% respectively reporting to be ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with their career.

2.6.3 Value for Money (Table 32, Chart 11)

The majority (64%) of qualifiers from NI HEIs, three and a half years after qualifying, said that they ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement that the course they completed in 2008/09 was good value for money.

Females and males were equally likely to ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that the course was good value for money.



Seventy-seven percent of postgraduate qualifiers ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the value for money statement compared to 61% of first degree qualifiers. Part-time (83%) qualifiers were more likely than full-time (60%) qualifiers to ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the value for money statement.

2.6.4 Preparation for career (Table 33)

Seventy-four percent of qualifiers from NI HEIs, three and a half years after qualifying, said that their HE experience had prepared them ‘very or quite well’ for their career. Seventy-five percent of females stating they had been prepared ‘very or quite well’ compared to 72% of males.

First degree qualifiers (72%) were less likely than postgraduate qualifiers (82%) to report that their HE experience had prepared them ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’ for their career.

Seventy-three percent of qualifiers who studied full-time reported that their HE experience had prepared them ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’ for their career, compared to 79% of part-time qualifiers.

**NOTES AND DEFINITIONS**

**Methodology for Longitudinal DLHE**

**Sample Design**

1. The 2008/09 Longitudinal DLHE survey is based on two sub-samples of the 354,730 qualifiers who completed their course in 2008/09 and responded to the Early DLHE Survey.

Sample A - 80,835 qualifiers were selected from across virtually all UK HEIs with certain sub-groups oversampled, to provide adequate numbers for analysis and 33,640 responses were received.

Sample B - In addition 192,745 of the remaining 273,890 qualifiers for whom an email address was available were contacted resulting in a further 28,565 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 62,205. Of these 10 leavers had replied to the survey but the responses were not sufficiently complete in order to be counted as valid and have been excluded from all further analysis.

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 2,515 (2,375 from sample A and 145 from sample B). The total number of responses from NI domiciled students was 3,405 (3,140 from Sample A and 265 from sample B). Both groups (NI domiciled qualifiers and qualifiers from NI HEIs) include the same 2,295 NI domiciled qualifiers from NI HEIs.

1. The four 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**

1. The data have been collected 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 leavers 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. A final reminder was sent towards the end of the collection period. The same approach was taken for all leavers in Sample B with an email address.

(ii)Two weeks after the initial email, contact attempts were made by telephone for leavers in Sample A who had not responded and for whom a telephone number had been provided.

(iii)The postal survey launched in two phases. The first mailing was sent to all leavers in Sample A who held only a postal address and no phone number or email. These were sent out 2 weeks after the initial emails. The second phase of the postal survey took place 10 weeks after the initial email with questionnaires sent to all leavers for whom a postal address was held as well as an email or phone number but had not already responded. A reminder letter was then mailed a month later.

Data collection was undertaken by IFF Research.

**Analysis**

1. 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 2008/09 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Differences reported between subgroups in this bulletin are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level*.*

1. The 2008/09 Early DLHE was a census of all EU domiciled students at UK HEIs which achieved a relatively high response rate (81%). 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**

## This report is divided into two sections. Section 1 focuses on the destinations of NI domiciled students who gained a qualification at a HEI in NI, England, Scotland or Wales. Section 2 concentrates on the destinations of all NI, GB and other EU students who gained a qualification at a NI HEI. 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.

1. Unless otherwise stated, responses of ‘don’t know’ and ‘refusal to answer’ have been excluded from the analysis.
2. Numbers in tables (Annex 1) and this bulletin have been rounded to the nearest 5. Due to rounding figures may not sum to totals.
3. Percentages in tables (Annex 1) and this bulletin may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
4. To adjust for outliers in salary information, the lowest and highest 0.5% of salaries were removed before analysis.

**Definitions**

1. Qualifiers in employment include those in full-time work, part-time work, voluntary work, those combining work and study and those in work whose mode of work is unknown.
2. *Other undergraduate courses* - includes undergraduate diplomas and certificates, HNDs, HNCs and foundation degrees.
3. *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.
4. *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.
5. *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](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/completed/7yrs2/rp6.pdf) - ‘SOC (HE) A Classification of occupations for studying the graduated labour market’ (Institute of Employment Research, Warwick).
6. *Domicile* – a student’s place of residence prior to enrolment on a Higher Education course.
7. *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. The median is less likely than the mean to be affected by very high earners.

Media enquiries should be made to the Department’s Press Office in Adelaide House, 39-49 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8FD, telephone (028) 9025 7793.

ANNEX 1 : TABLES

