



2008 Recent Graduate Survey Executive Summary

March 2010

**Employment Observatory
Career Development Section
Office for International and Educational Cooperation
Vice-Rector's Office for Students and Employment
Universitat Jaume I
observatori@uji.es**

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1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the activities pursued by students before and while studying at the Universitat Jaume I, as well as graduates' expectations concerning entry into working life during the 2008 academic year. The survey took the possible differences between sexes and groups of degrees into consideration.
- To continue with the implementation of a continuous method for surveying graduates based on a longitudinal model that will enable us to obtain methodologically more correct data, optimise the resources available, increase the percentage of answers and reduce the size of the questionnaire.
- To introduce and test the online survey as a faster, more accessible and more efficient method of collecting data.

2 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS OF THE STUDY

SCOPE: Universitat Jaume I.

UNIVERSE: recent graduates who paid the fees for the issue of their degree certificate in 2008: 1,600 graduates (28 undergraduate degrees and 20 official master's degrees).

SAMPLE COLLECTION: 404 questionnaires (25.25% of the population). 336 were completed by undergraduates; 39 by official master's degrees graduates; and no information was provided on the courses taken in the other cases.

PROCEDURE: an anonymous online survey; contact via e-mail with several reminders to maximise response.

ERROR: for a confidence level of 95.5%, and $P = Q$, the real error is $\pm 4.22\%$ for the sample as a whole and assuming simple random sampling was performed.

DATE CONDUCTED: February to July 2009.

3 UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Sociobiographical data

60% of the 2008 graduates were females. The degrees with the most women were long-cycle (29%) and short-cycle (28%) degrees in the social or legal sciences (SLS). The teaching branches with a predominance of males were long-cycle technical studies (TS) and degrees involving experimental sciences (ES) (32%), short-cycle SLS (25%) and short-cycle TS & ES (20%). The average age of the sample was 26 years old, but differed between men (27) and women (25).

As regards **who they lived with**, most respondents lived with their parents (58.80%), but the percentage of graduates who lived with their partner was also significant: 22.60%.

Choice and length of studies

The main reason for pursuing university studies was career opportunities, reported by 55% of the sample. This was closely followed by the studies being the students' vocation (44%). In contrast, social influence as a factor in the choice of degree accounted for a very low percentage in the sample, of just 1%.

85% of graduates were able to study the degree that was their first choice before starting university.

As regards the length of their studies, 36.40% of graduates finished their degree course within the expected period. Men took longer than women to finish their studies (33% and 39% in due time respectively). The degrees finished in due time belong mostly to second-cycle (57%) and first-cycle (55%) SLS degrees. The low percentage of graduates failing to complete their degrees in due time are those of short-cycle TS & ES degrees (2%).

Activities pursued while studying

As regards **academic activities** pursued while studying, the most frequent ones are – as is to be expected – attending practical and theoretical classes (94% and 93%, respectively). Attendance at tutorials was also very high (90%), as were personal work and exam preparation. (89%). Among the less frequent activities were attendance at seminars and workshops (59%) and cooperation scholarships, undertaken by only 20% of the sample.

Attendance at theoretical classes and seminars or workshops was higher among females.

By branches of education, humanities graduates attended seminars and workshops more often (84%) than other graduates (59%). Cooperation scholarships were undertaken mostly by long-cycle TS and ES graduates (31%).

Regarding **non-academic activities**, working while studying or in the summer were reported as frequent (by 63% and 62%, respectively).

A higher proportion of women than men spent time doing activities such as supplementary or additional studies (48% against 45%), while by contrast men devoted more time to associations and cultural and sports activities (66% compared to 44%).

Humanities graduates were characterised by undertaking supplementary studies while studying their degree (77% as compared to 53% in the whole). Working in the summer was more common among humanities graduates (71%) and short-cycle and long-cycle SLS graduates (72% and 63%, respectively), the total being 62%.

Knowledge and skills acquired

With respect to their **knowledge of Catalan**, nearly 50% of the graduates have an intermediate or proficient level. At the other end of the scale, 17% of the respondents stated that they had no knowledge of the language. In general, competence in Catalan was lower in technical degrees and higher in humanities.

As regards **foreign language skills**, only 10% of the graduates considered that they did not have any knowledge of **English**, while 20% reported having a high level in this language.

Only 20% of the respondents reported some knowledge of **French**, half of whom reported a basic level.

The percentage in the sample decreased to 13% for **German**, and again a basic level was reported in half of the cases.

Knowledge of **Italian** was also surveyed, and approximately 12% of the graduates declared some skill in this language (around 8% of which was basic).

As regards the **general work skills** considered in this study, the score given (on a 1-5 scale) is medium-high, at around 4 in all cases. Instrumental skills are slightly higher than the others, with a score of 4.06. Systemic skills had 3.81 points, and interpersonal skills had 3.79.

Interpersonal differences revealed a higher score for women (3.93) compared to men (3.58). In this area, differences between the various types of degrees have also been found, and the highest score was for second-cycle SLS (4.14).

Degree assessment

Degree assessment was evaluated in two different ways. First, graduates were asked whether, if they could choose again, they would pursue university studies. Second, they were asked to rate their degrees using satisfaction scales.

When asked **if they would pursue university studies**, 96% replied yes. To the question “Would you do the same degree?” two thirds replied in the affirmative (69%). Finally, most respondents (88%) said they would choose Universitat Jaume I to pursue higher education studies if they had to choose a university again.

As for **satisfaction**, the most positive aspect were study periods abroad (3.5 on a 1-4 scale), followed by general satisfaction with the University (3.02) and the final year project (2.96). In the middle of the scale was satisfaction with the degree (2.71), marks obtained (2.64), compulsory work placements included in the programmes of study (2.59) and satisfaction with the theoretical knowledge acquired. The lowest score, although not below the middle of the scale, was satisfaction with practical skills acquired (2).

The groups of degrees in which graduates were most satisfied with their academic results were second-cycle SLS (3), humanities (2.8) and short-cycle and long-cycle SLS (2.78 and 2.69, respectively).

As for satisfaction with practical skills, humanities graduates showed a higher satisfaction than the rest (2.52), and second-cycle SLS (1.43) students reported the lowest degree of satisfaction.

As regards general satisfaction with the degree taken, the highest levels were found in humanities degrees (2.93%) and in short-cycle and long-cycle SLS (2.89 and 2.75, respectively). The lowest general satisfaction was reported by second-cycle SLS graduates (2.29).

Satisfaction with the Universitat Jaume I was higher among females (3.13) than males (2.85). In this case, there were differences depending on the degree taken, with higher satisfaction among those taking humanities degrees (3.25) and short-cycle SLS (3.21).

Awareness of and use of the services offered by the **Career Development Section (ACIP)** of the OCIE was also examined. The services recent graduates knew best included work placements (91%) and the Leonardo placement programme (81%). By contrast, the least known were the ACIP's e-mail distribution list and the e-guide entitled *Preocupa't* (which was known to 22% of the graduates). As was to be expected, the most widely used service by far was work placements (81%). It should be borne in mind that it is possible to avoid undertaking work placements, which is why the percentage is not 100%. Furthermore, since work placements are a subject in the study programmes, it is likely that many students do not identify them as an activity managed by the ACIP.

Transition to the labour market

With regard to **job hunting**, a high percentage of graduates from the sample searched for a job at some point after starting their studies (85%). By degrees, the percentage among second-cycle SLS graduates (43%) is lower than among the rest (between 80% and 90%).

As regards the time when they began searching for a job, almost two thirds did so before finishing their university studies (64%) and one third did not do so until completing them (36%).

As for their **attitude towards job hunting**, the locus of control (2.74) and self-efficacy (2.61) values were placed in a medium-high position on a scale from 0 to 4, which indicates the ability to control the graduates' own job hunting process and their belief in their ability to accomplish this process correctly). However, the behavioural attitude (i.e. their intention to undertake a job search) showed a clearly low score (1.51).

The locus of control was significantly lower among short-cycle TS and ES graduates (2.30) in comparison with all the other types of degrees. As for self-efficacy, short-cycle and second-cycle SLS scored higher (2.85 and 3, respectively) than those of other studies. Finally, the highest score in behavioural attitude was found in second-cycle SLS degrees (2.67), clearly above the other groups of degrees.

If we consider the **work status** of respondents before going to the university, three quarters only studied and did not work, while 23% only worked or combined work and studies.

When they completed this survey, almost one third of the graduates worked as employees (30%), while another third were unemployed and searching for a job, or studying for civil service entrance examinations (29%). One fifth (20%) were pursuing further studies or had some kind of grant. The percentage of graduates who were studying and working at the same time was also significant (17%). 4% had started their own business.

In summary, at the point when studies were completed, the employment rate was 80% and the unemployment rate was 37%.

Prospects for pursuing complementary activities and training after graduation

This study asked graduates about their intention to pursue a range of **activities after university studies**. Further training is by far the most popular activity (100%). In second and third place were working and studying abroad (28% and 21%, respectively). Professional collaborations and free work placements followed in the fourth place (21%). Unpaid work is an option considered by 8% of the respondents.

Working and studying abroad and professional collaborations/free work placements were options preferred by humanities graduates (55%, 46% and 39%, respectively).

The **further training** chosen is mostly connected with the degree completed (68%). The other part of the sample (approximately one third) chose it in order to give a new focus to their careers.

The **educational contents** which attract most interest is languages (66%), followed by information technologies (37%) and content areas specific to the degree studied (31%).

Humanities graduates were those showing the most interest in languages (86%), while those least interested were second-cycle SLS graduates.

The graduates who were most interested in content areas specific to their degrees were from long-cycle SLS (44%) and short-cycle TS and ES (34%),

Men said they were more interested in information technologies (43%) than women (33%), and short-cycle TS and ES graduates (66%) are more interested than graduates in other degrees.

The preferred **type of complementary training** chosen by respondents was an official master's degree (43%) or another degree (27%). Doctoral studies were chosen in 9% of cases.

Official master's degree are preferred by women (47% against 36% of men); and by graduates in humanities and long-cycle SLS (59% and 55%, respectively). Second-cycle SLS graduates showed less interest in them (14%)

Graduates in short-cycle SLS showed the most interest in studying another degree (48%).

As regards doctoral studies, a higher preference was shown by men (15%) than women (6%).

Career prospects

Regarding the **type of organisation** the graduates would like to work for, most prefer a public organisation (46%), while a private company is the second alternative (19%). Only 0.51% would choose a third sector organisation. About one third of the respondents (35%) were indifferent to this question.

As for the **economic activity** preferred by the graduates, almost one third would like to work in education (31%). Lower percentages of preference were apparent for professional, scientific and technical work (16%), information and communications (11%), public administration (7.145), health and social services (6.59%) and financial activities (6.09%).

82% of the respondents would accept a job involving a **change of town or city of residence**, while 53% would accept a **change of country of residence**.

Men (62% compared to 48% of women) and short-cycle TS & ES (68%) and humanities (66%) showed more inclination to change their country of residence if this was involved in accepting a job.

4 OFFICIAL MASTER'S DEGREES

Sociobiographical data

60% of master's degree holders of the sample were women, and men were 10 years older than women on average.

As regards **who they lived with**, 50% said they lived with their partners, 28% had not left their parental home, 10% lived with other adults and 8% lived alone.

Two thirds of the respondents lived in the province of Castelló (66%), 13% in the province of Valencia, 5% in the province of Alicante, 13% in other parts of Spain and 3% in other countries.

Choice and length of course

Three quarters of the master's degree holders chose an official master's course because of the career prospects it offered (75%). The average length of their course was 2 years.

Activities when studying

As regards the **academic activities**, 83% of the respondents attended theory classes and 80% spent time on personal work and preparing exams. Both seminars and practical classes were attended by 75% of the respondents. 70% of the respondents went to tutorials. Finally, 45% of the respondents were involved in some kind of cooperation scholarship scheme.

Attendance at workshops/seminars was higher among women (88%) compared to men (56%).

As for **non-academic activities**, work (58% of the cases) was the most common activity, followed by participation in associations (50%). These were followed by other supplementary non-university studies (45%), housework (38%) and summer jobs (35%).

Knowledge and skills acquired

One third of official master's degree holders reported to have an intermediate or high level of **Catalan**, while approximately one third had a basic level (35%) and about one third (30%) reported having no knowledge of the language.

As for **knowledge of foreign languages**, 55% said their level of **English** was intermediate or high, and 13% reported having no knowledge of this language.

An intermediate or high level of **French** was declared by 10% of the respondents, while 75% of the sample said that they did not know this language.

As for **German**, 7.5% declared having an intermediate or high level, and another 7.5% stated that their level of this language was basic. The rest (85%) had no knowledge of German.

Finally, 2.5% reported a high level of **Italian**, and 93% had no knowledge of it.

Overall scores for **general labour skills**, measured on a 1 to 5 scale, are high, and over 4 in the case of instrumental skills (4.08) and systemic skills (4.02), and around 4 for interpersonal skills (3.88).

Master's degree assessment

In the case of master's degrees, asking if the graduates would pursue university studies again is not relevant, so the questions were if the graduates would choose the same course or UJI again. 83% of the graduates **would choose the same master's course again**, while 98% of them **would take it at the UJI again**.

The scores on the **satisfaction** scales are generally high. The highest score was for study periods abroad (3.60 on a 0–4 scale), followed by the final year project (3.38), the Universitat Jaume I as a whole (3.33), the marks obtained (3.15) and the course itself.

The knowledge about and use of the services provided by the **Career Development Section (ACIP)** of the OCIE were also considered. The services master's degree graduates were most aware of included the Leonardo grants and work placements (81% in both cases). These were followed by the careers guidance workshops (64%) and the job-hunting conference (50%). ACIP's actions were known to 42% of the respondents. Among the lesser known activities are the e-guide entitled *Preocupa't* (20%), the *PIE* programme (19%) and ACIP's e-mail distribution list (14%).

In terms of use, the most widely used service was the work placements (51%). The services with lower percentages were the job-hunting conference (23%) and the career guidance workshops (22%). The OPEA services were used by 17% of the respondents. The least used services or activities were the *Preocupa't* guide and ACIP's e-mail distribution list (9% each), the Leonardo grants (5%) and the *PIE* programme (3%).

Transition to the labour market

With regard to **job hunting**, 70% of the master's graduates had searched for a job at some point since they started their course. Of these, 70% did so before completing the master's course, and the rest did so afterwards.

As regards their **attitude towards job hunting**, the locus of control was high (3.15 on a 0-4 scale), which indicates an ability to control the graduate's own job hunting process. Self-efficacy was medium-high (2.63), showing that the graduates' had some belief in their capacity to accomplish this process. Finally, their behavioural attitude was low, which seems to show that they were unlikely to undertake the job search.

As for the **work status** of the respondents, a little more than one third (38%) studied and worked before starting their master's course. Approximately one third (33%) studied full-time. A quarter (25%) worked and did not study.

When they answered the questionnaire, a little over one third of the sample were employees (38%), 25% were still in education or had scholarships, 15% were unemployed and seeking employment or preparing civil service examinations, 10% were employers, freelancers or employees and students at the same time, and finally, 2.5% said they were doing housework or similar tasks.

Prospects of pursuing complementary activities and training

As regards **future activities after completing the master's course**, all the respondents declared that they would pursue further studies. This was followed at some distance by those who would engage in professional collaborations or a work placement abroad (13% in each case). 8% of the respondents would pursue some kind of studies abroad. Finally, 3% would accept unpaid work.

58% of the sample chose **further training** connected with the master's course they completed, while 42% intended to give a new focus to their careers.

The **educational content** attracting most interest among master's graduates are languages (68%) in first place, information technologies (48%) in second place, and content areas specific to the master's course studied, in third place (18%).

The preferred **type of training** chosen by respondents was doctoral studies (45%). Only 10% would study another master's course, and the same percentage would take another university degree.

Career prospects

As for the **type of organisation** the master's graduates would like to work for, most of them preferred a public organisation (51%), while a private company was preferred only by 8%. A very high percentage of the respondents (41%) were indifferent to this question.

As for their preferred **employment**, almost one third of the master's graduates would like to work in education (38%). The second choice was professional, scientific and technical activities (19%), and the civil service was third (11%). The information and communications sector and health and social services was included in 8% of the responses.

When faced with the opportunity to accept a job involving **a change of town or city of residence**, 78% would accept it, and 22% would not. If this involved **changing their country of residence**, 58% would accept and 42% would not.