

NSCC 2023 Graduate Survey

nscc

Graduate Survey 2023

Results in Brief

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of the 2023 Graduate Survey, an extensive annual survey of NSCC graduates one year following graduation. Graduates were surveyed by telephone and online by Narrative Research to explore employment and other graduate activities, as well as graduates' satisfaction with their experiences at NSCC. This is the twenty-third year that this survey has been commissioned by NSCC and results continue to demonstrate that graduates succeed after graduation.

The 2023 survey was conducted during the period of July 5 to October 29, 2023, and included the graduates of the Class of 2022. To create a snapshot of employment and continued learning experiences of graduates, a reference week of June 18 to June 24, 2023 was used. There were 3,851 graduates in the Class of 2022¹ eligible for the survey and they were invited by telephone, email, or text (SMS). The survey yielded participation from 1,336 graduates for an overall response rate of 35%.

The Graduate Survey is considered an “attempted census survey” where every effort is made to collect data from each member of the graduating class. For the Class of 2022, there were 14 graduates for whom no contact information exists in the alumni database, who are deceased, or who asked not to be contacted. The process for contacting graduates included an email invitation (if address available), with up to eight reminder emails, a maximum of five telephone attempts, and up to two SMS invitations (with another triggered upon request during the telephone survey). As per the Government of Canada’s [Standards and Guidelines for Sampling](#), margin of sampling error does not apply due to the research being an attempted census and a sample of graduates was not the chosen data collection methodology.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Table 1. Summary of Employment and Overall Satisfaction Outcomes

2023 Graduate Survey Results								
Employment Outcomes	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
% of graduates participating in the labour force ²	97%	96%	97%	97%	93%	94%	96%	96%
% of graduates employed ³	87%	87%	88%	90%	82%	83%	91%	92%
% of employed graduates working in a job related to field of studies ⁴	83%	81%	83%	87%	85%	80%	83%	88%
% of employed graduates living and working in Nova Scotia	92%	93%	92%	91%	94%	94%	93%	93%
Average annual earnings of working graduates employed full time in work related to field of study ⁵	\$36,853	\$37,426	\$38,395	\$39,943	\$41,192	\$41,861	\$43,881	\$47,060
% of graduates satisfied with the overall NSCC experience	95%	94%	95%	95%	93%	91%	90%	93%
Median annual earnings of working graduates employed full time in work related to field of study ⁵	\$34,580	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$38,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$41,639	\$44,841

¹ This excludes graduates from the Adult Learning Program under School of Access as it is not a post-secondary program.

² Labour Force Participation Rate specifies the percent of respondents indicating they are working or looking for work.

³ Employment Rate specifies the percent of those in the Labour Force that indicate they are working.

⁴ Related employment rate specifies the percent of those employed who indicate their job is in a field directly or indirectly related to their field of study.

⁵ Average and Median Annual Salary includes those employed full time in a job related to their field of study. During the data cleaning process, the annual salaries of respondents who reported earning less than the minimum wage were excluded. For 2023, this corresponded to an annual salary of \$22,620, which is a minimum wage of \$14.50 at 30 hours per week at 52 weeks. Outliers of \$100,000 or more were examined for salary validity. For graduates who provided an hourly wage, their annual salary was estimated using a figure of 35 hours per week.

Graduate Survey 2023

Results in Brief

EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Table 2. Employment Rates of Graduates in the Labour Force by School

Employment Rate of Graduates in the Labour Force By School					
School	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Access, Education and Language	81%	68%	75%	89%	89%
Business and Creative Industries	90%	77%	81%	91%	93%
Health and Human Services	93%	92%	92%	94%	96%
Technology and Environment	89%	84%	83%	92%	87%
Trades and Transportation	89%	79%	78%	86%	90%
Overall NSCC	90%	82%	83%	91%	92%

GRADUATE SATISFACTION

Overall graduate satisfaction with the NSCC experience remains very high at 93% (Table 3).

Table 3. Graduate Satisfaction with NSCC

Graduate Satisfaction with NSCC								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Overall satisfaction with NSCC experience	95%	94%	95%	95%	93%	91%	90%	93%

SUMMARY BY SCHOOL AND CREDENTIAL

Employment relatedness is high for all credential types but highest for those with Advanced Diplomas at 100%. Average annual earnings are highest among Graduate Certificate and Advanced Diploma holders (Table 4).

Table 4. Employment Outcomes by Credential

Employment Outcomes by Credential											
	# Grads Eligible*	# of Responses	In Labour Force	% Labour Force**	Number Employed	Seeking Employment	% Employed	# Employed Related	% Employed Related	Average Annual Salary***	Median Annual Salary***
Certificate	1,691	541	517	96%	472	45	91%	383	86%	\$45,006	\$41,860
Diploma	1,867	649	616	95%	566	50	92%	466	89%	\$46,132	\$43,000
Graduate Certificate	276	140	134	98%	124	10	93%	108	89%	\$56,855	\$53,000
Advanced Diploma	17	6	6	100%	6	0	100%	6	100%	\$53,333	\$50,000
Overall NSCC	3,851	1,336	1,273	96%	1,168	105	92%	963	88%	\$47,060	\$44,841

* Number of graduates eligible to participate in the survey.

** Labour Force Participation Rate specifies the percent of respondents indicating they are working or looking for work.

*** Average and Median Annual Salary includes those employed full time in a job related to their field of study.

Graduate Survey 2023 Results in Brief

Results from the 2023 survey are presented in more detail in the following summary tables, which break down results by academic school and credential type.

Graduates from the School of Health and Human Services continue to have the highest employment rate (96%). This school also has the highest percentage of graduates working in program-related occupations (91%). Graduates from the School of Technology and Environment experienced the highest average annual salary related to their field of study, at \$54,895. The difference between the highest and lowest average annual salary by school in 2023 was \$18,282 compared to \$15,807 in 2022.

Below is a summary of survey results by school and credential (Table 5).

Table 5. Employment Outcomes by School and Credential

Employment Outcomes by School and Credential											
	# Grads Eligible*	# of Responses	In Labour Force	% Labour Force**	Number Employed	Seeking Employment	% Employed	# Employed Related	% Employed Related	Average Annual Salary***	Median Annual Salary***
Access, Education and Language	200	75	64	86%	57	7	89%	33	77%	\$36,613	\$38,611
Certificate	119	39	32	84%	27	5	84%	5	36%	-	-
Diploma	81	36	32	89%	30	2	94%	28	97%	\$37,720	\$39,012
Business and Creative Industries	1,154	483	470	97%	435	35	93%	355	89%	\$43,319	\$41,000
Certificate	398	161	155	96%	141	14	91%	111	85%	\$39,028	\$36,564
Diploma	637	261	255	98%	234	21	92%	189	90%	\$41,945	\$40,000
Graduate Certificate	110	58	57	98%	57	0	100%	52	93%	\$54,402	\$51,000
Advanced Diploma	9	3	3	100%	3	0	100%	3	100%	-	-
Health and Human Services	857	304	290	97%	278	12	96%	236	91%	\$48,205	\$47,320
Certificate	467	164	160	99%	154	6	96%	144	95%	\$50,535	\$50,960
Diploma	360	127	118	94%	114	4	97%	84	84%	\$43,920	\$42,976
Graduate Certificate	30	13	12	100%	10	2	83%	8	100%	-	-
Technology and Environment	625	230	215	94%	187	28	87%	157	88%	\$54,895	\$50,500
Certificate	62	19	17	89%	12	5	71%	7	70%	-	-
Diploma	427	142	133	94%	118	15	89%	102	91%	\$53,287	\$50,000
Graduate Certificate	136	69	65	97%	57	8	88%	48	84%	\$59,882	\$56,000
Trades and Transportation	1,015	244	234	96%	211	23	90%	182	87%	\$46,924	\$41,930
Certificate	645	158	153	97%	138	15	90%	116	85%	\$44,337	\$40,000
Diploma	362	83	78	94%	70	8	90%	63	90%	\$52,558	\$50,000
Advanced Diploma	8	3	3	100%	3	0	100%	3	100%	-	-
Overall NSCC	3,851	1,336	1,273	96%	1,168	105	92%	963	88%	\$47,060	\$44,841

* Number of graduates eligible to participate in the survey.

** Labour Force Participation Rate specifies the percent of respondents indicating they are working or looking for work.

*** Average and Median Annual Salary includes those employed full time in a job related to their field of study. Groups with less than 10 salary respondents display (-).

Graduate Survey 2023

Results in Brief

SUMMARY BY SCHOOL AND CLUSTER

When the survey results are broken down by cluster, differences in employment outcomes are more variable. Within the School of Business and Creative Industries, there is a lower percentage of Creative & Digital Media graduates with related employment, as compared to the other two clusters. For other schools, the differences across clusters are more modest. In 2023, Culinary and Tourism had the highest employment rate (99%). Marine graduates (100%), followed by Education graduates (96%) and Health and Wellness graduates (95%) had the highest related employment. Surveying, Mapping and Geomatics grads, again, reported the highest average salary of all the clusters at \$57,966 (Table 6).

Table 6. Employment Outcomes by School and Cluster

Employment Outcomes by School and Cluster											
	# Grads Eligible*	# of Responses	In Labour Force	% Labour Force**	Number Employed	Seeking Employment	% Employed	# Employed Related	% Employed Related	Average Annual Salary***	Median Annual Salary***
Access, Education and Language	200	75	64	86%	57	7	89%	33	77%	\$36,613	\$38,611
Academic Upgrading and Skills Development	97	30	23	79%	20	3	87%	4	40%	-	-
Education	77	35	31	89%	29	2	94%	27	96%	\$37,720	\$39,012
Language & Cultural Studies	26	10	10	100%	8	2	80%	2	40%	NA	NA
Business and Creative Industries	1,154	483	470	97%	435	35	93%	355	89%	\$43,319	\$41,000
Business	816	343	336	98%	322	14	96%	270	91%	\$45,050	\$42,000
Creative & Digital Media	145	64	62	97%	42	20	68%	26	72%	\$37,713	\$39,000
Culinary & Tourism	193	76	72	95%	71	1	99%	59	88%	\$36,335	\$33,835
Health and Human Services	857	304	290	97%	278	12	96%	236	91%	\$48,205	\$47,320
Health & Wellness	535	187	181	98%	172	9	95%	159	95%	\$50,948	\$50,960
Social & Community Supports	322	117	109	95%	106	3	97%	77	85%	\$42,017	\$41,600
Technology and Environment	625	230	215	94%	187	28	87%	157	88%	\$54,895	\$50,500
Engineering Technologies	212	60	55	92%	49	6	89%	42	88%	\$51,696	\$49,000
Environment, Sustainability and Natural Resources	112	38	33	92%	29	4	88%	22	85%	\$47,802	\$45,000
IT & Data Analytics	199	81	79	98%	68	11	86%	59	89%	\$57,715	\$56,000
Surveying, Mapping & Geomatics	102	51	48	94%	41	7	85%	34	87%	\$57,966	\$54,000
Trades and Transportation	1,015	244	234	96%	211	23	90%	182	87%	\$46,924	\$41,930
Building & Manufacturing	628	144	139	97%	128	11	92%	110	87%	\$47,951	\$44,340
Marine	38	8	8	100%	6	2	75%	6	100%	-	-
Transportation	349	92	87	95%	77	10	89%	66	86%	\$43,019	\$38,110
Overall NSCC	3,851	1,336	1,273	96%	1,168	105	92%	963	88%	\$47,060	\$44,841

* Number of graduates eligible to participate in the survey.

** Labour Force Participation Rate specifies the percent of respondents indicating they are working or looking for work.

*** Average and Median Annual Salary includes those employed full time in a job related to their field of study. Groups with less than 10 salary respondents display (-).

Graduate Survey 2023

Results in Brief

BY CLUSTER AND CREDENTIAL

Further detail is provided by cluster and credential (Table 7).

Table 7. Employment Outcomes by Cluster and Credential

Employment Outcomes by Cluster and Credential											
	# Grads Eligible*	# of Responses	In Labour Force	% Labour Force**	Number Employed	Seeking Employment	% Employed	# Employed Related	% Employed Related	Average Annual Salary***	Median Annual Salary***
Academic Upgrading and Skills Development	97	30	23	79%	20	3	87%	4	40%	-	-
Building & Manufacturing	628	144	139	97%	128	11	92%	110	87%	\$47,951	\$44,340
Certificate	385	84	83	99%	78	5	94%	65	84%	\$46,849	\$42,000
Diploma	243	60	56	93%	50	6	89%	45	90%	\$50,032	\$50,000
Business	816	343	336	98%	322	14	96%	270	91%	\$45,050	\$42,000
Certificate	264	106	103	97%	98	5	95%	87	91%	\$39,924	\$37,164
Diploma	442	183	179	98%	170	9	95%	134	90%	\$43,750	\$41,200
Graduate Certificate	101	51	51	100%	51	0	100%	46	92%	\$56,180	\$55,000
Advanced Diploma	9	3	3	100%	3	0	100%	3	100%	-	-
Creative & Digital Media	145	64	62	97%	42	20	68%	26	72%	\$37,713	\$39,000
Certificate	46	23	22	96%	14	8	64%	3	33%	-	-
Diploma	99	41	40	98%	28	12	70%	23	85%	\$37,634	\$38,000
Culinary & Tourism	193	76	72	95%	71	1	99%	59	88%	\$36,335	\$33,835
Certificate	88	32	30	94%	29	1	97%	21	81%	\$33,773	\$32,760
Diploma	96	37	36	97%	36	0	100%	32	91%	\$36,172	\$33,835
Graduate Certificate	9	7	6	86%	6	0	100%	6	100%	-	-
Education	77	35	31	89%	29	2	94%	27	96%	\$37,720	\$39,012
Engineering Technologies	212	60	55	92%	49	6	89%	42	88%	\$51,696	\$49,000
Environment, Sustainability and Natural Resources	112	38	33	92%	29	4	88%	22	85%	\$47,802	\$45,000
Certificate	37	8	6	75%	4	2	67%	2	50%	-	-
Diploma	53	20	19	95%	18	1	95%	13	87%	\$46,113	\$44,340
Graduate Certificate	22	10	8	100%	7	1	88%	7	100%	-	-

Continued on next page

* Number of graduates eligible to participate in the survey.

** Labour Force Participation Rate specifies the percent of respondents indicating they are working or looking for work.

*** Average and Median Annual Salary includes those employed full time in a job related to their field of study. Groups with less than 10 salary respondents display (-).

Graduate Survey 2023

Results in Brief

Employment Outcomes by Cluster and Credential											
Continued	# Grads Eligible*	# of Responses	In Labour Force	% Labour Force**	Number Employed	Seeking Employment	% Employed	# Employed Related	% Employed Related	Average Annual Salary***	Median Annual Salary***
Health & Wellness	535	187	181	98%	172	9	95%	159	95%	\$50,948	\$50,960
Certificate	453	157	153	99%	147	6	96%	139	97%	\$50,874	\$50,960
Diploma	82	30	28	93%	25	3	89%	20	83%	\$51,368	\$52,000
IT & Data Analytics	199	81	79	98%	68	11	86%	59	89%	\$57,715	\$56,000
Diploma	152	60	58	97%	50	8	86%	46	96%	\$56,434	\$55,500
Graduate Certificate	47	21	21	100%	18	3	86%	13	72%	\$62,556	\$58,000
Language & Cultural Studies	26	10	10	100%	8	2	80%	2	40%	-	-
Certificate	22	9	9	100%	7	2	78%	1	25%	-	-
Diploma	4	1	1	100%	1	0	100%	1	100%	-	-
Marine	38	8	8	100%	6	2	75%	6	100%	-	-
Certificate	21	4	4	100%	2	2	50%	2	100%	-	-
Diploma	9	1	1	100%	1	0	100%	1	100%	-	-
Advanced Diploma	8	3	3	100%	3	0	100%	3	100%	-	-
Social & Community Supports	322	117	109	95%	106	3	97%	77	85%	\$42,017	\$41,600
Certificate	14	7	7	100%	7	0	100%	5	71%	-	-
Diploma	278	97	90	94%	89	1	99%	64	84%	\$40,941	\$40,020
Graduate Certificate	30	13	12	100%	10	2	83%	8	100%	-	-
Surveying, Mapping & Geomatics	102	51	48	94%	41	7	85%	34	87%	\$57,966	\$54,000
Certificate	25	11	11	100%	8	3	73%	5	83%	-	-
Diploma	10	2	1	50%	1	0	100%	1	100%	-	-
Graduate Certificate	67	38	36	95%	32	4	89%	28	88%	\$60,983	\$60,000
Transportation	349	92	87	95%	77	10	89%	66	86%	\$43,019	\$38,110
Certificate	239	70	66	94%	58	8	88%	49	84%	\$40,027	\$34,580
Diploma	110	22	21	95%	19	2	90%	17	89%	\$53,082	\$50,000
Overall NSCC	3,851	1,336	1,273	96%	1,168	105	92%	963	88%	\$47,060	\$44,841

* Number of graduates eligible to participate in the survey.

** Labour Force Participation Rate specifies the percent of respondents indicating they are working or looking for work.

*** Average and Median Annual Salary includes those employed full time in a job related to their field of study. Groups with less than 10 salary respondents display (-).

SUMMARY OF GRADUATES IN PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

New questions were added to the 2023 survey to gather feedback from graduates in pre-apprenticeship programs regarding their intentions to register as apprentices. There were 858 graduates from pre-apprenticeship programs invited to complete the survey and 197 responses were received. Of those, 31 graduates have already registered (16%), 115 intend to register (58%), and 37 (19%) do not intend to register. Thirteen graduates were enrolled in other education or training, and one graduate did not give a response.