



February 2016

GradStats – starting salaries



This factsheet provides an overview of salaries and qualifications earned by Australian graduates, broken down by gender. Data was mainly sourced from Graduate Careers Australia's Graduate Starting Salaries data set (part of the Australian Graduate Survey¹) and is based on female and male bachelor degree graduates aged less than 25 years who were employed in their first full-time job.

Other data from Graduate Careers Australia covers earnings of female and male graduates in full-time employment by their highest level of postgraduate qualification. Information based on the overall population who hold undergraduate degrees and postgraduate degrees was sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Education and Work data set (catalogue 6227.0).²

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Overview of graduate degree holders

Data from Graduate Careers Australia shows that:

- In 2015, the median full-time employment starting salary for women was \$53,000 (up from \$52,000 in 2014), and for men was \$55,000 (unchanged from 2014).
- The gender difference in median starting salaries decreased from \$3,000 in 2014 to \$2,000 in 2015.
- There was a 3.6% gender pay gap overall. That is, women's earnings were 96.4% of men's earnings (compared to 94.5% in 2014).
- There were seven fields of education where women graduates earned more than men, 11 fields where men earned more than women, and two fields with equality of pay.
- In 2015 there was a maximum dollar difference of \$10,000 across two fields (physical sciences and earth sciences) where women earned more than men, compared to a maximum dollar difference of \$5,000 (humanities and architecture and building) where men earned more than women.



Gender differences in median starting salaries and fields of education

This section explores median starting salaries based on fields of education³ where:

- men earned more than women
- women earned more than men
- Women's and men's earnings were equal.

Table 1. Fields of education where men earned more than women in 2015

Field of education	Female (\$,000); 2015	Male (\$,000); 2015	Female (\$,000); 2014	Male (\$,000); 2014
Dentistry	76.5	80.0	75.0	75.0
Medicine	64.0	65.0	60.0	60.3
Education	60.3	61.0	59.0	59.7
Law	55.0	56.0	54.5	52.5
Paramedical	55.0	58.0	54.0	56.0
Psychology	50.0	50.5	50.0	48.0
Economics, business	48.6	50.0	46.0	50.0
Agricultural science	48.0	51.0	48.0	54.5
Humanities	45.0	50.0	45.0	48.3
Architecture and building	45.0	50.0	44.5	50.0
Art and design	40.0	42.0	40.0	40.0

Source: Graduate Careers Australia (2015), *GradStats - employment and salary outcomes of recent higher education graduates*, viewed 11 February 2016, http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/GCA_GradStats_2015_FINAL.pdf

In 11 fields of education men's median starting salaries were greater than women's in 2015 (Table 1):

- Architecture and building and humanities had the largest differences in starting salaries, with men respectively earning 10% more than women.
- The smallest differences in starting salaries were in psychology and education, with men earning 1.0% and 1.1% more than women respectively.
- Psychology was an area where women earned more than men in 2014, but where men earned more than women in 2015. Dentistry had no difference in earnings between women and men in 2014, but in 2015 had a gender pay gap in favour of men (4.4%).

Table 2. Fields of education where women earned more than men in 2015

Field of education	Female (\$,000); 2015	Male (\$,000); 2015	Female (\$,000); 2014	Male (\$,000); 2014
Earth sciences	65.0	55.0	61.0	60.0
Engineering	63.0	60.0	65.0	60.0
Mathematics	61.0	60.0	60.0	60.0
Physical sciences	60.0	50.0	57.0	55.0
Computer sciences	57.0	53.0	53.5	55.0
Social sciences	47.4	47.0	48.0	56.0
Pharmacy(pre-reg)	42.0	40.5	40.0	40.0

Source: Graduate Careers Australia (2015), *GradStats - employment and salary outcomes of recent higher education graduates*, viewed 11 February 2016, http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/GCA_GradStats_2015_FINAL.pdf

There were seven fields of education where women's median starting salaries exceeded men's in 2015 (Table 2):

- Physical sciences had the greatest difference in favour of women, with starting salaries being 20% greater than men's.
- Social sciences had the smallest difference, with women earning 0.9% more than men.
- Engineering, earth sciences and the physical sciences were the three fields where women continued to out-earn men since 2014.

Table 3. Fields of education where women and men had the same starting salaries in 2015

Field of education	Female (\$,000); 2015	Male (\$,000); 2015	Female (\$,000); 2014	Male (\$,000); 2014
Accounting	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
Biological sciences	50.0	50.0	48.0	48.5

Source: Graduate Careers Australia (2015), *GradStats - employment and salary outcomes of recent higher education graduates*, viewed 11 February 2016, http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/GCA_GradStats_2015_FINAL.pdf

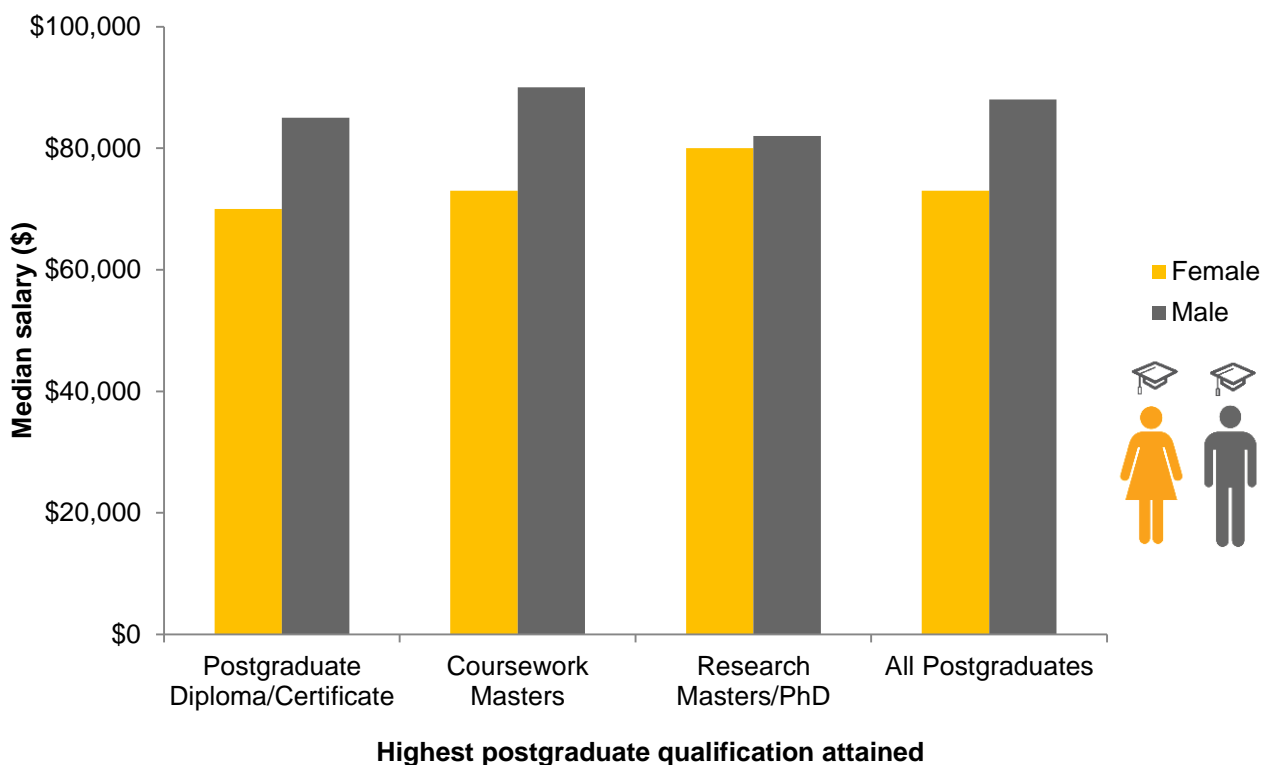
In 2015, there was pay parity among women and men in two fields of education (Table 3):

- This was less than in 2014, when there were five areas in which women and men earned the same starting salary.
- Earnings in these equal paying fields provided women and men with median earnings of \$50,000.
- Graduate median earnings for women and men remained unchanged for accounting since 2014, while biological sciences have increased.

Gender differences in median salaries and levels of postgraduate qualifications

This section showcases the median salaries of postgraduates by their highest level of qualification by gender.

Figure 1: Median salaries in full-time employment for postgraduates by level of qualification in 2015



Source: Graduate Careers Australia (2015), *Postgraduate Destinations Report 2014*, viewed 11 February 2016, <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/Research/ResearchReports/PostgraduateDestinations>

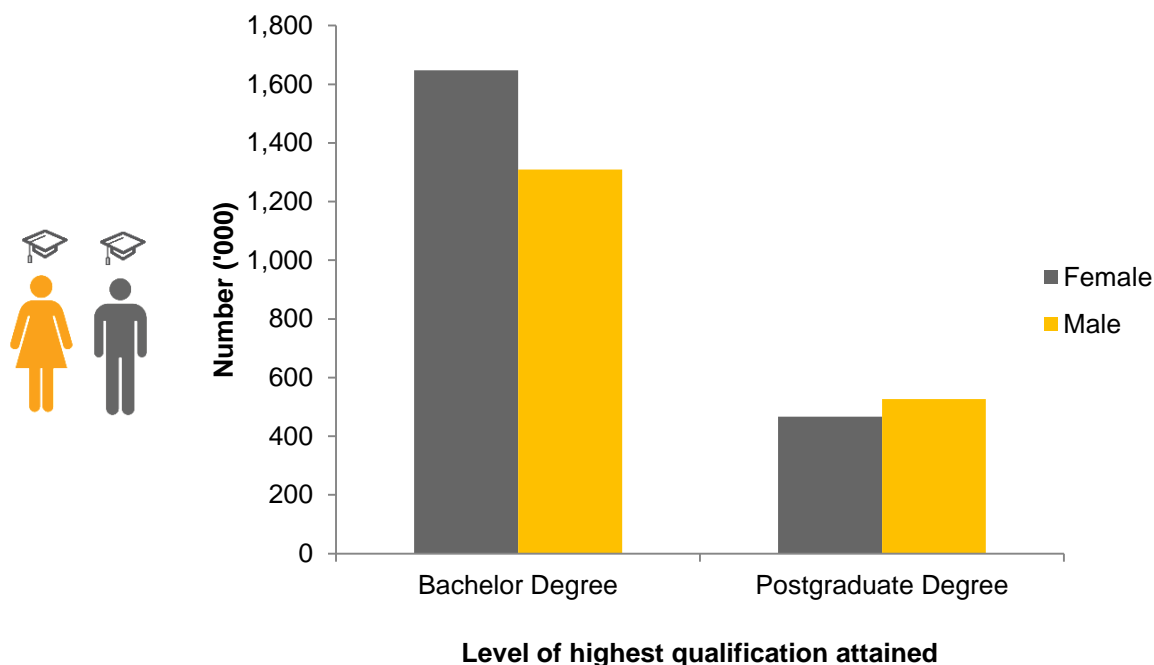
Based on the median salaries for women and men in full-time employment with a postgraduate qualification (Figure 1):

- The difference between postgraduate starting salaries for women and men was substantial, with women earning 83% of men’s salaries.
- The smallest difference in starting salaries was for those who had completed Research Master/PhD degrees (2.4% difference).
- Large differences in starting salaries existed for those who had obtained Coursework Masters and Postgraduate Diploma/Certificate qualifications (where men earned 18.9% and 17.6% more than women, respectively).

Gender differences in higher education qualifications

This section provides information on bachelor degree and postgraduate degree holders by gender.

Figure 2: Australian population aged 15-64 years by highest higher education qualification by gender in 2015



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015), *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015*, cat. no. 6227.0, viewed 11 February 2016, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6227.0>

Based on the attainment of higher education degrees (Figure 2):

- Women held the majority of bachelor degrees (55.7% of all bachelor degree holders).
- Women held nearly half of postgraduate degrees (47.0% of all postgraduate degree holders).

¹ <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/research/surveys/australiangraduatesurvey/>

² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015), *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015*, cat. no. 6227.0, viewed 11 February 2016, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6227.0>

³ Excludes fields of education that had a low sample (fewer than 10 respondents) in 2015: optometry, veterinary science and social work. For more information refer to GradStats - employment and salary outcomes of recent higher education graduates 2015: http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/GCA_GradStats_2015_FINAL.pdf