



What Happens Next?

A Report on the First Destinations of
2008/2009 Disabled Graduates

AGCAS Disabilities Task Group
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Executive Summary

The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey undertaken every year by most UK higher education institutions continues to provide the most valuable indicator of the value of a degree. The survey collects data from graduates approximately six months on from completion of their studies and focuses on their current activities. This data is used as one of several benchmarks to rank universities on their overall performance in publications such as *The Times Good University Guide*. Since 2002, the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) has funded research, undertaken by the Disabilities Task Group, into the destinations of disabled graduates. Over the last eight years the “What Happens Next” report has provided, for the first time, real evidence of the effect of a disability on a graduate’s prospects in the labour market. For the most part the reports have indicated that disabled graduates generally fare well in this regard, or at least better than had generally been assumed previous to the report’s inception.

This year’s report indicates that the full force of the economic recession struck the graduate employment market in 2009, showing significant decreases in the numbers of both disabled and non disabled graduates entering full time employment and higher numbers of both groups unemployed.

Key findings

- The proportion of both disabled and non-disabled graduates entering employment in 2009 fell sharply although the decrease for disabled graduates overall was marginally less than for their non disabled peers.
- The numbers of graduates choosing “further study only” as an option following graduation rose this year for both disabled and non disabled graduates - though the percentage increase for those choosing this option was greater among disabled graduates.
- Unemployment levels went up for both groups although the increase was slightly greater for non disabled graduates, the opposite of last year.
- Nature of disability continues to affect leavers’ prospects, with graduates with a ‘Specific Learning Disability’ and those with “unseen disabilities” generally achieving more favourable outcomes than those with more apparent disabilities.
- Graduates with mental health difficulties and those who are wheelchair users, or have mobility difficulties exhibited the lowest levels of full-time employment and the highest levels of unemployment.
- The proportion of graduates entering “graduate level” employment dropped this year, with comparable figures for both disabled and non disabled graduates.
- There was little difference in the types of industries both sets of graduates entered, repeating similar results from previous surveys. The sector attracting the highest numbers of both disabled and non disabled graduates was “Human health and social work”. The sector demonstrating greatest disparity between the two groups was “Arts, entertainment and recreation” with significantly more disabled graduates entering this area.
- There was similarity between disabled and non disabled graduates in terms of the occupations they entered, although this year saw marginally higher numbers of disabled graduates entering “management” level occupations than their non-disabled peers.
- A significantly higher number of disabled graduates chose self employment as an option than non disabled graduates.
- Earnings of disabled graduates compared well with non disabled graduates although overall average starting salaries were down for both groups.

1. Background and Introduction

1.1 Context

In the academic year 2008/2009 270,360 UK and other EU domiciled students graduated from UK universities with a first degree, obtained through a full-time mode of study¹. Approximately six months later these graduates were contacted by their respective universities to complete the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey, the results of which are published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

This report is based on analysis of data from the 205,340 leavers that responded to the survey, of this number 9.4% (19,350) identified themselves, during the period of their studies, as having either a disability or learning difficulty. What happened to these disabled graduates? How successful were they in gaining employment? How did the jobs and sectors they entered compare to those of their non-disabled peers? This report seeks to answer these questions and to challenge the widely established views on the opportunities available to disabled graduates.

1.2 Higher Education Careers Services and Disability

In recent years widening participation activities have occupied the agenda of most UK higher education institutions. University careers services have been at the forefront of these activities in recognising the additional needs of students traditionally seen as disadvantaged within the labour market (by virtue of factors relating to age, ethnicity, gender and disability). Specialist legislation in many of these areas, including the Disability Discrimination Acts (now subsumed within the Equality Act), has put further pressure on services to demonstrate commitment to support activities. This report is of significant value to services wishing to gain a greater understanding of the challenges facing their disabled students.

1.3 Disability Development Network

This is the ninth year this report has been produced by the Disability Development Network (DDN). The DDN was formed in 2000 with funding from the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) with the aim of improving careers provision for disabled students and graduates by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and resources and to undertake developmental work. The network is coordinated by the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) Disabilities Task Group (DTG). AGCAS provided the funding to obtain the DLHE data statistics from HESA.

1.4 Impact of the Report

Since its inception the report has attracted significant interest from parties committed to supporting disabled graduates. It provided, for the first time, evidence of the impact of disability on a graduate's employment prospects. In 2008 the report was praised by the Secretary of State, and members of the DTG were invited to the main political party conferences to share and discuss the findings of the report.

1.5 What this Report Measured

The aim of the report was to see how the destinations of disabled and non-disabled graduates compared, and whether these groups entered comparable employment. Features particular to the experience of graduates with specific disabilities were highlighted. The report analyses the first destinations of those completing a first degree on a full-time basis. It does not give details of the destinations of part-time first degree graduates, postgraduates, foundation degrees or diploma qualifiers.

¹ Source: HESA website, Table 14 - HE qualifications obtained in the UK by level, mode of study, domicile, gender, class of first degree and subject area.

1.6 Notes on Terminology

The term "disabled graduates" describes those graduates who identified themselves as having a disability / learning difficulty during the period of their studies. The term "non-disabled graduates" refers to the cohort of graduates in the survey who did not declare themselves to have a disability of any kind. Due to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act, 1998, HESA implements a strategy in published tabulations designed to prevent the disclosure of personal information about any individual. This strategy involves rounding all numbers to the nearest five. The percentage figures quoted in tables and throughout the text are the more accurate figures.

For brevity, in the text throughout the remainder of this report the 2008/09 DLHE survey is referred to as "2009", whilst the 2007/08 survey is referred to as "2008". In the headings the full academic year will be stated.

1.7 First Degree, Full-time mode of study, 2008/2009 DLHE respondents

- Total number of first degree, full-time mode of study leavers responding to DLHE survey: 205,340 (the equivalent figure for leavers from 2008 was 200,090).
- Total number of non-disabled graduates: 184,015 (180,875).
- Total number of disabled graduates: 19,350 (18,095).
- The percentage of disabled graduates in 2008/2009 from the total of all graduates with known classification: 9.4% (the 2008 figure was 9.1%).
- The number of disabled graduates increased by 1,255 (a 6.9% rise) in just one year.

1.8 Disabled First Degree, Full-time mode of study, 2008/2009 DLHE respondents by Specific Disability

Table 1: Disabled respondents to DLHE survey by disability type, 2004/05 to 2008/09

Disability	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	% change 04/05 – 08/09
A specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia	7570	8490	9515	10540	11480	51.7
Blind/Partially Sighted	305	305	330	360	345	13.1
Deaf / Hearing Impairment	510	505	545	555	610	19.6
Wheelchair User / Mobility Difficulties	375	405	435	455	455	21.3
Personal Care Support	15	15	15	15	10	-33.3
Mental Health Difficulties	390	455	590	755	945	142.3
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	35	40	90	125	185	428.6
An Unseen Disability	2660	2560	2715	2765	2800	5.3
Multiple Disabilities	595	580	715	750	835	40.3
A Disability Not Listed Above	1295	1540	1485	1775	1685	30.1
Total	13750	14895	16435	18095	19350	40.7

The numbers of disabled graduates responding to the 2009 survey increased in almost all specific categories from the previous year. Graduates with a specific learning difficulty formed the largest single category (larger than all others combined) for the second successive year². The largest percentage increases from the previous year were seen amongst students who indicated that they were autistic and those who reported mental health difficulties.

² In 2007/08 the Disabled field in HESA's Student Record was revised, changing the "dyslexia" category to "a specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia".

2. Destinations of Disabled Graduates Compared with Non-disabled Graduates

Table 2: Destinations of Disabled Graduates Compared with Non-disabled Graduates

Activity	Non disabled	%	Disabled	%
Full-time paid work only (including self-employed)	85065	46.2	8215	42.4
Part-time paid work only	21195	11.5	2185	11.3
Voluntary/unpaid work only	3675	2.0	525	2.7
Work and further study	14040	7.6	1460	7.6
Further study only	33960	18.5	3470	17.9
Assumed to be unemployed	17110	9.3	2340	12.1
Not available for employment	6855	3.7	860	4.5
Other	2120	1.2	295	1.5
Total	184015	100.0	19350	100.0

2.1 Summary of Findings

This year's survey reveals mixed fortunes for disabled graduates as the above table illustrates. For most categories fairly small changes were recorded between 2008 and 2009, however, some interesting changes are apparent. There was a marginally higher increase in the rate of unemployment for non disabled graduates over disabled graduates and a higher percentage of non disabled graduates entering further study than non disabled graduates. The numbers of disabled students in full time employment dropped from 47.5% in 2008 to 42.4% in 2009 whereas the proportion assumed to be unemployed rose from 10.8% in 2008 to 12.1% in 2009. These figures are analysed further below and illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 overleaf:

- 42.4% of disabled graduates were in full-time work compared with 46.2% of non-disabled graduates. This compares with 47.5% and 51.9% respectively last year, so the current report shows, as last year, that there has been a decrease in the percentages of both groups in full time work at the time of the survey. However, the decrease is again greater among non-disabled graduates.
- 11.3% of disabled graduates were in part-time work (an increase from 9.6% in 2008), compared to 11.5% of non-disabled graduates (9.0% last year in 2008).
- Equal percentages (both 7.6%) of disabled and non-disabled graduates opted for work and further study in 2009. These figures are identical to those in the 2008 survey for both groups.
- The percentages of both disabled and non-disabled graduates who went on to further study only as an option increased between 2008 and 2009: 17.9% of disabled graduates were in further study only compared with 15.7% in 2008. By contrast, 18.5% of non-disabled graduates chose further study only, a significant increase on the corresponding figure (16.7%) for 2008.
- In 2009, the percentage of disabled graduates who were assumed to be unemployed stood at 12.1%, an increase from 10.8% in 2008. The corresponding figures for non-disabled graduates believed to be unemployed in 2009 also increased to 9.3% (up from 8.2% in 2008). Although unemployment rates for both groups increased, it is worth noting that the increase was slightly greater for non disabled graduates, the opposite to last year.
- 4.5% of disabled graduates were not available for employment. This was slightly lower than the corresponding figure of 5.0% in 2008. The proportion of non-disabled graduates not available for work also dropped; from 4.0% in 2008 to 3.7% in 2009.
- 4.2% of disabled graduates were self employed. This shows a slight drop compared to the corresponding figure of 4.3% recorded for 2008 but it is still significantly higher than the 2.6% of non-disabled graduates in 2009 (see Appendix 1).

Figure 1: Destinations of 2008/09 Non-disabled Graduates

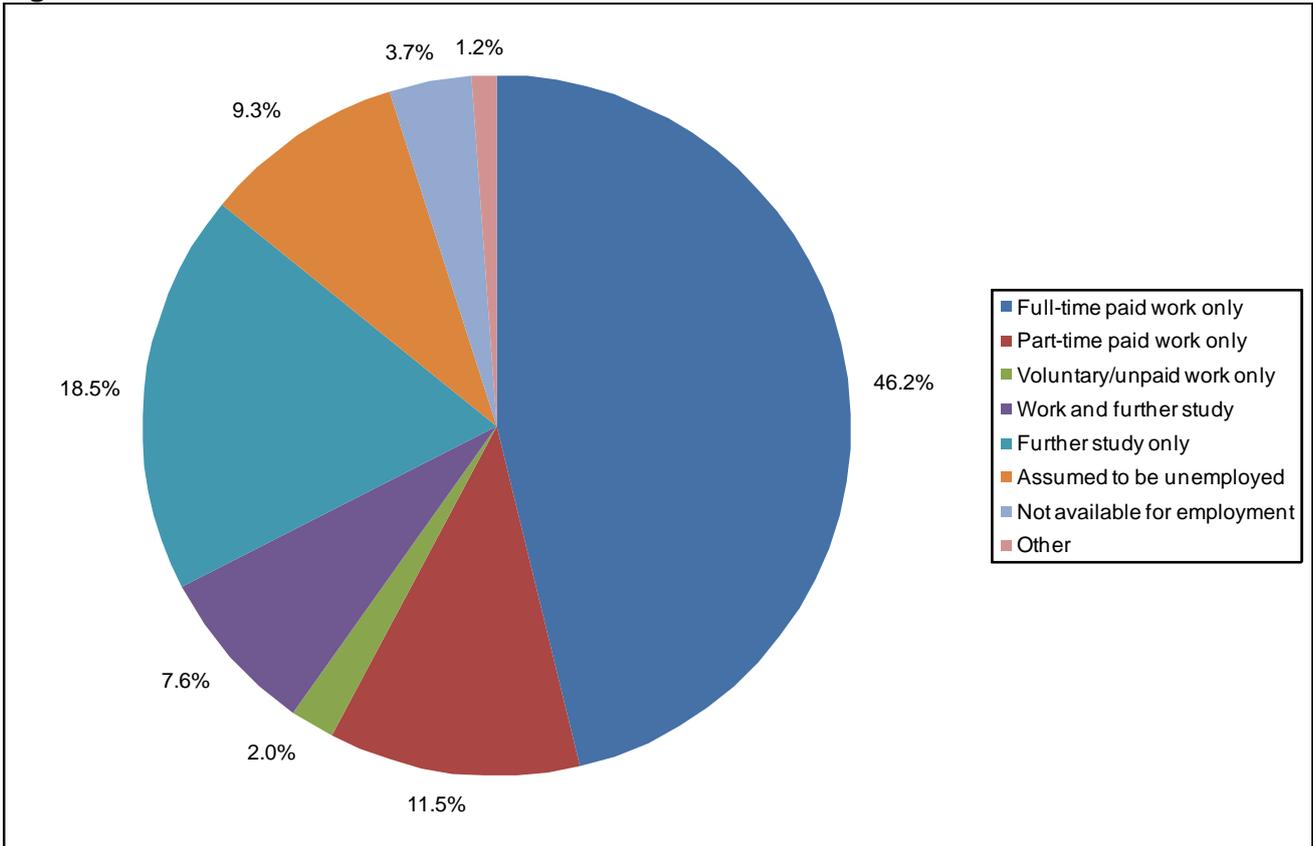
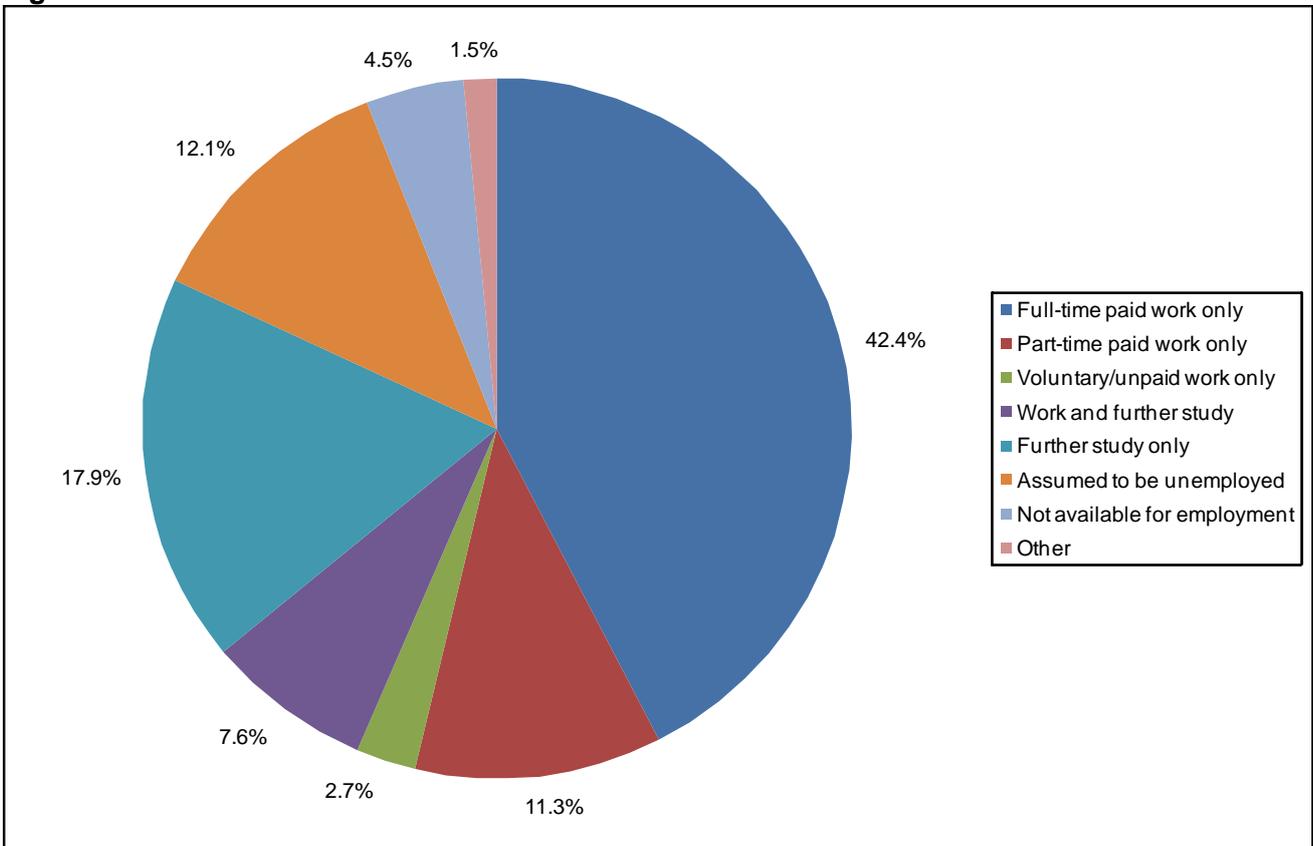


Figure 2: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates



3. Standard Industrial Classification/Type of Employer

This section identifies the industries entered by 2009 graduates. It uses the Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities (SIC) as defined by HESA. The present version was updated in 2003 and is aligned with similar classifications in all member states of the European Union. For this report we were solely concerned with examining the type of employers that graduates were employed by, as defined in Part One of the SIC. The number of destinations for which the relevant SIC was not known is significant and any analysis should take account of this fact.

Table 3: Standard Industrial Classification

Standard Industrial Classification	Non disabled	%	Disabled	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	380	0.3	50	0.4
Mining and quarrying	350	0.3	20	0.2
Manufacturing	4840	3.9	500	4.0
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	580	0.5	55	0.5
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	235	0.2	25	0.2
Construction	1690	1.4	160	1.3
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	20570	16.6	1805	14.6
Transport and storage	1305	1.1	125	1.0
Accommodation and food service activities	7835	6.3	795	6.4
Information and communication	6255	5.1	675	5.5
Financial and insurance activities	5740	4.6	410	3.3
Real estate activities	1180	1.0	130	1.1
Professional, scientific and technical activities	11875	9.6	1135	9.2
Administrative and support service activities	5185	4.2	540	4.4
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	7390	6.0	785	6.4
Education	16260	13.1	1610	13.0
Human health and social work activities	23685	19.1	2360	19.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	6100	4.9	875	7.1
Other service activities	1985	1.6	245	2.0
Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods and services producing activities of households for own use	115	0.1	25	0.2
Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies	140	0.1	15	0.1
Total	123695	100	12345	100
Not known/Not applicable	60320		7005	
Grand Total	184015		19350	

- On the whole there was little difference in the types of industries both sets of graduates entered. In some cases the percentages of disabled and non-disabled graduates who entered a particular industry were either identical or only marginally different. This reflects similar results from the previous surveys between 2003 and 2008.
- The industrial sector attracting the highest numbers of both disabled and non-disabled graduates was: 'Human health and social work'. This finding is similar to that observed in previous surveys.
- The category which showed the greatest difference in terms of disabled and non-disabled entrants was 'Arts, entertainment and recreation'. 4.9% of non-disabled graduates chose employment in this sector whereas significantly more (7.1%) disabled graduates chose first destinations in this field.
- By contrast, substantially more (4.6%) non-disabled graduates chose the financial and insurance sector compared to only 3.3% of disabled graduates going into the same field. However, both these figures are significantly lower than in previous years, 6.1% and 4.1% respectively in 2008 reflecting the impact of the recession on financial recruitment.

4. Standard Occupational Classification

This section compares the occupational groups entered by disabled and non-disabled graduates using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system.

4.1 Summary of Findings

There was similarity between the disabled and non-disabled graduates in terms of some categories of employment entered. However, for some occupational groupings there were notable differences between the groups as explained further below and illustrated in Figures 3 and 4.

- Almost identical proportions of disabled graduates (7.1%) and non-disabled graduates (7.0%) entered jobs in management and administration. Over recent years the figures for both groups have been virtually the same.
- 26.6% of non-disabled graduates entered the professional occupations grouping, a reduction from 2008's figure of 27.9%. By contrast, fewer disabled graduates (22.6%) went into careers in this category, representing a decrease from the corresponding figure of 24.9% in 2008.
- A higher percentage of disabled graduates entered associate professional and technical occupations (32.3%) compared with non-disabled graduates (29.0%). These percentages show a slight decrease for both groups going into these types of occupations compared to 2008.
- Lower proportions of disabled graduates entered clerical and secretarial occupations: 9.0% of disabled graduates did so compared with 10.3% of their non-disabled peers, representing fairly significant declines from 2008, 10.1% and 11.7% respectively.
- Again, in 2009, a higher proportion of disabled graduates (8.0%) compared to non-disabled graduates (6.1%) went into personal and protective service occupations, both increases on 2008's figures of 7.0% and 5.5% respectively.
- Slightly more non-disabled graduates (13.3%) chose sales occupations than disabled graduates, for whom the figure stood at 12.0%. This represents increases for both groups from 2008, when the figure for disabled graduates was 9.8% and for non-disabled was 10.7%.

4.2 Graduate Level Occupations

Using a basic definition of "graduate level" occupation as representing the first three SOC groups we can compare the figures for each group entering graduate employment as follows:

Table 4: Graduate Level Occupations

	Graduate Level Occupations (SOCS 1,2,3)							Graduate Employment Marker	
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2008	2009
Disabled	64.5	60.6	62.2	64.5	65.8	65.5	62.0	64.8	61.1
Non disabled	63.2	61.4	62.9	64.9	67.2	65.7	62.6	64.7	61.7

- Following steady increases in recent years of the proportions of graduates entering graduate occupations, the current survey noted a significant decrease in the percentages of both disabled and non-disabled graduates going into graduate level jobs. Interestingly, the figures of 62.0% and 62.6% respectively are on a par with pre-recession figures of 2005.
- A more accurate measure of graduate employment can be obtained by using HESA's graduate employment marker, which is derived from the work of Elias & Purcell. This method, which maps individual SOC codes into graduate or non-graduate occupations, found that 61.1% of disabled graduates worked in graduate level roles, compared to 61.7% of non-disabled graduates, again a notable drop from 2008's figures, as the above table illustrates.

Figure 3: Destination of 2008/09 Non-disabled Graduates by SOC Codes

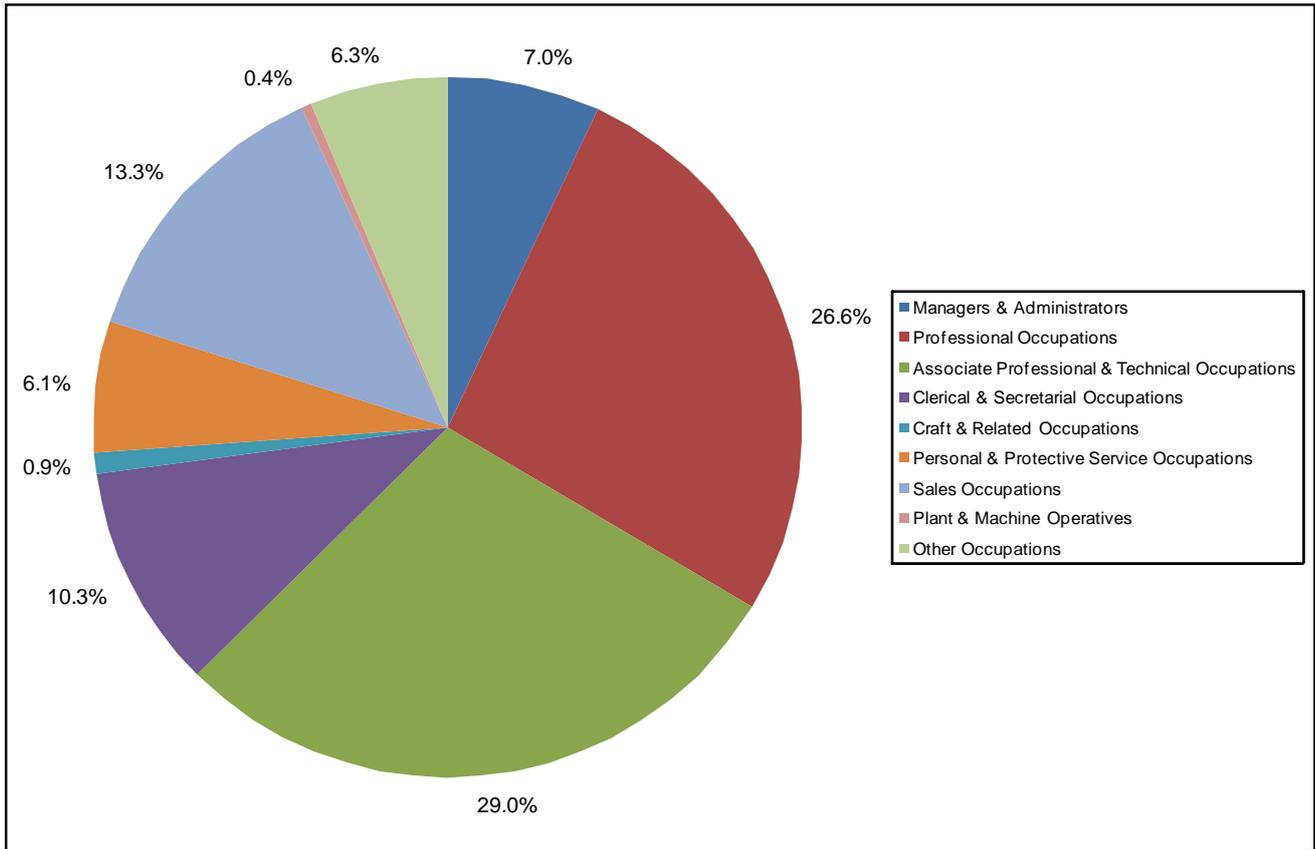
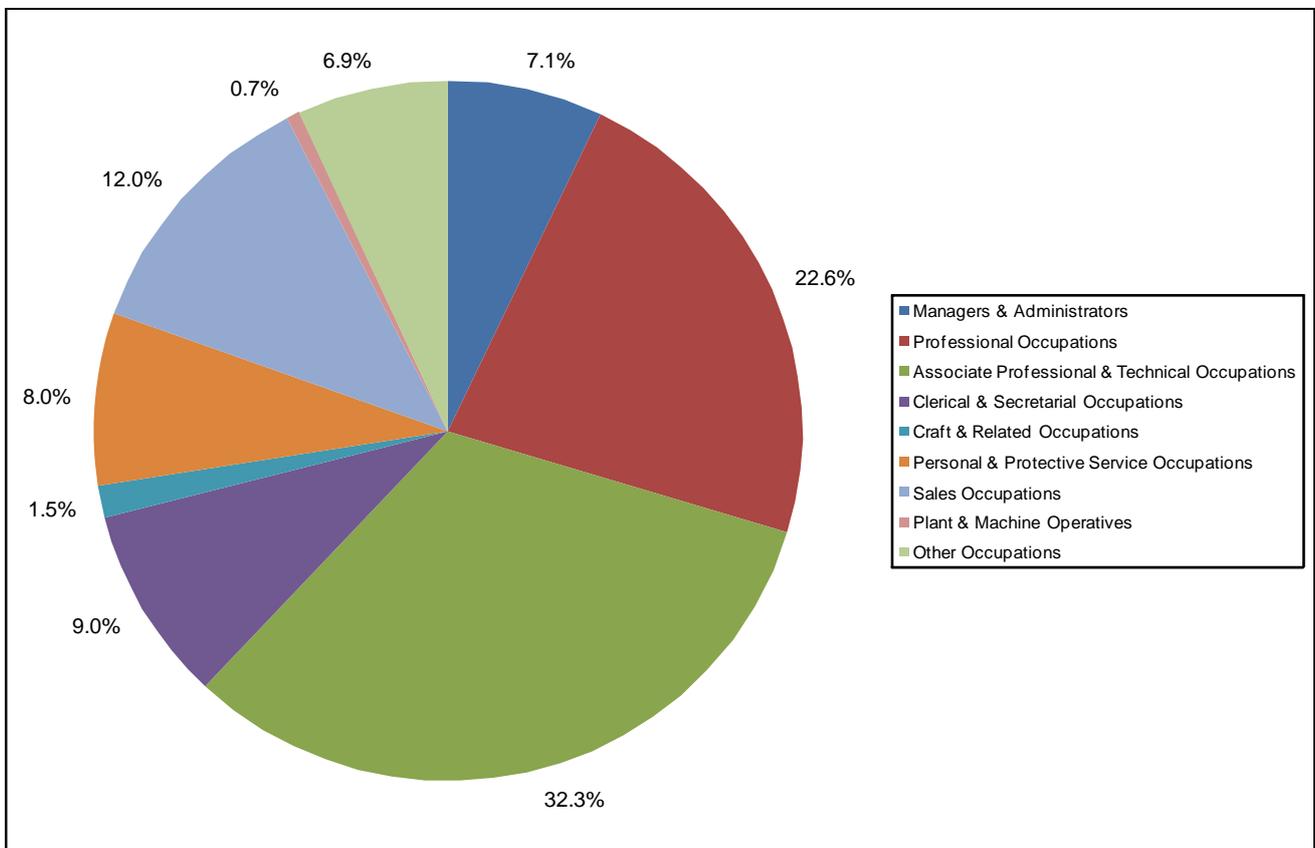


Figure 4: Destination of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates by SOC codes



4.3 Annual Salary of Employed Respondents

This section of the report examines the annual pro-rata salaries of employed graduates. The figure below indicates that the range of starting salaries for graduates varied very substantially between the lowest and the highest.

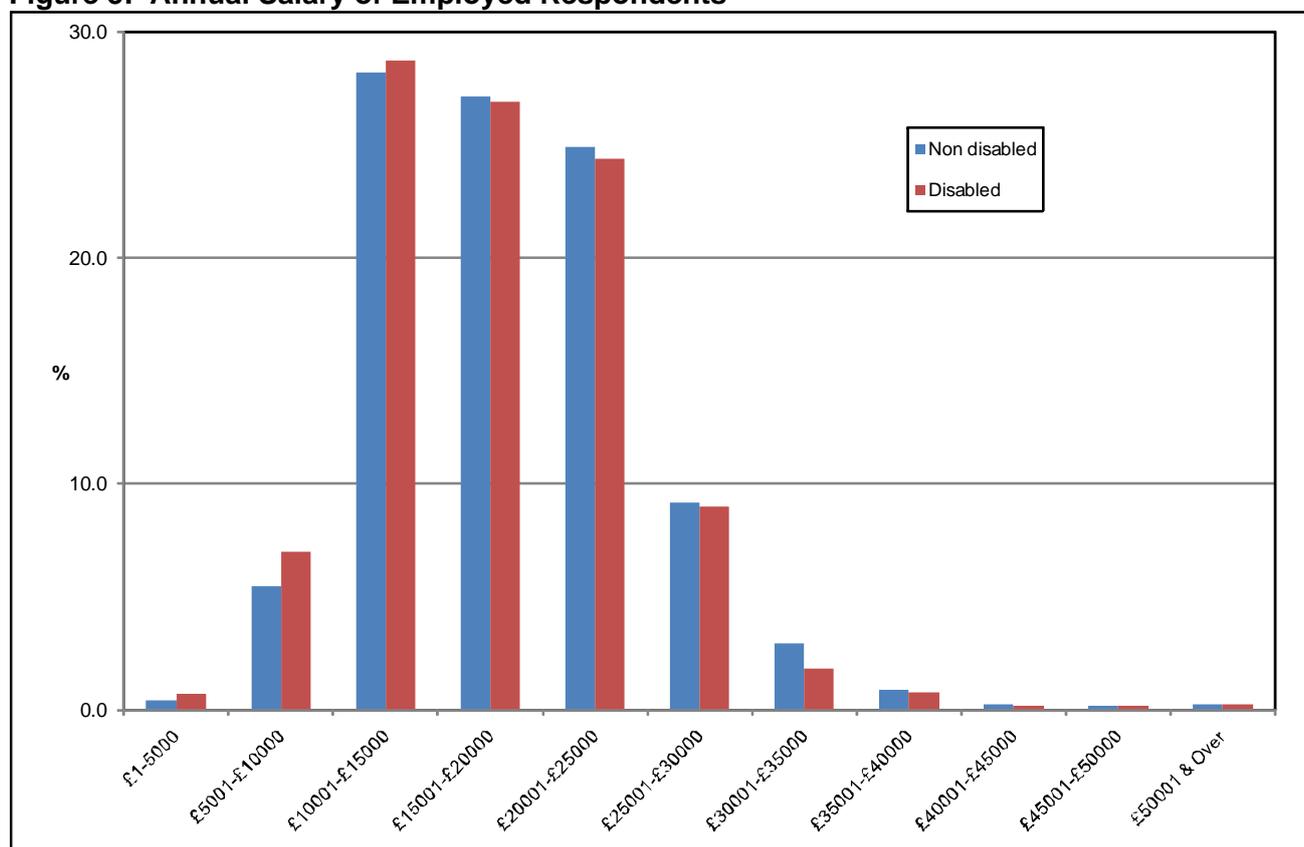
As in 2008 the vast majority of both disabled and non-disabled graduates began work on salaries between £10,001 and £25,000.

In 2009 the most common starting salary for both disabled and non-disabled graduates was in the £10,001 to £15,000 range. This is a decline from 2008, where it was in the £15,001 to £20,000 range for both groups, and a sign of the weakness of the overall labour market.

However despite this salary decrease, the earnings of disabled graduates compared very well with the pay levels of their non-disabled peers in all categories. This is perhaps not surprising given the general similarities between both groups in terms of occupational choice and level of employment.

It should be noted, however, that the question on earnings was not a core question on the DLHE survey, and consequently was not responded to by all graduates.

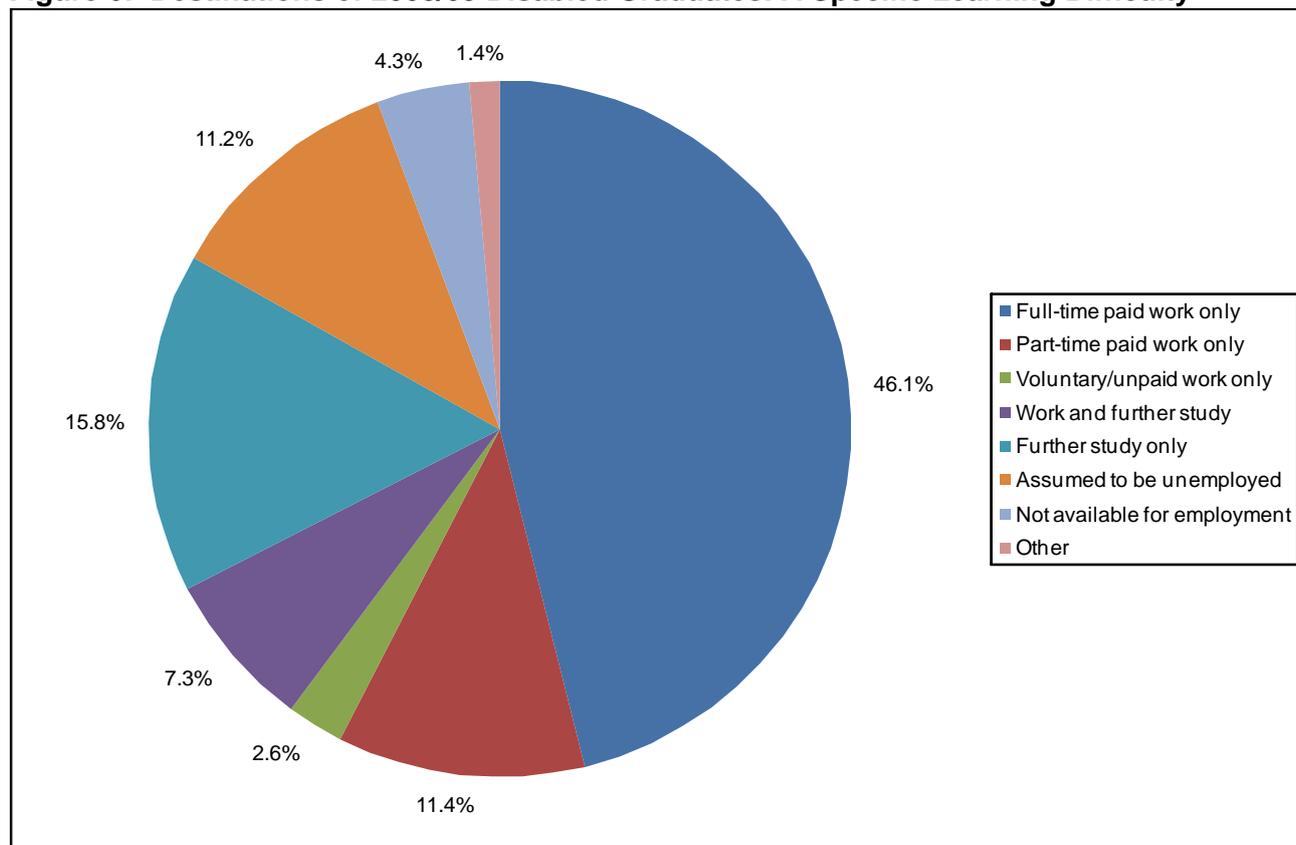
Figure 5: Annual Salary of Employed Respondents



5. Destinations of Disabled Graduates by Disability

5.1 A Specific Learning Difficulty (including dyslexia)

Figure 6: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates: A Specific Learning Difficulty

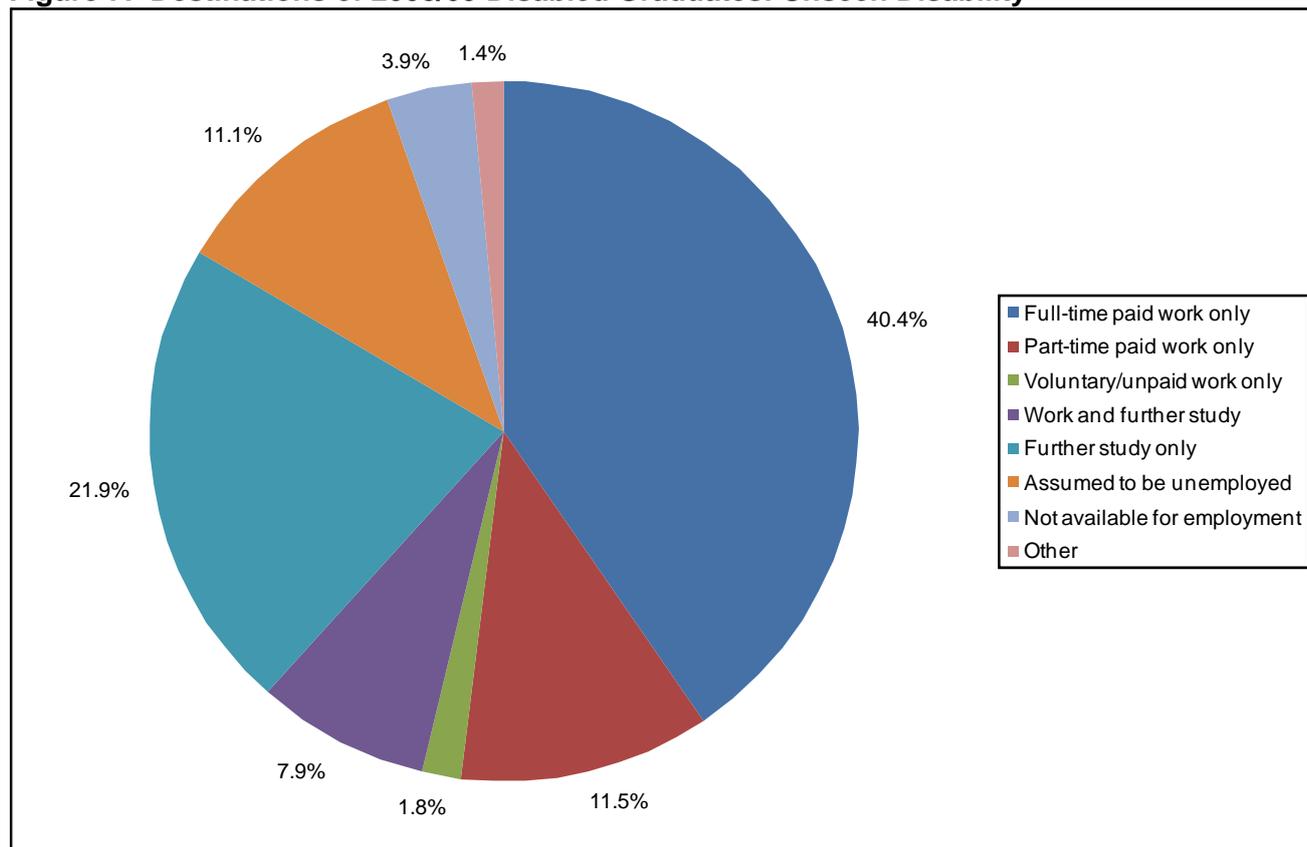


Key Findings

- 46.1% of graduates with a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) entered full-time paid work only, a decrease from 50.4% in 2008. In comparison 42.4% of all disabled graduates entered full time paid work and 46.2% of non-disabled graduates did so (see Figures 1 and 2).
- 15.8% of graduates with a SpLD went on to further study only, an increase from the figure of 14.2% in 2008. The percentage of graduates with a SpLD progressing on to further study is, however, slightly lower than the 17.9% of disabled graduates as a whole and the 18.5% of non-disabled graduates who chose further study only as an option.
- 11.2% of graduates with a SpLD were believed to be unemployed, an increase from the 9.9% recorded in the previous survey. The percentage of graduates with a SpLD who were unemployed was lower than the corresponding figure for disabled graduates overall (12.1%) but somewhat higher than the 9.3% of non-disabled graduates who were unemployed.
- 7.7% of graduates with a SpLD went into manager and administrator occupations. This was higher than the percentage of 7.1% of the disabled graduates as a whole – higher, in fact, than any category of disabled students- and more than their non-disabled peers (7.0%)
- 21.5% of this group (lower than the figure of 23.3% for the previous survey) entered professional occupations. This is lower than the percentage of the disabled graduates overall (22.6%) and lower than the proportion of non-disabled graduates (26.6%) entering professional occupations.

5.2 Unseen Disability

Figure 7: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates: Unseen Disability

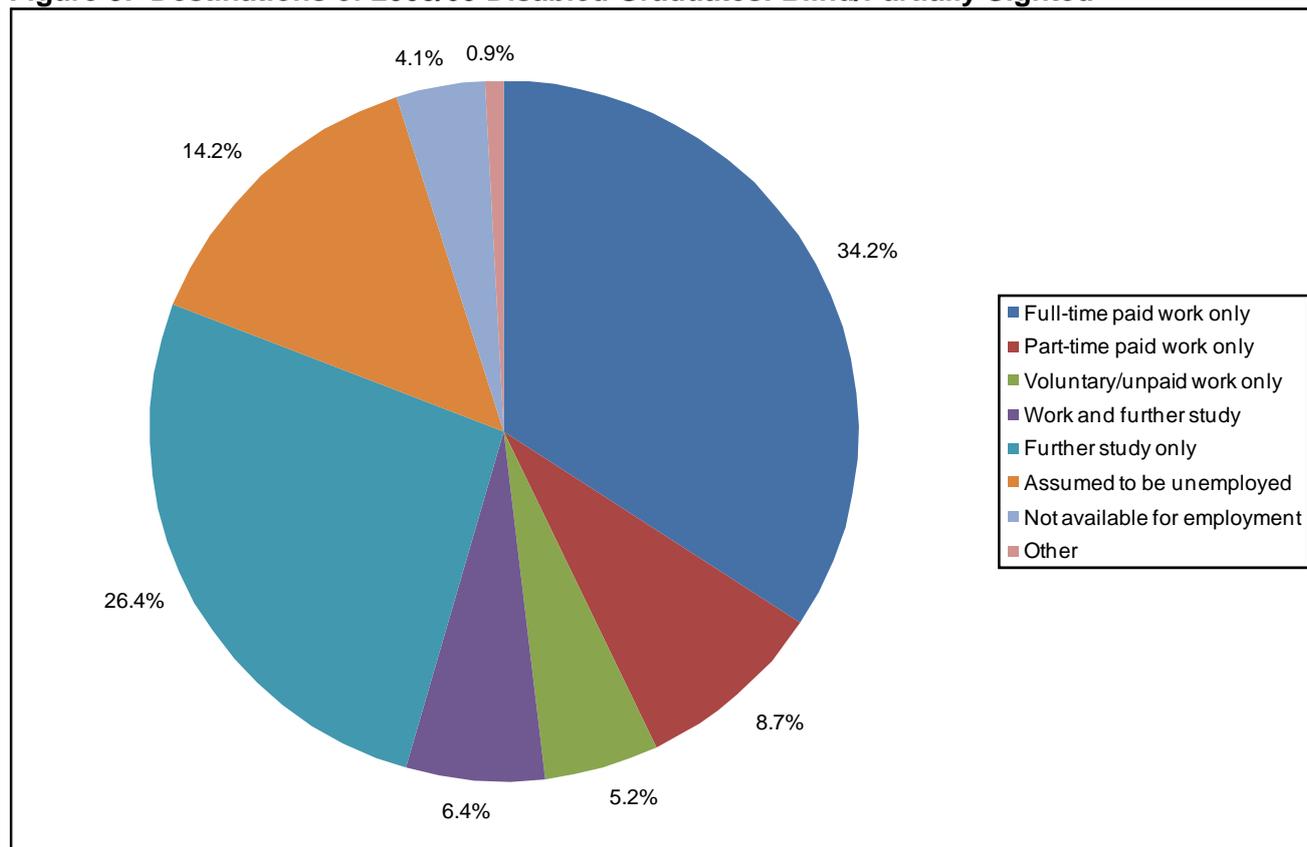


Key findings

- 40.4% of graduates who indicated that they had an unseen disability were in full time employment, a significant decrease from the corresponding percentage of 49.1% in 2008. It is quite common for this group to outperform the overall group of disabled graduates and most specific disability groups but this year's figure of 40.4% is lower than the proportion of disabled graduates as a whole (42.4%) and much lower than the 46.2% of non-disabled graduates who entered full time employment after graduation (see Figures 1 and 2).
- 21.9% of graduates with an unseen disability went on to further study only representing an equally significant increase from last year's figure of 16.7%. It is also much higher than the figures for non disabled and disabled graduates entering further study only in 2009, 18.5% and 17.9% respectively.
- 11.1% of graduates with an unseen disability were assumed to be unemployed at the time of the survey, a clear increase on last year's figure of 9.8% and alarmingly higher than the 6.1% recorded in 2007. This year's figure is, however, still lower than the corresponding percentage for disabled graduates as a whole (12.1%) though, higher than the percentage of non-disabled graduates who were thought to be unemployed (9.3%).
- 6.2% of graduates with an unseen disability entered manager and administrator occupations, down from 2008's figure of 6.9%. The 2009 figure was lower than the overall one for disabled graduates (7.1%) and non-disabled graduates (7.0%).
- 26.3% of this group entered professional occupations compared to last year's total of 27.9%. This is also higher than the percentage of disabled graduates (22.6%) as a whole that went into professional occupations and marginally lower than the corresponding figure for non-disabled graduates (26.6%).

5.3 Blind/Partially Sighted

Figure 8: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates: Blind/Partially Sighted

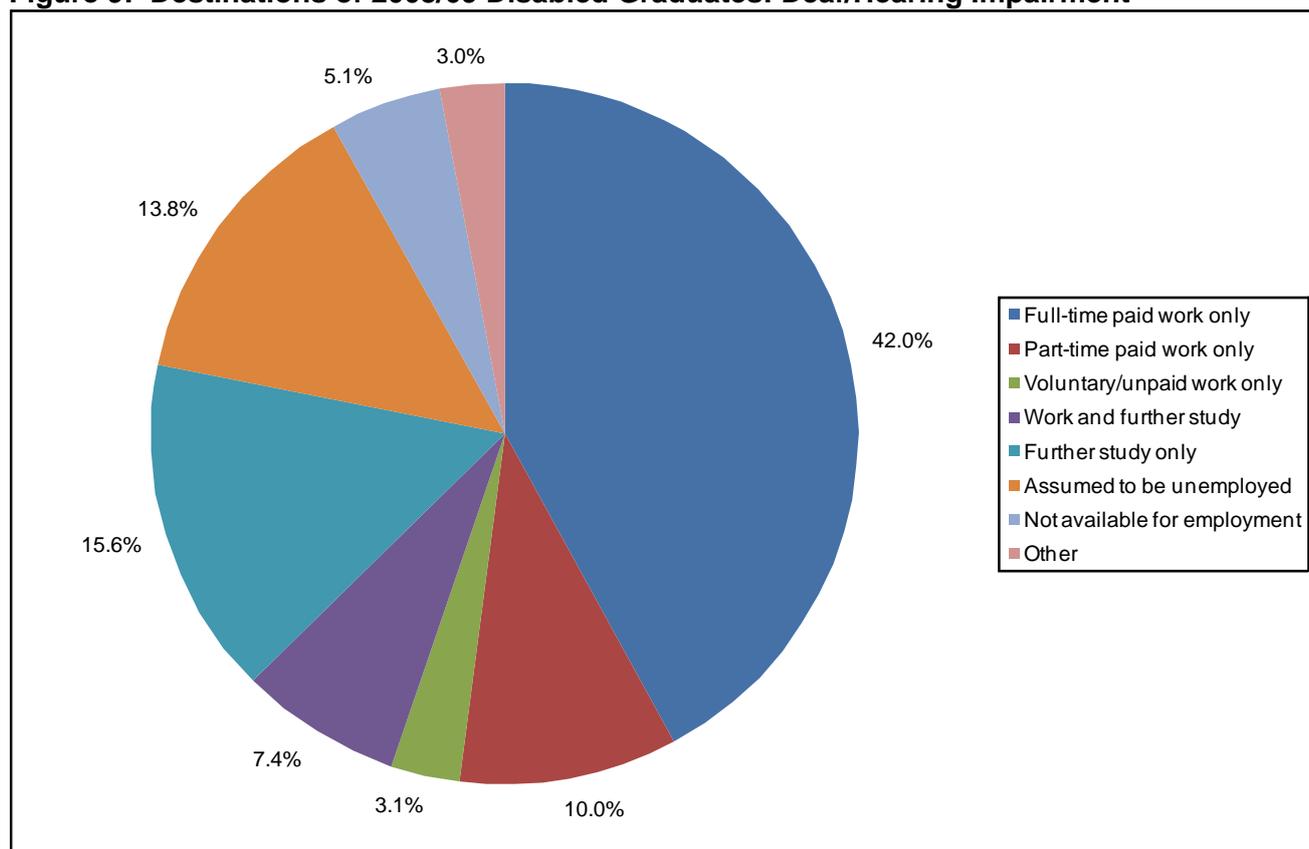


Key findings

- 34.2% of blind / partially sighted graduates were in full time employment. This marks the second successive year of significant decline for graduates in this category: from 44.7% in full time employment two years ago to 40.4% last year. This percentage is also much lower than both the proportion of disabled graduates as a whole (42.4%) and the proportion (46.4%) of non-disabled graduates who entered full time employment after graduation (see Figures 1 and 2).
- 26.4% of blind / partially sighted graduates went on to further study only. This represents a huge increase from last year's figure of 19.2%. It is also much higher than the figures for non disabled and disabled graduates entering further study only in 2009, 18.5% and 17.9% respectively.
- 14.2% of blind / partially sighted graduates were assumed to be unemployed. This is lower than the 15.3% from last year but still significantly more than the 9.1% recorded in 2007. The proportion of this group who were unemployed was also greater than the corresponding percentage for disabled graduates as a whole (12.1%) and much higher than the percentage of non-disabled graduates who were unemployed (9.3%).
- 4.3% of blind / partially sighted graduates went in to manager and administrator occupations. These is exactly the same figure as n 2008 and, once again, significantly lower than the 7.1% of the disabled graduates as a whole and 7.0% of their non-disabled peers in the present survey who were successful in going into manager and administrator roles. This is the lowest percentage of any disabled group entering these roles.
- 24.5% of this group entered professional occupations. This is higher than the percentage of the disabled graduates as a whole (22.6%) that went into these roles but lower than the 26.6% of non-disabled graduates entering professional occupations.

5.4 Deaf/Hearing Impairment

Figure 9: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates: Deaf/Hearing Impairment

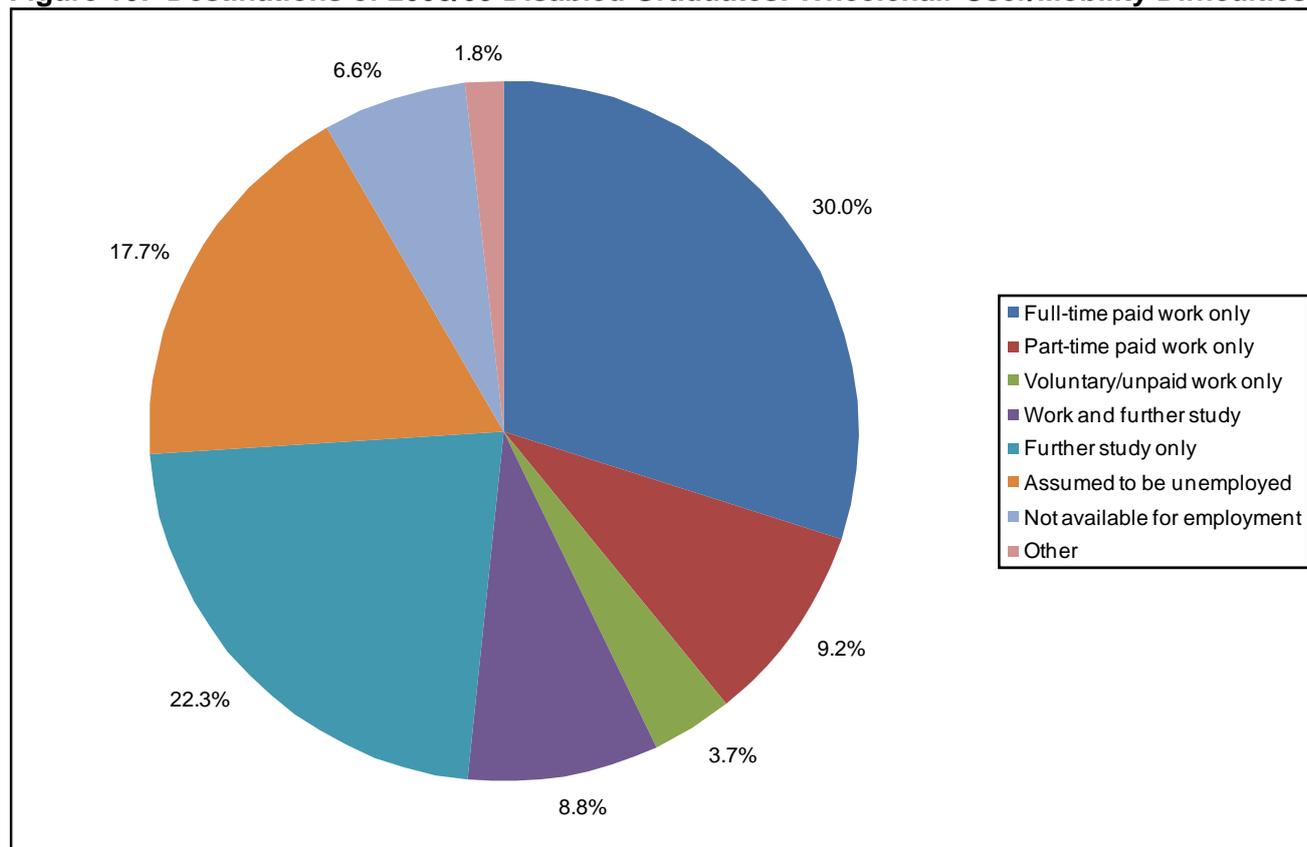


Key Findings

- 42.0% of deaf / hearing impaired graduates entered full-time paid work only (a decrease from the previous year's figure of 46.3%). In comparison, 42.4% of disabled graduates overall and 46.2% of non-disabled graduates were in full time employment (see Figures 1 and 2).
- 15.6% of these graduates entered further study only; a decrease from the 17.7% recorded for this group in the previous survey. This is lower than both the 17.9% of disabled graduates overall and higher than the 18.5% of non-disabled graduates who opted for further study only.
- 13.8% of the graduates with hearing difficulties were believed to be unemployed at the time that the data was collected. This compares with 11.4% in 2008 and, alarmingly, only 6.4% in 2007 indicating an increase in unemployment levels of over 100% in just two years.
- 6.0% of this group entered management and administration occupations, compared with 6.5% in 2008. This is lower than the figure of 7.1% of disabled graduates as a whole, and lower than the 7.1% of non-disabled graduates going into manager and administrator roles in this survey.
- 26.2% of graduates in this category entered professional occupations, a decrease from the 27.6% recorded for this group in the previous survey. The figure of 26.2% is greater than the 22.6% of disabled graduates overall, but lower than the 26.6% of non-disabled graduates who went into professional roles.

5.5 Wheelchair User/Mobility Difficulties

Figure 10: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates: Wheelchair User/Mobility Difficulties

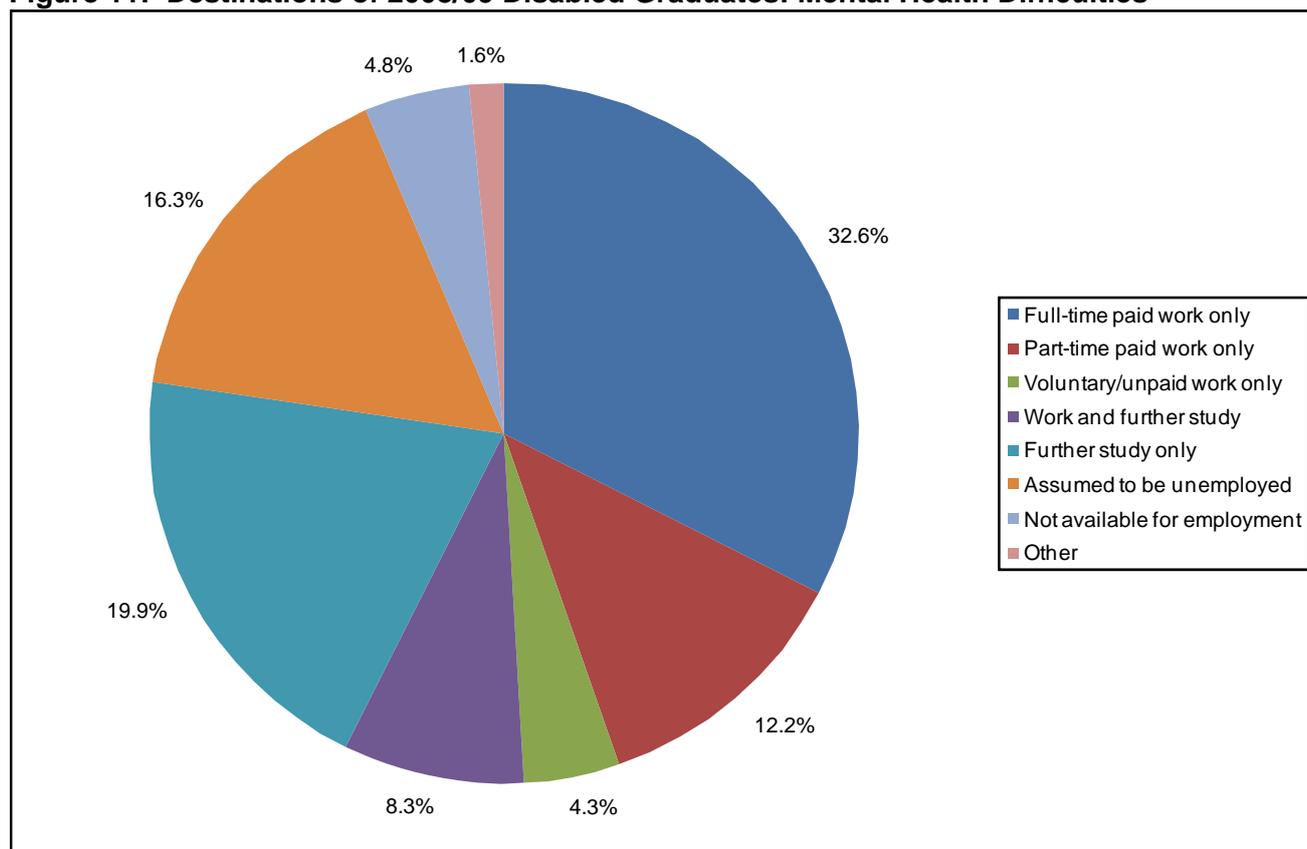


Key Findings

- 30.0% of graduates who are wheelchair users or have mobility difficulties were in full-time paid work only, a decrease from last year's figure of 33.4% and demonstrating a significant decline in fortunes from 2007's 42.3%. The figure of 30.0% is also much lower than the percentage (42.4%) of disabled graduates overall and non-disabled graduates (46.2%) who went into full time employment (see Figures 1 and 2).
- 22.3% (an increase from last year's 18.7%) went on to further study only compared with 17.9% of disabled graduates overall and 18.5% of non-disabled graduates.
- 17.7% of the graduates with mobility difficulties were assumed to be unemployed. This is higher than the figure of 15.8% recorded for this group in the previous survey and, as with other groups, dramatically higher than the 2007 pre-recession survey of just 9.9%. The percentage of 17.7% is also substantially greater than the 9.3% unemployment rate recorded for non-disabled graduates and is the highest unemployment figure of any disability category recorded in this report.
- 4.7% of employed graduates from this group entered management and administration occupations, a dramatic decrease from last year's 7.8%. This compares poorly with the 7.1% of disabled graduates overall and 7.0% of non-disabled graduates who went into these career fields.
- 26.0% of graduates who were wheelchair users or had some form of mobility difficulties entered professional occupations, down from 28.6% the previous year. It is also higher than the proportion of disabled graduates overall (22.6%) who went into professional occupations at the time of the present survey reported here, but marginally lower than the figure for non-disabled graduates (26.6%).

5.6 Mental Health Difficulties

Figure 11: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates: Mental Health Difficulties

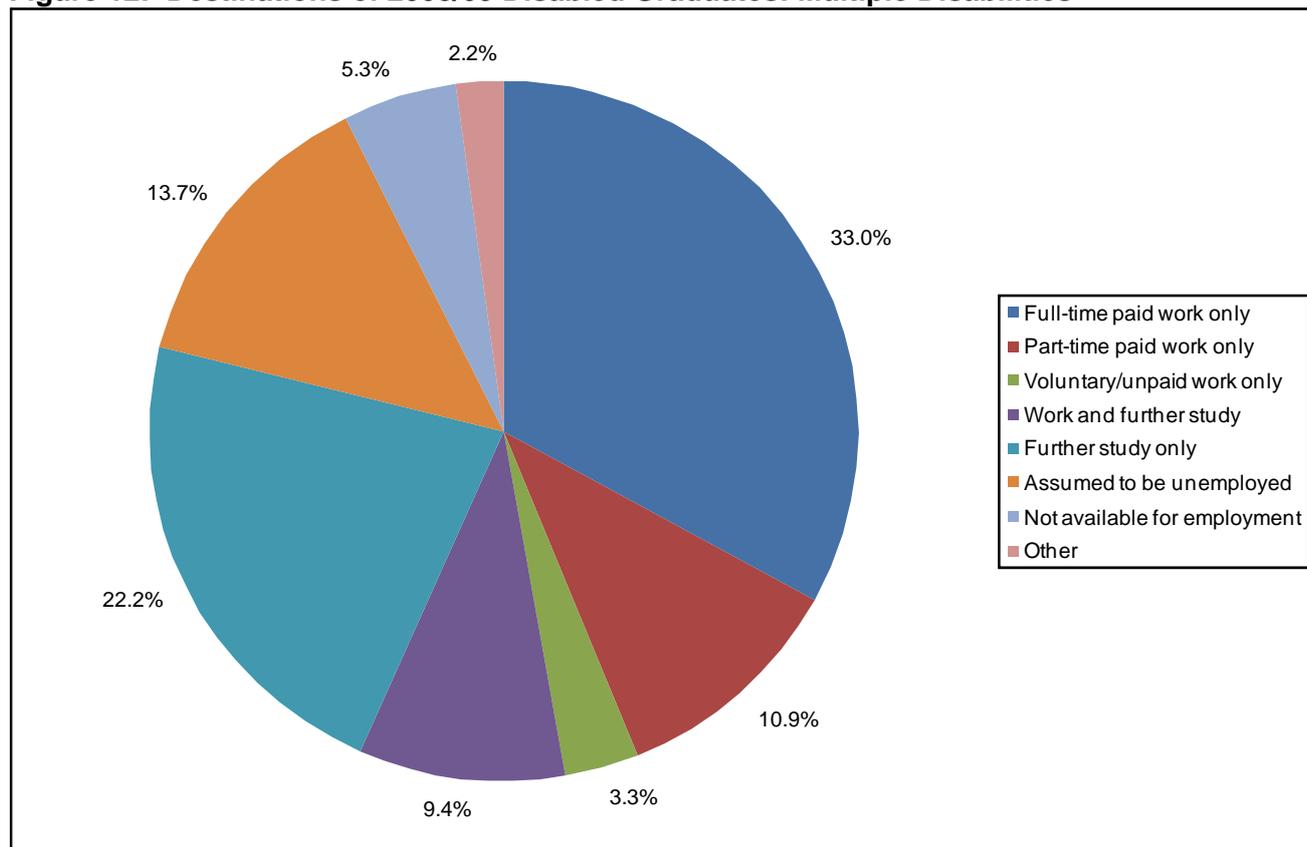


Key Findings

- 32.6% of graduates with mental health difficulties were in full-time paid work only. This is a significant decrease from last year's figure of 37.5%. As in previous years it is also much lower than the corresponding figures of 42.4% of disabled graduates overall who were in full time employment only and the figure of 46.2% of non-disabled graduates who had gone into employment (see Figures 1 and 2).
- 19.9% of graduates with mental health difficulties were in further study, the same figure as in 2008. This compares to 17.9% disabled graduates in further study and 18.5% of non-disabled graduates.
- 16.3% of graduates with mental health difficulties were assumed to be unemployed, a significant rise from the corresponding 12.7% the previous year. This unemployment rate is higher than the overall rate for disabled graduates (12.1%) and non-disabled graduates (9.3%).
- 6.7% of employed graduates with mental health difficulties entered management and administration. Indicating a fall after last year's impressive 8.1 % figure, though still much higher than 2007's 2.9%. This figure of 6.7% compares with 7.1% of disabled graduates as a whole and 7.0% of non-disabled graduates who went into management and administration.
- 18.2% of employed graduates with mental health difficulties entered professional occupations a decline from 21.1% in the previous survey and from 26.7% in 2007. This figure of 18.2% is also lower than the corresponding percentages of 22.6% of disabled graduates overall and 26.6% of non-disabled graduates who went into professional occupations.

5.7 Multiple Disabilities

Figure 12: Destinations of 2008/09 Disabled Graduates: Multiple Disabilities



Key Findings

- 33.0% of graduates with multiple disabilities were in full-time paid work only at the time of the study compared with last year's figure of 36.3%. This is much lower than the figures of 42.4% of disabled graduates overall and 46.2% of non-disabled graduates who also went into full time employment only (see Figures 1 and 2).
- 22.2% of graduates with multiple disabilities were in further study. This is higher than the 19.3% recorded in last year's survey and higher than the totals for disabled graduates overall (17.9%) and non-disabled graduates (18.5%) who also chose full time study only after graduation.
- 13.7% of graduates with multiple disabilities were unemployed. This shows a welcome decline from last year's figure of 15.1% though it is still higher than the totals for disabled graduates overall (12.1%) and non-disabled graduates (9.3%).
- 6.2% of employed graduates with multiple disabilities entered management and administration occupations. This is a drop from last year's figure of 7.9% and is lower than the corresponding percentages of 7.1% of disabled graduates as a whole and 7.0% of non-disabled graduates who went into management and administration roles.
- 23.4% of employed graduates with multiple disabilities entered professional occupations. This compares with the figure of 22.6% of disabled graduates overall and 26.6% of non-disabled graduates who went into professional occupations.

5.8 Unemployment Time Series by Disability Type

For the second year since its inception this report will look at unemployment time series by disability type.

Table 5 shows that unemployment rates had been falling consistently across almost all categories of graduates, non-disabled, disabled and those with specific types of disability up to 2007. 2008 bucked this trend with unemployment rising for all these groups of graduates. The 2009 survey continues this trend with unemployment rates for disabled graduates up from just 7.8% in 2007 to 12.1% in 2009 although this rate of increase is lower than that of non disabled graduates in the same period, from just 5.6% in 2007 to 9.3% in 2009. There are 2 notable exceptions to this overall trend this year: unemployment rates fell for blind / partially sighted graduates and graduates with multiple disabilities.

Table 5: Unemployment Rates (time series by disability type)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
No known disability	6.4	6.2	5.6	8.2	9.3
Disabled	8.9	8.7	7.8	10.8	12.1
Blind/partially sighted	13.4	13.5	9.1	15.3	14.2
Deaf/hearing impairment	11.3	10.1	6.4	11.4	13.8
Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties	9.9	14.4	9.9	15.8	17.7
Mental health difficulties	11.0	10.9	10.9	12.7	16.3
An unseen disability, e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma	7.5	7.5	6.1	9.8	11.1
Multiple disabilities	10.8	12.3	8.9	15.1	13.7
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	20.6	12.5	16.9	24.4	28.8
A specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia	8.6	8.2	7.6	9.9	11.2
A disability not listed above	9.3	8.8	9.2	11.3	12.1

6. Conclusions

This is the ninth year of the “What Happens Next” survey – a period, which up until 2007 had remained fairly buoyant in terms of graduate recruitment. The 2008 survey illustrated the early effects of the economic recession on levels of graduate employment. This year’s survey demonstrates much more clearly the declining fortunes of both disabled and non disabled graduates.

Significant decreases in the number of graduates finding employment, increases in the levels of those undertaking further study and in the numbers of those assumed to be unemployed characterise this year’s survey. In some cases the rate of decline has been quite dramatic with unemployment levels now twice as high as they were in 2007. In other areas the decline is less pronounced – in a small number of areas graduate fortunes improved this year. Notably those graduates most negatively affected tended to be those with more apparent disabilities with those with less visible disabilities continuing to stay within the general reach of non disabled graduates in terms of their outcomes. It was a pretty disappointing year overall for graduate employment. It may be of some consolation to note that the decline for disabled graduates in most cases is on a par with that for non-disabled graduates i.e. the recession does not seem to be particularly discriminating against those with a disability. In fact, the rate of decline for non disabled graduates this year has, in several areas, been greater than for disabled graduates.

The data presented in this report indicates that disabled graduates have, as in previous years, been able to achieve some significant successes in the graduate employment market despite the economic downturn. However, it is clear that a number of graduates, especially some of those with particular types of disability have continued to encounter difficulties in the labour market, the conclusion being that type of disability does affect the fortunes of some disabled graduates.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Table 6: Employment Circumstances of Disabled and Non-Disabled Graduates 2008/09

	No known disability	No known disability %	Disabled	Disabled %
Employed full-time in paid work	88215	47.9	8155	42.2
Employed part-time in paid work	26850	14.6	2785	14.4
Self-employed/freelance	4775	2.6	820	4.2
Taking time out in order to travel	5790	3.1	600	3.1
Due to start a job within the next month	1505	0.8	175	0.9
Unemployed & looking for employment, further study or training	16805	9.1	2285	11.8
Not employed but NOT looking for employment, further study or training	9290	5.0	985	5.1
Something else	25555	13.9	2645	13.7
Voluntary work/other unpaid work	4135	2.2	620	3.2
Permanently unable to work/retired	110	0.1	45	0.2
Temporarily sick or unable to work/looking after the home or family	985	0.5	230	1.2
Total	184015	100.0	19350	100.0

Appendix 2

Table 7: Standard Occupational Classification by Disability 2008/09

	No known disability	Disabled	Specific learning difficulty	An unseen disability e.g. diabetes epilepsy asthma	Blind/ partially sighted	Deaf/hearing impairment	Wheelchair user/have mobility difficulties	Mental health difficulties
Managers & Administrators	7.0	7.1	7.7	6.2	4.3	6.0	4.7	6.7
Professional Occupations	26.6	22.6	21.5	26.3	24.5	26.2	26.0	18.2
Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	29.0	32.3	33.7	29.6	31.9	29.9	31.9	31.5
Clerical & Secretarial Occupations	10.3	9.0	8.1	9.5	10.6	12.3	11.9	10.6
Craft & Related Occupations	0.9	1.5	1.7	0.5	1.6	1.8	0.4	1.7
Personal & Protective Service Occupations	6.1	8.0	7.6	7.4	7.4	7.9	8.9	13.0
Sales Occupations	13.3	12.0	11.2	14.7	14.9	12.3	11.1	12.4
Plant & Machine Operatives	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.7
Other Occupations	6.3	6.9	7.6	5.5	4.3	3.1	4.3	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Graduate employment marker								
Graduate employment	61.7	61.1	61.9	61.3	60.6	61.7	62.1	55.5
Non-Graduate employment	38.3	38.9	38.1	38.7	39.4	38.3	37.9	44.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0