



What Happens Next?

*A Report on the First Destinations of
2014 Disabled Graduates*

AGCAS Disability Task Group

August 2016

Foreword

Julie Blant – Chair of the AGCAS Postgraduate Taught Task Group

I am pleased to introduce the latest 'What Happens Next' report focusing on disabled graduates. It is great to see that postgraduate destination data for both has been included in this important annual research for the very first time.

As those of us that work with postgraduate students know there are many reasons why people choose to study a higher degree qualification and expectations can be high. Whatever the reason may be, one of the main challenges for the individual is to promote the benefits of their postgraduate studies to potential future employers. Often employers do not differentiate between undergraduate and postgraduate entry points so this is no easy task and often requires support in unpicking and interpreting the postgraduate experience.

Drawing on recent DLHE data, this report highlights differences between undergraduates and postgraduates in terms of employment outcomes for disabled graduates, disability disclosure, and how disabled graduates sourced their jobs. The reasons for these differences are certainly worth further investigation to help inform the sector and I am sure that given the findings presented here, careers services will wish to consider how they can further engage and support disabled students at all levels of study.

What Happens Next?

*A report on the first destinations of 2014 disabled graduates
(with first degree and higher degree qualifications)*

Contents

Foreword	2
List of tables and figures	4
Executive summary	5
1. Background and introduction	7
2. Disclosure of disability	10
3. Destinations of graduates	12
4. Destinations of disabled graduates	15
5. How did graduates find out about the job?	18
6. Conclusion	22

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List of tables and figures

Tables

Table 1: Disability type category headings	7
Table 2: Disability disclosure for each qualification level	9
Table 3: Destinations of non-disabled and disabled graduates (first degree)	11
Table 4: Destinations of non-disabled and disabled graduates (higher degree (taught))	12
Table 5: Destinations of non-disabled and disabled graduates (higher degree (research))	12

Figures

Figure 1: Disability disclosure for each qualification level	9
Figure 2: Type of disability disclosed by qualification level	10
Figure 3: Destinations of non-disabled and disabled graduates (by qualification level)	13
Figure 4: Destination by disability (first degree)	14
Figure 5: Destination by disability (higher degree (taught))	15
Figure 6: Destination by disability (higher degree (research))	16
Figure 7: How did graduates find out about the job? (first degree)	18
Figure 8: How did graduates find out about the job? (higher degree (taught))	18
Figure 9: How did graduates find out about the job? (higher degree (research))	19

Executive summary

Although this is currently under review, the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey undertaken every year by UK higher education (HE) institutions at present provide the most valuable indicator of the worth of a degree. The survey collects data from graduates approximately six months on from completion of their studies and focuses on their activities at that point in time.

Since 2002, the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) has funded research, undertaken by the Disability Task Group (DTG), into the career destinations of disabled graduates. This research culminates in the annual '*What Happens Next?*' report.

Over the years the report has been produced it has provided real evidence of the effect of a disability on a graduate's prospects in the labour market. Although these reports have found that disabled graduates are generally more successful in obtaining employment or further study than had been assumed prior to the report's inception, it is clear that graduates with certain disabilities are likely to be more successful in this than others.

Slight changes to how the data collected from graduates by the DLHE survey is categorised were introduced in 2011. This has afforded the opportunity for the DTG to consult with the HE careers guidance community about the future of the report. The consultation highlighted the usefulness of the report to the sector, and so, as with last year's report, this report presents a new focus on destinations details for disabled graduates. In addition, the DTG felt that it was also important to consider the destinations of graduates from higher degrees (both taught and research), so this latest report includes sections on the statistics of these graduates, in addition to first degree graduates.

This report on the 2013/14 survey not only answers questions about the destinations of disabled graduates, but also describes about how graduates found out about their jobs and contains a section on disclosure of disability.

Key findings from the 2013/14 survey

- The proportion of graduates disclosing a disability decreased with level of qualification, despite the fact that only slightly less disabled graduates than non-disabled graduates progressed to full time or part time study after their first degree.
- At all levels of qualification, the greatest proportions of disabled graduates had a SpLD.
- As has been described in previous editions of this report, disabled graduates were less likely to obtain full time employment than non-disabled graduates; this was true at all qualification levels. However, the difference between full time employment figures for disabled and non-disabled first degree graduates is less than in last year's report.
- At all qualification levels, disabled graduates were more likely to obtain part time work and part time study than non-disabled graduates.
- With the exception of graduates with mental health conditions, there was an increase in the proportion of graduates entering employment (part time and full time) at higher degree (taught) and particularly at higher degree (research).
- Graduates (at all qualification level) with a social/ASD condition were more likely to be unemployed and least likely to find out about their job through their university/college careers service or other university/college source.

- First degree disabled graduates were less likely than the previous year's graduates to find out about their job role through having worked at the organisation (including an internship or work experience)

1. Background and introduction

1.1 Context

In the academic year 2013/2014, approximately six months after completing their degree courses, UK and other EU domiciled 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 341,760 graduates from first degree, higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research) qualifications who responded to the 2013/14 survey. Of this number of graduates, 11.3% (38,770) identified themselves as having either a disability or learning difficulty, during the period of their studies. This report seeks to investigate what these disabled graduates did next; if they were successful in obtaining employment or pursuing further study and how the methods used to find work compare to those of their non-disabled peers.

1.2 Higher education careers services and disability

In recent years widening participation activities have been of concern to all UK HE 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 (due to factors relating to age, ethnicity, gender and disability). Specialist legislation in many of these areas, including the Equality Act 2010, has encouraged 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 AGCAS Disability Task Group

The AGCAS Disability Task Group (DTG) helps to shape the careers support available to disabled students in HE through resource development, training delivery and sharing of good practice.

This is the fourteenth year the '*What Happens Next?*' report has been produced. It is now written by members of the DTG. AGCAS provided the funding to obtain the DLHE survey data from HESA.

1.4 Impact of the report

Historically, this report has attracted significant interest from parties committed to supporting disabled graduates. The report provided, for the first time, evidence of the impact of disability on a graduate's employment prospects.

1.5 Evolution of this report

The '*What Happens Next?*' report has gone through several manifestations since its inception in 2003. Originally working with data from what was then the *First Destination* survey, the report each year built upon the number of comparisons it made between the destinations of disabled and non-disabled graduates.

This edition of the report will investigate the differences between disabled people graduating with varying levels of qualification: first degree, higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research). This has not been investigated before and it is anticipated that this could result in new findings and possibly highlight any areas of concern requiring further discussion or research.

1.6 What this report measures

The aim of the report is to see how the destinations of disabled and non-disabled graduates compare and whether these groups entered comparable employment. Features particular to the experience of graduates with specific disabilities are highlighted. For the first time, the report analyses the first destinations of those completing a first degree, higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research) on a full time and part time basis. It does not give details of the destinations of graduates of foundation degrees, postgraduate diplomas or certificates (e.g. PGCE) or professional qualifications (e.g. ACA).

The report first describes the disclosures of disabled graduates at the different qualification levels. Next, the destinations of disabled graduates are examined and comparisons are made with non-disabled graduates, as well as being considered by disability type. Finally, how disabled graduates at each level found out about the job they were in at the time of the survey is also described.

Due to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998, HESA implements a strategy in its publications designed to prevent the disclosure of personal information about any individual. This strategy involves rounding all numbers to the nearest multiple of five. The percentage figures quoted in tables and throughout the text are based on the accurate figures drawn from HESA's raw data.

1.7 Terminology

Within this report 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 (i.e., this includes those who did not return any disability data, as well as those who stated that they did not have a disability).

The disability type categories used by HESA have been modified in the most recent version of the DLHE survey. Table 1 shows the HESA categories which graduates selected from to best describe their disability. The AGCAS DTG have chosen to refer to the DLHE disability type categories by the terminology shown in column 2 of the table, both for reasons of brevity and to present the categories using terminology preferred by the AGCAS DTG.

HESA disability categories	<i>What Happens Next? 2016</i> category headings
Blind or serious visual impairment	Blind/visual condition
Deaf or serious hearing impairment	Deaf/hearing loss
Physical impairment or mobility issues	Physical/mobility issues
Mental health conditions	Mental health conditions
Long-standing illness or health condition	Long-standing illness or health condition
Two or more conditions	Two or more conditions
Specific learning difficulty	SpLD
Social communication/Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Social/ASD
Another disability, impairment or medical condition	Other disability or condition

Table 1: Disability type category headings

In terms of qualification levels referred to in this report, the following should be noted:

- **First degree** refers to an undergraduate qualification (e.g. BA, BSc and MBChB);
- **Higher degree (taught)** refers to a postgraduate qualification consisting of a taught programme of lectures or seminars (e.g. MA, MSc and MBA);
- **Higher degree (research)** refers to a postgraduate qualification involving independent study (e.g. PhD, DPhil, MPhil).

1.8 2013/2014 DLHE respondents

As noted in Section 1.1, 38,770 (11.3%) of the respondents to the 2013/14 survey disclosed a disability or learning difficulty. Whilst disclosure figures are described in detail in Section 2, it should be noted that the numbers of respondents at each qualification level varied and at higher degree (taught) and in particular at higher degree (research), the number of graduates with a particular disability responding to a question in the survey was sometimes less than 100. Where this occurred, a degree of caution should be employed when seeking to draw conclusions from the results, due to this small sample size. To aid with this, a note to alert the reader has been added to the bar charts displaying figures from this smaller sample of graduates.

2. Disclosure of disability

This section describes the disclosure of disability at first degree, higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research) qualification levels. It should be noted that disclosure was not included in last year's 'What Happens Next?' report and so no comparisons can be made with data from the 2012/13 survey.

Key findings:

- Disability disclosure levels were higher at first degree level than at either higher degree (taught) or higher degree (research).
- The greatest proportions of disabled students at all qualification levels had a SpLD.
- There were greater proportions of students at higher degree (taught) and especially at higher degree (research) disclosing as Blind (or with a visual condition), as Deaf (or with hearing loss), a long standing illness or health condition or two or more conditions.

Table 2: Disability disclosure for each qualification level

Level of Qualification	No known disability	Disabled	Total	Disability Disclosure Levels
UG First Degree	246170	33690	279860	12.0%
Higher Degree Taught	47095	4340	51430	8.4%
Higher Degree Research	9725	740	10465	7.1%

Table 2 above and figure 1 below show the number of graduates disclosing a disability at each qualification level. As can be seen, disclosure levels are higher at first degree level (12%) than at either higher degree (taught) (8.4%) or higher degree (research) level (7.1%). It is difficult to determine the reason for this difference, especially as it can be seen from Tables 3-5 that only slightly fewer graduates with a disability progress to full-time or part-time study after completing their first degree: a total of 12.8% for students with a disability, compared to 13.1% of graduates with no known disability (it should be noted however, that it is not known if this study is at higher degree level). It could be that fewer disabled students actually complete their studies at higher degree level (leading to the lower disclosure levels in the subsequent DHLE survey); another possible reason is that students are less inclined to disclose this information when studying at postgraduate level. It is not possible to ascertain this with the data available for this report, but perhaps this is an area where further research could be undertaken.

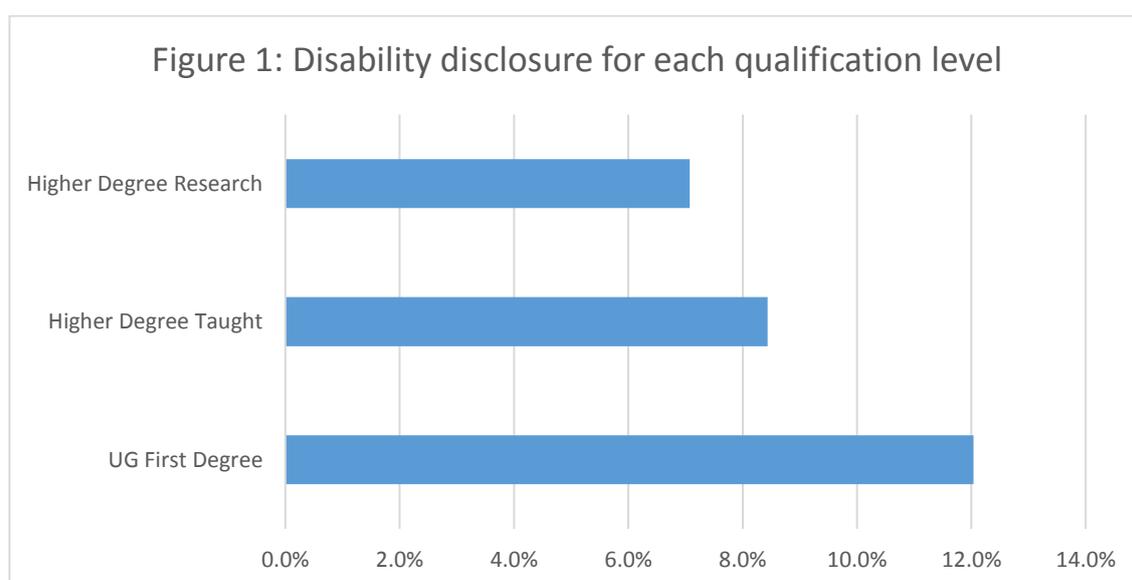


Figure 2: Type of disability disclosed by qualification level

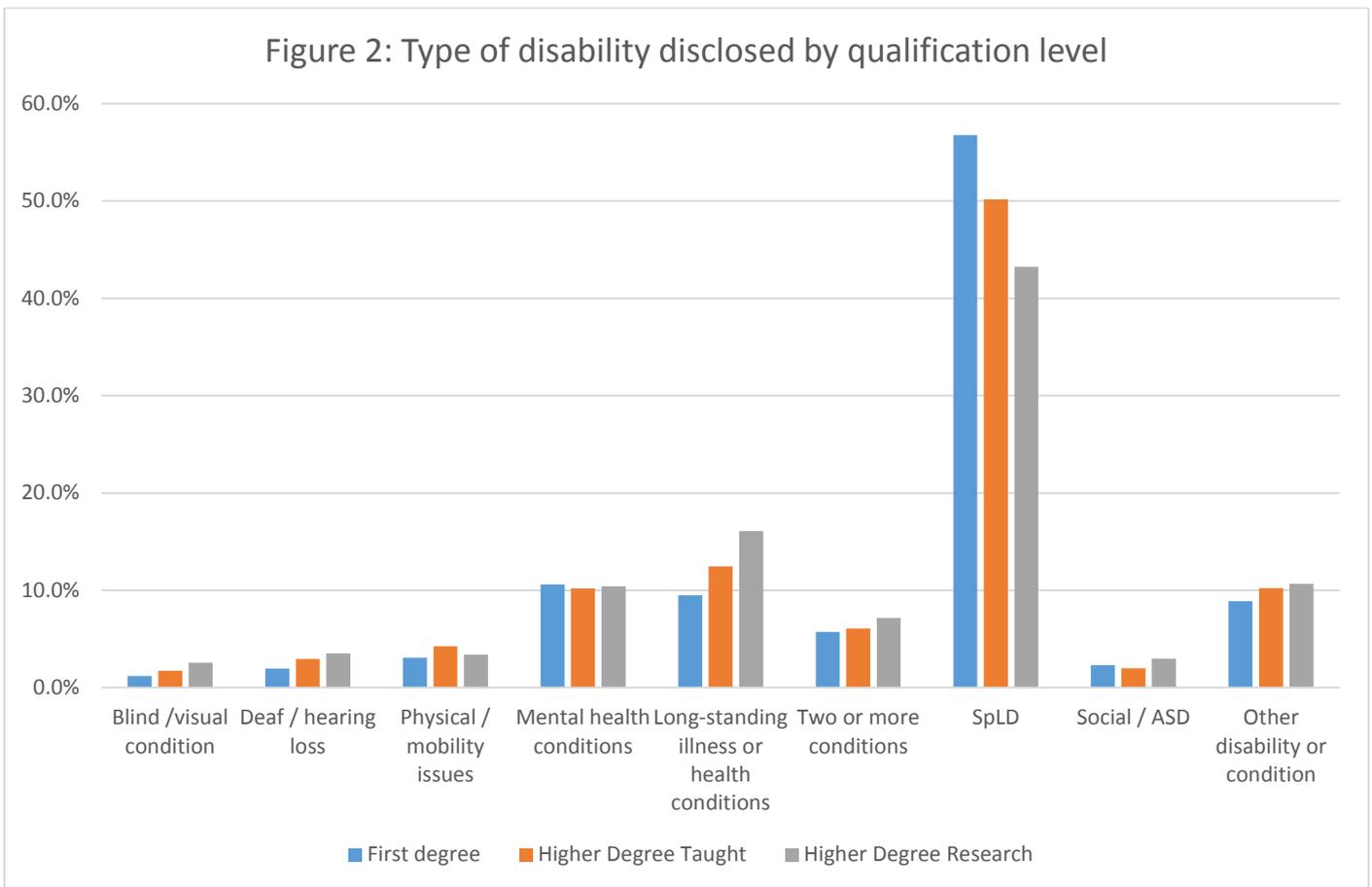


Figure 3 above shows the type of disability disclosed at each level (as a percentage of the total number of students disclosing a disability). As can be seen, at the all levels of study, the greatest proportions of disabled students have a SpLD, although the percentages do vary by level, decreasing from 56.8% at first degree to 50.2% at higher degree (taught) and again to 43.2% at higher degree (research). For some disability types, such as Social/ASD and mental health conditions, there are similar percentages at each qualification level disclosing many of the other disabilities. However, there are a greater proportion of disabled students at higher degree level (research) who have a long-standing illness (16.1%, compared with 9.5% for first degree 12.4% for higher degree (taught)). There are also small increases in the proportions of students at higher degree level (particularly higher degree (research)) disclosing a blind/visual condition (1.2% for first degree compared with 2.6% for higher degree (research)), Deaf/hearing loss (2.0% compared with 3.5%), two or more conditions (5.7% compared with 7.2%) or an other disability or condition (8.9% compared with 10.7%).

3. Destinations of graduates

In the section, the destinations of the first degree, higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research) graduates are described.

Key findings:

- At all qualification levels, non-disabled graduates were more likely to be in full time employment than disabled graduates. Similarly, disabled graduates at all levels were also more likely to be unemployed than non-disabled graduates.
- However, when first degree figures are compared to the results of the previous year's survey, the *differences* between full time employment and unemployment figures for non-disabled graduates and disabled graduates have decreased.
- At higher degree (taught) level, the differences in full time employment figures between disabled and non-disabled graduates were more pronounced than at other qualification levels.
- At all qualification levels, graduates with a disability were more likely to obtain part time work and part time study than non-disabled graduates.
- Whilst at first degree level, figures for further study were similar for disabled and non-disabled graduates, at higher degree level (both taught and research) greater proportions of disabled graduates were pursuing further study.

3.1 First degree graduates

As can be seen in Table 3, the number of non-disabled first degree graduates in full time work (58.1%) was higher than the number of disabled graduates (52.8%). However, the number of disabled graduates obtaining part-time work (14.7%) was greater than non-disabled graduates (12.5%); similarly, the number of disabled graduates participating in part-time studies (1.2%) was slightly greater than non-disabled graduates (0.8%). The unemployed figure for disabled graduates (7.2%) was notably higher than that of non-disabled graduates (5.1%). At this level, the figures for further study are similar for non-disabled and disabled graduates (18.6% and 18.4% for respectively*). All of these statistics are concurrent with destination statistics from previous destination surveys; however, it should be noted that when comparing these figures to the previous year's results, the *difference* between non-disabled graduates and disabled graduates has decreased in every activity. For example, the difference for full time work has reduced from 7.6% (2012/13 survey) to 5.3% (2013/14 survey) and the difference in unemployment has reduced from 2.6% (2012/13 survey) to 2.1% (2013/14 survey).

UG First Degree	Activity	No known disability	%	Disabled	%
	Full-time work	142925	58.1%	17785	52.8%
	Part-time work	30780	12.5%	4965	14.7%
	Primarily in work and also studying	6390	2.6%	865	2.6%
	Primarily studying and also in work	7170	2.9%	1015	3.0%
	Full-time study	30370	12.3%	3895	11.6%
	Part-time study	1930	0.8%	410	1.2%
	Due to start work	2340	1.0%	360	1.1%
	Unemployed	12565	5.1%	2435	7.2%
	Other	11700	4.8%	1965	5.8%
	Total	246170	100.0%	33690	100.0%

Table 3: Destinations of non-disabled and disabled graduates (first degree)

* These figures for total study include all categories where study is an element, including 'Primarily working and also studying' and 'Primarily studying but also in work'.

3.2 Higher degree (taught)

In Table 4, it can be seen that there was a more notable difference between non-disabled higher degree (taught) graduates (66.2%) obtaining full time work and disabled graduates (56.7%). However, again, more disabled graduates from higher degree (taught) courses obtained part time work (15.0% compared with 11.1% for non-disabled graduates) and further study, either full or part time (14.2% in total compared, with a total of 12.4% for non-disabled graduates*). There was greater difference in the number of unemployed graduates from higher degree (taught) courses: 4.9% of non-disabled graduates compared with 7.0% of disabled graduates.

	Activity	No known disability	%	Disabled	%
Higher Degree Taught	Full-time work	31195	66.2%	2460	56.7%
	Part-time work	5225	11.1%	650	15.0%
	Primarily in work and also studying	1280	2.7%	120	2.7%
	Primarily studying and also in work	820	1.7%	90	2.1%
	Full-time study	3400	7.2%	365	8.4%
	Part-time study	355	0.8%	45	1.0%
	Due to start work	550	1.2%	50	1.2%
	Unemployed	2300	4.9%	305	7.0%
	Other	1970	4.2%	260	5.9%
	Total	47095	100.0%	4340	100.0%

Table 4: Destinations of non-disabled and disabled graduates (higher degree (taught))

3.3 Higher degree (research)

The figures in Table 5 show that non-disabled higher degree (research) graduates were also more likely to obtain work than disabled graduates at this level (69.9% compared with 62.7%). Again, more disabled graduates obtained part time work (10.0% compared with 8.9% for non-disabled graduates) and also pursued further study (14.6% compared with 13.5% for non-disabled graduates*). Unemployment figures are lower for both non-disabled and disabled graduates than the respective figures for first degree or higher degree (taught) graduates; however, again the unemployment figure is higher for disabled graduates (5.1%) than non-disabled graduates (3.0%).

	Activity	No known disability	%	Disabled	%
Higher Degree Research	Full-time work	6770	69.6%	465	62.7%
	Part-time work	870	8.9%	75	10.0%
	Primarily in work and also studying	270	2.8%	25	3.1%
	Primarily studying and also in work	170	1.7%	20	3.0%
	Full-time study	830	8.5%	60	7.8%
	Part-time study	55	0.5%	5	0.7%
	Due to start work	70	0.7%	5	0.7%
	Unemployed	290	3.0%	40	5.1%
	Other	400	4.1%	50	6.9%
	Total	9725	100.0%	740	100.0%

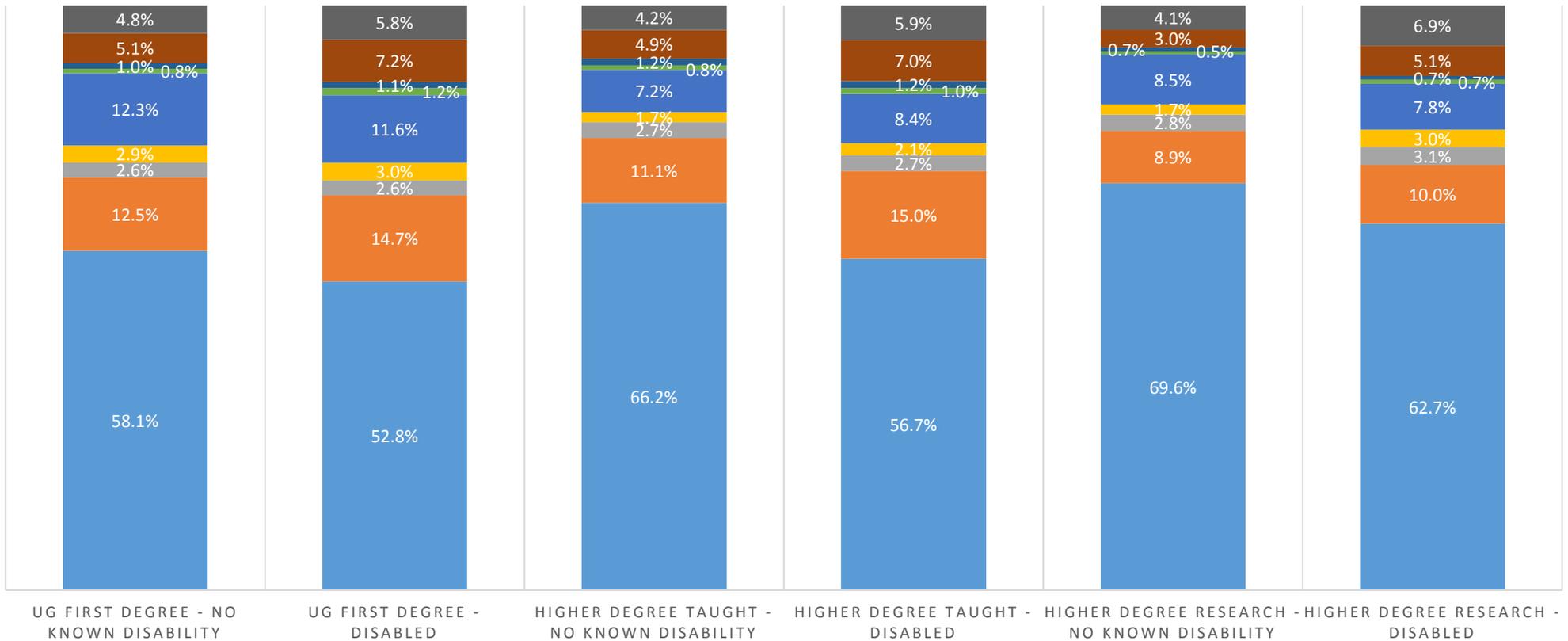
Table 5: Destinations of non-disabled and disabled graduates (higher degree (research))

Figure 3 overleaf shows the data from Tables 3-5 in the form of bar charts.

* These figures for total study include all categories where study is an element, including 'Primarily working and also studying' and 'Primarily studying but also in work'.

**FIGURE 3: DESTINATIONS FOR NON-DISABLED AND DISABLED GRADUATES
(BY QUALIFICATION LEVEL)**

- Full-time work
- Part-time work
- Primarily in work and also studying
- Primarily studying and also in work
- Full-time study
- Part-time study
- Due to start work
- Unemployed
- Other



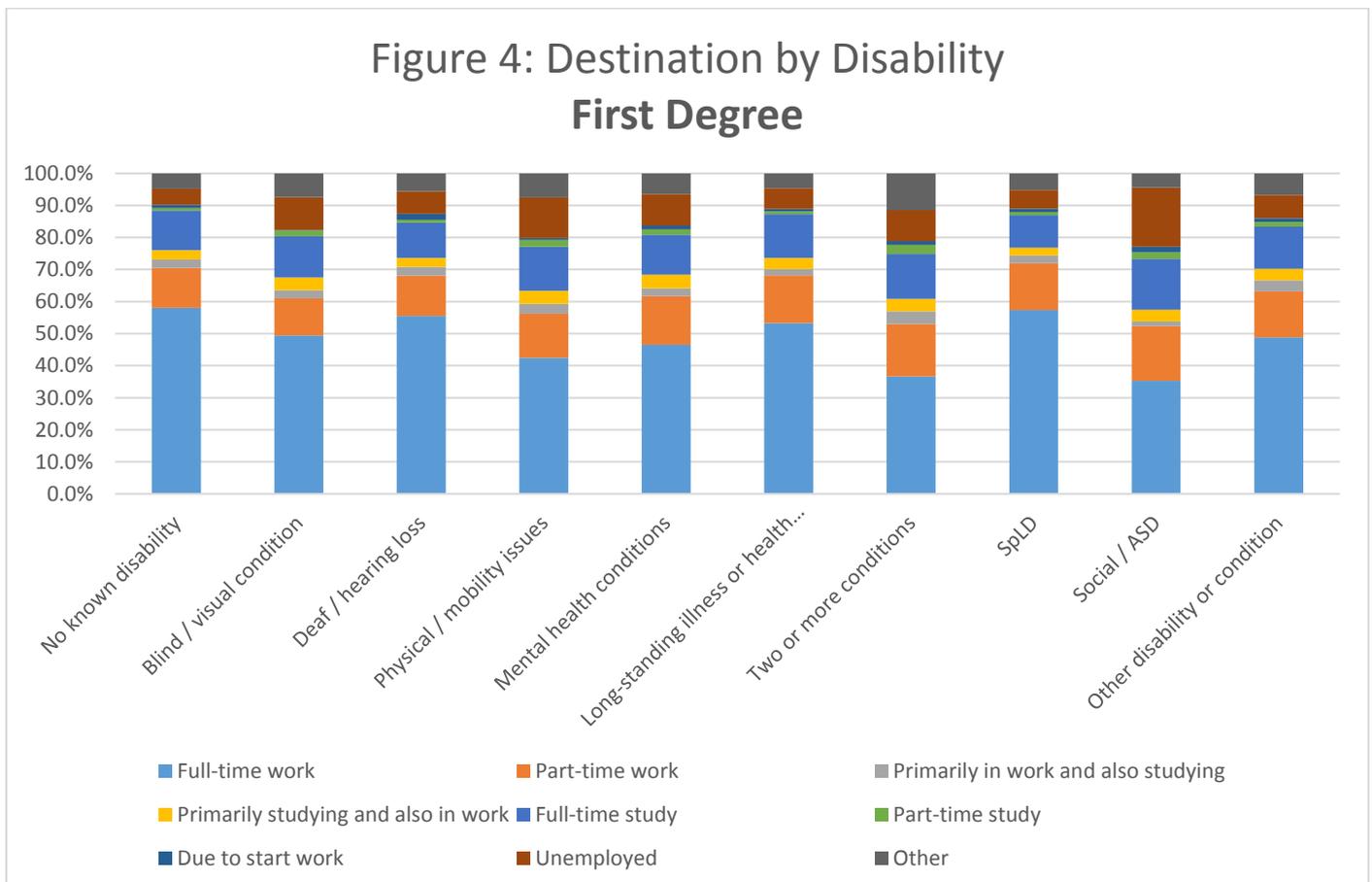
4. Destinations of disabled graduates

This section describes the destinations of disabled graduates responding to the 2013/14 survey by looking the different types of disability. Graduates from higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research) are included in addition to first degree graduates.

Key findings:

- There was a general increase in the proportion of graduates with all types of disability entering employment (both part and full time) at higher degree (taught) level and more markedly at higher degree (research) level, when compared with graduates at first degree level. An exception to this was graduates disclosing a mental health condition; with this group, employment figures did not increase with qualification level.
- At all qualification levels, the graduates most likely to be in unemployed were those who had disclosed a social/ASD condition.
- At all qualification levels, however, graduates who had disclosed a social/ASD condition were most likely to pursue further study.

Figure 4 below shows the destinations of first degree graduates by disability; as can be seen, graduates with a social/ASD condition had the lowest levels of employment (52.4% for full-time and part-time combined), along with graduates with two or more conditions (53.0% for full-time and part-time work combined). Graduates with a social/ASD condition also had the highest levels of unemployment (18.5%). Conversely, first degree graduates with a SpLD had the highest figures for employment (72.0% for full-time and part-time employment combined) and the lowest level of unemployment (5.8%).



In figure 5 the destinations of higher degree (taught) graduates can be seen, again broken down by disability. As shown, there was a slight increase in total employment figures for almost all disability types, compared with first degree graduates. Again, graduates with a social/ASD condition have the lowest levels of employment (48.9% for full time and part-time work combined); these levels are actually lower than the levels for first degree graduates with a social/ASD condition. However, graduates at higher degree (taught) disclosing a social/ASD condition also had the highest figure for full-time study (24.4%). Higher degree (taught) graduates who were blind/had a visual condition and those with a SpLD had the highest levels of employment (77.3% and 77.2% respectively for full-time and part-time work combined).

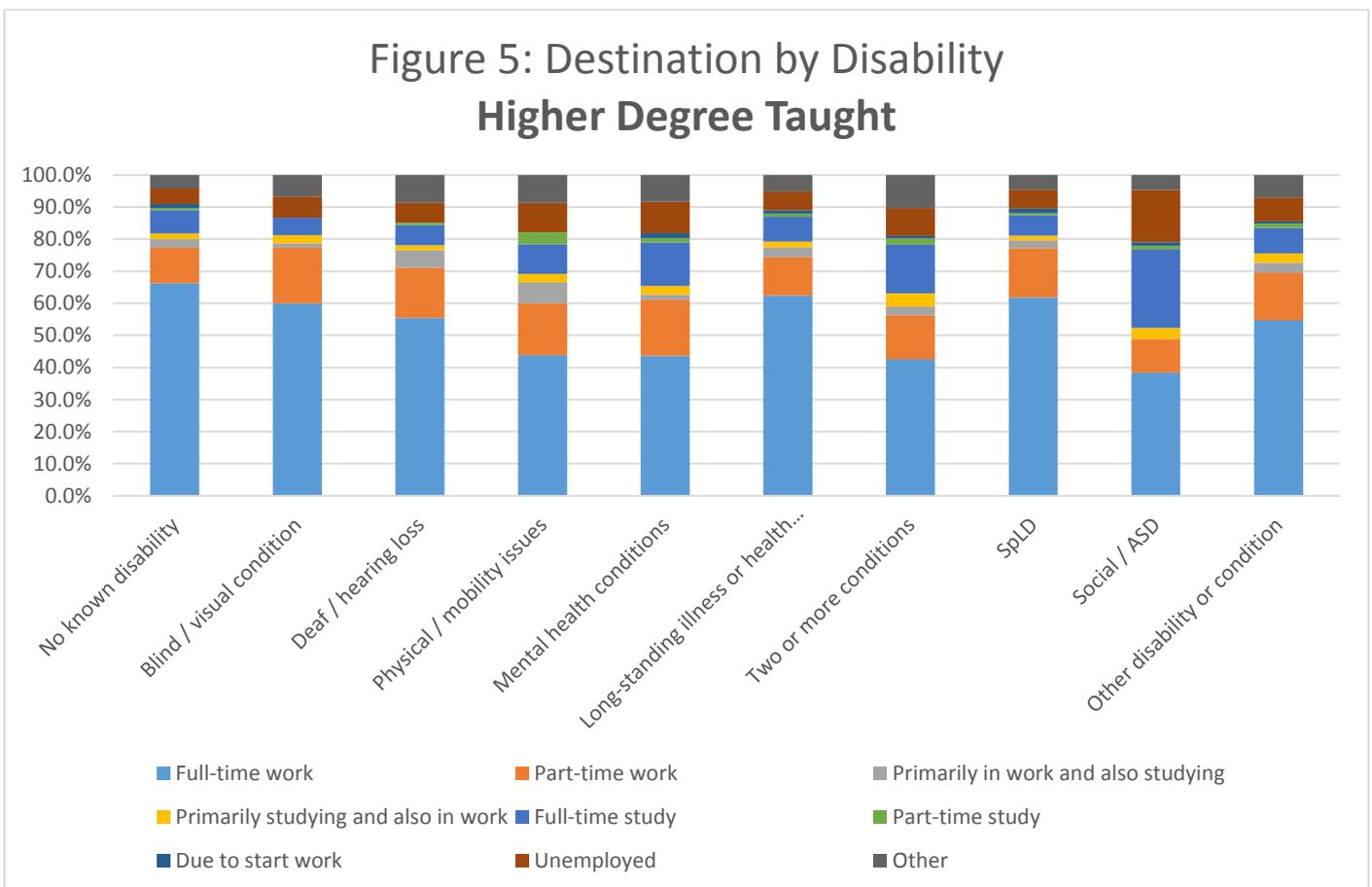
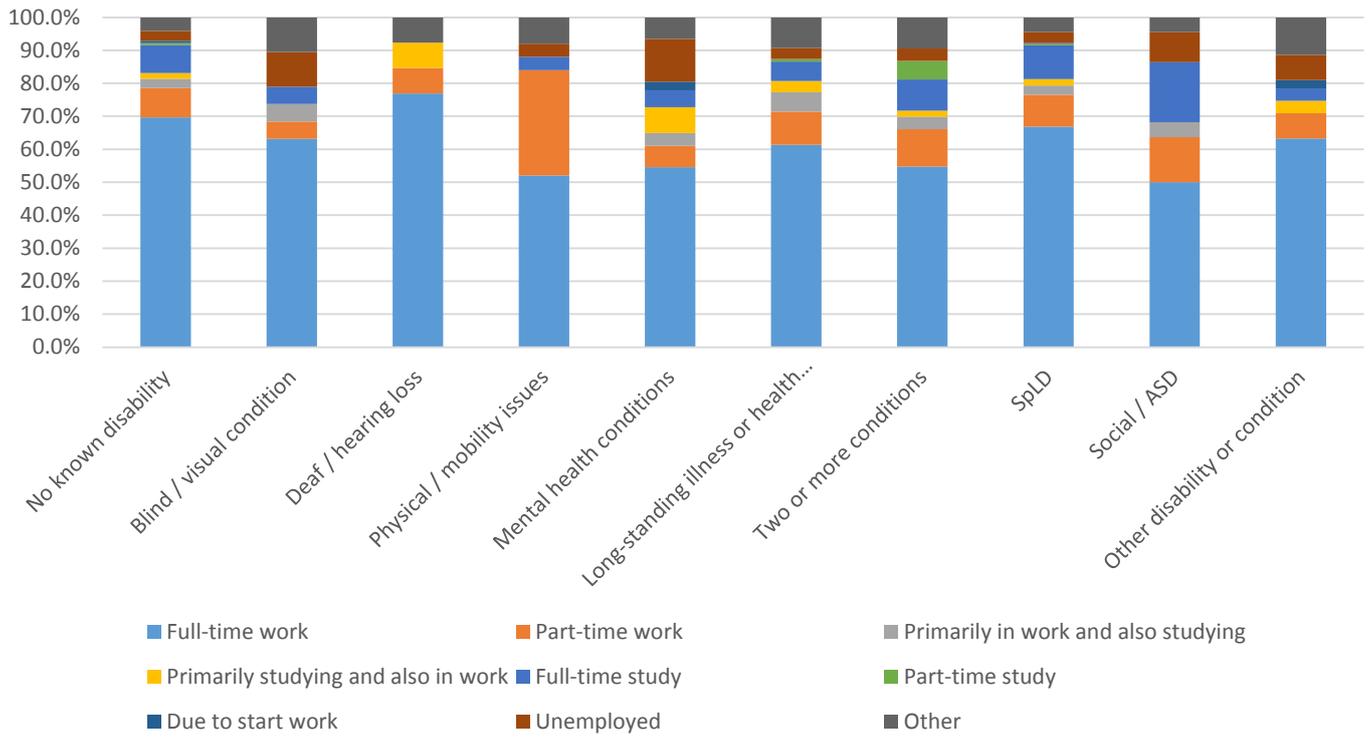


Figure 6 overleaf shows the destinations for higher degree (research) graduates by disability; it should be noted that there was an increase in percentage of graduates entering employment across all types of disability compared with higher degree (taught) and more markedly compared with first degree graduates. There was only one exception to this: graduates with mental health conditions, where the total employment figures did not alter a great deal between each of the study levels. Indeed, unemployment levels actually increased for higher degree (research) graduates with mental health conditions (13.0%, compared with 9.8% for first degree and 9.7% for higher degree (taught)). It is difficult to ascertain the contributing factors, but perhaps further research should be carried out relating to this.

In figure 6 it can again be seen that students with a social/ASD condition had the highest levels pursuing further full-time study (18.2%). One noticeable difference at this qualification level was for graduates with physical/mobility issues, who had a much higher total employment figure (84.0% for higher degree (research), compared with 60.0% for higher degree (taught) and 56.2% for first degree).

Figure 6: Destination by Disability
Higher Degree Research



5. How did graduates first find out about the job?

This section describes the different ways in which first degree, higher degree (taught) and higher degree (research) graduates first found out about the job they were in at the point of the 2013/14 DHLE survey.

Key findings:

- At each qualification level, graduates with a social/ASD condition were least likely to find out about their job via their university/college careers service or another university/college source.
- There were no significant variations in how first degree graduates with different disabilities found out about their job; however, when compared with the figures from last year's 'What Happens Next?' report, all first degree graduates were less likely to have found out about their job through already having worked for the organisation.
- At higher degree (taught) level, two fifths of Deaf graduates, or those with a hearing loss had already worked in the job before they began their studies.
- Graduates with a social/ASD condition at higher degree (taught) level were more likely than graduates with any other disability to hear about their job through personal contacts.
- Higher degree (research) graduates from almost all disability groups were more likely than graduates from other qualification levels to hear about a job via university/college careers services or other university/college sources.
- Graduates at higher degree (research) level with physical/mobility issues were more likely than any other disability group to find out about their job via an employer website.
- Also at higher degree (research) level, Blind graduates, or those with a visual impairment in addition to graduates with physical/mobility issues were most likely to have already worked in the job prior to commencing their studies.

Figure 7 shows how first degree graduates disclosing different types of disability found out about their first job (this can be compared with graduates with no known disability, shown by the lowest horizontal bar on the chart). The most popular method for finding out about a job was through personal contacts (18.6% for all disabled graduates), followed by recruitment agency websites (18.1%) then employer websites (17.1%). These results are slightly different to those in last year's 'What Happens next?' report, where the most popular method was employer websites (17.8%), followed by personal contacts (16.7%). In last year's report, it was noted that 16.4% of disabled graduates found out about their job role through already having worked for the organisation (including internships). In the 2014 survey, which this report is concerned with, this figure has decreased to 14.5%. It should be noted however that the figure for non-disabled graduates has also decreased (from 19.4% in the 2013 survey to 16.1% in the latest survey).

Of all the groups, Deaf graduates or those with a hearing loss had the highest figure for finding out about their role through the University/College Careers Service (8.0%, compared with 6.3% which is the average figure for all disabled graduates); this group also had the lowest figure for recruitment agency/website (14.7%, compared with the average figure of 18.1% for all disabled first degree graduates). Generally, however, there are only minor variations in the percentages at this level of qualification.

Figure 7: How did graduates first find out about the job?

First degree

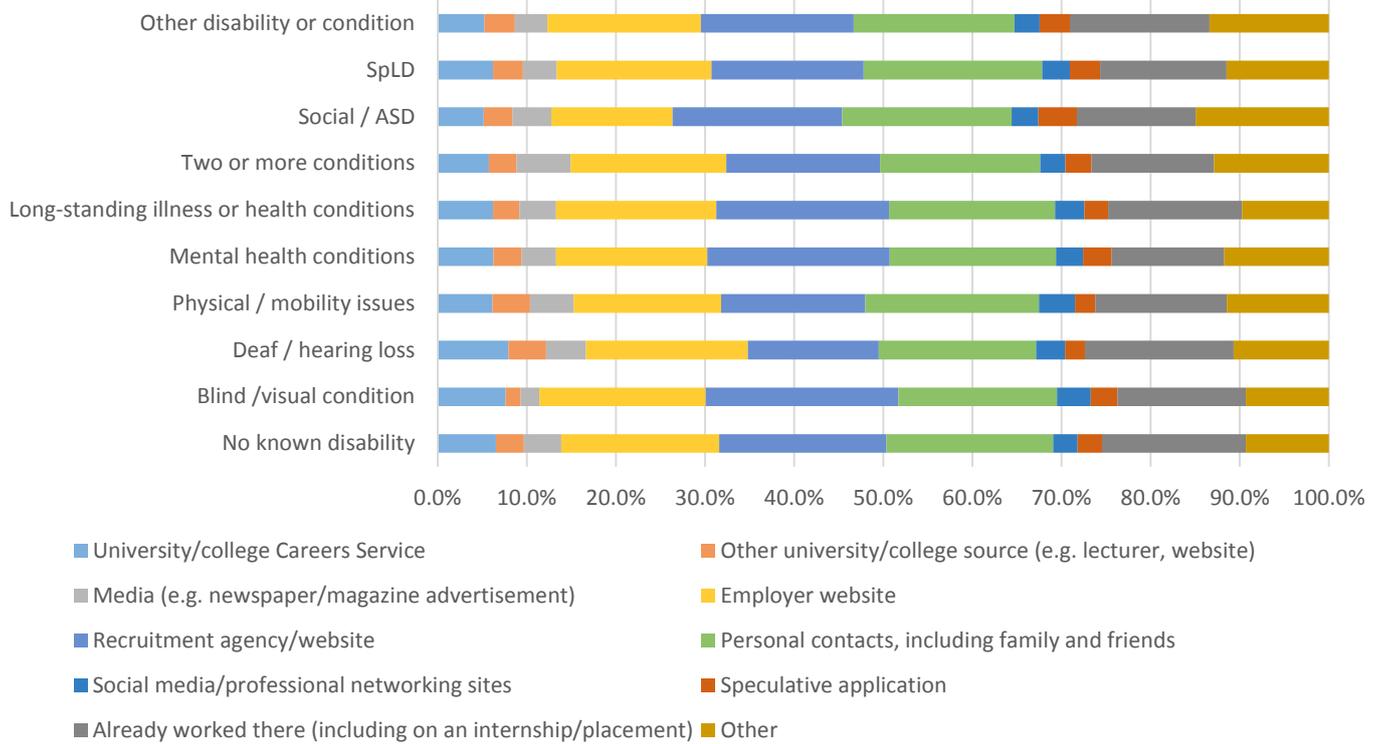
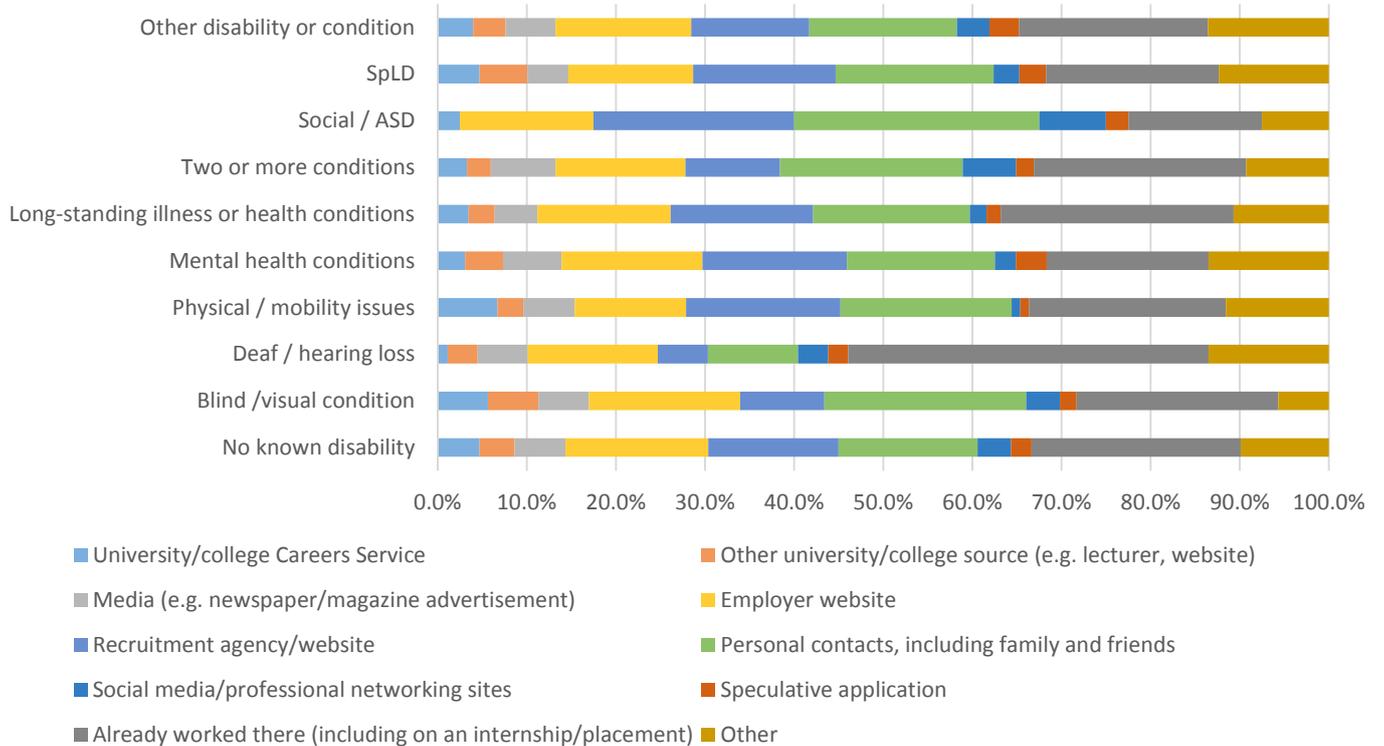


Figure 8: How did graduates first found out about the job?

Higher degree (taught)



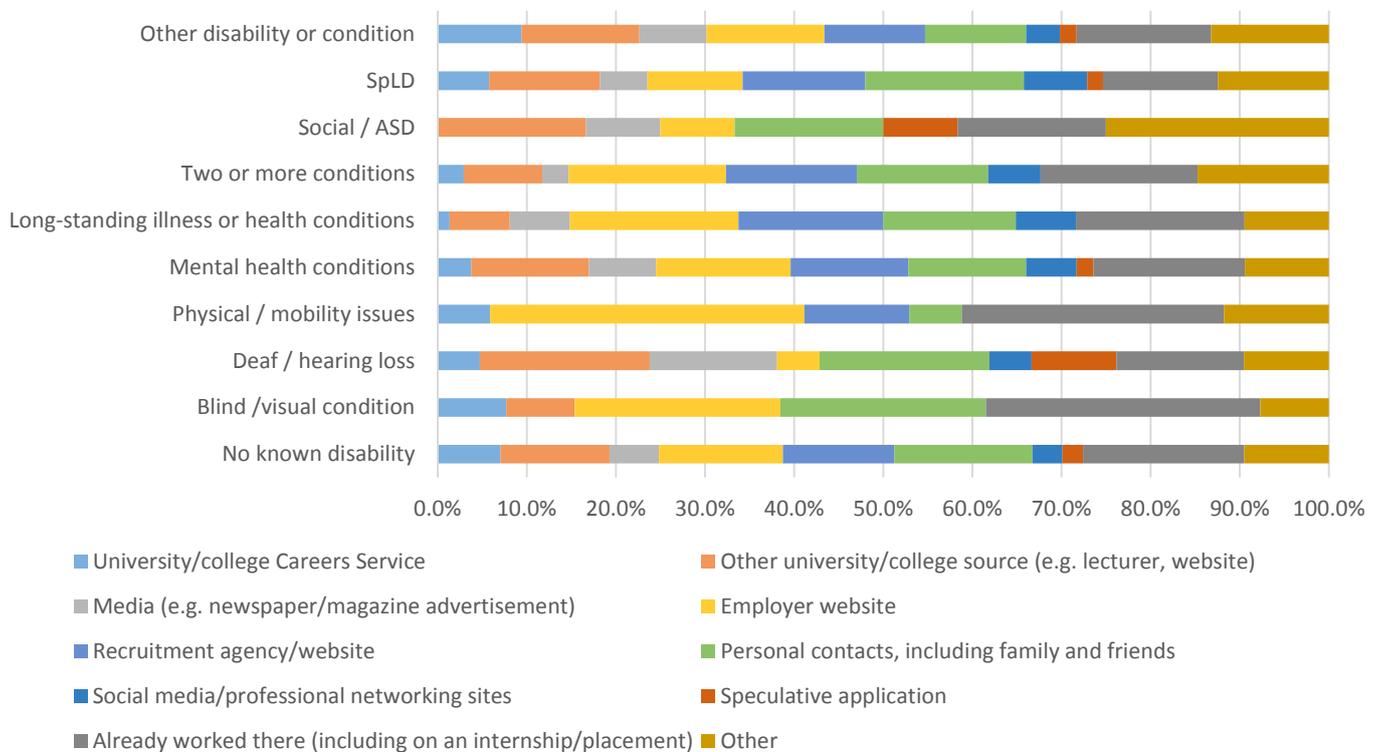
*Please note that the number of respondents in the following disability groups was less than 100: Blind/visual condition, Deaf/hearing loss and Social/ASD

In figure 8 it can be seen how graduates from higher degree (taught) qualifications found out about their first job; here there were more variations than at first degree level. The most notable difference was for graduates who were Deaf or had a hearing loss, where 40.4% of those responding to the survey stated that they already worked in the job before they commenced their studies. This could have been via an internship or work experience placement, or due to studying for their further degree (taught) qualification on a part time basis whilst working at the organisation. Deaf graduates or those with a hearing loss were also least likely to hear about a role through personal contacts (10.1%).

Graduates with a social/ASD condition were least likely to hear about a job through university/college sources (2.5% found their job through their university/college careers service and none found their job through other university/college sources; the figures for all disabled graduates were 3.8% via careers services and 3.4% via other university/college sources). Conversely, graduates from higher degree (taught) qualifications with a social/ASD condition were most likely to hear about their job through personal contacts or through a recruitment agency/website (27.5% and 22.5% respectively) than any other group.

When considering these trends, it should be remembered that the sample size for Blind graduates or those with a visual condition, Deaf graduates or those with a hearing loss and graduates with a social/ASD condition was less than 100; it would be interesting to carry out further research with these groups to find out if these findings were in fact representative of these graduates.

Figure 9: How did graduates first find out about the job?
Higher degree (research)



*Please note that in Figure 9 the number of respondents in all disability groups (except SpLD) was less than 100.

Figure 9 shows how graduates from higher degree (research) qualifications found out about the job they were in at the time of the survey. One noticeable difference was that the figures for graduates finding out about their job through university/college careers services and more significantly, through another university/college source were higher than at other qualification levels. This was perhaps due to the fact that higher degree (research) students are likely to form closer links with members of staff in their university/college. (It should be noted that here are two exceptions to this: graduates with a social/ASD condition did not have any respondents who found their job through their careers service and there were no graduates with physical/mobility issues who found out about their role through university sources).

Figure 9 also shows that graduates with physical/mobility issues from this qualification level were more likely to find out about a job through an employer website (35.3%, compared with the average figure of 16.3% for all disabled graduates at this qualification). This group, in addition to blind graduates or those with a visual condition, had high percentages of graduates who already worked in the role prior to commencing their studies (29.4% for graduates with physical/mobility issues, 30.8% for blind graduates or those with a visual condition). As mentioned in the previous section, this could have been due to the fact that graduates had been on a work experience placement or could have been working at the organisation whilst studying on a part time basis. Finally, the graduates who were most likely to hear about a role through personal contacts were blind graduates or those with a visual condition (23.1%) in addition to Deaf graduates or those with a hearing loss (19.0%).

As with some groups at higher degree (taught) level, it should be remembered that sample sizes for all disability groups at higher degree (research) level except graduates with a SpLD were less than 100 and therefore more research should be done before more definite conclusions can be made.

6. Conclusion

As mentioned in previous editions of 'What Happens Next?', as the economic recovery continues there is an observed increase in employment rates for graduates and this is reflected in this most recent edition.

At all qualification levels, non-disabled graduates were more likely to be in full time employment than disabled graduates; disabled graduates were also more likely to be unemployed. However, when figures for first degree graduates were compared with the previous year's figures, it can be seen that this 'gap' in full time employment had decreased. It should also be noted that at all qualification levels, disabled graduates were more likely to obtain part time work and part time study than non-disabled graduates, so there are certainly positive perspectives to be drawn from the findings.

From examining the destinations of graduates with different disabilities at each qualification level, it can be seen that there was an increase in the proportion entering part time or full time employment at higher degree (taught) and more markedly at higher degree (research), which is perhaps to be anticipated. There was however, an exception to this: graduates with mental health conditions were not more likely to obtain employment if they had gained a higher degree (either taught or research). This is a concerning outcome and it is felt that more research should be done to investigate the factors contributing to this result. Another finding of this report is that at all qualification levels, the graduates most likely to be unemployed were those with a social/ASD condition. This is concurrent with findings for first degree graduates with a social/ASD condition in last year's report. However, it should be added graduates in this group from the most recent survey were most likely to pursue further study.

When enquiring how graduates heard about the job they were in at the time of the survey, graduates at all qualification levels with a social/ASD condition were least likely to find out from their university/college careers or from another university/college source. Considering that this group are the most likely to be unemployed, perhaps university and college careers services should reflect on how they could encourage an increase in engagement of graduates from this disability group.

Disabled first degree graduates in this most recent survey were less likely than disabled graduates from the previous year's survey to have found out about their job through previously working for the organisation; this is not a positive finding, as it could indicate that these graduates had been less likely to have obtained an internship or work experience. However, in the 2013/14 survey there was also a decrease in this figure for non-disabled first degree graduates so whilst this is not a positive fact, it does perhaps reflect a broader issue.

Comparing the different qualification levels for the first time in a 'What Happens Next?' report has revealed many interesting trends, some of which are mentioned above. It is felt that more research into certain areas, such as the variation in employment levels for some disability groups at higher degree (research) level, could help to clarify the key factors involved and therefore enable effective support to be identified and implemented.