



## Class of 2023 Graduate Exit Survey Results

## 1. Methodology

An online, structured survey was used to collect the Class of 2023's employability. The survey was distributed via email and SMS at varying times to graduating students over four weeks which fell before, during and after each of the July 2023, December 2023, and March 2024 graduation periods. The required research ethics clearance was secured from the Centre for Higher Education Development Research Ethics Committee (CHED REC) and the Department of Student Affairs. Qualifier lists were provided by the Deputy Registrar's office before graduations. Qualifiers with fee blocks were excluded from the survey contact list to avoid causing distress to those who were not able to graduate due to fee debt.

## 2. Data Cleaning

Survey responses were cleaned through the removal of duplicates and apparent incorrect student numbers. In cases where student numbers were incorrect, but possible to infer (i.e. due to incorrect spacing or where numerical campus IDs were used), the number was adjusted after comparing it to the graduate's details in PeopleSoft. In cases where the intended number was not possible to infer, the data was removed. In case of duplicate submissions, the second response was included.

## 3. Participation Rate

The Class of 2023 consisted of 6810 July 2023, December 2023 and March 2024 graduates. 394 qualifiers had fee debt and were excluded. 40% of qualifiers who received the survey responded. The response rate per faculty ranged from 33% to 47%. Graduates in the Law and Health Science faculties remain the hardest to engage.

Faculty Response Rate	
Commerce	38%
Engineering and the Built Environment	46%
Health Sciences	33%
Humanities	47%
Law	35%
Science	38%
All 2023 Graduates	40%

Figure 2. Survey response rate per faculty

#### 4. Degree level of respondents

Undergraduate students accounted for 52.2% respondents and postgraduates were 43.7% (figure 3).

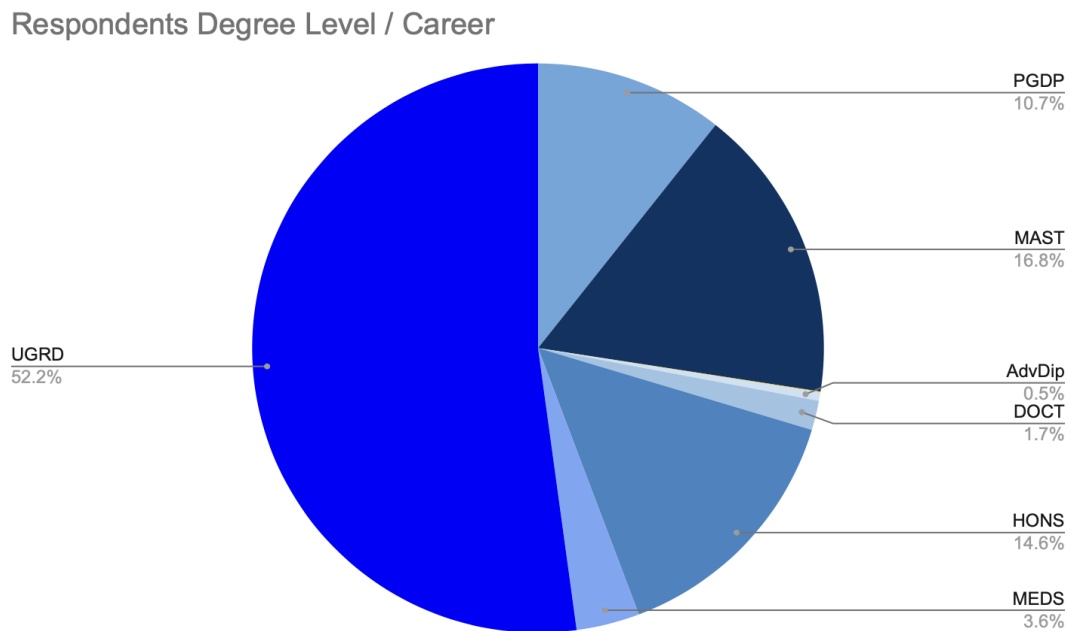


Figure 3. Degree level / Career of Respondents

### 5. Results

#### 5.1 Primary activity at time of graduation

Survey results relating to the UCT 2023 graduates' primary activity at time of graduation (figure 4) show that the employment rate for this cohort at 48.3% is even higher than before the pandemic. At the same time, graduates seeking employment increased significantly from before the pandemic. 16.6% of the 2023 graduates were still looking for work at time of graduation. Graduates continuing their studies decreased slightly from 30.8% in 2022 to 28.1%.

Primary Activity at Graduation	2023	2022	2021	2018
Employed	48.3%	44.6%	42.7%	45.7%
Studying	28.1%	30.8%	33.3%	29.4%
Seeking Employment	16.6%	15.7%	17.2%	10.9%
Self-employed	3.6%	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%
*Seeking Studies	1.5%	3.4%	-	5.6%
Gap Year	1.2%	0.9%	1.7%	2.4%
Not Decided	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%	1.1%
Other	-	0.2%	0.4%	1.0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 4. Primary Activity at graduation for the 2022, 2021 and 2018 cohorts

\*Not included in the 2021 Survey

### 5.1.1 Primary activity per faculty

Graduates from the Commerce, Engineering and the Built Environment, Health Science and Law faculties have a much higher employment rate than the average rate across faculties (figure 5). Humanities and Science graduates have the lowest employment rate at 31.6% and 32.2% respectively. Graduates from the Humanities and Science faculties are slightly more entrepreneurial than their peers.

	Survey Response Rate	Employed	Studying	Seeking Employment	Self-Employed	Seeking Studies	Gap Year	Not Decided	Other
<b>ALL FACULTIES</b>	40%	48.3%	28.1%	16.6%	3.6%	1.5%	1.2%	0.7%	-
COMMERCE	38%	58.9%	27.9%	9.2%	2.9%	-	1.0%	0.1%	-
EBE	46%	56.8%	23.1%	16.0%	1.4%	0.8%	1.4%	0.5%	-
HEALTH SCI	33%	70.2%	14.9%	9.5%	2.7%	1.7%	-	1.0%	-
HUMANITIES	47%	31.6%	32.0%	25.8%	4.9%	2.9%	1.6%	1.2%	-
LAW	35%	63.6%	14.8%	14.9%	4.5%	-	1.1%	-	1.1%
SCIENCE	38%	32.2%	42.4%	16.3%	4.9%	1.9%	1.5%	0.8%	-
		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 5. Primary Activity at graduation for the 2023 Graduates per Faculty

### 5.1.2 Meaningfully Occupied

When combining the 'Employed', 'Studying' and 'Self-employed' categories, a total of **80%** of the UCT Class of 2023 are categorised as meaningfully occupied at the time of graduation. Figure 6 illustrates this rate according to the various faculties.

	Class of 2023	COM	EBE	HS	HUM	LAW	SCI
<b>Meaningfully Occupied</b>	80.0%	89.6%	81.3%	87.8%	68.5%	82.9%	79.5%

Figure 6. 'Meaningfully Occupied' per Faculty

## 5.2 Job Satisfaction

More than 80% of employed graduates from 2023 claim that they are satisfied with the job they were in at the time of graduation (figure 7).

## Satisfied with job at time of graduation

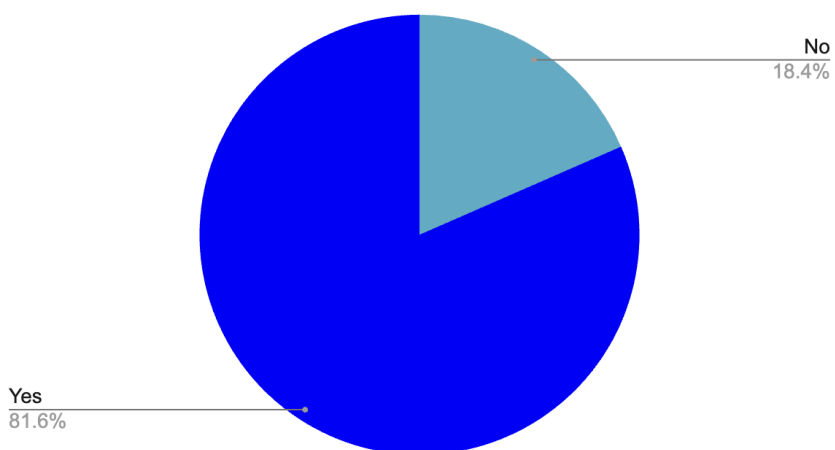


Figure 7. 'Meaningfully Occupied' per Faculty

### 5.3 Employment related questions

#### 5.3.1 Relation to degree

Two thirds of respondents report (figure 8) that their job is directly related to their degree.

<i>Employment related to degree</i>	
Directly Related	66.3%
Somewhat related	23.0%
Not related	10.2%
Unsure	0.5%
	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 8. Employment related to degree

#### 5.3.2 Employment Sector

Most 2023 graduates who were working at time of graduation, find themselves in the private sector (figure 9). Graduates working in the public sector (including public universities and public health) tally 18% and a further 16% of the 2023 graduates find themselves in the Government sector (including national, provincial and parastatals organisations).

## Employment Sector

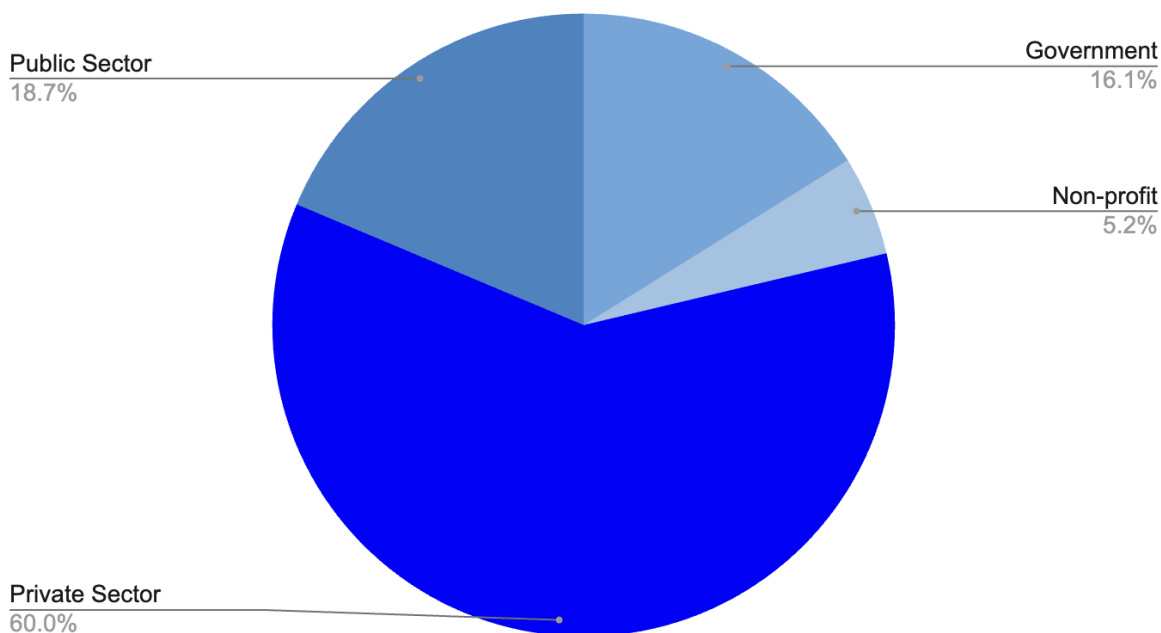


Figure 9. Employment sector

### 5.3.3 Salary

A fifth of employed respondents report that they earn between R20 000 and R30 000 (figure 10) per month. A further 18% earn more than R50 000 per month. The percentage of graduates falling in the R20 000 to R30 000 salary bracket decreased from 24% for the previous graduating class to just over 20% for the Class of 2023. Graduates earning less than R5000 or less at time of graduation almost doubled from the previous graduating class. Median salary for the 2023 graduates: R25 000

Salary per month	2023	2022
R 20 001 - R 30 000	20.3%	24.1%
More than R 50 000	18.3%	19.0%
R 30 001 - R 40 000	14.6%	14.4%
R 15 001 - R 20 000	10.2%	10.9%
R40 001 - R 50 000	10.0%	9.9%
R12 001 - R 15 000	5.7%	3.5%
R 9001 - R 12 000	5.0%	5.8%
R 7001 - R 9000	3.9%	4.8%
R 5000 or less	6.7%	3.5%
R 5001 - R 7 000	4.3%	3.8%
Ad hoc (it varies)	1.2%	1.1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 10. Monthly Salary 2023 Graduates

### 5.3.4 Employment Location

90% of the 2023 graduates are employed in South Africa. Six percent graduates work in another African country and four percent are based overseas (figure 11). Those working outside of South African borders find themselves in 15 different African countries (figure 12) and in 19 different countries overseas (figure 13).

## Employment Location

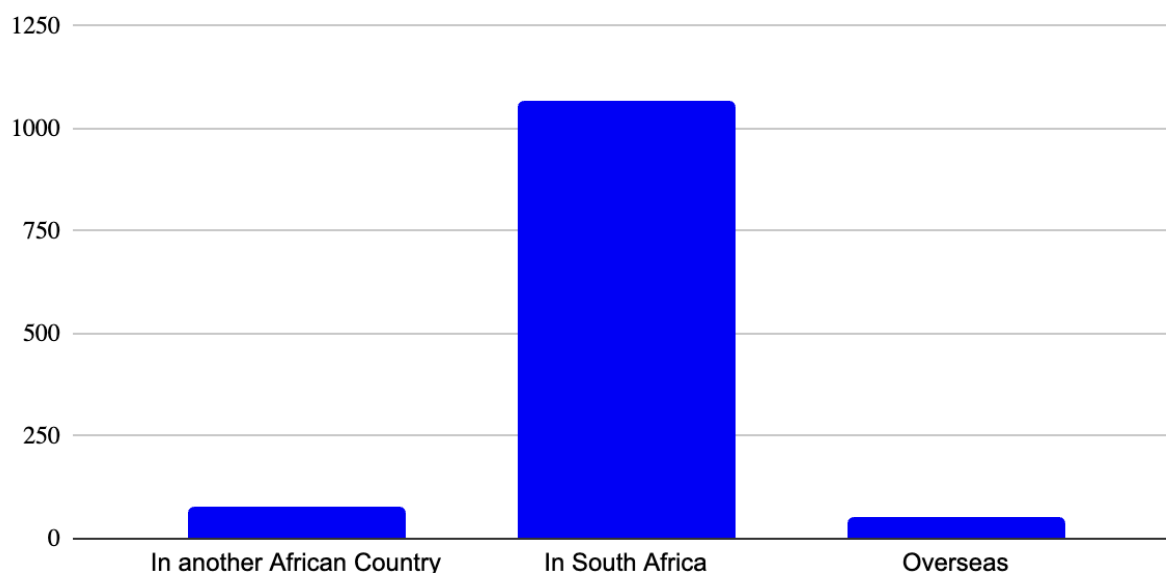


Figure 11. Employment Location

Angola
Botswana
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Eswatini
Ghana
Kenya
Lesotho
Malawi
Mauritius
Namibia
Nigeria
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Figure 12. Employment Locations: African Countries

<i>Afghanistan</i>
<i>Bali</i>
<i>Brazil</i>
<i>Canada</i>
<i>Germany</i>
<i>India</i>
<i>Iraq</i>
<i>Isle of Man</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>
<i>Qatar</i>
<i>Saudi Arabia</i>
<i>South Korea</i>
<i>Switzerland</i>
<i>Taiwan</i>
<i>United Kingdom</i>
<i>United Arab Emirates</i>
<i>United States of America</i>
<i>Vietnam</i>
<i>Wales</i>

Figure 13. Employment Locations: Countries Overseas

Of those employed graduates remaining in South Africa, almost two thirds are based in the Western Cape (figure 14).

### Employment per province

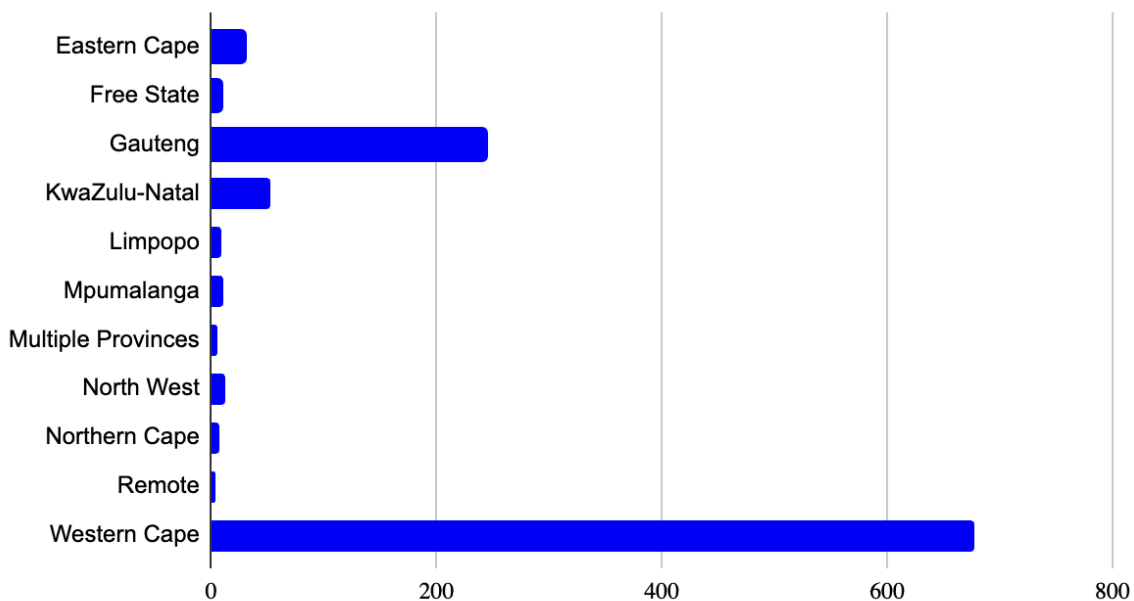


Figure 14. Province located in South Africa



## 5.4 Further Study Related Questions

### 5.4.1 Institution

The vast majority (80%) of respondents indicating that they were studying further at time of graduation or plan to study further, will remain at UCT (figure 15).

<i>Studying Further</i>	
University of Cape Town	80.0%
Other	11.6%
University of Stellenbosch	2.6%
University of the Witwatersrand	2.1%
University of Pretoria	1.1%
University of South Africa	1.1%
University of the Western Cape	0.5%
University of Johannesburg	0.4%
Cape Peninsula University of Technology	0.4%
Nelson Mandela University	0.1%
University of KwaZulu Natal	0.1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Figure 15. Where graduates are studying further or plan to study further

### 5.4.2 Reason for further studies

Investing in future career progression, was the main reason half of graduates provided for furthering their studies (figure 16). Other main reasons include bettering employment chances and planning and academic career.

<i>Study Further Reason</i>	
To improve my future career progression	49.8%
To improve my chances of finding employment	22.8%
I would like to become an academic/lecturer	10.3%
Personal motivation	6.4%
To change to a different career	3.3%
To increase my salary potential	2.5%
Other	2.5%
I was advised to continue with further studies	2.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Figure 16. Reason for studying further

## Funding Sources

Respondents reported that they will mostly rely on a bursary or family to pay for their further studies (figure 17).

### Further studies funding sources

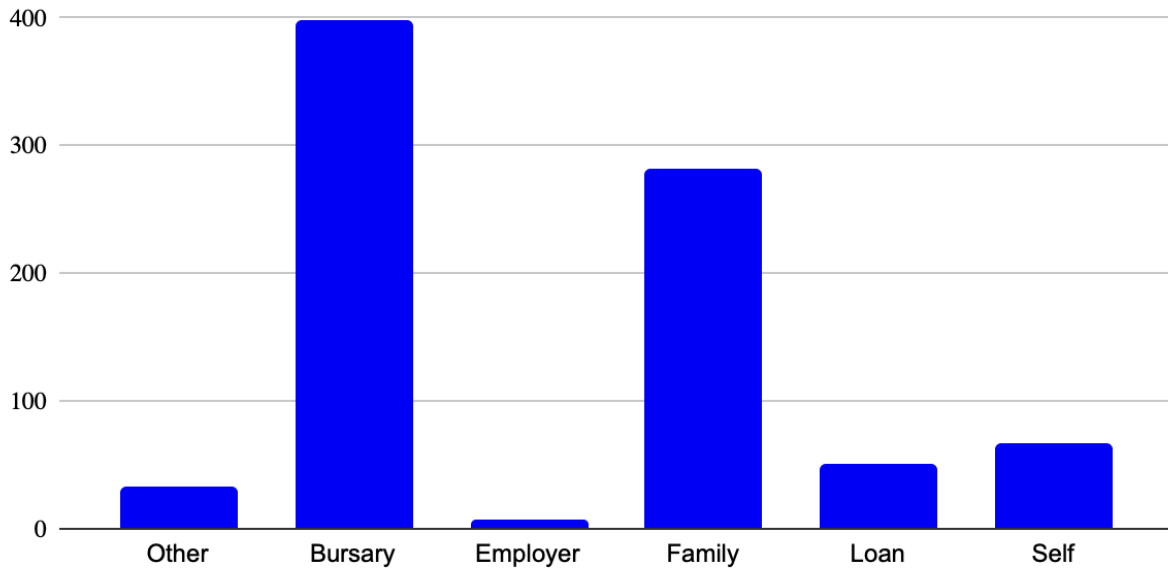


Figure 17. Source of funding for further studies

## 6. Annexure

### 6.1 Survey questions Class of 2023

#### UCT Exit Survey Consent

- I hereby grant consent to participate in this research and for my responses to be used in a confidential manner by the UCT Careers Service.

Type: select one

Options

Yes

No

If answered YES, continue to Question 2

If answered NO, survey ends

## UCT Exit Survey

2. Please enter your student number.

Type: text

3. Faculty

Type: select one

Options

- Commerce
- Engineering and the Built Environment
- Health Sciences
- Humanities
- Law
- Science
- Graduate School of Business

4. What was your highest level of education prior to this graduation?

Type: select one

Options

- Secondary Education
- National Diploma
- Bachelor's degree
- Postgraduate degree
- Other

5. What are you planning to do next?

*Please do not select more than 3 options.*

Type: select multiple

Options

- I am employed
- I am self-employed
- Look for employment opportunities
- Study further (simplified from Engage in further study/training)
- Seeking to study further (added as option)
- Take a gap year (i.e. travel, volunteer, etc)
- I have not decided what I will be doing after graduation
- Other

**If I AM EMPLOYED is selected, continue to Question 6**

**If Study Further or Seeking to study further is selected continue to Question 19**

**All other responses are directed to Question 16**

6.

What is your employer's (company) name?

Type: text

7.

What is your job title (e.g. analyst, researcher, etc.)?

Type: text

8.

Which employment sector are you working in?

Type: select one

Options

- Government (including national, provincial and parastatals)
- NGO/Civil Org /Non-profit
- Public Sector (including public universities, public health)
- Private Sector
- Other
- Type: text

9.

Which industry are you working in?

Type: select one

Options

- Advertising, Marketing, PR
- Agriculture, Fishing & Forestry
- Art & Design
- Business & Management
- Commercial & Retail
- Construction & Property Management
- Education

- Engineering or Industrial
- Finance
- Insurance
- Data Science / Actuarial Science
- Health Care
- Hotel & Leisure / Entertainment
- Investment Banking
- IT, Telecoms & Information Services
- Legal
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Public Sector
- Social & Community Services
- Transport & Related Services
- Utilities & Energy
- Other
- Type: text

10. Where will you work? (location)

- Overseas  
Please specify country
- In another African country  
Please specify country
- In South Africa please specify province

11. What is your company/business' agreed working model?

- On-site
- Hybrid
- Fully Remote

12.

What are the terms of your employment contract?

Type: select one

Options

- Permanent
- Fixed Term Contract (< 12 months)
- Fixed Term Contract (12 months or more)
- Temporary (i.e. apprenticeship, internship, etc.)
- Self-employed / Freelance
- Don't know yet

13.

What are your agreed working hours?

Type: select one

Options

- Full-time (>30 hrs/week or >120hrs/month)
- Part-time (<30hrs /week or set agreed hours)
- Ad-Hoc/ Casual /Varied hours

14.

What is your agreed annual salary before tax?

Type: select one

Options

- < R100 000
- R 100 001 - R 200 000
- R 200 001 - R 300 000
- R 300 001 - R 400 000
- R 400 001 - R 500 000
- R 500 001 - R 600 000
- R 600 001 - R 700 000
- R 700 001 - R 800 000
- R 800 001 - R 900 000
- > R 900 000

15. What is your monthly salary before tax? New question added

- < R5 000
- R5 001 - R7 000
- R7 001 - R9 000
- R 9 001-R12 000
- R12 001 - R15 000
- R15 001 - R20 000
- R 20 001 - R 30 000
- R 30 001 - R 40 000
- R 40 001 - R 50 000
- > R 50 000
- Ad Hoc (it varies)

16.

To what extent is your job related to the field of the degree or diploma you are about to receive?

Type: select one

Options

- Directly Related
- Somewhat related
- Not related
- Unsure

17.

What sources of information did you make use of whilst job hunting?

Type: select multiple

Options

- UCT MyCareer portal (UCT added)
- UCT Careers Expo (UCT added)
- UCT Employer presentation (UCT added)
- UCT Careers Service Guide (UCT added)
- Part-time work, vacation work or internship
- Faculty/Lecturer
- Family/Friends/Acquaintances
- Recruitment agency
- Contractual bursary obligation
- Headhunted /Approached an employer directly
- Volunteering
- Social media (Social networks changed to Social media)
- Online job boards (Careers24; Indeed; Leaply etc.)
- Alumni
- Other

18.

What was the primary method of finding your current job?

Type: select one

Options

- UCT MyCareer portal
- UCT Careers Expo
- UCT Employer presentation
- UCT Careers Service Guide
- Part-time work, vacation work or internship

- Faculty/Lecturer
- Family/Friends/Acquaintances
- Recruitment agency
- Contractual bursary obligation
- Headhunted /Approached an employer directly
- Volunteering
- Social media (changed from social networks)
- Online job boards (Careers24; Indeed; Leaply etc.)
- Alumni
- Other

19. At which institution are you going to or are you planning to study? (New question added)

- University of Cape Town
- University of Stellenbosch
- University of South Africa
- University of the Witwatersrand
- University of the Free State
- University of the Western Cape
- University of Pretoria
- University of Johannesburg
- Rhodes University
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Other please specify:

20. What do you intend to study? (New question added)

Type Text \_\_\_\_\_

21. Why did you decide to continue with your studies? (Choose the most important reason)  
(new question added)

- To improve my future career progression
- To improve my chances of finding employment
- I would like to become an academic/lecturer
- Personal motivation
- I was advised to continue with further studies
- To change to a different career
- To increase my salary potential
- Other

22. How will your studies be funded? (new question added)

- Self



- Loan
- Bursary
- Employer
- Other:

23.

Have you ever interacted with the Careers Service?

*For example: MyCareer portal, booked consultation, attended CS hosted webinar etc.*

Type: select one

Options

- Yes
- No

If answered YES to Question 16, continue to Question 17 - 20

If answered NO to Question 16, continue to Question 21

24.

I have engaged with the UCT Careers Service to

Type: select multiple

Options

- Make use of the MyCareer portal
- Find out about job vacancies and the employers who might recruit me.
- Attend a Careers Expo
- Attend an employer presentation/showcase
- Learn how to improve my CV and/or application.
- Improve my interview skills.

- Find out about postgraduate study options.
  - Find out about funding and bursary opportunities.
  - Learn about opportunities for international students.
  - Download the Careers Service Guide
  - Navigate the Careers Service website
  - Gain more information about a specific career(s).
  - Learn how to develop or present my employability skills
  - Develop my entrepreneurial mindset.
  - Find out how to change my course and/or Faculty.
  - Discuss doubts or challenges with my current degree or course(s).
  - Other
- Type: text

25. When did you first make use of the UCT Careers Service?

Type: select one

Options

- Pre-university
- First year
- Intermediate years (2nd, 3rd etc)
- Final year undergraduate
- Postgraduate

26. How did you find out about the Careers Service?

Type: select one

Options

- Email
- SMS
- UCT Careers Service website
- UCT Careers Service publication (i.e. Careers Service Guide)
- Notice Boards/posters/flyers
- Word of mouth (fellow students)
- UCT Careers Service staff
- UCT Careers Service event or presentation
- UCT staff (lecturer or admin staff)
- UCT Company presentation
- UCT Career Expos
- Other

27.

Would you like to receive emails regarding job or other opportunities from the Careers Service?

Options

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide you email address:

Text

28. Comments

Before you go, do you have any comments and/or feedback which can help the Career Service to improve?

Type: text

SUBMIT

29. Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to provide UCT with your feedback. Please feel free to be in touch with us should you find the need for Career-related advice – we are available to graduates as a free service for up to three years post-Graduation.