



Summary Report

Post-Graduation Earnings of NBCC
Graduates: 2015 to 2017 Graduate
Cohorts

June 2023



NB-IRDT
New Brunswick Institute for
Research, Data and Training

Project Title

Post-graduation earnings of NBCC graduates: 2015 to 2017 graduate cohorts

Principal Investigators

Herb Emery, Vaughan Chair in Regional Economics, UNB
Ted McDonald, Director, NB-IRDT

Research Team

Eton Boco, Data Analyst, NB-IRDT

Acknowledgements

Funding for this project was provided by the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC). The views expressed in this study do not necessarily represent those of NBCC or its partners.

The analysis presented in this paper was conducted at the New Brunswick Research Data Centre (NBRDC), which is part of the Canadian Research Data Centre Network (CRDCN). The services and activities provided by the NBRDC are made possible by the financial or in-kind support of the SSHRC, the CIHR, the CFI, Statistics Canada, the Government of New Brunswick, and the University of New Brunswick. The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily represent those of the CRDCN or its partners.

How to Cite This Product

Boco, E., Emery, H., & McDonald, T. (2023). Summary report: Post-graduation earnings of NBCC graduates: 2015 to 2017 graduate cohorts. Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Institute for Research, Data and Training.

[Read the Full Report](#)



Why is This Study Important?

The New Brunswick Community College - known as NBCC - plays an important role in our province. Each year, more than 2,000 students graduate from NBCC's six campuses across the province. Most of these graduates end up staying and working in New Brunswick, boosting the province's labour force and its GDP.

Research shows that 90% of NBCC graduates have a job within 1 year of graduating; and 90% of these employed graduates happen to have a job right here in New Brunswick.¹

In recent years, New Brunswick has been struggling to grow its population and its labour force by attracting and retaining qualified workers and families. In light of the province's aging population and youth outmigration, NBCC graduates' decisions to stay and contribute to the New Brunswick economy make them a key demographic to study.

This report looks at NBCC graduates' median incomes 1 to 3 years after graduation and compares incomes according to their field of study. It also compares NBCC graduates' incomes with the incomes of university graduates across the province to see if earning a college diploma leads, in the short term, to an income level similar to that of obtaining a university degree.

As NBCC continues to expand its program offerings, it is important to see how its graduates perform in the labour market. Information on their financial outcomes will be helpful to NBCC as it designs in-house policies and programs for students; and it may also help aspiring college students choose which field of study to pursue.



How Was This Study Completed?

To undertake this study, a team of researchers from NB-IRDT used linked university and college registrar data in the Postsecondary Student Information System and T1 Family File tax records, which are available through Statistics Canada's Educational and Labour Market Longitudinal Platform (ELMLP).

This report analyzes the post-graduation earnings of NBCC graduates who earned their credentials between 2015 and 2017, differentiating between "total income" (that is, all taxable earnings) and "earnings" (employment income only). Graduates' income and earnings are presented 1, 2, and 3 years after graduation, with a particular focus on the proportion of median total income due to employment income (as opposed to self-employment).

All income and earnings information is converted into 2021 purchasing power using the All-items Consumer Price Index (Year=100).



Limitations

While reading the results on the next pages, it is important to remember that there are certain limitations to this study. For instance, the Postsecondary Student Information System does not contain information on the specific NBCC campus attended. Graduates are only listed as NBCC graduates, as opposed to graduates from a specific NBCC campus location.

This means we can only show median earnings for NBCC graduates as a whole - rather than breaking earnings down even further by NBCC campus.

A Look at NBCC Graduates' Incomes (2015-2017)

NBCC graduates' starting earnings (1 year after graduation) remained stable in 2015 and 2016 and then jumped in 2017.

2015 Graduates	2016 Graduates	2017 Graduates
\$32,312	\$32,685	↑ \$35,241



NBCC graduates' yearly incomes increase each year after graduation. For example, compared to starting earnings, graduates from the Class of 2015 make **9% more** 2 years after graduating and **17% more** 3 years after graduating.

Comparing NBCC graduates' and university graduates' earnings

	1 Year Later	3 Years Later
University (2015)	\$38,157	\$52,118
NBCC (2015)	\$32,312	\$37,894

Graduates from university in 2015 made a median starting income similar to the median income NBCC graduates earn 3 years after graduating.

Is this a negative finding for NBCC graduates?

No! It's important to remember that NBCC programs are generally 2-4 years shorter than university programs, and therefore NBCC graduates have approximately 2 years of earnings increases to bring them up to the same level as university graduates' starting earnings.

However, NBCC graduates are generally older at graduation than their university counterparts, and this will also affect lifetime earnings - but considerations of lifetime earnings are beyond the scope of this study.

Comparing Incomes Among NBCC Graduates



1 year after graduation, male NBCC graduates report **6-8% more** total income than female graduates. This income gap continues to increase as more years pass since graduation.

Comparing NBCC Graduates' Incomes by Field of Study

- NBCC graduates from Math, Computer, and Information Sciences usually have the highest median incomes 1 year after graduation:

↳ **\$35,000 - \$41,000**

- NBCC graduates from Architecture, Engineering, and Related Technologies display the highest income growth:

↳ **+ 27% between the 1st and 3rd year since graduation**

- NBCC graduates from Health and Related Fields and Business, Management, and Public Administration have the highest proportion of median total income come from paid employment.

-
- NBCC graduates from Arts, Communication, and Humanities have the lowest median incomes, the lowest income growth, and the lowest proportion of median total income from paid employment.

↳ **\$23,000 - \$28,100 the 1st year after graduation**

↳ **+ 2% between the 1st and 3rd year since graduation**



Conclusions

Overall, this report's examination of the post-graduation median incomes of NBCC graduates by their demographic and background characteristics suggests their incomes continue to rise year after year.

Class of 2017 graduates saw even higher starting incomes compared to 2015 and 2016 graduates. This 2018 tax year income increase could be a result of compositional changes and improvements in programs and/or growth in business activity leading to an increased labour demand within this tax year.

While the majority of NBCC graduates are paid employees, graduates from programs in Health and Related Fields and Business, Management, and Public Administration have the highest proportion of median total income from paid employment, rather than self-employment. This finding is understandable for Health and Related Fields – as most healthcare jobs are under a provincial government – but it is less understandable for Business, Management, and Public Administration graduates. This could be due to the presence of Public Administration in this field of study, but it could also be a signal to emphasize entrepreneurship initiatives among students in programs within this field.

The starting incomes of university graduates in NB are higher than those of NBCC graduates. However, 2 to 3 years after graduation, NBCC graduate incomes are on par. Though NBCC graduates earn less 1 year after graduation, NBCC programs take considerably less time to complete than most university programs, which means that over the time it would take a university student to complete their degree, NBCC graduates will experience an earnings growth that takes them up to the starting earnings of a university graduate.

References

1. Prairie Research Associates. (2022). 2021 Survey of graduates of 2020 of the New Brunswick Community College. Government of New Brunswick – Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour. Retrieved June 8, 2022, from <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/petl-epft/PDF/LMI/NBCC-2021-survey-of-2020-graduates.pdf>