

Post-secondary Credential Completion of B.C. Grade 12 Graduates

Background and Introduction: The Student Transitions Project (STP) has found that 52%¹ of grade 12 graduates enter B.C. public post-secondary education within one year of high school graduation. This is a success story in itself, but once these students arrive in post-secondary education, how successful are they? One way the STP has begun to answer this question is by looking at the awarding of credentials, while recognizing that earning a credential is not a goal for some students, especially those in sub-baccalaureate programs in certain fields of study.

This newsletter addresses several topics about credential completions of student populations and sub-populations taken from the grade 12 graduation cohorts of 2001/02 to 2003/04 who enrolled immediately in B.C. public post-secondary education in 2002/03 to 2004/05, with a focus on credentials completed within five years of enrolling. Please refer to the inset box below for more information on the **Data Sources and Methodology** used in this STP study.

Data Sources and Methodology: *The focus of this study is the population of 130,000 high school graduates of 2001/02, 2002/03 and 2003/04 (roughly 43,000 graduates per year) who enrolled immediately in a public post-secondary institution.*

From the three graduation cohorts, roughly 50% to 51% or 21,000 to 22,000 students from each cohort enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary education within one year of high school graduation. These immediate-entry students (nearly 66,000 students) were tracked over a period of five years to identify whether, where and what type of post-secondary credential was awarded in that time period.

The post-secondary enrollment and credential completion information for these students was obtained from post-secondary institutions as part of the annual STP data collection and data merge process, whereby student records from the two education systems are matched on an encrypted Personal Education Number (PEN).

Also see **Definitions** on **page 10**.

Key Findings: Among the findings discussed in this newsletter are:

Completion Rates:

- 42% completed their first credential within five years.
- The five-, six- and seven-year credential completion rates of 2001/02 grade 12 graduates who enrolled immediately in BC public post-secondary education are 42%, 52%, and 58% respectively.

Field of Study:

- 38% completed a credential in an Arts and Sciences program, 17% in Business and Management, 13% in Engineering and Applied Sciences, 12% in Trades and 7% in Health.
- The highest credential completion rates were achieved by students in the Trades (66%) and Health (65%) program areas

and by students who obtained a Certificate (65%), likely due to the shorter duration of these programs and credentials.

Institutional and Program Mobility:

- A minority (38%) of the students who began and completed a credential within five years attained their credential in the same program area where they initially registered.
- 95% of Bachelor's degree completers completed their degree at the same institution where they first enrolled.

Credential Type:

- Half (50%) of the credential completers finished a Bachelor's degree, 25% a Certificate and 19% a Diploma, and the remainder completed some other credential.
- Students who first enrolled in short certificates, developmental programs, or other study areas that do not normally result in a credential, often completed a higher-level credential than the credential they first enrolled in.
- 50% of the Bachelor's degree entrants completed a credential within five years of enrolling.

Student Characteristics:

- Immediate-entry students who have high academic qualifications from high school are more likely than those with moderate academic qualifications to complete a post-secondary credential within five years of first enrolling in post-secondary education.
- Females have higher five-year credential completion rates than males (44% versus 40%).
- Non-Aboriginal students are more likely to complete a credential within five years compared to Aboriginal students (43% versus 30%). Given more time to complete, it is expected that the credential completion gap between these two groups will narrow.

¹ 52.2% of 2007/08 B.C. grade 12 graduates enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary education within one year of graduation, up from 50% to 51% of grade 12 graduates from

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Figure 1: Distribution of Post-Secondary Program and Credential of First Entry by Grade 12 Graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04 Who First Enrolled in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Education within One Year of High School Graduation

BC CIP Program Cluster	Post-Secondary Credential Category											Grand Total	Program Distribution
	Bachelor's Degree	Diploma	Associate Degree	Certificate	Developmental Level	Apprenticeship	Short Certificate	Post-Degree Diploma	Advanced Diploma	Other Credential	Non-Credential		
Arts and Sciences	18,677	9,779	6,310	315			10			1,178	2,944	39,213	60%
Business and Management	1,586	2,880	1	910			10	4	1		20	5,412	8%
Engineering and Applied Sciences	2,556	1,243	14	606	1	13	7				212	4,652	7%
Trades		231		2,915		608	76				22	3,894	6%
Developmental Programs				51	2,624						76	3,027	5%
Personal Improvement and Leisure	102				1		77				2,279	2,459	4%
Visual and Performing Arts	462	831	4	397			5				207	1,906	3%
Education	1,591	41	55	43	1		1			1	11	1,744	3%
Other Programs										738	597	1,335	2%
Health	729	55		297			23			1	17	1,122	2%
Human and Social Services	195	567	2	299			18			3	35	1,119	2%
Grand Total	25,898	15,627	6,386	5,833	2,627	621	227	4	1	2,019	6,640	65,883	100%
Credential Distribution	39%	24%	10%	9%	4%	1%	0.3%			3%	10%	100%	

Figure 2: Distribution of Post-Secondary Program and Credential of First Completion by Grade 12 Graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04 Who First Enrolled in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Education within One Year of High School Graduation

BC CIP Program Cluster	Post-Secondary Credential Category											Grand Total	Program Distribution
	Bachelor's Degree	Certificate	Diploma	Associate Degree	Developmental Level	Apprenticeship	Short Certificate	Non-Credential	Other Credential	Post-Degree Diploma	Masters Degree		
Arts and Sciences	8,522	286	697	1,194			11	2			1	10,713	38%
Business and Management	2,042	817	1,882	3			7			5		4,756	17%
Trades		3,374	238			124						3,736	13%
Engineering and Applied Sciences	1,559	501	1,233	1			6	2			1	3,303	12%
Health	656	1,073	221				29	1				1,980	7%
Human and Social Services	405	440	498	1			34	19	2			1,399	5%
Visual and Performing Arts	563	325	456				2			1	1	1,348	5%
Education	244	106	101	3			13		10			477	2%
Developmental Programs		74			129							203	1%
Personal Improvement and Leisure	22			1			13					36	0%
Other Programs		2										2	0%
Grand Total	14,013	6,998	5,326	1,203	129	124	115	24	12	6	2	27,953	100%
Credential Distribution	50%	25%	19%	4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%					100%	

Note: As apprenticeship credentials are awarded by the Industry Training Authority, most of the public post-secondary institutions do not record completions. Therefore, this represents an undercount of apprenticeship credential completions.

Credential Completion Rates

From the population of roughly 130,000 grade 12 graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04, about half enrolled immediately in B.C. public post-secondary education between 2002/03 and 2004/05. From this population of nearly 66,000 immediate-entry students from three B.C. grade 12 graduation cohorts, nearly 28,000 students, or 42%, completed a post-secondary credential within five years of enrolling in post-secondary education. For the earliest of the three cohorts (2001/02 grade 12 graduates), 42% completed a credential within five years, 52% within six years, and 58% within seven years.

Credentials and Programs First Enrolled In

B.C. public post-secondary institutions offer a multitude of different combinations of credentials and programs (see *Definitions on page 10*). The initial program and credential destinations of the immediate-entry students of the 2001/02 to 2003/04 grade 12 graduation cohorts are shown in *Figure 1*. The student credential and program destinations can be examined separately (from the outer perimeter of the table) or in combination (from within the inner cells of the table).

Credentials Entered: In total across all program areas, nearly 26,000 (or 39%) of the immediate-entry students enrolled in a Bachelor’s degree program². The balance of students enrolled directly in a Diploma program (24%), Associate Degree (10%), Certificate (9%) or other credential categories (18%) listed across the top of *Figure 1*.

Programs Entered: In total across all credential categories, more than 39,000 students (or 60% of the immediate-entry students) enrolled directly in an Arts and Sciences program. This is a broad program area which can be pre-entry for other programs, such as Nursing or Business. Among the 39,000 Arts and Sciences students, nearly half (19,000) enrolled in a Bachelor’s degree. Other popular program destinations were Business and Management (8%), Engineering and Applied Sciences (6%) and Trades (5%)³.

Credentials and Programs Entered: The largest group of students (nearly 19,000) enrolled directly in a Bachelor’s Degree in an Arts and Sciences program in one of B.C.’s 25 public post-secondary institutions. This represents 28% of the 66,000 immediate-entry students from the three graduation cohorts of 2001/02 to 2003/04.

² Some institutions offer programs that are “laddered”, such that Bachelor’s degree students may have an early exit option to receive a diploma or associate degree, or transfer to another institution. As a result, the initial program and credential destinations of students may be more a measure of different business practices at institutions, rather than aspiration of students. In the same way, some university transfer programs are represented as credential “none” because the students are expected to earn their credential after transfer to a different program or institution.

³ Program destinations for delayed entry students may differ from those of immediate entry students, e.g. greater propensity to enter applied programs.

Credentials and Programs Completed

Credentials Completed: Of all 28,000 credential completers, half (50%) completed a Bachelor’s degree, 25% completed a Certificate, 19% completed a Diploma and the remaining 6% completed other credentials. *Figure 2* provides a detailed breakdown of the roughly 28,000 credentials awarded by program area.

Programs Completed: Nearly 11,000 (or 38%) of all post-secondary credentials first awarded to these grade 12 graduates were in an Arts and Sciences program. It is not surprising that a much larger proportion (60%) of immediate-entry students first enrolled in Arts and Sciences because many of the students who first enroll in this broad program area do so as a stepping stone towards completing a credential in some other program area, such as Business, Health or Education. Other popular programs of credential completers were in Business and Management (17%), Trades (12%), Engineering and Applied Sciences (13%) and Health (7%).

Credential and Program Completed: The largest volume of credential completers (8,500 students or 30% of all 28,000 completers) attained a Bachelor’s degree in an Arts and Sciences program. This is similar to the 28% share of all immediate-entry students who first enrolled in an Arts and Sciences Bachelor’s degree program (see *Figures 1 and 2*).

Students do switch programs from the time of post-secondary entry to credential completion and this is evident in aggregate by examining the differences in program and credential distributions of immediate-entry students from time of entry to time of completion (see *Figures 3 and 4*). More information on the mobility of students between programs and credentials is provided later in this newsletter.

Figure 3: % Distribution of Programs Entered vs. First Programs Completed Within Five Years for Grade 12 Graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04 Who Enrolled in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Education Within One Year of High School Graduation

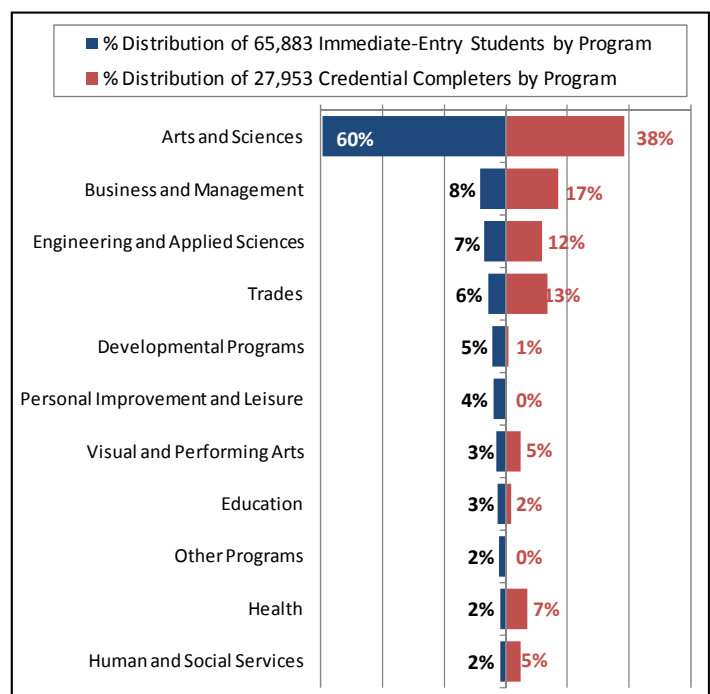
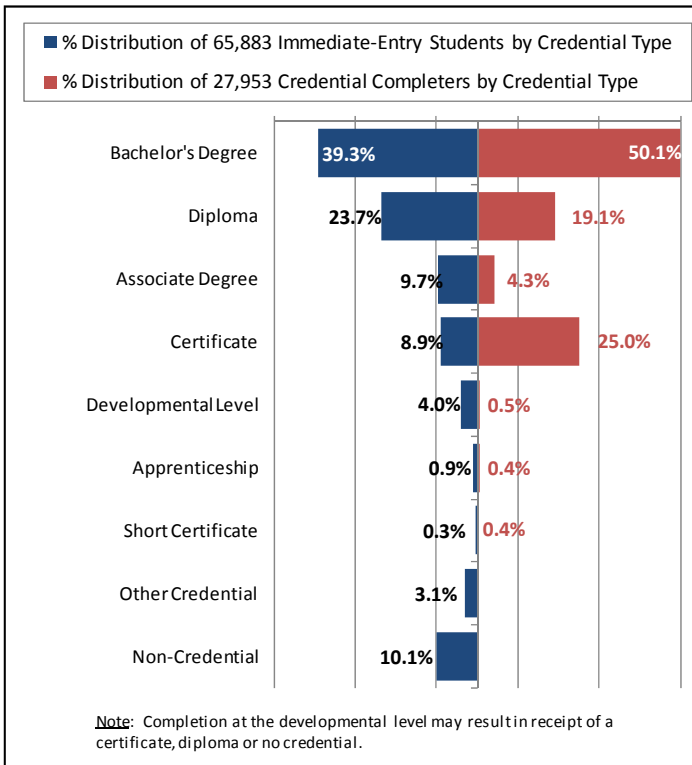


Figure 4: % Distribution of Credential Entered vs. First Credential Completed Within Five Years for Grade 12 Graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04 Who Enrolled in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Education Within One Year of High School Graduation



⁴ Credentials are not typically awarded in the following program areas: Personal Improvement and Leisure, Developmental and Other.

⁵ Most Developmental programs in colleges, in contrast to Adult Basic Education (ABE) offered in school districts, are not designed to lead to a credential, but rather to further study in another field.

Credential Completion Rates by Program of Entry

As shown in *Figure 5*, the credential completion rate tends to vary across program of entry. For those program areas that would typically result in a credential, the proportion of students who completed a credential⁴ in any program subject area ranges from a low of 40% among students who enrolled directly in Arts and Sciences to a high of 66% among those who enrolled in a Trades program (see *Figure 6a*).

Looking Forward — From Program at Entry to Program of Completion

The students' program of first entry is not always the same as the program where they ultimately completed their first credential (see *Figures 5 and 6b*). In fact, only 38% of the students who began and completed a credential within five years attained their credential in the same program area where they began. The extent to which this occurs varies across program of entry.

- Virtually all (98%) of the students who entered a Trades program and completed a credential within five years completed their credential in Trades – the same program area where they began.
- In Arts and Sciences, the most popular program area upon entry to post-secondary education, 62% of the credential completers obtained their credential in Arts and Sciences; 38% completed in some other program area.
- Among entrants to Health programs, 70% of credential completers obtained a credential in Health, while the remaining 30% completed a credential in some other program area.
- Three program areas, Developmental⁵, Personal Improvement and Leisure and 'Other' are transitory and typically do not result in credential completions. As a result, students who begin in these programs are more likely to complete in other program areas.

Figure 5: 2001/02 to 2003/04 Grade 12 Graduates: Transitions From Entry Program CIP Cluster to 5-Yr Credential Completion Program CIP

BC CIP Program Cluster Upon Immediate-Entry	BC CIP Program Cluster Upon Credential Completion												Total 5-Year Credential Completers	No Credential Completion (Yet)	Total Immediate-Entry Students	Credential Completion Rate	Same CIP at Completion*
	Arts and Sciences	Business and Management	Developmental Programs	Education	Engineering and Applied Sciences	Health	Human and Social Services	Other Programs	Personal Improvement and Leisure	Trades	Visual and Performing Arts						
Arts and Sciences	9,729	1,935	49	252	775	1,098	765	0	9	540	430	15,582	23,631	39,213	40%	62%	
Business and Management	127	2,325	5	7	31	48	31	0	1	84	11	2,670	2,742	5,412	49%	87%	
Developmental Programs	65	98	125	11	73	144	38	0	1	206	17	778	2,249	3,027	26%	16%	
Education	88	30	0	142	688~	2	17	0	0	12	3	982	762	1,744	56%	14%	
Engineering and Applied Sciences	298	136	7	3	1,542	22	20	0	0	98	26	2,152	2,500	4,652	46%	72%	
Health	98	25	1	2	59	505	21	0	5	7	1	724	398	1,122	65%	70%	
Human and Social Services	75	16	1	14	6	16	441	0	0	15	1	585	534	1,119	52%	75%	
Other Programs	79	104	2	5	64	32	15	0	0	68	28	397	938	1,335	30%	0%	
Personal Improvement and Leisure	63	66	4	16	37	99	45	2	19	158	24	533	1,926	2,459	22%	4%	
Trades	3	6	8	2	16	5	2	0	0	2,529	1	2,572	1,322	3,894	66%	98%	
Visual and Performing Arts	88	15	1	23	12	9	4	0	1	19	806	978	928	1,906	51%	82%	
Total 5-Yr Credential Completers	10,713	4,756	203	477	3,303	1,980	1,399	2	36	3,736	1,348	27,953	37,930	65,883	42%	38%	
Same CIP Cluster on Completion**	91%	49%	62%	30%	47%	26%	32%	0%	53%	68%	60%	65%					

~ UBC students appear to be incorrectly classified as having enrolled directly in Education and then subsequently completing an Engineering degree. The enrollment records of these students were likely incorrectly classified in the STP submission from UBC with an Education CIP, rather than a more appropriate CIP code in Engineering. The 688 value shown in the table above might be more appropriately added to the 1,542 value in the cell below it.

** % of CIP Completers who entered same CIP.

* % of CIP Enters who completed in same CIP as entry.

Figure 6: Program of Entry and 5-Year Credential Completion Status of Grade 12 Graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04 Who Enrolled Immediately in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Education

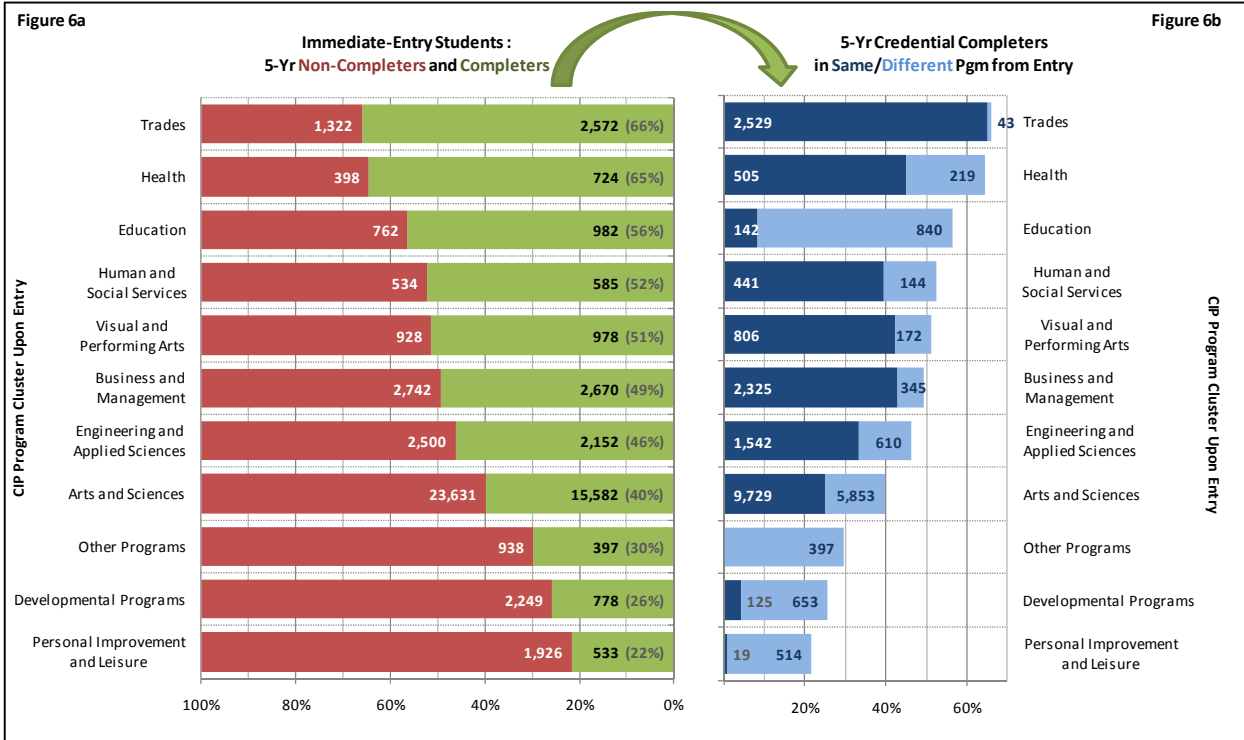
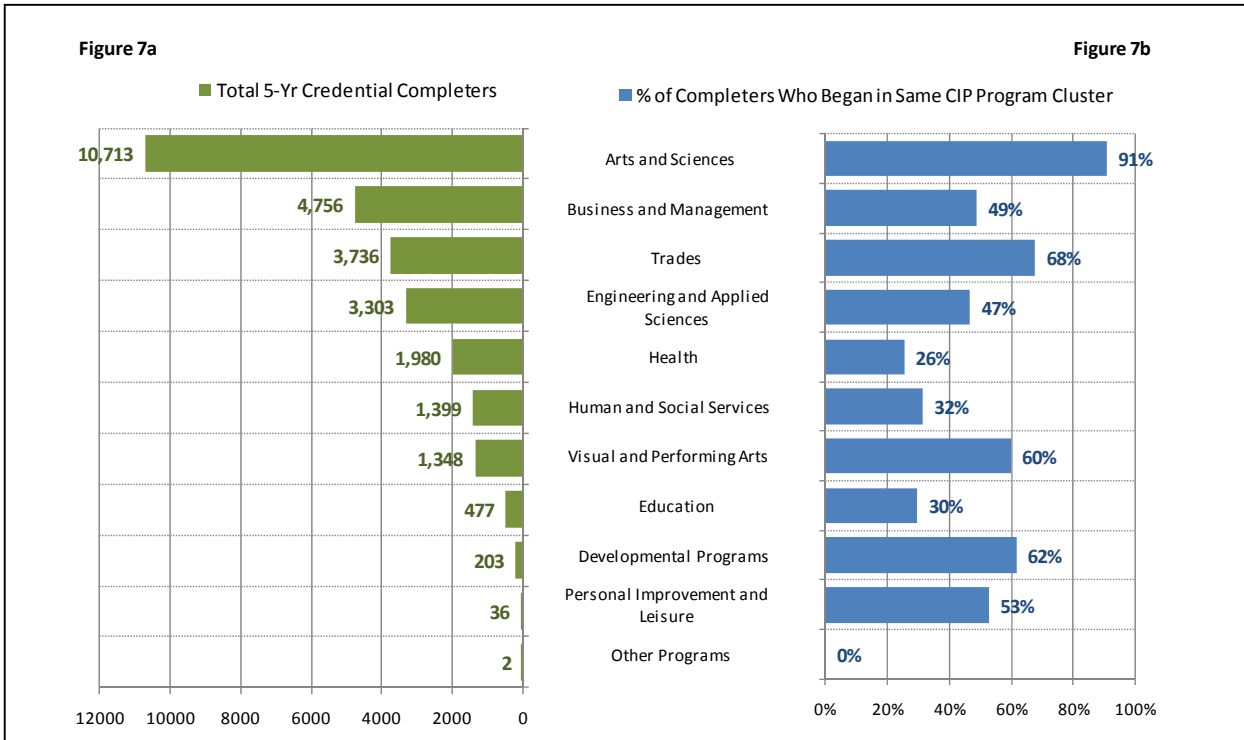


Figure 7: Distribution of B.C. Public Post-Secondary Programs Completed by Grade 12 Graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04 Who Enrolled Immediately in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Education, Including % Who Completed in Program of Entry



Looking Backward — From Program of Completion to Program of Entry

An alternate perspective on the movement of students between programs is to identify all credential completers from the immediate-entry cohort and then look backward at the programs where they first began their studies, five or fewer years earlier. Did they begin in the same program area where they ultimately finished?

Among the 28,000 credential completers (see *Figure 7a*), 65% began in the same program, and this tends to vary by program of completion, from a low of 26% for students who completed a Health credential to a high of 91% for students who completed a credential in Arts and Sciences (see *Figure 7b*).

Student Mobility Between Credential Categories

We have seen that students do not necessarily complete their credential in the same program area where they began. Similar movement between credential categories is also evident when we track the students from their credential type when they first enrolled (i.e. Certificate) through to their first credential received (i.e. Bachelor’s degree) within five years of post-secondary entry. By rank-ordering⁶ credentials first entered versus credentials first awarded, a matrix is formed that shows the movement of students to a higher-, lower- or same-level credential, from time of entry to time of credential completion (see *Figure 8*).

In general, students who first enrolled in short certificates, developmental programs, or other study areas that do not normally result in a credential, often completed a higher-level credential than the credential they first enrolled in (see *Figure 9*). The opportunity for completing a lower-level credential than first enrolled in is also evident. For example, half of all Associate Degree entrants and 11% of Bachelor’s degree entrants completed a lower-level credential (mainly Certificates and Diplomas). In addition, 20% of Diploma entrants completed a lower-level credential (primarily Certificates).

Bachelor’s Degree Attainment:

Thus far, this newsletter has focused on the credential completions of all 66,000 immediate-entry students from three grade 12 graduation cohorts. We now turn to a subset of this group (26,000 students) who initially enrolled in a Bachelor’s degree.

Did Bachelor’s degree seekers complete their first credential at the Bachelor’s degree level, or did they complete some other credential within five years of first enrolling? As shown in *Figure 10*, 50% of the Bachelor’s degree entrants completed their first credential within five years of enrolling, with the majority (11,470) completing a Bachelor’s degree and a tenth as many (1,470) completing some other credential⁷ (see *Figure 9*). The five-year credential completion rate of Bachelor’s degree entrants has remained constant at 50% for each of the three grade 12 graduation cohorts of 2001/02 to 2003/04 (see *Figure 11*), with 44% to 45% of each cohort completing a Bachelor’s degree as their first credential received within five years of enrolling in post-secondary education.

Among 26,000 Bachelor’s degree seekers, is the 45% Bachelor’s degree 5 year completion rates consistent across the province, by region of high school graduation? The grade 12 graduates from the Vancouver/Langara region (or roughly 5,000 students) who enrolled immediately in a Bachelor’s degree program had the highest five-year Bachelor’s degree completion rate (58%) in the province. Grade 12 graduates from the Capilano and Kwantlen regions also had relatively high Bachelor’s degree completion rates, at 52% and 51% respectively. The five-year Bachelor’s degree completion rates were lower among grade 12 graduates from high schools in other regions of the province (see *Figure 12*), but it is possible that we may see a closing

⁶ The STP has adopted the rank-ordering of credential categories used by the Central Data Warehouse (CDW). Please see inset box of Definitions for more information.

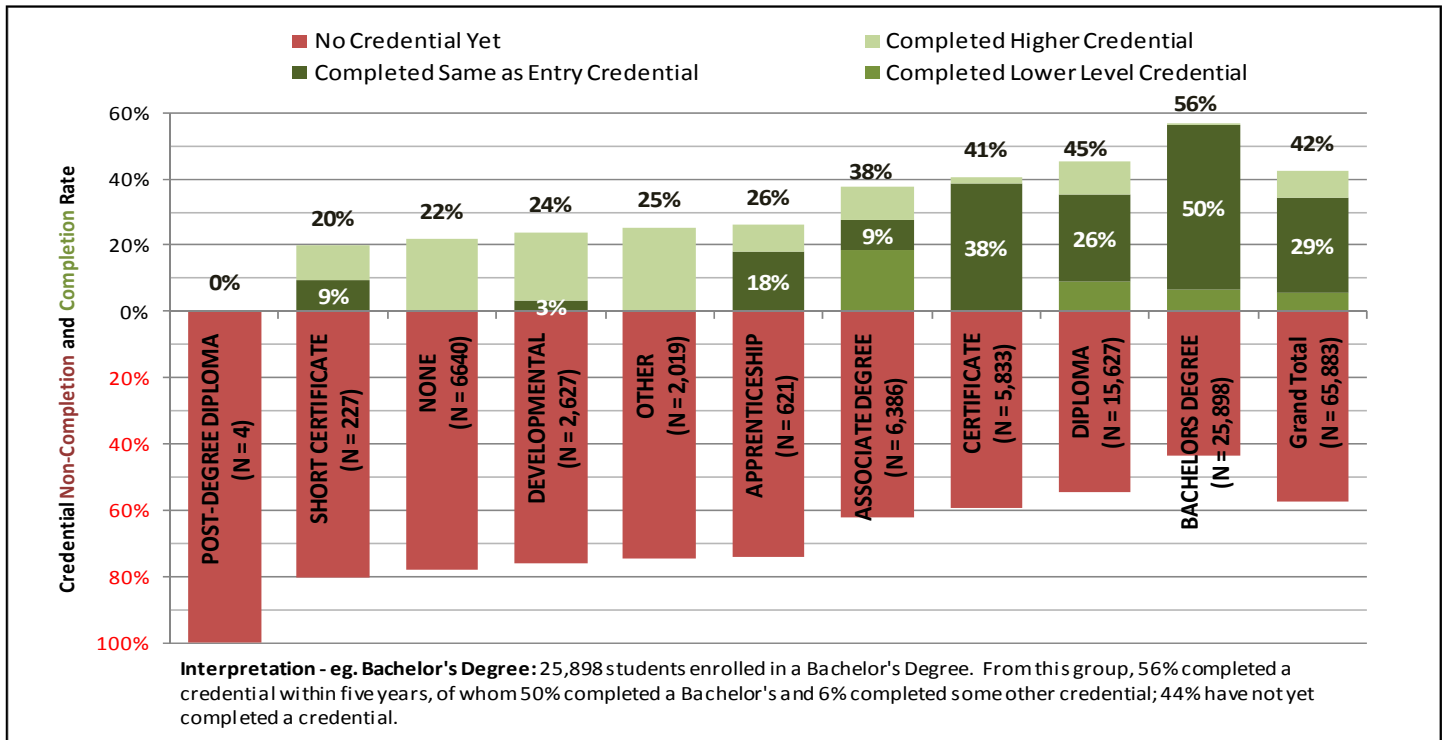
⁷ Students who completed some other credential may have done so as a stepping stone to a Bachelor’s degree.

Figure 8: 2001/02 to 2003/04 Grade 12 Graduates: From Entry Credential Category to 5-Yr Credential Completion Category

Credential First Enrolled In	Credential Category of First Credential Awarded Within 5 Years of Post-Secondary Entry													5 Years of Entry	Grand Total Completers	Total Immediate Entry	Credential Completion Rate	Compl. Same Cred. As Entered
	MASTERS DEGREE	POST-DEGREE DIPLOMA	BACHELORS DEGREE	ADVANCED DIPLOMA	ASSOCIATE DEGREE	DIPLOMA	CERTIFICATE	APPRENTICESHIP	SHORT CERTIFICATE	OTHER CREDENTIAL	NO CREDENTIAL	DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL						
MASTERS DEGREE														0	0	0		
POST-DEGREE DIPLOMA			1											3	1	4	25%	
BACHELORS DEGREE	1	3	11,470		64	726	641	9	18					12,958	12,940	25,898	50%	89%
ADVANCED DIPLOMA														1	0	1		
ASSOCIATE DEGREE				529	485	472	470	3	14					4,406	1,980	6,386	31%	24%
DIPLOMA		2	847		391	3,302	1,050	5	36	9	9	11		9,965	5,662	15,627	36%	58%
CERTIFICATE				49	12	153	3,617	8	2					1,983	3,850	5,833	66%	94%
APPRENTICESHIP						2	35	81	1					502	119	621	19%	68%
SHORT CERTIFICATE			1			5	18		20					182	45	227	20%	44%
OTHER CREDENTIAL	1		502		9	170	147		1					1,188	831	2,019	41%	
NON-CREDENTIAL		1	584	1	222	378	664	14	17	2	6	11		4,740	1,900	6,640	29%	0%
DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL			30		20	118	356	4	6	1	2	88		2,002	625	2,627	24%	14%
Grand Total	2	6	14,013	1	1,203	5,326	6,998	124	115	12	24	129		37,930	27,953	65,883	42%	50%

Note: Apprenticeship completions are under-reported because apprenticeships are awarded by the Industry Training Authority (ITA), rather than post-secondary institutions. Very few post-secondary institutions record student apprenticeship completions. As a result, complete data on all student apprenticeship completions are not obtained via STP submissions from institutions.

Figure 9: 2001/02 to 2003/04 Grade 12 Graduates Who Made Immediate-Entry to B.C. Public Post-secondary Education— Five-year Credential Completion Status, by Credential Level Initially Entered



of the Bachelor's degree completion gap between regions of the province when the six-year and seven-year Bachelor's degree completion rates are available in future years for these three grade 12 cohorts. However, in looking only at the 2001/02 grade 12 cohort, we find that grade 12 graduates from the Lower Mainland achieved higher seven-year credential completion rates than graduates from other regions. Longer degree-completion or non-completion might also occur among high school graduates from outlying regions, who enrolled in a Bachelor's degree program away from home and experienced some academic or non-academic difficulty adjusting to post-secondary education.

A regional comparison of credential completion rates for all immediate-entry students (and not limited to bachelor's degree completion) is shown for comparison in Figure 13. Overall credential completion rates range from a low of 25% for high school graduates from the Northern Lights region to a high of 49% for high school graduates from the Vancouver/Langara region of B.C.

Figure 10: Cumulative Credential Completions of Grade 12 Graduates of 2001/02 to 2003/04 Who Enrolled Immediately in a Bachelor's Degree Program

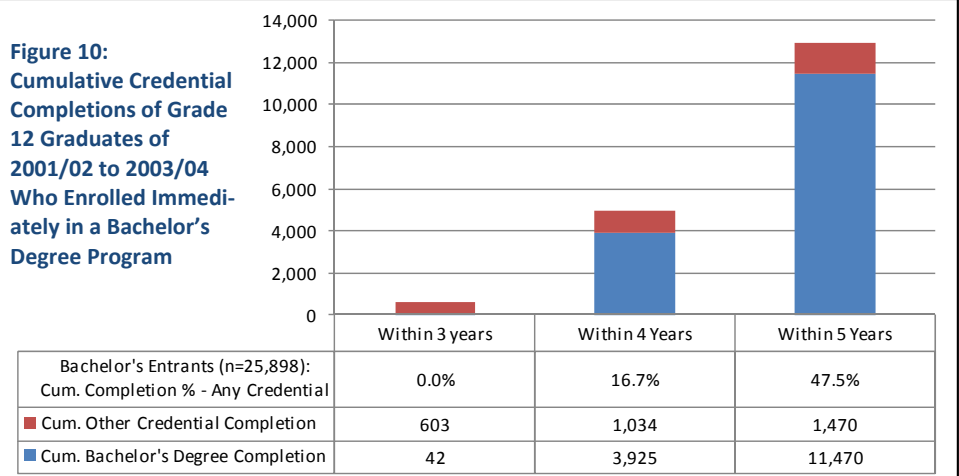


Figure 11: Five-Year Credential Completion Rates of Immediate-Entry Students to Bachelor's Degree Programs, by Grade 12 Graduation Cohort

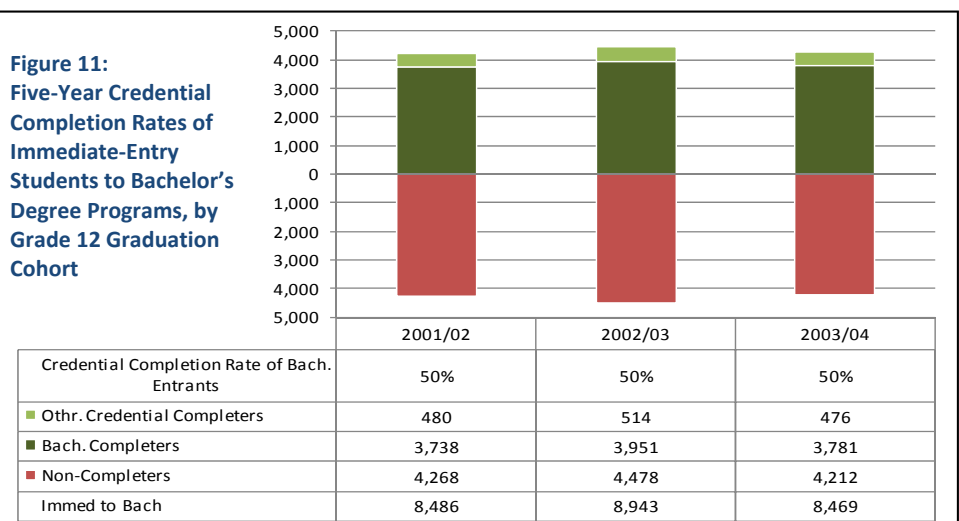


Figure 12: Five-Year Bachelor’s Degree Completion Status of Immediate-Entry Students Who Enrolled in Bachelor’s Degree Programs in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions by Region of High School Graduation

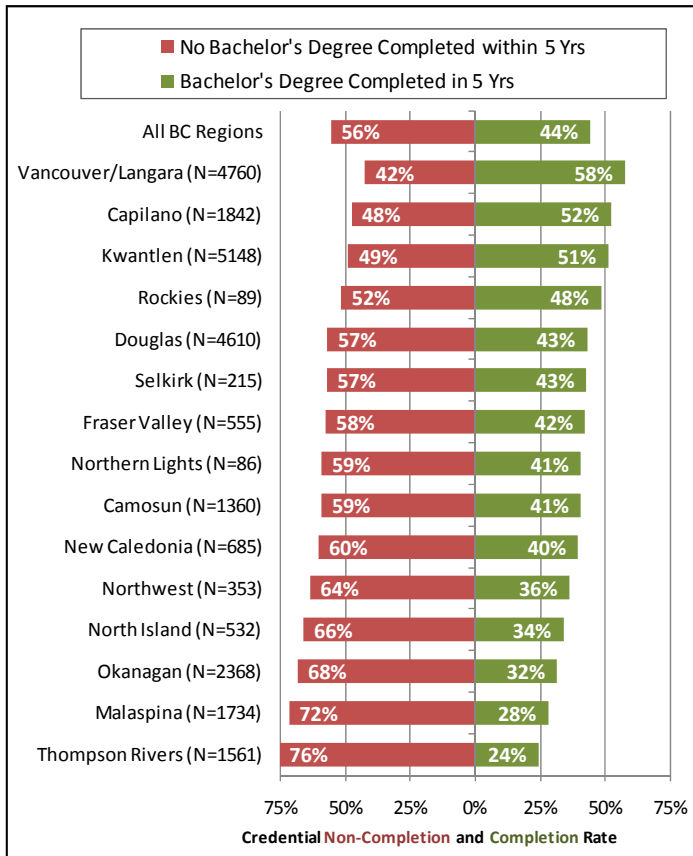
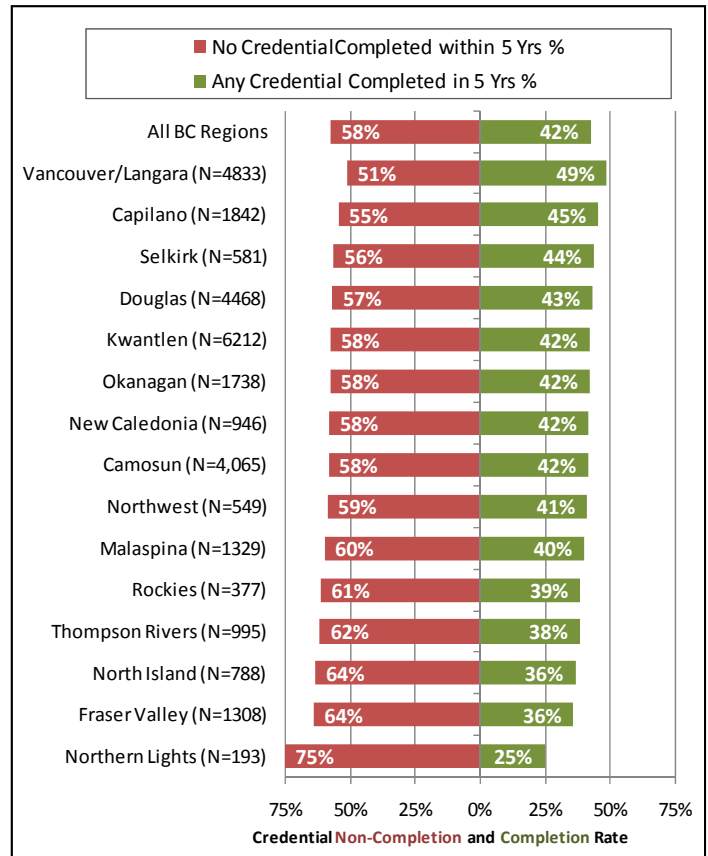
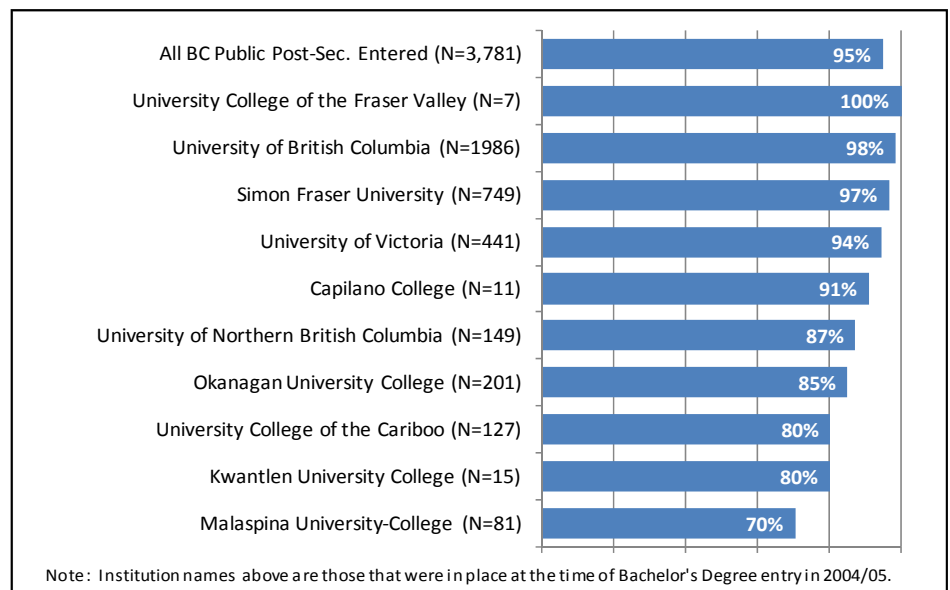


Figure 13: Five-Year Credential Completion Status of Immediate-Entry Students Who Enrolled in Any Programs in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions by Region of High School Graduation



Of those students who completed a Bachelor’s degree, did they finish at the same institution where they first enrolled? Among the 3,800 Bachelor’s degree completers who first enrolled in a Bachelor’s degree program in 2004/05 (after graduation from grade 12 in 2003/04), 95% completed their credential where they first enrolled. Students who first enrolled in a B.C. research-intensive university and subsequently completed a Bachelor’s degree program within five years were more likely to complete at the institution where they began, compared to Bachelor’s completers who entered other B.C. public post-secondary institutions (see **Figure 14**). This is consistent with students at smaller institutions having to change institutions to complete majors not offered at their original institution.

Figure 14: % of 2003/04 Immediate-Entry Students into Bachelor’s Degrees Who Completed a Bachelor’s Degree Within 5 Years at the Same Institution Where They First Enrolled



Credential Completion Rates by Student Characteristics

It has been shown that 42% of immediate-entry students completed their first credential within five years of enrolling in a B.C. public post-secondary institution and these credential completion rates vary across regions of the province and by program and/or credential of entry. Other student characteristics also affect credential completion rates, including, but not limited to, academic qualifications, gender, and Aboriginal status.

Academic qualifications: Using each student’s academic GPA⁸ upon high school graduation as a measure of academic qualifications upon entry to post-secondary education, **Figure 15** shows that immediate-entry students who have high academic qualifications are more likely that those with lower academic qualifications to complete a post-secondary credential within five years of first enrolling in post-secondary education. The five-year credential completion rates vary between 42% and 44% for each of the 2001/02, 2002/03 and 2003/04 grade 12 graduation cohorts and reach 67% to 74% among students who graduated from high school with GPA’s of 95 or higher. **Figure 16** shows that six-year and seven-year credential completion rates by academic GPA follow a similar pattern to the five-year credential completion rates. The highest academic achievers in high school (with academic GPA’s of 95 to 100%) achieved a completion rate of 89% within seven years of enrolling in post-secondary education.

Gender: At 44%, immediate-entry female students were slightly more likely than male students (at 40%) to complete a credential within five years of enrolling in post-secondary education. A similar gap of four percentage points exists between the shares of female

versus male immediate-entry students who enrolled directly in a Bachelor’s degree program (22% versus 18%). Overall, among all Bachelor’s degree entrants, 44% completed a Bachelor’s degree within five years, but this rate was lower for males (39%) than it was for females (48%). Given more time to complete their degree, such as six or seven years in total, we may see a closing of this nine percentage point gap between Bachelor’s degree completion rates of male and female bachelor’s degree entrants.

Aboriginal Students: Among approximately 2,700 Aboriginal immediate entry students in this study, 30% completed a credential within five years of enrolling in post-secondary education (versus 43% of non-Aboriginal students). Non-Aboriginal immediate-entry students were more likely to enrol directly in a Bachelor’s degree program compared with Aboriginal immediate-entry students (21% versus 9%). Among those Aboriginal students who did enrol immediately in a Bachelor’s degree program, 20% completed within five years (45% for non-Aboriginal students).

Interpretation note: In order to provide a consistent five-year time period for all grade 12 graduates to complete a credential, this study focused exclusively on immediate-entry students. The STP data has shown that Aboriginal students are more inclined to delay their entry into post-secondary education, including delayed-entry into a Bachelor’s degree program. In fact, 22% of Aboriginal bachelor’s degree entrants delayed their post-secondary enrollment (versus 12% of non-Aboriginal bachelor’s degree entrants).

⁸ Academic GPA is an average grade calculated from the student’s grades in English 12 and their best three other academic grade 12 subjects.

Figure 15: Five-Year Credential Completion Rates by Academic GPA and High School Graduation Cohort (2001/02, 2002/03, 2003/04)

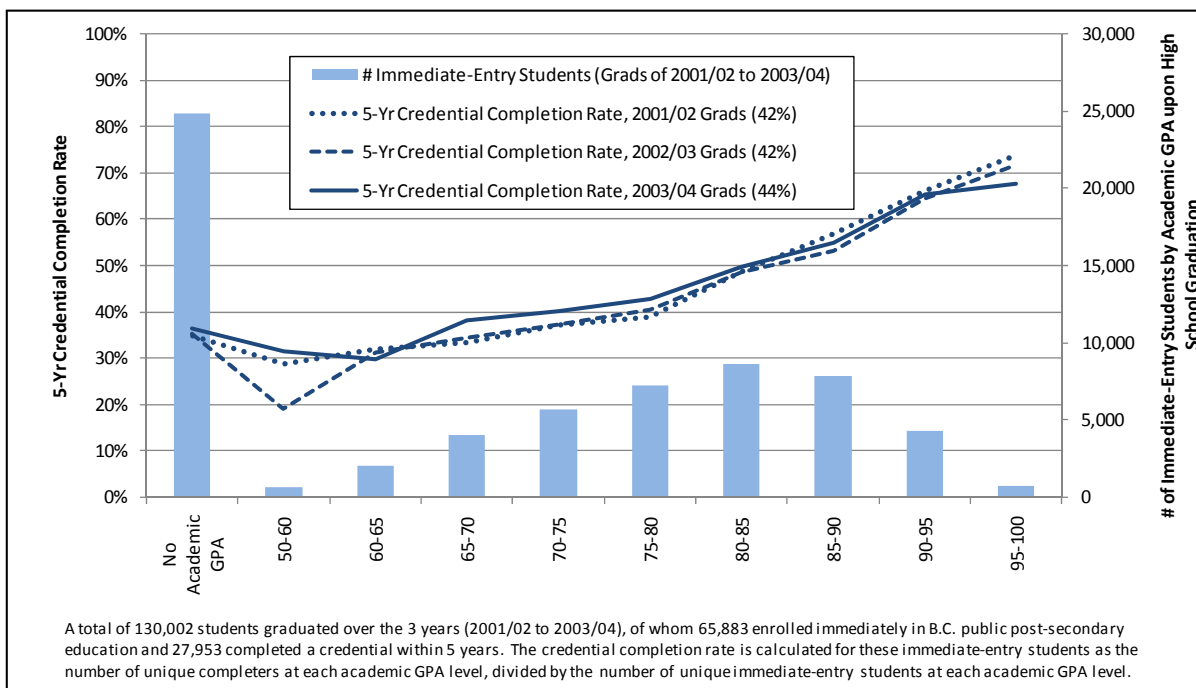
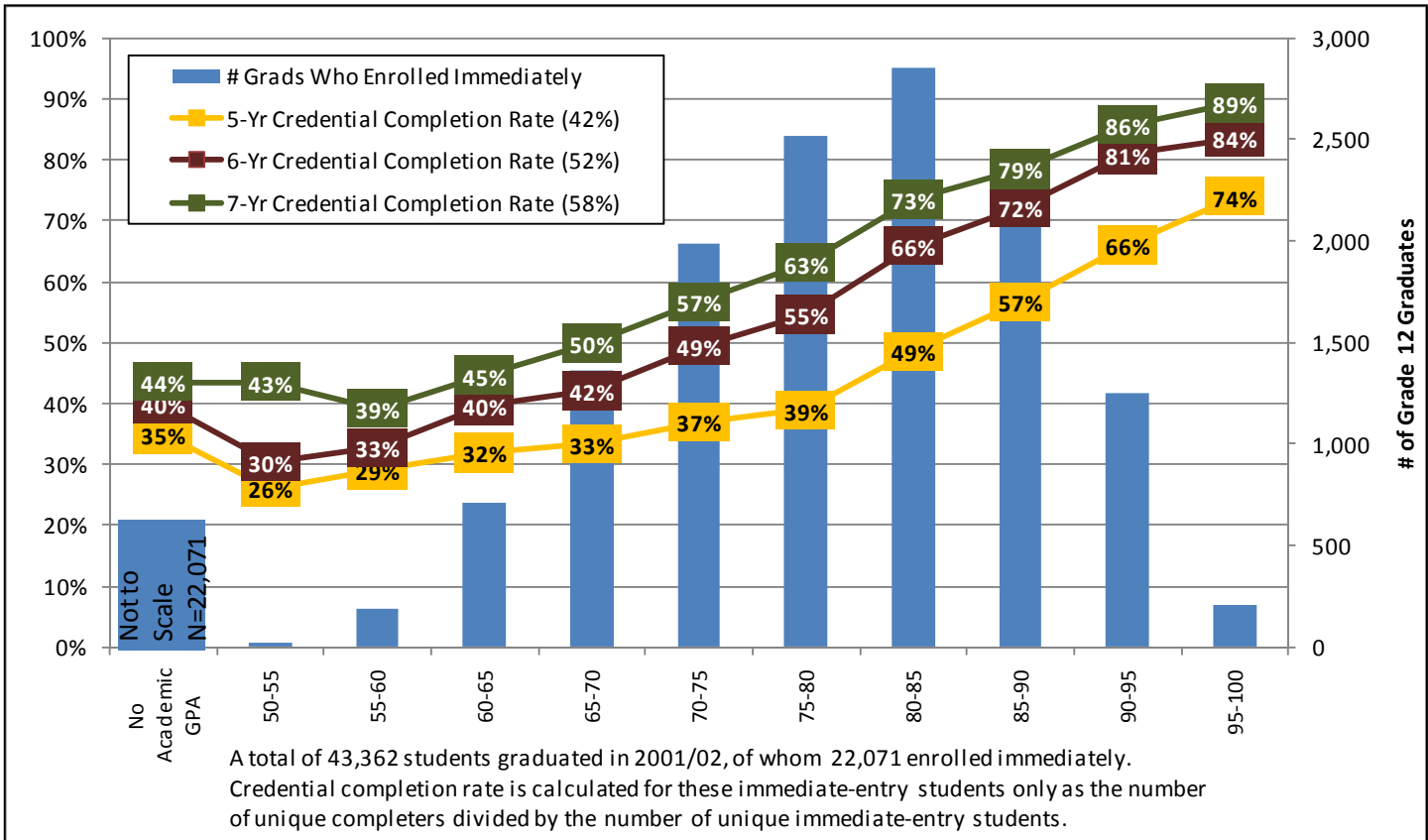


Figure 16: Five-, Six-, and Seven-Year Post-Secondary Credential Completion Rates of 2001/02 Grade 12 Graduates Who Enrolled Immediately in B.C. Public Post-Secondary Education in 2002/03



Definitions:

Credentials and Programs: When students enroll in a B.C. public post-secondary institution, they typically enroll in a specific **program** or field of study, and this normally leads to the receipt of a **credential** upon successful completion of the program, such as a Bachelor of Arts, Certificate in Welding or Diploma in Business Administration. In these examples, Bachelor, Certificate and Diploma are **credential categories**, whereas Arts, Welding and Business Administration are **program areas**.

Within any program area there are numerous different credentials that a student might choose to obtain and similarly, within any credential category, there are numerous different programs that a student might pursue. Which credential and program students pursue will depend upon their interests and qualifications and the available credential and program offerings at the post-secondary institutions.

Programs and B.C. CIP Clusters: Each B.C. public post-secondary institution assigns a 6-digit **Classification of Instructional Program Code (CIP)** code to each of their programs, based on a nationally accepted standard coding system. These CIP codes are provided to the STP for each enrollment and credential completion record for each student in the annual STP data submission. In the system-wide, aggregate-level reporting in this newsletter, the program information is reported in **B.C. CIP Clusters**, or aggregated clusters of programs with similar features, based on the first two digits of the CIP codes. The B.C. CIP clusters are listed in **Figure 1** of this newsletter and a detailed breakdown of the programs within each of the B.C. CIP clusters is available from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD).

Credentials and Ranking of Credentials: A credential is a formal qualification resulting from the completion of studies with evaluative components. A credential is not a certificate of attendance. There are several special circumstances about credentials that should be noted in the context of this newsletter:

Some programs in the B.C. public post-secondary system result in **no credential** being awarded to the student upon successful completion and some university transfer programs. This is typical of college preparatory and personal developmental programs

Students who receive a credential after successful completion in the **developmental** level can be awarded a certificate or diploma (i.e. high school diploma, ESL certificate, BC Adult Graduation “Dogwood” Certificate).

“**Other Credential**” might be awarded to a student, based on evaluative components, but the name of the credential is not one of those defined in the list below.

Some institutions offer credential programs that are “**laddered**”, such that Bachelor’s degree students may take an early exit option to receive a diploma or associate degree or transfer to another institution.

The STP orders post-secondary credentials according to the ranking adopted by the Central Data Warehouse (CDW). In this newsletter, these rankings (listed here from highest to lowest) are used to determine whether students completed a credential at a higher, lower or same level as the one initially enrolled in.

Ranking	Credential Category
Highest ↑	Doctorate
	Masters Degree
	Graduate Diploma
	Graduate Certificate
	Post-Degree Diploma
	Post-Degree Certificate
	First Professional Degree
	Bachelors Degree
	Advanced Diploma
	Advanced Certificate
	Associate Degree
	Diploma
	Certificate
	Apprenticeship
Short Certificate	
Other	
None	
Lowest	Developmental

Conclusion

The pooling of data through the STP reveals that roughly half (52%) of all grade 12 graduates in British Columbia enrol in B.C. public post-secondary education within one year of high school graduation and 42% of immediate-entry students earn a post-secondary credential within five years of graduating from high school. In other words, if these trends continue, we should expect approximately 22% of each grade 12 graduation class to earn a post-secondary credential within five years of completing high school, bearing in mind that post-secondary credential completion rates tend to vary across program areas and regions of the province where students graduate. Completion rates also tend to be higher among female students, non-Aboriginal students and students with high academic qualifications. The STP's ability to project the volume of post-secondary credential completers five-years after grade 12 graduation, particularly at the program or regional level, has the potential to provide valuable information for provincial labour market development and planning.



Where to find more information:

A wealth of additional information is also available to post-secondary institutions seeking more detailed information specific to their region or institution.

STP Highlights newsletters and reports are available on the public Student Transitions Project web site at:

http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions

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Student Transitions Project (STP): The Student Transitions Project is British Columbia's collaborative research project that measures student success from the K-12 to post-secondary systems. This effective system-wide partnership, involving B.C.'s education and advanced education ministries and post-secondary institutions, is tracking student success by reporting on student transition rates to post-secondary education, student mobility among post-secondary institutions, and post-secondary completion and retention rates. STP is managed by a steering committee with representation from the two education ministries, public institutions and the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT).

STP Steering Committee Members:

Devron Gaber, STP Chair, Associate Director, BCCAT.

Bob Cowin, Director, Institutional Research, Douglas College.

Gerald Morton, Director, Information Department, Ministry of Education.

Patty Beatty-Guenter, Director, Student Enrolment & Reporting, Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development.

Walter Sudmant, Director, Planning and Institutional Research, University of British Columbia.

Special Thanks: The STP would like to thank the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and the B.C. public post-secondary institutions for collaborating in this research effort. Without their co-operation and data contributions, this research could not have been accomplished.

The following B.C. public post-secondary institutions are included in this study and grouped by institution designation in 2009/10:

Community Colleges— Camosun College, College of New Caledonia, College of the Rockies, Douglas College, Langara College, North Island College, Northern Lights College, Northwest Community College, Okanagan College, Selkirk College, Vancouver Community College.

Institutes— British Columbia Institute of Technology, Justice Institute of British Columbia, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

Teaching-Intensive Universities – Capilano University, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Royal Roads University, Thompson Rivers University, Vancouver Island University, University of the Fraser Valley.

Research-Intensive Universities – Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia and University of British Columbia, Okanagan, University of Northern British Columbia, University of Victoria.