



## Student Transitions into Post-Secondary Education Sectors – B.C. Public, B.C. Private and Non-B.C. Institutions TEN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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**Introduction:** The Student Transitions Project (STP) has broadened its research agenda by beginning to examine transitions of B.C. grade 12 graduates *beyond* the B.C. public post-secondary education system – into B.C. private and non-B.C. institutions. Lacking student-by-student enrolment data from outside the BC public system, STP was able to use government student assistance data to identify the transition patterns into private and out-of-province institutions for at least those students who received government loans or Passport to Education credits. The data sources were linked on an encrypted student identifier to reveal the study destinations of B.C. grade 12 graduates while protecting students’ privacy. (see [Data Sources and Methodology](#) on page 4).

This study begins with the population of roughly 258,000 B.C. grade 12 graduates of 2001/02 to 2006/07. Within one to six years of high school graduation, a minimum of 186,000 students from this population subsequently transitioned to post-secondary education by 2007/08. These “transitioners” and their post-secondary destinations are the focus of this study.

**Executive Summary:** Through ten research questions about the first post-secondary institution that high school graduates entered, STP shows that B.C.’s public post-secondary education system has seen consistent transition levels for B.C. Grade 12 graduates. The B.C. public post-secondary institutions are the most frequent sector destination (close to 90%) for grade 12 graduates who sought post-secondary education, while a minority of post-secondary registrants enrolled in a B.C. private institution (at least 4) or a non-B.C. institution (at least 6%).

A brief summary of the research findings is presented below and a more detailed analysis begins on page 5 in the full report on the STP web site at: [http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student\\_transitions/documents/transitions\\_beyond\\_bcpublic\\_post\\_sec\\_2010.pdf](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/documents/transitions_beyond_bcpublic_post_sec_2010.pdf)

### 1. What proportion of B.C. Grade 12 secondary school graduates enroll in post-secondary education?

**Immediate Entry:** Within one year of high school graduation, 51% of each grade 12 graduation class, from 2001/02 to 2006/07, enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary education. At a minimum, an additional 2% enrolled immediately in B.C. private institutions and 3% in institutions outside of B.C.

**Immediate and Delayed Entry:** When all immediate (56%) and all delayed transitions (25%) into all sectors (B.C. public, B.C. private and non-B.C. institutions) are accounted for, the six-year cumulative transition rate of the 2001/02 grade 12 graduation cohort reaches at least 81%<sup>1</sup> by 2007/08.

### 2. Does time of entry influence post-secondary sector destination? The longer students delay their transition into post-secondary education, the more likely they are to enrol in a B.C. private institution and the less likely they are to enrol in a B.C. public institution.

<sup>1</sup> Transition rates calculated from the supplemental sources likely under-estimate the overall transition rates of B.C. secondary school graduates because not all students seek financial assistance or receive and/or redeem Passport to Education credits.

- 3. What proportion of grade 12 graduates take a “gap year” before enrolling in post-secondary education?** Roughly 1 in 8 (13%) of high school graduates take a gap year before enrolling in post-secondary education. With 56% enrolling immediately, these “gappers” represent almost one quarter as many students as transition immediately.
- 4. Do students’ high school academic qualifications affect their post-secondary sector destinations?** High school graduates who enrol in B.C. public and non-B.C. post-secondary institutions tend to have higher grades in academic Grade 12 courses than students enrolled in B.C. private institutions. Student academic qualifications also have the greatest influence on transition rates into non-B.C. post-secondary institutions than to any other sector; transition rates into post-secondary institutions outside BC are highest for the most academically qualified.
- 5. What are the regional differences in student sector destinations?** Some differences in regional student transition rates into B.C. public post-secondary education can be partially attributed to movement into B.C. private and non-B.C. institutions. For example, graduates from the Rockies region have the lowest transition rate into B.C. public post-secondary education but the highest transition rate into non-B.C. post-secondary institutions. In general, graduates from regions outside of the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, have higher than average transition rates into Alberta post-secondary institutions.
- 6. What are the trends in transition rates and sector destinations?** The immediate and delayed transition rates into each post-secondary sector (B.C. public, B.C. private and non-B.C.) have remained relatively stable for each of the last six grade 12 graduation cohorts (2001/02 to 2006/07). Consistently for each cohort, the longer students waited after graduation, the less likely they were to enrol in post-secondary education, and these declining transition rates are remarkably similar for each cohort and for each period of time since graduation.
- 7. Do other student characteristics influence the post-secondary sector destinations of B.C. grade 12 graduates?** Student characteristics have some influence on transition rates into each post-secondary sector and overall across all sectors combined.

  - Gifted students have the highest overall transition rates, especially into non-B.C. institutions.
  - French immersion graduates have higher overall transition rates than graduates not in French immersion, and they are more likely to enroll outside of B.C., especially in Quebec.
  - Students whose primary language spoken at home is not English or who were enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) in their graduation year have higher overall student transition rates than students whose primary language is English.
  - Female students have overall higher transition rates into post-secondary institutions than male students, and also to each sector (B.C. public, B.C. private and non-B.C. post-secondary).
  - Non-Aboriginal students have higher overall student transition rates than Aboriginal students; although transition rates into B.C. private institutions are similar.
  - Compared to B.C. grade 12 graduates from public secondary schools, independent secondary school graduates have lower transition rates into B.C. public post-secondary education, largely offset by having higher transition rates into non-B.C. institutions.

**8. What are the most frequent post-secondary destinations of B.C. grade 12 high school graduates who attend outside of the B.C. public post-secondary system?**

Destinations of B.C. private and non-B.C. post-secondary registrants were examined separately.

- Most of the **B.C. private** post-secondary institutions are located in the Lower Mainland and this is where the majority of B.C. private registrants enroll. The top three B.C. private institution destinations were Trinity Western University (11%), Sprott Shaw (11%) and Art Institute of Vancouver (8%).
- The top four most popular post-secondary institutions attended **outside of B.C.** were University of Toronto (9%), McGill University (9%), University of Calgary (7%) and University of Alberta (7%). Among those who attended non-B.C. post-secondary institutions, 20% enrolled outside of Canada; 32% went to Alberta, 31% to Ontario, 10% to Quebec and 7% to the rest of Canada.

**9. What are the program destinations of grade 12 graduates who transition to B.C. private and non-B.C. post-secondary institutions?**

Across all three post-secondary sectors (B.C. public, B.C. private and non-B.C.), Arts and Sciences programs are the primary initial program destinations of entering students<sup>2</sup>. While the program destinations for the majority of those who attended non-B.C. post-secondary institutions is not available, it is evident that students who attended B.C. private institutions often enrolled in vocational programs with vocational, specialized arts or faith-based perspectives that are less available, or absent, in B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions.

**10. Do high school graduates who first enrolled outside of the B.C. public post-secondary system ever enter the B.C. public system?**

Roughly one-third of nearly 2,200 students from the 2001/02 high school graduation cohort who enrolled immediately in a B.C. private or non-B.C. post-secondary education institution subsequently entered the B.C. public post-secondary education system over the next five years. The rate of entry to the B.C. public system from the B.C. private system is slightly higher (36%) than it is for those who attended non-B.C. institutions (30%).

**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.

<sup>2</sup> Entering post-secondary students may begin in Arts and Sciences with the intention of switching to other faculties or programs later on.

**Data Sources and Methodology:** To conduct this analysis of the first post-secondary education destinations of grade 12 graduates – into B.C. public, B.C. private or non-B.C. post-secondary institutions – the Student Transitions Project worked collaboratively with both of B.C.’s education ministries, StudentAid B.C. and B.C.’s public post-secondary institutions to collect and amalgamate the following four related data sets:

1. Student enrolment information from the Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) system for roughly 258,000 students who graduated from B.C. grade 12 between 2001/02 and 2006/07. Source: B.C. Ministry of Education.
2. B.C. public post-secondary institution enrolment records for academic years 2002/03 through 2007/08 for the population of 258,000 high school graduates. Source: B.C. public post-secondary institutions.
3. A data file of Passport to Education\* recipients for the purpose of identifying post-secondary institution destinations of grade 12 graduates outside of the B.C. public post-secondary education system. In this file, nearly 16,000 grade 12 graduates of 2001/02 to 2006/07 received and redeemed Passport to Education tuition fee credits to attend an accredited B.C. private post-secondary institution (4,000 students) or non-B.C. institution (12,000 students), between 2002/03 and 2007/08. Source: B.C. Ministry of Education.
4. Student Financial Assistance records for roughly 16,000 students from the population of grade 12 graduates of 2001/02 to 2006/07 who attended post-secondary destinations outside of the B.C. public post-secondary education system between 2002/03 and 2007/08. This information was gathered solely for the purpose of identifying the post-secondary institution attended by students who enrolled outside of the B.C. public system. Included were 10,000 financial aid recipients enrolled at accredited B.C. private post-secondary institutions and roughly 6,000 students who attended accredited institutions in other jurisdictions around the world. Source: Student Aid B.C., Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development.

By linking these multiple data sets, using an encrypted Personal Education Number (PEN), the STP was able to identify if, when and where grade 12 graduates first enrolled in post-secondary institutions, either within the B.C. public post-secondary education system, or at non-B.C. institutions or B.C. private institutions. Very few students attended more than one institution simultaneously and in such cases, enrolment priority was given to the B.C. public institution attended. Students who enrolled outside of the B.C. public system and received both Passport to Education credits and financial assistance were counted only once at the B.C. private or non-B.C. institution where they first attended.

**Caveats:** Not all students seek financial assistance or receive Passport to Education credits (and not all who receive the credits redeem those credits). Therefore, the STP acknowledges that transition rates reported from these supplemental sources likely under-estimate the overall transition rates of B.C. secondary school graduates.

\* The Passport to Education Program recognizes and rewards B.C. public and independent secondary school students for academic and non-academic achievements. Passport stamps, valued from \$250 to \$500 in post-secondary tuition credits, are awarded annually by schools to qualified students (or roughly 30 per cent of the students) in grades 10 through 12. Stamps can be redeemed upon registration at accredited/designated public or private post-secondary institutions or job training institutes in B.C., other Canadian provinces or other countries.