

MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND  
LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT

BRITISH COLUMBIA INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENT SURVEY REPORT  
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Douglas College	University of British Columbia
Emily Carr University of Art and Design	University of Northern British Columbia
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	University of the Fraser Valley
Langara College	University of Victoria
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	Vancouver Community College
North Island College	Vancouver Island University
Northern Lights College	

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## INTRODUCTION

This report presents the overall results from a web survey conducted by BC Stats, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD), and the International Student Survey Steering Committee. The web survey was conducted from October to December 2008. The survey targeted international post-secondary students in B.C. The purpose of the International Student Survey (ISS) was to obtain direct feedback from international students about their learning and living experiences in B.C. The survey was also constructed to indicate whether ALMD's initiatives with educational institutions and government partners benefited international students.

Data from the survey will help B.C. public post-secondary institutions and ALMD understand and enhance the study and adjustment experiences of international students.

This report includes the following sections:

- **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Provides the key findings of the survey.
- **SURVEY METHODOLOGY:** Describes the design of the survey, how the survey was administered, and how the results were reported.
- **FINDINGS:** Provides a full explanation of overall results.
- **CONCLUSION:** Provides the main results of the survey.
- **APPENDIX:** Includes a copy of the survey postcard, web survey invitation, and web survey questionnaire.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In fall 2008, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD) collaborated with BC Stats to conduct a web-based International Student Survey. This was the first time that the Government of British Columbia had surveyed so many international students studying in public post-secondary institutions. Twenty-three out of 25 public post-secondary institutions provided a cohort-data file for 18,052 international students eligible to participate in this project. The response rate was 29 per cent. The response rate showed international students were quite receptive to sharing information about their international experiences in British Columbia. This report only presents overall results and does not focus on institutional-level results. For in-depth analysis, each institution participating in the survey received a data file and open-ended responses for the students who attended the institution.

### **Student Demographics**

The results from the International Student Survey (ISS) indicate that nearly half of survey respondents (49 per cent) were from Eastern Asia. Slightly over half of survey respondents (51 per cent) were female and 64 per cent of participants were between the ages of 18 and 24 years old.

### **Student Program Characteristics**

Over ninety percent of respondents (94 per cent) were full-time students and nearly half of respondents (49 per cent) were enrolled in a Bachelors degree program. Slightly over half of respondents (53 per cent) attended 11 to 20 classroom and laboratory hours per week.

Reasons for studying abroad cited by respondents included experiencing life in a foreign country (39 per cent), Canada having better programs for their major than their home country (23 per cent), and wanting to learn English (22 per cent).

### **Student Institution Knowledge and Preferences**

The top three important factors influencing students to study in B.C. were the quality of education, safety and security, and the reputation of the institution. The top three sources for learning about B.C. post-secondary studies and institutions were friends (38 per cent), websites of B.C. post-secondary institutions (27 per cent), and agents (24 per cent).

### **Student Experiences**

When asked to select words that described their experience completing the paperwork required to enter Canada the top two words chosen had a negative connotation – time-consuming (48 per cent) and complicated (36 per cent). Positive words were chosen less frequently, with those most often being selected including clear (25 per cent) and easy (23 per cent).

Finding information about admission deadlines was not very difficult or not at all difficult for 63 per cent of survey respondents, while over half said this was the case for

finding information about English admission requirements, program availability, program and course information, and visa requirements. Nevertheless, just 3 in 10 students said they didn't experience any difficulty finding information about financial assistance and scholarships, and 4 in 10 had no difficulty with finding information about a place to live, and about institutional student 'lifestyle'.

The most helpful sources for academic questions were international students from students' own country of origin (72 per cent of respondents said this was helpful or very helpful), and institutional faculty and staff (71 per cent). However, just over half of respondents (55 per cent) indicated that academic advising or program advising was very helpful or helpful.

When asked how difficult it was to adjust to processes related to B.C. post-secondary studies as new international students, more than 6 in 10 said that was not very difficult or not at all difficult to make friends with other international students, while approximately half mentioned adjusting to living in the community (51 per cent), interacting with instructors and professors (47 per cent), and dealing with teamwork in classes (45 per cent). However, only just over one-third of students said it was not difficult to get involved in extra-curricular activities at their institution, make friends with Canadians, and adjusting to academic expectations.

Over two-thirds of survey participants (67 per cent) indicated they attended an orientation at their B.C. post-secondary institution. With slightly under one-quarter of respondents (23 per cent) saying the orientation was "very helpful" and slightly over one-quarter (28 per cent) saying it was "a little bit helpful", this may indicate that there are areas where international student orientation could be improved.

### **Student Work Experience**

Forty percent of survey respondents worked for pay or wages while studying in B.C. Respondents' top three plans after finishing their B.C. post-secondary studies were to work in B.C. (54 per cent), to return to home countries for work (33 per cent), and to engage in more post-secondary education in B.C. (32 per cent).

### **Student Satisfaction**

When asked about their satisfaction with their B.C. post-secondary institution, 69 per cent of survey participants indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied, while only 6 per cent expressed dissatisfaction. Two-thirds (66 per cent) of survey respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their B.C. post-secondary program, with 9 per cent indicating they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Survey respondents were asked how satisfied they were with topics related to post-secondary studies. The majority (71 per cent) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of education, their teachers (70 per cent), and student services (68 per cent). Respondents indicated lower satisfaction with the recreational facilities on-campus (53 per cent), and their experiences obtaining a study permit (58 per cent).

Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents (63 per cent) indicated that they were likely or very likely to recommend their post-secondary institution to others, while 17 per cent said they were unlikely or very unlikely to recommend their institution.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### Survey Design

The ISS was designed to assist B.C. public post-secondary institutions and ALMD to understand and enhance the study and adjustment experiences of international students.

The steering committee for this ISS was struck in March of 2008. The committee consisted of representatives from ALMD and from the B.C. public post-secondary institutions. The ISS steering committee had the responsibility for oversight of the survey, including the development of the survey instrument. BC Stats was responsible for all project deliverables related to the web survey and for reporting the survey results. Funding for the ISS project came from ALMD.

The survey was also constructed to indicate whether ALMD's initiatives with educational institutions and government partners benefited international students. The survey results could also indicate whether ALMD's initiatives influenced international students to study and live in B.C. In so doing, ALMD and the B.C. public post-secondary institutions could understand and learn additional ways to effectively support international students and to attract more international students to study and live in B.C.

The ISS was structured with questions relating to:

- ❖ **Preparedness:** Whether students received adequate information to prepare for their B.C. educational experience.
- ❖ **Marketing:** Factors which international students considered when selecting Canada, B.C., and the institution as a study destination.
- ❖ **Engagement:** Use of resources and services to make international students feel connected to their institution and part of the community.
- ❖ **Satisfaction:** With the institution's programs and quality of instruction.
- ❖ **Work Experience:** Whether students participated in the Off-Campus Work Permit Program, Post-Graduate Work Permit Program, or were aware of resources that are available to help them transition from school to work in Canada.

## Survey Cohort

The ISS survey cohort consisted of international students who held a valid study permit and were enrolled in academic, graduate or English as Second Language (ESL), diploma or certificate programs (full-time or part-time) at a B.C. public post-secondary institution in the fall of 2008. In order to participate in the survey, students needed to be located in B.C. at the time of the survey. The study did not include off-shore international students or exchange students.

There were 23 B.C. public post-secondary institutions that participated in this project. The **ISS post-secondary institution table** lists the participating institutions in alphabetical order. The table includes the number of international students from each institution who were eligible for the survey and the number of students who responded to the survey.

### ISS post-secondary institution

Institution	Eligible for Survey*	Number of Respondents	Response Rate
British Columbia Institute of Technology	901	239	27%
Camosun College	515	115	22%
Capilano University	569	155	27%
College of New Caledonia	129	36	28%
College of the Rockies	110	46	42%
Douglas College	551	137	25%
Emily Carr University of Art and Design	218	106	49%
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	575	156	27%
Langara College	669	168	25%
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	2		
North Island College	56	28	50%
Northern Lights College	53	13	25%
Okanagan College	438	103	24%
Royal Roads University	86	20	23%
Selkirk College	148	38	26%
Simon Fraser University	2,867	822	29%
Thompson Rivers University	1,050	264	25%
University of British Columbia	5,442	1,466	27%
University of Northern British Columbia	223	70	31%
University of the Fraser Valley	551	186	34%
University of Victoria	1,842	714	39%
Vancouver Community College	265	65	25%
Vancouver Island University	792	232	29%
	<b>18,052</b>	<b>5,179</b>	<b>29%</b>

\*132 international students were removed from the original sample frame because of invalid email addresses or duplicate records.

## Survey Response Rate

The ISS web survey was conducted from October 10, 2008 to December 10, 2008. The **Survey response table** shows that of the 18,052 international students identified as eligible from the survey cohort, 5,179 completed the web survey. This translates into a response rate of 29 per cent.

Two survey completion reminder emails were sent to all eligible students. Six per cent of eligible students started the survey but did not complete it. (See Appendix 2 for more information on the characteristics of the international student cohort.)

**Survey response table**

Survey responses	Count	Percentage
Completed surveys	5,179	29%
Partial completes	1,034	6%
Visited the first page only	398	2%
Invitation email bounced back	494	3%
Non-response	10,947	61%
<b>Total eligible students</b>	<b>18,052</b>	<b>100%</b>

## FINDINGS

### 1. Student Demographics

This section of the findings provides descriptions and an overview of survey respondent demographics.

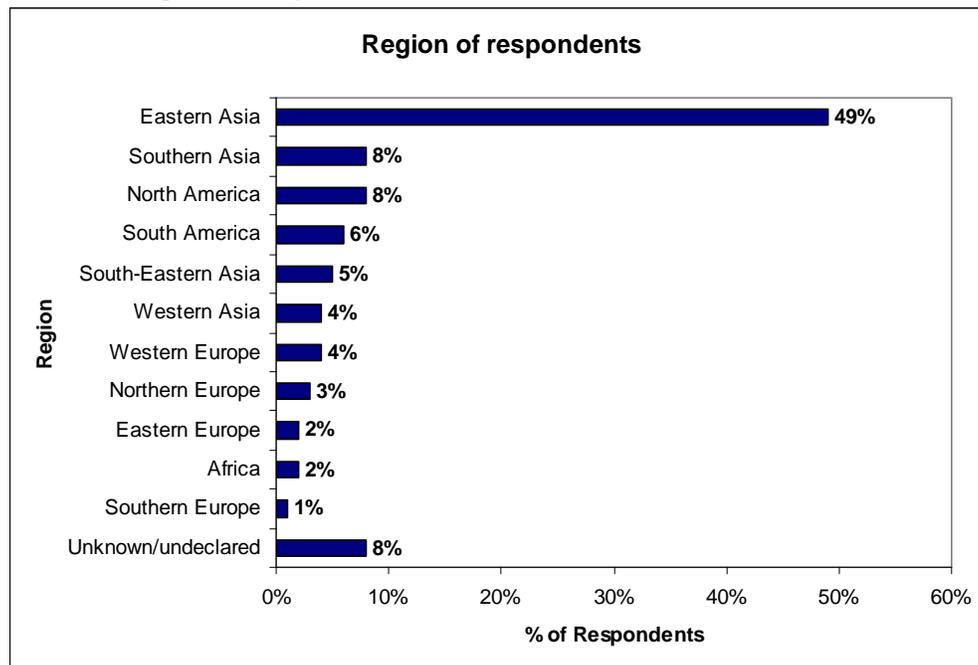
#### Gender of Respondents

The gender of survey respondents was proportionally represented. That is, 51 per cent of survey respondents were female and 49 per cent of respondents were male. The overall cohort was composed of 48 per cent females and 52 per cent of males.

#### Region of Origin of Respondents

The regions of origin of students are displayed in **Chart 1.0**. A large percentage of survey respondents were from Eastern Asia (49 per cent). This figure was followed by Southern Asia (8 per cent), North America (8 per cent), and South America (6 per cent).

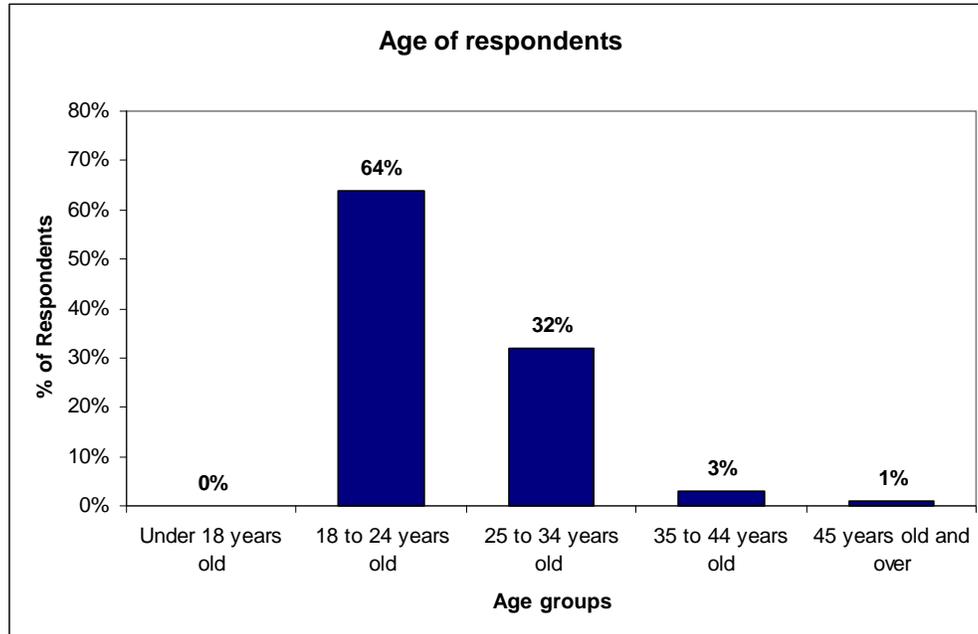
**Chart 1.0-Region of respondents**



## Age

The age distribution is displayed in **Chart 1.1**. The majority of survey respondents (64 per cent) indicated that they were between 18 and 24 years of age. Nearly one-third of survey participants (32 per cent) were between the ages of 25 and 34. Less than 5 per cent of survey respondents indicated that they were over the age of 35 or under the age of 18.

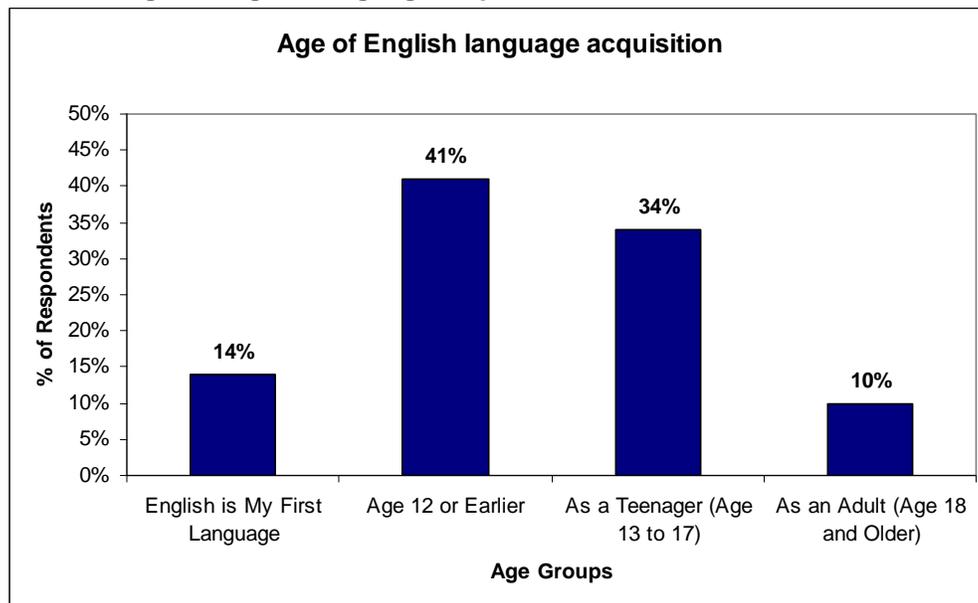
**Chart 1.1-Age of respondents**



## Age of English Language Acquisition

**Chart 1.2** shows when international students began learning English. Fifty-five per cent of the students surveyed said they acquired English when they were aged 12 or younger, including 14 per cent who indicated English was their first language. This was followed by 34 per cent of respondents indicating that they began to learn English as teenagers (13 to 17 years of age). Only 10 per cent of participants responded that they began acquiring the English language as adults.

**Chart 1.2-Age of English language acquisition**

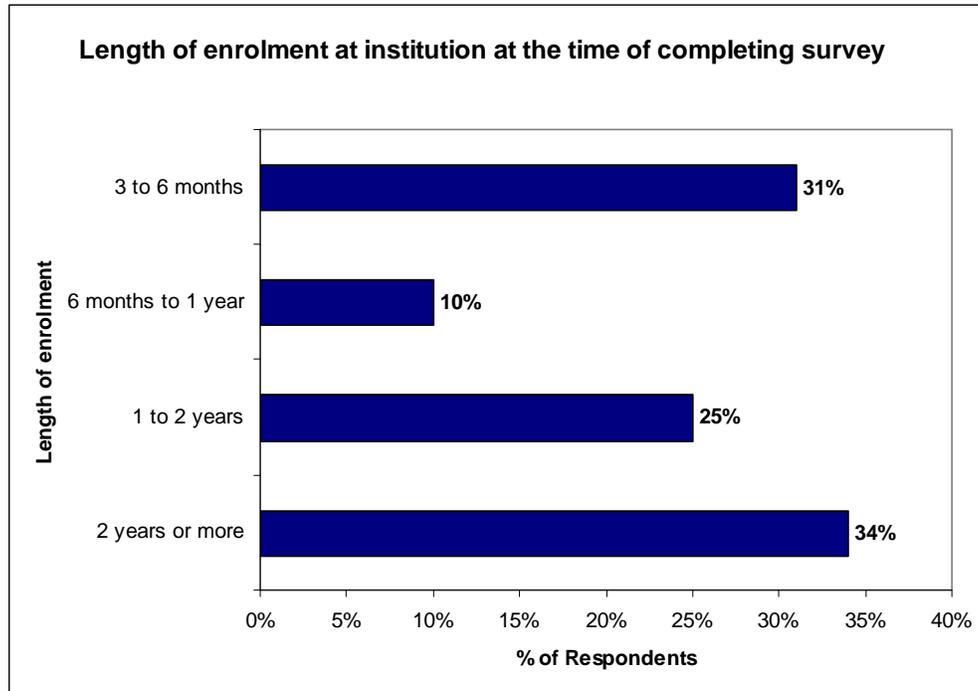


\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

## Length of Enrolment at Institution

**Chart 1.3** shows the survey participants' length of enrolment in post-secondary institutions in British Columbia at the time they completed the International Student Survey. Nearly 6 in 10 (59 per cent) participants had been enrolled for one or more years, while just under one-third of participants (31 per cent) had been enrolled for three to six months.

**Chart 1.3**-Length of enrolment at institution at the time of completing survey



## Current Status in Canada

The current status of students in Canada is shown in **Table 1.4**. The majority of respondents (96 per cent) indicated that they were Canada study permit holders. This category was followed by work permit holder (11 per cent).

**Table 1.4-Current status in Canada**

<b>Current status in Canada</b>	<b>% of Respondents*</b>
<b>Canada study permit holder</b>	96%
<b>Work permit holder</b>	11%
<b>Diplomatic visa holder</b>	1%
<b>Permanent resident</b>	1%
<b>Travelling/visitor's visa (less than 6 months)</b>	1%
<b>None/did not stay long enough to require one</b>	1%
<b>Other status</b>	1%

\*5,178 participants responded to this multiple choice question about their current status in Canada. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 5,728 responses in total.

## 2. Student Program Characteristics

This section describes survey respondents' program characteristics, including their program registration status, study level, course load, classroom and laboratory hours, type of program, and area of study.

### Registration Status

As would be expected, nearly all survey respondents (99 per cent) indicated that they were registered at the institution.

Students were asked to confirm their program of study and the vast majority (97 per cent) of survey respondents indicated that their program was correct. Only 3 per cent of survey respondents indicated that their program of study differed from what the institution had recorded. This may indicate that participants had switched programs or recently enrolled in a different program.

### Course Load

**Table 2.0** displays the course load of survey respondents. Ninety-four per cent of participants indicated they were full-time students, while six per cent of respondents indicated they were part-time students.

**Table 2.0-Course load**

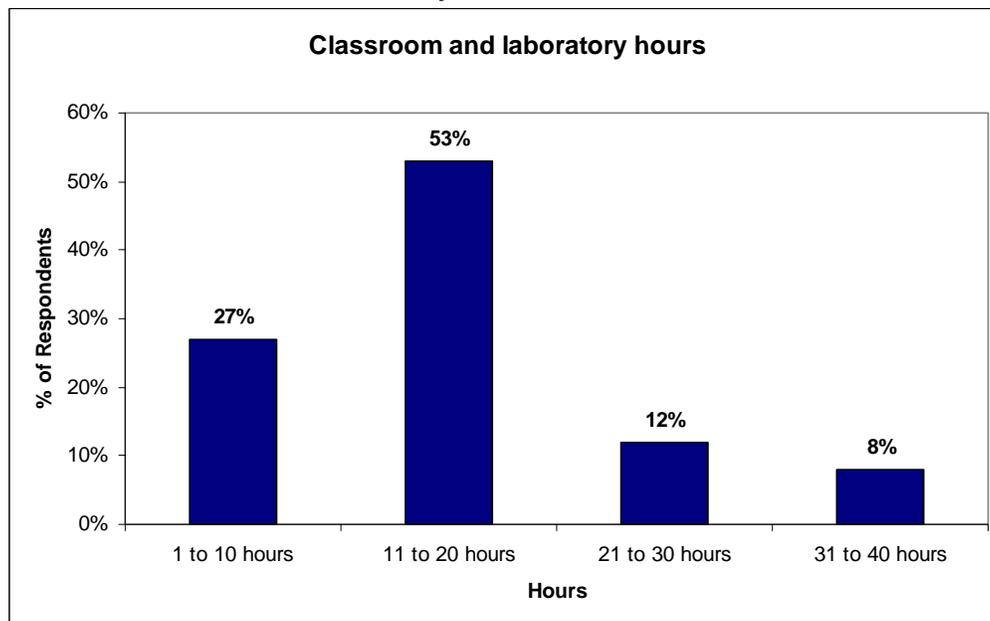
Course load	% of Respondents
Full-time	94%
Part-time	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*5,000 participants responded to this question, while 179 said they were unsure if they were a full- or part-time student.

## Classroom and Laboratory Hours

As shown in **Chart 2.1**, over half of survey respondents (53 per cent) indicated that they were scheduled to attend 11 to 20 hours of classroom and laboratory hours per week. Slightly over one-quarter of participants (27 per cent) responded that they attended 1 to 10 hours of classroom and laboratory hours. When looking at classroom and laboratory hours it is essential to remember that full-time and part-time students will have varying numbers of hours required, more importantly the hours will vary substantially by type of program (Bachelors degree, Masters, Diploma or Certificate, etc.) and some areas of study have considerably longer laboratory hours.

**Chart 2.1-Classroom and laboratory hours**



\*4,337 participants responded to this question, while 802 indicated that they did not know how many classroom and laboratory hours they were scheduled to attend each week.

## Type of Program of Study

**Table 2.2** shows that almost half of survey respondents were enrolled in a Bachelor degree program (49 per cent). This was followed by enrolment in a graduate degree program (27 per cent) and a diploma or certificate program (17 per cent).

**Table 2.2-Type of program of study**

Type of program of study	% of Respondents*	Count of Respondents
<b>Bachelors degree</b>	49%	2,520
<b>Masters or doctorate degree</b>	27%	1,412
<b>Diploma or certificate</b>	17%	897
<b>English language training/ English as a Second Language</b>	12%	611
<b>University transfer program/Associate degree</b>	2%	78
<b>Trades or apprentice</b>	<1%	27
<b>Other program of study</b>	2%	99

\*5,179 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 5,644 responses in total.

## Area of Study

**Table 2.3** shows that the area of study for 35 per cent of survey respondents was in the Arts and Sciences, while 20 per cent were studying business and management. This was followed by engineering, electrical, and electronics (9 per cent) and developmental education (7 per cent). Developmental programs include English as a Second Language training and Adult Basic Education or upgrading courses.

**Table 2.3-Area of study**

Area of study	% of Respondents*
Arts and sciences	35%
Business and management	20%
Engineering, electrical, and electronics	9%
Developmental education	7%
Computer and information services	6%
Recreation, tourism, hospitality, and service	3%
Visual, performing, and fine arts	3%
Agriculture, natural resources and science technologies	2%
Education and library science	2%
Health related (including nursing)	2%
Communications	1%
Legal and social	1%
Unknown/undeclared	8%

\*Categories that round to 0 per cent are not reported.

### 3. Student Institution Knowledge and Preferences

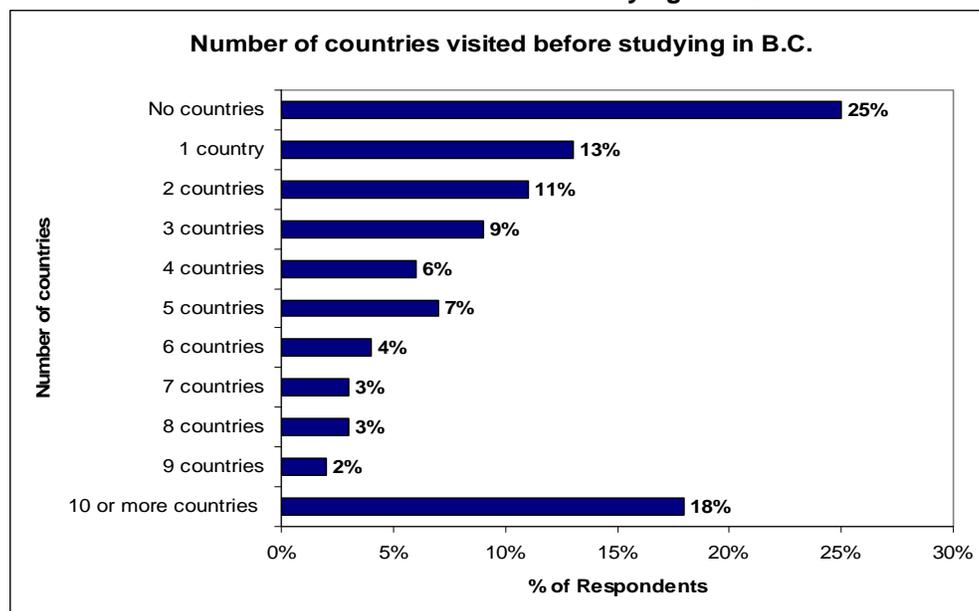
This section describes students' background knowledge about B.C. and B.C. institutions, how students acquired knowledge about institutions, reasons for choosing their particular institutions, and other institutions respondents considered attending.

#### International Experience

Students were asked whether they had visited B.C. before deciding to study here. The majority of respondents (74 per cent) indicated that they had not visited B.C. prior to studying in B.C.

Students were asked how many countries (outside of their country of birth) they had traveled to before beginning their studies in B.C. **Chart 3.0** shows that one-quarter of respondents (25 per cent) indicated they had not traveled to any countries prior to starting their studies in B.C. This was followed by having traveled to one country (13 per cent) and two countries (11 per cent).

**Chart 3.0-Number of countries visited before studying in B.C.**



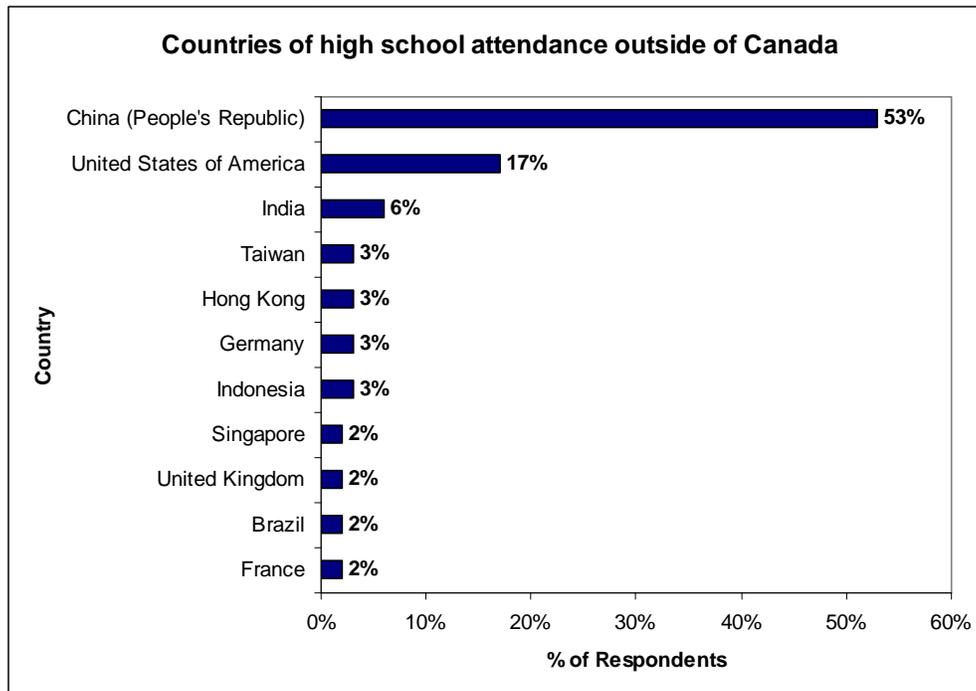
\*4,977 participants responded to this question.

### Country of High School Attendance

Respondents were asked whether they had attended high school in Canada. In total 11 per cent said yes – five per cent of respondents indicated they attended high school in B.C. and 6 per cent attended high school in another Canadian province.

As shown in **Chart 3.1** below, over half of the respondents (53 per cent) who attended high school outside of Canada indicated they went to high school in China. Seventeen per cent of respondents went to high school in the USA and 6 per cent in India.

**Chart 3.1-Countries of high school attendance outside of Canada**



\*2,880 participants responded to this question. Categories with 1 per cent of responses or less are included in Appendix 4.

It is important to note that 38 per cent of respondents who indicated they attended high school outside of Canada also indicated they did not know where they attended high school. In future surveys, a definition of “high school” and its equivalent in various countries may assist students in answering the question.

### Reasons for Studying Abroad and in B.C.

Students were asked to indicate why they chose to study abroad. **Table 3.2** shows that over one-third of respondents (39 per cent) wanted to experience life in a foreign country. Nearly one-quarter (23 per cent) of respondents noted that Canada has better programs for their major than their home country. Students also indicated that they wanted to learn English (22 per cent).

**Table 3.2-Reasons for studying abroad**

Reasons for studying abroad	% of Respondents*
Wanted to experience life in a foreign country	39%
Canada has better programs for my major than my home country	23%
Wanted to learn English	22%
Schools in my home country are not very good	12%
Better work opportunities with a degree from Canada	11%
Reputation of specific school	7%
Standard of living is better in Canada	6%
To be independent/learn how to be independent	6%
Better/brighter future	4%
Family/friends live in Canada	3%
Family wanted me to	3%
Hard to get admitted to a school in my home country	1%
Other reason	8%

\*4,678 participants provided a total of 6,737 comments to this multiple response question.

Survey respondents were asked how important particular factors were in deciding to study specifically in B.C. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories on a 5-point scale where 5 was “Very Important” and 1 was “Not at all Important” (see **Table 3.3**). Ninety per cent of students rated the quality of education as an important or very important factor for deciding to study in B.C. The next most important factors were safety and security (73 per cent) and the reputation of the institution (72 per cent).

The desire to live in Canada was rated as being less important than the other factors for students. That is, just under half of respondents rated the desire to live in Canada as being important or very important as a deciding factor to study in B.C.

**Table 3.3-Factors influencing students to study in B.C.**

<b>Factors that influence students to study in B.C.*</b>	<b>% of Respondents who said Important or Very Important</b>	<b>Count of Respondents who said Important or Very Important</b>
<b>Quality of education</b>	90%	4,658
<b>Safety and security</b>	73%	3,752
<b>Reputation of institution</b>	72%	3,715
<b>Costs (tuition and living)</b>	68%	3,541
<b>Friendly people</b>	68%	3,522
<b>Future employment goal</b>	63%	3,274
<b>Multicultural environment</b>	55%	2,865
<b>Beautiful landscape</b>	54%	2,804
<b>Desire to live in Canada</b>	48%	2,488

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

### Acquisition of Knowledge about B.C. Post-Secondary Studies

Students were asked how they learned about post-secondary studies in B.C. Nearly 4 in 10 survey respondents indicated they learned about B.C. post-secondary studies from friends. This was followed by B.C. post-secondary institution websites (27 per cent), agents (24 per cent), school counsellors or teachers in one's home country (20 per cent), and from family members (20 per cent). **Table 3.4** displays how students learned about B.C. post-secondary studies.

**Table 3.4-Sources of information for B.C. post-secondary studies**

Sources of information for B.C. post-secondary studies	% of Respondents*
Friends	38%
Websites of post-secondary institutions in B.C.	27%
Agent	24%
School counsellor or teacher in my home country	20%
Family	20%
Someone from my institution	17%
Canadian government website	6%
Person at a Canadian education centre in my home country	5%
Other internet sites	2%
LearnLiveBC website	2%
Workshops or school fairs in my home country	1%
Google website	1%
Went to high school in Canada	1%
Canadian education websites	1%
Staff from a B.C. school	1%
Other source (including visited Canada and recruiters)	3%

\*5,167 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 8,733 responses in total.

In addition to asking students how they learned about B.C. post-secondary studies in general, survey respondents were asked where they heard about their current B.C. institution. Similar to the high proportion of responses for learning about B.C. post-secondary studies through friends, **Table 3.5** shows that 41 per cent of respondents reported they heard about their current B.C. institution from friends. This indicates that word-of-mouth and personal communication are very important when promoting B.C. post-secondary studies and institutions.

**Table 3.5-Sources for hearing about current B.C. institution**

Sources for hearing about current B.C. institution	% of Respondents*
Friends	41%
Websites of post-secondary institutions in B.C.	25%
Agent	20%
School counsellor or teacher in my home country	20%
Someone from my institution	18%
Family	17%
Canadian Government website	5%
Person at a Canadian education centre in my home country	4%
Other internet website	2%
LearnLiveBC website	1%
Workshops or school fairs in my home country	1%
Google website	1%
Staff from a B.C. school	1%
Canadian education websites	1%
Went to high school in Canada	1%
Other source (including visited Canada and recruiters)	3%

\*5,169 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 8,310 responses in total.

## Preparation for B.C. Post-Secondary Studies

Students were asked how useful specific sources of information were in helping to prepare for studies in B.C. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories using a 5-point scale where 5 was “Very Useful” and 1 was “Not at all Useful”. Seventy-two per cent of students rated the institution website as a useful or very useful information source. The following useful information sources include direct communication from institutions (67 per cent), talking with students and alumni from institutions (63 per cent), and friends or acquaintances (62 per cent). **Table 3.6** summarizes the respondents’ ratings of information sources.

**Table 3.6-Information sources to help students prepare to study in B.C.**

Information sources*	% of Respondents who said Useful or Very Useful	% of Respondents who said Does Not Apply
<b>Institution website</b>	72%	5%
<b>Direct communications from institution (email, letter, fax, etc.)</b>	67%	13%
<b>Talking with students/alumni from institution</b>	63%	28%
<b>Friends or acquaintances</b>	62%	18%
<b>Family</b>	53%	24%
<b>Institutional recruiter or education agent</b>	52%	33%
<b>Educational/college fair</b>	52%	40%
<b>Brochures/pamphlets about institution</b>	49%	24%
<b>School counsellor or teacher in home country</b>	47%	37%
<b>Canadian education centre in home country</b>	34%	53%
<b>Advertisements in magazines, TV, radio, or newspaper</b>	30%	43%

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

## Post-Secondary Institution Preferences

Survey respondents were asked what post-secondary institutions they applied to. Nearly half of respondents (48 per cent) indicated that they *only* applied to their current institution. Survey respondents were asked if they applied to additional institutions. **Table 3.7** displays the results for respondents who applied to additional institutions. Forty-three per cent of respondents indicated they applied to the University of British Columbia, 30 per cent to Simon Fraser University, and 23 per cent to the University of Victoria. It is interesting to note that forty per cent of respondents indicated that they only applied to one other institution (n= 1,070).

**Table 3.7-Post-secondary institutions respondents applied to**

Post-secondary institutions respondents applied to	% of Respondents*	Count of Respondents
University of British Columbia	43%	1,144
Simon Fraser University	30%	813
University of Victoria	23%	614
Langara College	8%	216
British Columbia Institute of Technology	6%	170
Camosun College	6%	160
Douglas College	5%	138
Other US University/college	5%	137
University of Toronto	5%	125
Capilano University	4%	114
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	4%	112
Vancouver Island University	4%	97
Thompson Rivers University	4%	95
University of the Fraser Valley	3%	85
Vancouver Community College	3%	85
Other institutions	10%	278

\*2,676 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 5,080 responses in total. Categories with 2 per cent of responses or less are reported in Appendix 5.

Students who applied to more than one institution were asked if their current institution was their first choice. Over half of these respondents (58 per cent) reported that their current B.C. institution was their first choice.

Out of the respondents who indicated that their current institution was *not* their first choice, 35 per cent reported that their first choice was the University of British Columbia. This was followed by Simon Fraser University (9 per cent), the University of Victoria (7 per cent), and University of Toronto (4 per cent). **Table 3.8** shows the results for respondents who indicated that their current institution was not their first choice.

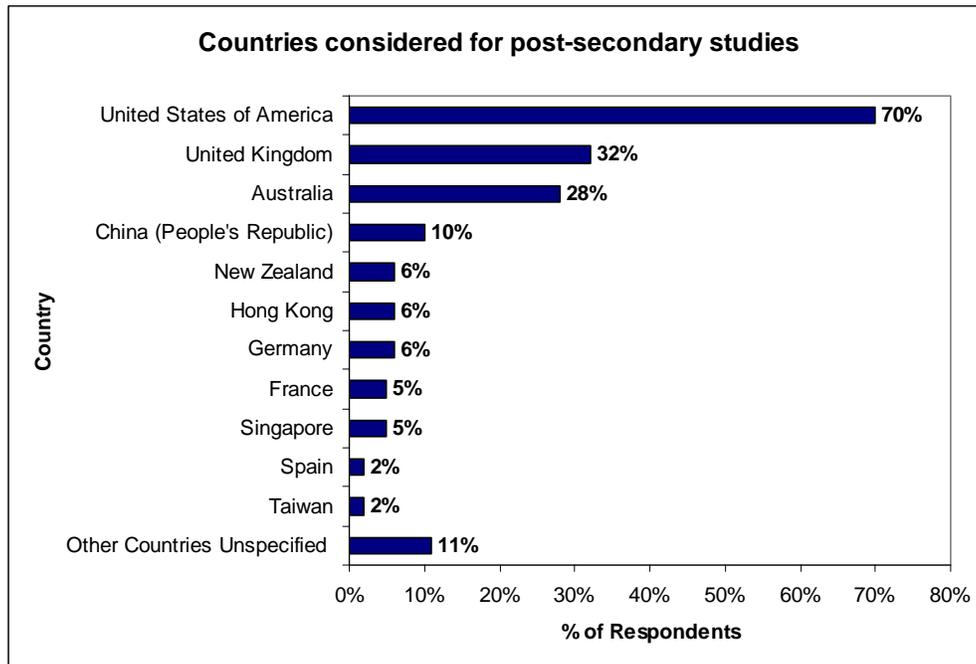
**Table 3.8-First choice of institution other than current institution**

<b>First choice of institution other than current Institution</b>	<b>% of Respondents*</b>	<b>Count of Respondents</b>
<b>University of British Columbia</b>	35%	392
<b>Simon Fraser University</b>	9%	102
<b>University of Victoria</b>	7%	78
<b>University of Toronto</b>	4%	46
<b>Langara College</b>	2%	27
<b>University of California</b>	2%	26
<b>Douglas College</b>	2%	22
<b>British Columbia Institute of Technology</b>	2%	21
<b>McGill University</b>	2%	19
<b>Camosun College</b>	2%	18
<b>Vancouver Community College</b>	2%	17
<b>Other institutions</b>	31%	348

\*1,116 participants responded to this question.

Students were asked what other countries they considered for their post-secondary studies. (Note that students were not asked what other countries they applied to.) Nineteen per cent of respondents indicated that they had only considered Canada. **Chart 3.9** displays the results for respondents who considered additional countries. Of those who had considered additional countries, 42 per cent chose only one additional country.

**Chart 3.9-Countries considered for post-secondary studies**



\*4,227 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 7,978 responses in total. Categories with 1 per cent or less include Italy, India, Ireland, Brazil, South Africa, Indonesia, and Russia.

Canada was the first choice for studies for more than two thirds (69 per cent) of respondents who indicated that Canada was *not* the only country of consideration for studies.

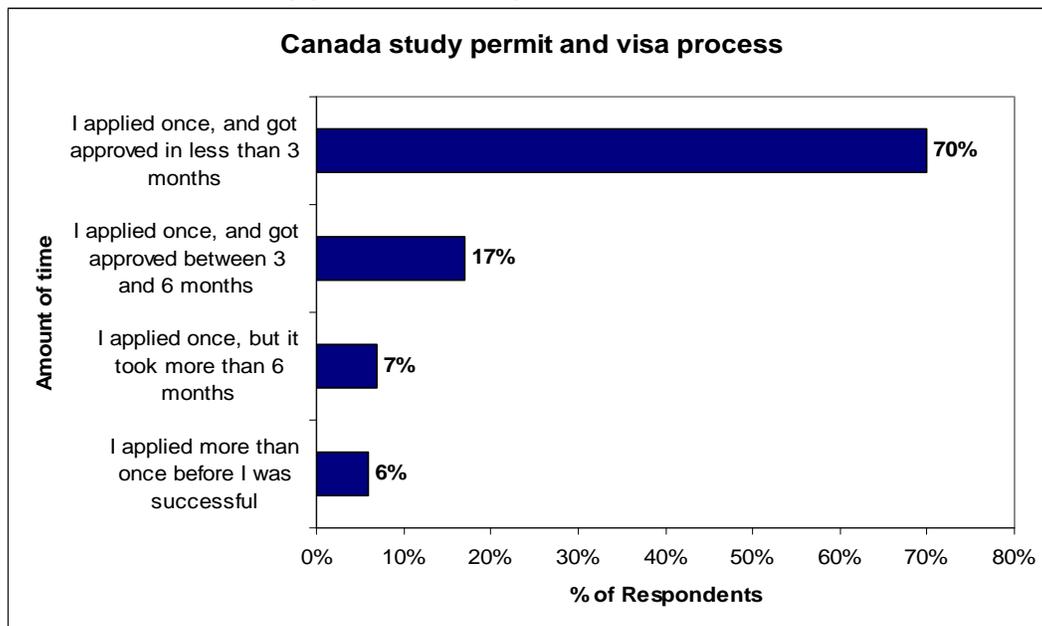
## 4. Student Experiences

This section highlights international students' experiences while attending public B.C. post-secondary institutions. Topics covered include the Canada study permit/visa process, finding post-secondary information, orientation experiences, and living accommodations.

### Canada Study Permit and Visa Process

Survey participants were asked to share their experiences with the Canada study permit or visa process (immigration) in their home country. **Chart 4.0** shows that 70 per cent of international students reported that they applied one time and were approved in less than three months. Only 6 per cent of respondents indicated that they applied more than once before their study permit or visa was successful.

**Chart 4.0- Canada study permit and visa process**



\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

Survey respondents were asked to select words that described their experience completing the paperwork required to enter Canada. The top two responses were time-consuming (48 per cent) and complicated (36 per cent). **Table 4.1** shows that one-quarter of respondents indicated that the paperwork process to enter Canada was clear, while 23 per cent of survey participants responded that the paperwork process was confusing. Areas for improvement include making the paperwork process less time-consuming, complicated, and confusing for international students.

**Table 4.1-Words associated with the paperwork process to enter Canada**

Words associated with paperwork to enter Canada	% of Respondents*
<b>Negative responses</b>	
<b>Time-consuming</b>	48%
<b>Complicated</b>	36%
<b>Confusing</b>	23%
<b>Hard</b>	17%
<b>Positive responses</b>	
<b>Clear</b>	25%
<b>Easy</b>	23%
<b>Well Explained</b>	19%
<b>Simple</b>	13%

\*5,179 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 10,572 responses in total.

### Finding Information as a Post-Secondary Student

**Table 4.2** displays the responses to questions about the difficulty of finding information about post-secondary studies. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories on a 5-point scale where 1 was “Not at all Difficult” and 5 was “Very Difficult”.

Sixty-three per cent of survey respondents indicated that finding information about admission deadlines was not very difficult or not at all difficult. Over half of survey respondents indicated that finding information about English admission requirements, program availability, program and course information, and visa requirements was not very difficult or not at all difficult. Nevertheless, just 3 in 10 students said they didn’t experience any difficulty finding information about financial assistance and scholarships, and 4 in 10 had no difficulty with finding information about a place to live, and institutional student ‘lifestyle’.

**Table 4.2-Finding information about post-secondary studies**

Aspects of post-secondary studies*	% of Respondents who said Not very Difficult or Not at all Difficult	% of Respondents who said Does Not Apply
Admission deadlines	63%	5%
English admission requirements	57%	11%
Program availability	54%	6%
Program and course information	53%	3%
Visa requirements (study permit)	51%	7%
B.C. culture	43%	17%
Institutional student 'lifestyle'	39%	15%
A place to live	38%	6%
Financial assistance and scholarships	29%	14%

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

Survey respondents were asked how helpful specific information sources were for assisting with academic questions. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories on a 5-point scale where 5 was “Very Helpful” and 1 was “Not at all Helpful”.

**Table 4.3** shows that the most helpful information sources for answering academic questions were international students from respondents’ home country (72 per cent) and institution faculty and staff (71 per cent). Not surprisingly, Canadians in the community and students’ homestay family were rated as being the least helpful in answering academic questions. Both categories also had the highest frequencies for being not-applicable to students when they sought help with academic questions.

**Table 4.3-Information sources for academic questions**

<b>Information sources for academic questions*</b>	<b>% of Respondents who said Helpful or Very Helpful</b>	<b>% of Respondents who said Does Not Apply</b>
<b>International students from my own country</b>	72%	18%
<b>Institutional faculty and staff</b>	71%	4%
<b>Other international students</b>	55%	8%
<b>Academic advising or program advising</b>	55%	16%
<b>Canadian classmates</b>	49%	10%
<b>My homestay family</b>	42%	53%
<b>Canadians in the community</b>	36%	25%

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

Survey respondents were asked how helpful specific information sources were for assisting with personal questions. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories on 5-point scale where 5 was “Very Helpful” and 1 was “Not at all Helpful”. **Table 4.4** shows that 76 per cent of students indicated that international students from respondents’ home country were helpful or very helpful in assisting with personal questions. This was followed by respondents’ homestay families (55 per cent) and other international students (51 per cent). Counselling professionals, and faculty and staff at their institution were only helpful or very helpful for slightly more than 4 in 10 students.

**Table 4.4-Information sources for personal questions**

Information sources for personal questions*	% of Respondents who said Helpful or Very Helpful	% of Respondents who said Does Not Apply
International students from my own country	76%	16%
My homestay family	55%	51%
Other international students	51%	12%
Counselling professionals at my institution	44%	32%
Institutional faculty and staff	44%	18%
Canadian classmates	39%	17%
Canadians in the community	38%	23%

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

### Adjustment to B.C. Post-Secondary Studies

Survey respondents were asked how difficult it was to adjust to processes related to B.C. post-secondary studies as new international students. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories on a 5-point scale where 5 was “Not at all Difficult” and 1 was “Very Difficult”. **Table 4.5** shows that 62 per cent of respondents indicated that it was not very difficult or not at all difficult to make friends with other international students. This was followed by adjusting to living in the community (51 per cent), interacting with instructors and professors (47 per cent), and dealing with teamwork in classes (45 per cent). However, only just over one-third of students said it was not difficult to get involved in extra-curricular activities at their institution, make friends with Canadians, and adjust to academic expectations.

**Table 4.5-Adjustment to B.C. post-secondary studies**

<b>Adjustment to B.C. post-secondary studies</b>	<b>% of Respondents who said Not Very Difficult or Not at all Difficult</b>	<b>Count of Respondents who said Not Very Difficult or Not at all Difficult</b>
<b>Making friends with other international students</b>	62%	3,192
<b>Living in the community</b>	51%	2,631
<b>Interacting with instructors &amp; professors</b>	47%	2,450
<b>Dealing with teamwork in classes</b>	45%	2,307
<b>Different teaching/learning styles</b>	43%	2,233
<b>Academic expectations</b>	37%	1,933
<b>Making friends with Canadians</b>	37%	1,893
<b>Getting involved in extra curricular activities at the institution</b>	35%	1,788

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

Respondents were asked what services or programs helped them adjust to their B.C. post-secondary studies and communities. **Table 4.6** shows the results for the services and programs. The top service or program contributing to student adjustment was the international education/international studies office (19 per cent). This was followed by on-campus students groups/clubs/organizations (17 per cent) and advice from students/friends (16 per cent). As well, 8 per cent indicated they didn't need or use any of these services.

**Table 4.6-Services or programs that helped students adjust to studies and communities**

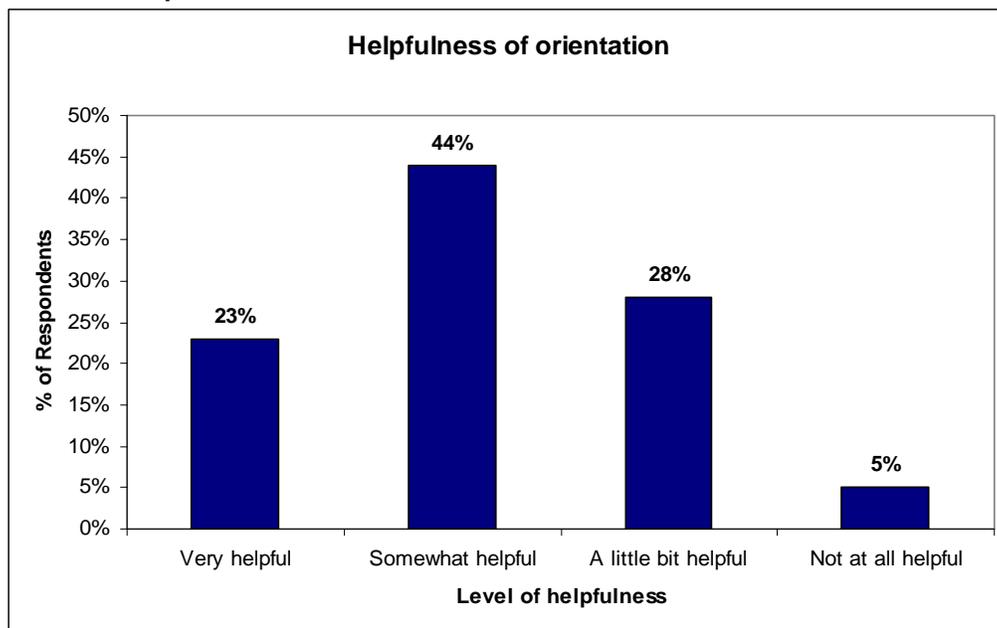
<b>Services or programs that helped students adjust to studies and communities</b>	<b>% of Respondents*</b>
<b>International education/international student office</b>	19%
<b>On-campus student groups/clubs/organizations</b>	17%
<b>Advice from students/friends</b>	16%
<b>Counselling</b>	15%
<b>Orientation</b>	14%
<b>Advice from teachers/tutors</b>	11%
<b>English as a Second Language (ESL) program</b>	8%
<b>On-campus workshops</b>	7%
<b>Homestay program</b>	5%
<b>Local church/religious group</b>	5%
<b>Writing centre</b>	4%
<b>School did a poor job helping me adjust</b>	3%
<b>None/didn't need/use help services</b>	8%
<b>Other services and programs</b>	13%

\*2,227 participants provided a total of 3,272 comments to this multiple response question.

## Student Orientation

Slightly over two-thirds of survey respondents (67 per cent) indicated that they had attended an orientation at their B.C. post-secondary institution. **Chart 4.7** displays the responses to the question: How helpful was the orientation that you received when you first arrived at your current institution? Only respondents who had attended an orientation were asked this question. Sixty-seven per cent of survey respondents indicated that the orientation was somewhat helpful or very helpful, while only 5 per cent of survey respondents indicated that the orientation was “not at all helpful”. With slightly under one-quarter of respondents (23 per cent) saying the orientation was “very helpful” and slightly over one-quarter (28 per cent) saying it was “a little bit helpful”, this may indicate that there are areas where international student orientation could be improved.

**Chart 4.7-Helpfulness of orientation**



\*3,107 participants responded to this question.

Students who answered that they had attended an orientation were asked if there were any additional topics that they would have liked to be included in an orientation. **Table 4.8** shows that 82 per cent of students indicated that there were no additional topics that students desired at orientation. Suggestions to improve orientation could be solicited in future international student surveys.

**Table 4.8-Desire for additional topics at orientation**

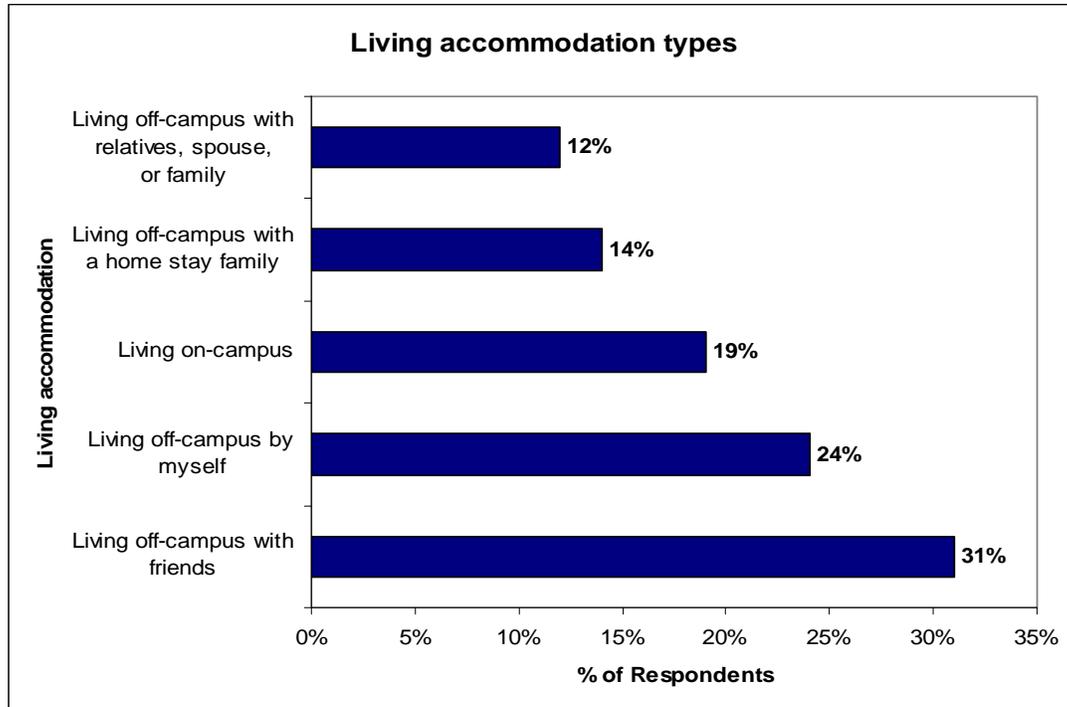
<b>Desire for additional topics at orientation</b>	<b>% of Respondents*</b>
<b>No additional topics</b>	82%
<b>Academic regulations (changing/dropping classes) and requirements</b>	4%
<b>General information on the school/city/B.C.</b>	4%
<b>Ways to fit-in/overcome culture shock</b>	3%
<b>More information on important off-campus services (transit, etc.)</b>	3%
<b>Housing information</b>	2%
<b>Ways for international students to meet/befriend Canadian students</b>	2%
<b>Information on job opportunities</b>	1%
<b>Other additional topics</b>	5%

\*3,094 participants provided a total of 3,284 comments to this multiple response question.

## Living Accommodations while Studying in B.C.

Students were asked about their living accommodations while they were studying or their accommodation when they attended their institution in B.C. **Chart 4.9** displays that nearly one-third of respondents (31 per cent) indicated that they lived off-campus with friends. This was followed by living alone off-campus (24 per cent) and living on-campus (19 per cent).

**Chart 4.9—Living accommodation types**



\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

## 5. Student Work Experience

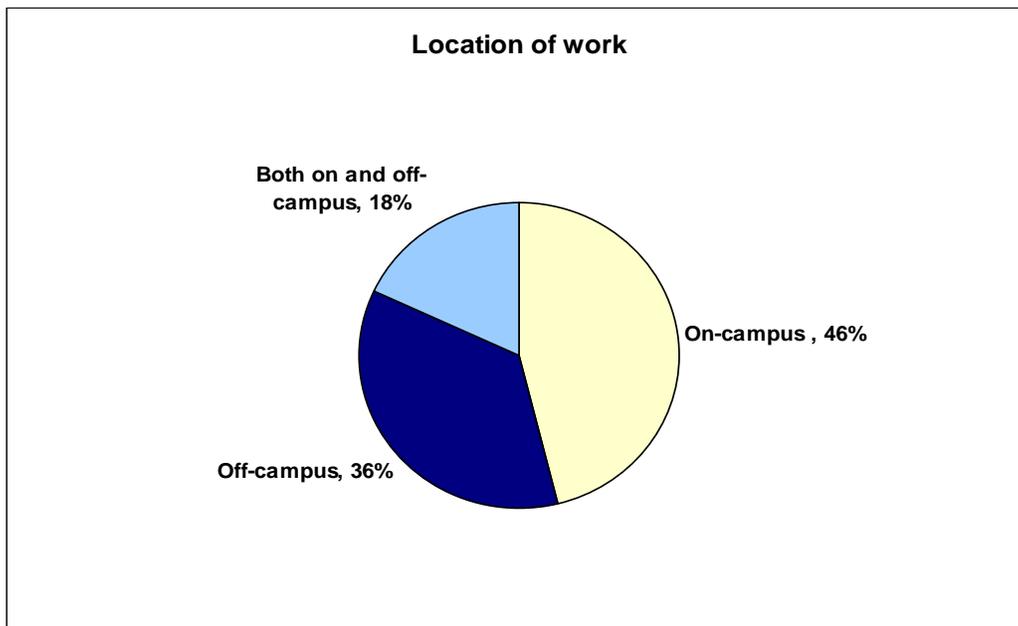
This section focuses on student work experiences and plans for future work in Canada.

### Working while Studying in B.C.

Survey respondents were asked if they had obtained a Canadian Social Insurance Number (SIN) and over half (57 per cent) of respondents said that they had.

Of the 40 per cent of respondents who said they did work for pay or wages in B.C., 46 per cent indicated that they worked on-campus, 36 per cent worked off-campus, and 18 per cent worked both on and off campus. **Chart 5.0** shows the responses for the location of work.

**Chart 5.0-Location of work**



\*2,056 participants responded to this question.

Only 14 per cent of survey respondents indicated they participated in a co-op or internship program.

Survey respondents were asked if they had obtained an off-campus work permit: 26 per cent of survey participants indicated that they had. If survey respondents had not obtained an off-campus work permit, they were asked if they planned on applying to the Off-Campus Work Permit Program and 62 per cent responded that they planned to apply for an off-campus work permit while a quarter (26 per cent) did not intend to apply. A significant group (12 per cent) had never heard of the Off-Campus Work Permit Program.

If survey respondents had obtained an off-campus work permit they were asked how they heard about the Off-Campus Work Permit Program. **Table 5.1** shows that close to two-thirds of respondents (60 per cent) indicated that they heard about the program through their institution’s international student services department. This was followed by the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website (42 per cent), international students at respondents’ current institutions (35 per cent), and classmates (24 per cent).

**Table 5.1-Sources for hearing about the Off-Campus Work Permit Program**

<b>Sources for hearing about the Off-Campus Work Permit Program</b>	<b>% of Respondents*</b>
<b>Institution’s international student services department</b>	60%
<b>Citizenship and Immigration Canada website</b>	42%
<b>International students at the institution</b>	35%
<b>Classmates</b>	24%
<b>Education agent</b>	8%
<b>Parents or family</b>	8%
<b>LearnLiveBC website</b>	2%
<b>Friends</b>	1%
<b>Co-op program</b>	1%
<b>Through the media (TV/radio/newspapers/magazines)</b>	1%
<b>Other</b>	1%

\*1,333 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 2,446 responses in total.

### Reasons for Working while Studying in B.C.

Survey respondents were asked their reasons for working while studying in B.C. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories on a 5-point scale where 5 was “Explains Very Well” and 1 was “Does not Explain”. **Table 5.2** shows that the top reason for working in B.C. was for additional spending money (75 per cent). This was followed by the work being related to respondents’ program of study (64 per cent) and to pay tuition fees (53 per cent).

**Table 5.2-Reasons for working while studying in B.C.**

Reasons for working while in B.C.*	% of Respondents who said Explains Well or Explains Very Well	% of Respondents who said Does Not Apply
<b>For additional spending money</b>	75%	6%
<b>Work was related to my program of study</b>	64%	10%
<b>To pay tuition fees</b>	53%	15%
<b>To meet people</b>	50%	11%
<b>To help with English language skills</b>	43%	29%

\* 2,056 participants responded to this question.

## Future Work and Study Plans

Survey participants were asked what best describes their plans after they leave their current post-secondary institution. **Table 5.3** shows that over half of the survey participants (54 per cent) indicated that they planned to work in B.C. after they leave their post-secondary institution. This was followed by returning to their home country to work (33 per cent), continuing with education in B.C. (32 per cent), and working in a Canadian province other than B.C. (23 per cent).

**Table 5.3-Plans after finishing post-secondary studies**

Plans after finishing post-secondary studies	% of Respondents*
Work in B.C.	54%
Return to home country for work	33%
More education in B.C.	32%
Work in another Canadian province	23%
Go to another country for further education	20%
Go to another country for work	16%
More education in another Canadian province	12%
Return to home country for further education	9%
Unsure about future plans	3%
Plans will depend on where jobs are available	1%
Stay in Canada/immigrate to Canada	1%
Other plan	1%

\*5,175 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 10,563 responses in total.

Survey participants were asked if they were planning to apply for a Canadian post-graduate work permit.<sup>1</sup> Sixty per cent indicated that they planned on applying for one and 19 per cent said that they did not. A significant group of 21 per cent reported they had never heard of the Post-Graduate Work Permit Program.

<sup>1</sup> Q39 *Are you planning to apply for a Canadian Post-Graduate Work Permit* was only asked of respondents who were enrolled in the following types of programs: bachelor degree, masters or doctorate degree, diploma or certificate or trades or apprentice programs (as defined in Q5).

Sixty per cent of survey respondents who indicated that they were planning to apply for a Canadian post-graduate work permit were also asked how they heard about the post-graduate work permit. **Table 5.4** displays the results.

In a ratio similar to the results for hearing about the Off-Campus Work Permit Program, results indicated the most frequent way that respondents heard about the Post-Graduate Work Permit Program was through the institution's international student services department (49 per cent). This was followed by the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website (41 per cent), international students at respondents' current institution (35 per cent), and classmates (27 per cent).

**Table 5.4-Sources for hearing about the Post-Graduate Work Permit Program**

Sources for hearing about the Post-Graduate Work Permit Program	% of Respondents*
Institution's international student services department	49%
Citizenship and Immigration Canada website	41%
International students at the institution	35%
Classmates	27%
Education agent	13%
Parents or family	10%
LearnLiveBC website	3%
Through the media (TV/radio/newspapers/magazines)	2%
Friends	1%
Other	1%

\*2,728 participants responded to this multiple choice question. Participants could choose more than one response; there were 4,952 responses in total.

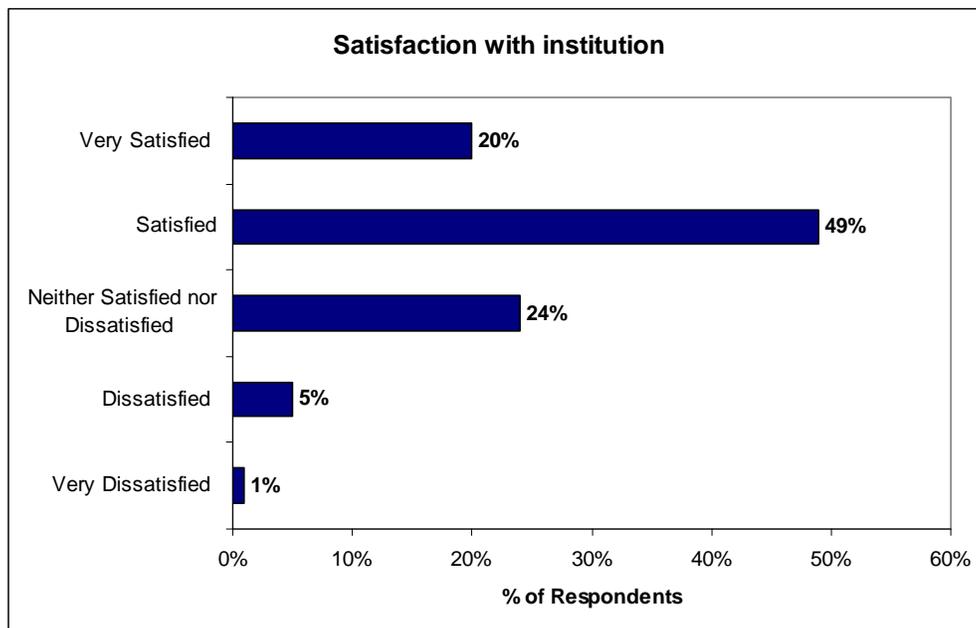
The "other" category included university newsletters and newspapers, university orientations, university websites, university departments, emails, conferences, workshops, posters, campus international houses, and work permit program sessions.

## 6. Student Satisfaction

### General Satisfaction Levels

Survey respondents were asked using a 5-point scale where 5 was “Very Satisfied and 1 was “Very Dissatisfied”, how satisfied they were with their institution. **Chart 6.0** shows that sixty-nine per cent of respondents indicated positive satisfaction scores (satisfied and very satisfied). A quarter (24 per cent) of respondents chose the middle category of the satisfaction scale. Only 6 per cent of respondents reported negative satisfaction scores (dissatisfied and very dissatisfied).

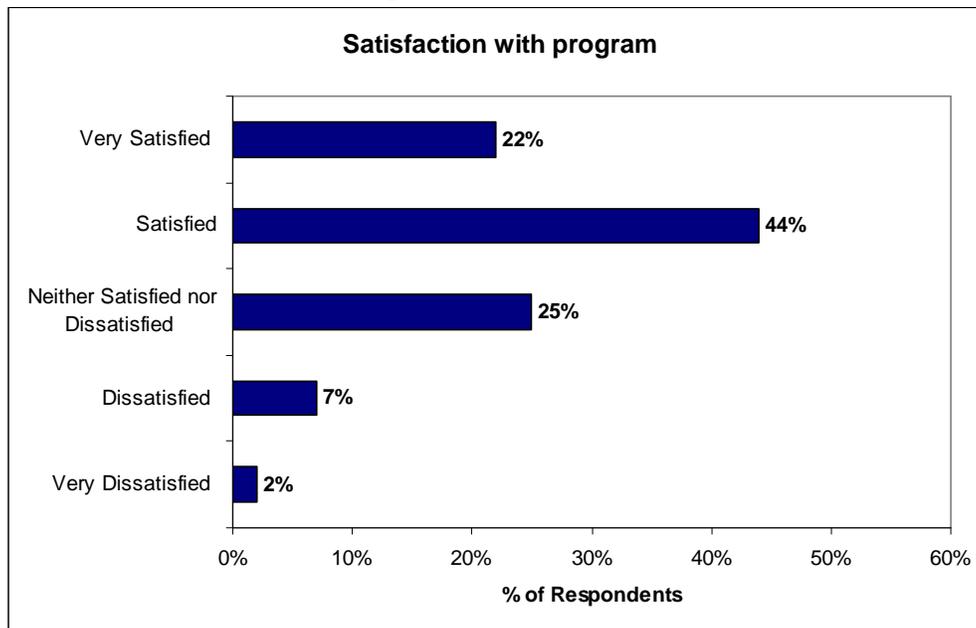
**Chart 6.0-Satisfaction with institution**



\*5,179 participants responded to this question. It is important to note that only the end-points of the 5-point scale were defined in the survey questionnaire.

Students were asked using a 5-point scale where 5 was “Very Satisfied and 1 was “Very Dissatisfied”, how satisfied they were with their program. **Chart 6.1** shows that two-thirds of respondents (66 per cent) indicated positive satisfaction scores (satisfied and very satisfied) with their program. A quarter (25 per cent) of respondents chose the middle category of the satisfaction scale. Only 9 per cent of respondents indicated negative scores (dissatisfied and very dissatisfied).

**Chart 6.1-Satisfaction with program**



\*5,179 participants responded to this question. It is important to note that only the end-points of the 5-point scale were defined in the survey questionnaire.

Survey respondents were asked how satisfied they were with aspects of their post-secondary studies. The majority of students (71 per cent) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of education. This was followed by satisfaction with their teachers (70 per cent) and student services (68 per cent). Respondents indicated lower satisfaction with the recreational facilities on-campus (53 per cent), and their experiences obtaining a study permit (58 per cent).

**Table 6.2-Satisfaction with aspects of their post-secondary studies**

<b>Aspects of their post-secondary studies</b>	<b>% of Respondents who said Satisfied or Very Satisfied</b>	<b>Count of Respondents who said Satisfied or Very Satisfied</b>
<b>The quality of education I receive</b>	71%	3,653
<b>My teachers</b>	70%	3,576
<b>Student services (library, healthcare, etc.)</b>	68%	3,472
<b>Admissions and registration at current institution</b>	67%	3,418
<b>My lifestyle in Canada</b>	66%	3,404
<b>The place where I stay (housing)</b>	66%	3,339
<b>Facilities (classrooms and equipment)</b>	65%	3,361
<b>My local social network (e.g. friends, faculty, and fellow students)</b>	65%	3,361
<b>Experience obtaining a study permit</b>	58%	2,898
<b>Recreational facilities on-campus</b>	53%	2,594

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

Survey respondents were asked how likely they were to recommend B.C., Canada, and their post-secondary institution to others. Other people may include friends, acquaintances, family members, employers, and other international students. Respondents had the option of rating each of the categories using a scale where 1 was “Very Likely” and 5 was “Very Unlikely”.

**Table 6.3** shows that 70 per cent of survey respondents indicated they were likely or very likely to recommend B.C. to other people. This was followed by 69 per cent of participants indicating that they were likely or very likely to recommend Canada. Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents (63 per cent) indicated that they were likely or very likely to recommend their post-secondary institution.

**Table 6.3-Likelihood of recommendation**

Likelihood of recommendation	% of Respondents who said Likely or Very Likely*
<b>British Columbia</b>	70%
<b>Canada</b>	69%
<b>Post-Secondary institution</b>	63%

\*5,179 participants responded to this question.

## Other comments

The final, open-ended question for the international student survey asked participants whether they had any overall/final comments. Seventeen per cent of respondents had final comments and they are categorized in **Table 6.4**.

Of the survey respondents who provided comments, 20 per cent indicated that international student tuition fees in B.C. are too expensive, 19 per cent noted they were thankful for having their opinions surveyed, and 16 per cent reported they need more government support.

Interestingly, 8 per cent of those who provided comments indicated they had suggestions for a future international student survey and 5 per cent indicated the survey was too long or confusing. These comments may assist in the future planning of the international student survey.

**Table 6.4-Final comments**

<b>Final comments</b>	<b>% of Respondents*</b>
<b>International tuition fees are too expensive</b>	20%
<b>Thankful for having opinions surveyed</b>	19%
<b>Need more government support</b>	16%
<b>Issues with quality of education</b>	14%
<b>Enjoy studying in Canada/at current institution</b>	13%
<b>Need assistance to live in a new culture</b>	10%
<b>Hard to get information on/apply for off-campus work permit</b>	9%
<b>Survey suggestions (have other topics and answer options)</b>	8%
<b>Experiences with prejudicial behaviour</b>	6%
<b>Survey was too long or confusing</b>	5%
<b>Application processes for international students are difficult</b>	5%
<b>Paperwork takes too long to process</b>	4%
<b>Studying in B.C./at current institution is boring</b>	1%

\*855 participants provided a total of 1,119 comments to this multiple response question.

This section includes cross-tabulations for the question: *Overall, how satisfied are you with your institution?* and student demographics, program characteristics, institution knowledge, post-secondary experiences, and work experience.

Chi-square procedures were used to test for any relationships. Many of the differences were statistically significant; however the relationships, while statistically significant; were very weak.<sup>2</sup>

### **Demographics and Satisfaction**

Satisfaction with their institution was slightly higher for male respondents (71 per cent) compared with female respondents (68 per cent).

Satisfaction with institution was highest among respondents who studied in Northern B.C. (76 per cent), followed by respondents who studied on Vancouver Island (73 per cent), the Lower Mainland (70 per cent), and the Interior & Kootenays (60 per cent).

### **Post-Secondary Program Characteristics and Satisfaction**

Satisfaction was higher among graduate students (76 per cent) compared with undergraduate students (67 per cent) and developmental students (63 per cent).

There was a strong positive correlation between program satisfaction and satisfaction with the institution where respondents who gave high program satisfaction ratings were more likely to give high institution satisfaction ratings.<sup>3</sup>

### **Institution Knowledge and Preferences and Satisfaction**

Satisfaction with their institution was higher for respondents who had attended high school outside of Canada (71 per cent) compared with respondents who had attended high school in B.C. (65 per cent) or in another Canadian province (57 per cent).

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<sup>2</sup> Cramer's V ranges from 0 to 1 with values close to zero indicating no association between the variables and values close to 1 indicating strong association between the variables. The results range from .036 to .117, indicating that the associations explored are very weak, rounding to 0 in most cases.

<sup>3</sup> Spearman's R = .613 and  $p < .01$ . Kendall's tau-b = .568 and  $p < .01$ .

There were no significant differences in satisfaction between survey respondents who had visited B.C. prior to studying at their current institution and those respondents who had not visited B.C. That is, the survey respondents who had visited B.C. prior to studying in B.C. reported the same satisfaction with their current institution as those who had not visited B.C. prior to commencing their studies.

**Table 6.5** shows that respondents who attended institutions that were their first choice reported higher satisfaction (71 per cent) with their institution compared with respondents (60 per cent) who did not attend their first choice institution.

**Table 6.5-Institution preference and satisfaction with institution**

		<b>% of Respondents who said Satisfied or Very Satisfied *</b>
<b>Current institution was first choice</b>	Yes	71%
	No	60%

### **Student Post-Secondary Experiences and Satisfaction**

Respondents who attended orientation reported higher satisfaction (74 per cent) compared with respondents who did not attend orientation (64 per cent).

Living arrangements were related to student satisfaction. Respondents who lived on-campus reported the highest satisfaction with their institution (76 per cent), while respondents who lived off-campus by themselves reported lower satisfaction with their institution (66 per cent).

### **Student Work Experience and Satisfaction**

There were no significant differences in the satisfaction with their institution associated with status in Canada, with Canada Study Permit holders, Work Permit holders, and permanent residents all reporting similar satisfaction ratings.

Respondents who worked for pay or wages while in B.C. reported higher satisfaction with their institution (73 per cent) compared with respondents who did not work for pay or wages while in B.C. (68 per cent).

There was no significant difference in the satisfaction reported by survey respondents who participated in a co-op or internship placement and those respondents who did not.

Satisfaction with their institution was slightly lower for respondents who obtained an off-campus work permit (67 per cent) compared with respondents who had not obtained an off-campus work permit (70 per cent).

Respondents who were planning to apply for a Canadian post-graduate work permit reported higher satisfaction (72 per cent) compared with respondents who had never heard of the post-graduate work permit (70 per cent) and students who were not planning on applying for the post-graduate work permit (66 per cent).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Note: Q39 *Are you planning to apply for a Canadian post-graduate work permit* was only asked of respondents who were enrolled in the following types of programs: bachelor degree, masters or doctorate degree, diploma or certificate or trades or apprentice programs (as defined in Q5).

## CONCLUSION

The International Student Survey has added to our understanding of international students at B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions by providing information to answer the following questions:

### **What were the characteristics of survey respondents?**

International students who answered the survey represented a diverse group of individuals. Although the majority of students were between the ages of 18 and 24 at the time of the survey, ages ranged from as low as 17 to as high as 67-years-old. Just over half of the international students surveyed were female.

Although the majority of students surveyed were from Eastern Asia, there were respondents from every continent around the globe. At the time of their studies, the vast majority were Canada study permit holders.

Nearly half of respondents were enrolled in a Bachelors degree program.

### **Why did international students study abroad and in B.C.?**

Students had multiple reasons for studying abroad including a desire to experience life in a foreign country, the quality of education available, and wanting to learn English. Survey respondents were asked how important particular factors were in deciding to study specifically in B.C. The most common reasons cited were quality of education, safety and security, and reputation of institution, although a number of students also reported that costs, friendly people, and future employment goals were important factors.

### **How did international students learn about B.C.?**

When students were asked how they learned about studies in B.C, most said they got information from friends, the B.C. post-secondary institution websites, agents, school counsellors or teachers in one's home country, and family members.

Over 4 in 10 respondents indicated they learned about their specific post-secondary institution through friends. Word-of-mouth and personal communication are important when promoting B.C. post-secondary studies and institution.

### **How many post-secondary institutions did international students apply to?**

Nearly half of respondents indicated that they *only* applied to their current institution. Of those who applied to more than one institution, 40 per cent indicated that they only applied to one other institution. Also of those who applied to more than one institution, just over 4 in 10 indicated they applied to the University of British Columbia.

### **What were the post-secondary experiences of international students?**

The majority of survey respondents said they applied one time for their Canada study permit or visa and were approved in less than three months.

Survey respondents were asked to select words that described their experience completing the paperwork required to enter Canada. The top two negative words selected were time-consuming (48 per cent) and complicated (36 per cent), while the most common positive words were clear (25 per cent) and easy (23 per cent).

The level of difficulty in finding information about particular aspects of post-secondary studies varied. Financial assistance was not difficult for just 3 in 10 students, while 4 in 10 had no difficulty finding information about a place to live, and institutional student 'lifestyle', indicating these are areas for improvement. At 6 in 10, the aspect students had the least difficulty with was admission deadlines, and half didn't have problems finding English admission requirements, program availability, program course information, and visa requirements.

Academic advising or program advising was cited as a helpful source for answers to academic questions by just over half of respondents, while those mentioned most often were international students from the students' own country, and institutional faculty and staff (each cited by more than 7 in 10 students).

#### **How did international students adjust to their B.C. post-secondary studies?**

Survey respondents were asked how difficult it was to adjust to processes related to B.C. post-secondary studies as new international students. Respondents had least adjustment difficulty in making friends with other international students, and living in the community. Almost two-thirds of respondents said they did not experience difficulties making friends with other international students, and half of the respondents said they did not experience difficulties living in the community. On the other hand, international students had difficulty getting involved in extra-curricular activities at their institution, making friends with Canadians, and adjusting to academic expectations.

When asked about how helpful certain sources of support were when they had encountered questions, the majority of respondents indicated international students from their own country or other international students were helpful or very helpful, whereas Canadian classmates or Canadians in the community ranked lower. This shows that peer support among international students was considered very important in helping with international students' adjustment to their life in B.C.

Respondents were asked what services or programs helped them adjust to their B.C. post-secondary studies and communities. The top service or program contributing to student adjustment was the international education/international studies office, followed by on-campus groups/clubs/organizations, and advice from students/friends.

Over two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that they had attended an orientation at their B.C. post-secondary institution – the majority of respondents thought the orientation session was at least somewhat helpful.

**How many international students work while studying?**

Over half of students responded they had obtained a Canadian Social Insurance Number. Four in 10 respondents said they worked for pay or wages in B.C – almost half of respondents indicated they worked on-campus, while one-third worked off-campus.

**What plans do international students have?**

At the time of the survey, over half of the survey participants indicated they planned to work in B.C. after they leave their post-secondary institution. Other respondents planned to return to their home country to work, continue with education in B.C., or work in a Canadian province other than B.C.

**How satisfied are international students?**

When asked about their satisfaction with their B.C. post-secondary institution, over two-thirds of survey participants indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied. Only six per cent of respondents expressed dissatisfaction.

Likewise, two-thirds of survey respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their B.C. post-secondary program. Only nine per cent indicated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

## APPENDIX

### 1. Survey Reporting and Limitations

NRG Research Group collected the web survey data on behalf of BC Stats. NRG was responsible for storing and cleaning the data. BC Stats monitored the web survey. In consultation with the ISS Steering Committee, analysis of data and reporting was conducted by BC Stats.

The ISS web survey was conducted from October 10, 2008 to December 10, 2008. Of the 18,052 international students identified as eligible from the survey cohort, 5,179 completed the web survey. With all survey research, caution needs to be taken when approaching the survey results because the 29 per cent of eligible international students who completed the ISS web survey may not be entirely representative of public post-secondary international students in B.C. Based on other web-based surveys, the response rate is typical for web-based surveys. (See Appendix 2 for more information on the characteristics of international students.)

The web-based questionnaire was in English only; therefore, the quality of the data obtained is reliant on the abilities of international students to understand, interpret, and respond to survey questions in the English language.

For consistency and ease of presentation, most percentages in the report text and tables have been rounded to the nearest whole number. As a result, the totals for the tables may not always add to 100 per cent. For example, totals for questions may round to 99 per cent or 101 per cent due to rounding. Tables containing many categories with smaller percentages have been modified for ease of presentation. All responses in tables that have been modified are indicated as such.

Unless applicable to the question, percentages for a question or question category are based on the number of respondents who provided a meaningful response to the question. Those who refused to answer the question or indicated “do not know” were not included in the calculation.

Analysis for this report included frequencies and crosstabs; in addition, several tests were used to determine if the observed differences between groups were statistically significant. A statistically significant result is one that is not likely to be explained by chance alone.

Questions with multiple responses have been noted as multiple response questions. Responses to multiple response questions were divided by the total number of respondents per question. The total respondents for multiple response questions will therefore add up to more than 100 per cent.

Questions that asked students to rate categories or variables on a scale from 1 to 5 have been noted as being scale questions. Scale questions that had the option of “does not

apply” are reported. The reporting of scale questions contains the percentages of the sum of positive ratings for each category.

Due to the majority of survey respondents choosing a positive ranking for scale question categories, this percentage is an important indicator of which areas are working well for students. The sum of positive percentages for each question provides a good context for understanding student responses.

## 2. Characteristics of International Students

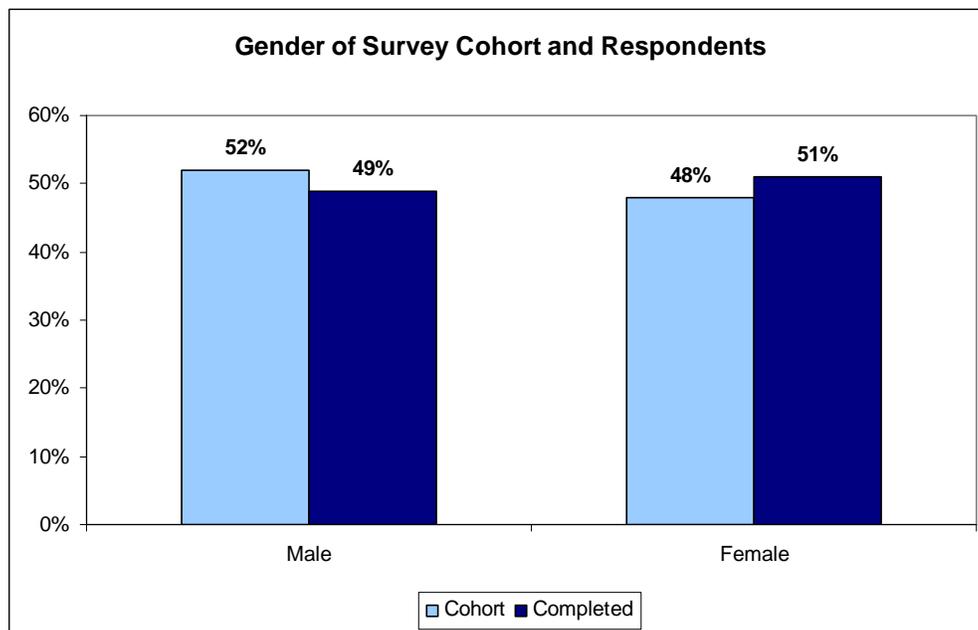
Of the 18,052 students invited to complete the survey, 6,213 logged-in to the survey – the majority (83 per cent or n= 5,179) answered all of the questions and 1,034 started but did not complete the survey.

In addition to the survey data, there are some characteristics in the cohort that may account for response variation and affect the analyses. An introductory examination of the cohort, survey respondents, and those who partially completed the survey was performed to allow identification of these characteristics.

Survey respondents, those who partially completed the survey, and the cohort were compared on a number of characteristics such as age, gender, and location of studies, in order to look for differences between these groups.

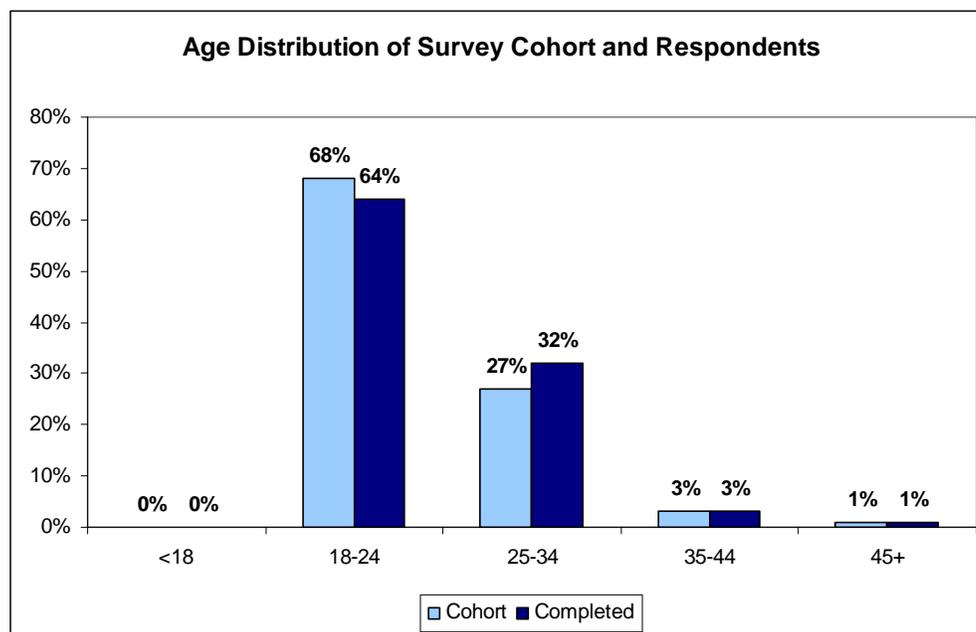
### Gender

Over half (52 per cent) of the student sample were male, while 49 per cent of the respondents were male. Furthermore, nearly 6 in 10 (58 per cent) of those who partially completed the survey were male. Thus, if those who partially completed the survey had finished it the gender distribution would have been more representative at 50 per cent male.



## Age

Students from the 18 to 24 year old category were underrepresented among the respondents (64 per cent compared with 68 per cent for the sample population). There were more respondents from the 25 to 34 year old category compared to the cohort.

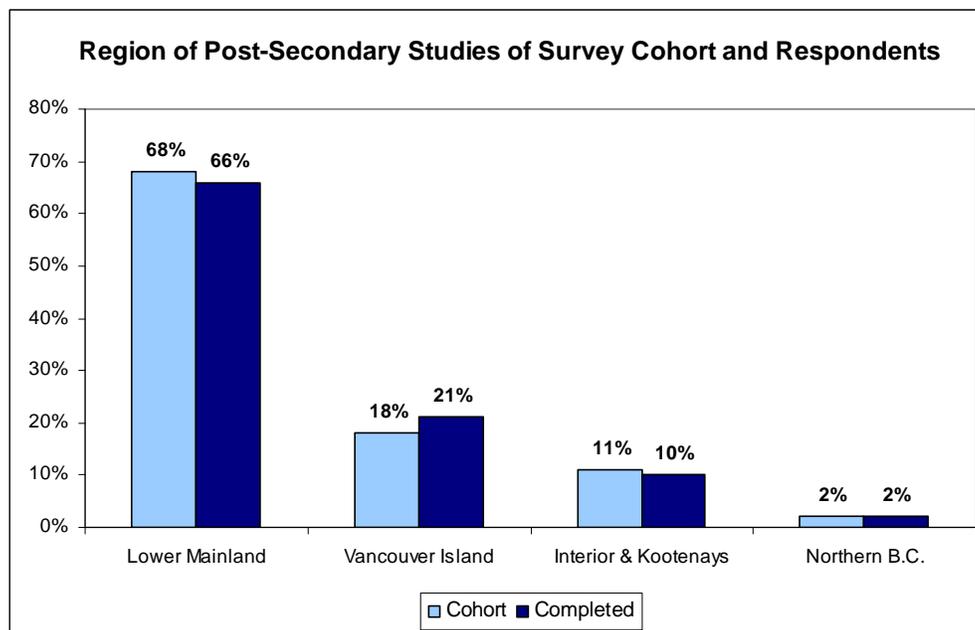


Chi-square procedures were used to test for any relationships. These results are statistically significant.

## Region of Post-Secondary Studies

There were some differences between respondents and the student cohort based on the region former students attended post-secondary studies. The largest differences were shown in the Vancouver Island region, the Lower Mainland, and Interior and Kootenays region.

Among the regions, students who studied on Vancouver Island had the highest response rate for the survey, and a higher partial completion rate compared with students studying in other regions. Respondents studying in the Lower Mainland had a lower completion rate than would be expected based on the distribution of the cohort.



### 3. Corresponding Survey Questions for Tables and Charts

The table below cross-references the name and number of each table or chart within this report with the corresponding ISS survey question.

<b>Name of table or chart</b>	<b>Table or Chart Number</b>	<b>Survey Question in ISS Questionnaire</b>
<b>Regions of respondents</b>	<b>1.0</b>	Demographics
<b>Age of English language acquisition</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>Question 6</b>
<b>Age of respondents</b>	<b>1.2</b>	Demographics
<b>Length of enrolment at institution at the time of completing survey</b>	<b>1.3</b>	Demographics
<b>Current status in Canada</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>Question 8</b>
<b>Course load</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>Question 3</b>
<b>Classroom and laboratory hours</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>Question 4</b>
<b>Type of program of study</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>Question 5</b>
<b>Area of study</b>	<b>2.3</b>	Demographics- CIP Area
<b>Number of countries visited before starting studies in B.C.</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>Question 14</b>
<b>Countries of high school attendance outside of Canada</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>Question 10</b>
<b>Reasons for studying abroad</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>Question 18</b>
<b>Factors influencing students to study in B.C.</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>Question 19</b>
<b>Sources of information about B.C. post-secondary studies</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>Question 11</b>
<b>Sources for hearing about current B.C. institution</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>Question 17</b>
<b>Useful information sources to help students prepare to study in B.C.</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>Question 20</b>
<b>Post-secondary institutions respondents applied to</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>Question 15</b>
<b>First choice of institution other than current institution</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>Question 16</b>

<b>Name of table or chart</b>	<b>Table or Chart Number</b>	<b>Survey Question in ISS Questionnaire</b>
<b>Countries considered for post-secondary studies</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>Question 12</b>
<b>Canada study permit and visa process</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>Question 22</b>
<b>Words associated with the paperwork process to enter Canada</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>Question 23</b>
<b>Finding information about post-secondary studies</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>Question 21</b>
<b>Information sources for academic questions</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>Question 26</b>
<b>Information sources for personal questions</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>Question 27</b>
<b>Adjustment to B.C. post-secondary studies</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>Question 25</b>
<b>Services or programs that helped students adjust to studies and communities</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>Question 29</b>
<b>Helpfulness of orientation</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>Question 24b</b>
<b>Desire for additional topics at orientation</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>Question 24c</b>
<b>Living accommodation types</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>Question 7</b>
<b>Location of work</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>Question 33</b>
<b>Sources for hearing about the Off-Campus Work Permit Program</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>Question 38a</b>
<b>Reasons for working while studying in B.C.</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>Question 34</b>
<b>Plans after finishing post-secondary studies</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>Question 37</b>
<b>Sources for hearing about the Post-Graduate Work Permit Program</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>Question 39b</b>
<b>Satisfaction with institution</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>Question 30</b>
<b>Satisfaction with program</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>Question 31</b>
<b>Satisfaction with aspects of post-secondary studies</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>Question 28</b>
<b>Likelihood of recommendation</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>Question 32</b>
<b>Final comments</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>Last Survey Question</b>
<b>Institution preference and satisfaction with institution</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>Question 30 and Question 15</b>

#### 4. Countries of High School Attendance-Outside of Canada

Chart 3.1- Responses of 1% or less for countries of school attendance outside of Canada

Countries of high school attendance- outside of Canada	% of Respondents	Count of Respondents
Russia	1%	34
New Zealand	1%	19
Italy	1%	15
South Africa	1%	15
Australia	0%	14
Peru	0%	11
Czech Republic	0%	10
Spain	0%	6

\*Categories with less than 5 respondents are not reported.

## 5. Post-Secondary Institutions Respondents Applied to

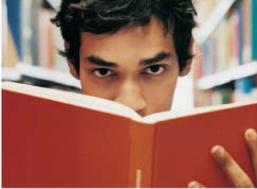
Table 3.7- Responses of 2% or less for post-secondary institutions respondents applied to

Post-secondary institutions respondents applied to	% of Respondents	Count of Respondents
McGill University	2%	65
University of Northern British Columbia	2%	54
Emily Carr University of Art and Design	2%	53
University of Alberta	2%	52
Columbia College	2%	46
Okanagan College	2%	43
University of California	2%	42
York University	1%	34
University of Western Ontario	1%	30
Royal Roads University	1%	29
University of Waterloo	1%	29
University of Calgary	1%	27
McMaster University	1%	24
Queen's University	1%	20
College of the Rockies	1%	18
Selkirk College	1%	17
Dalhousie	1%	17
College of New Caledonia	1%	15
Coquitlam College	1%	14
Concordia University	0%	13
North Island College	0%	11
University of Manitoba	0%	10
Stanford	0%	10
Northern Lights College	0%	8
MIT	0%	7
NAIT / SAIT	0%	6

\*Categories with less than 5 respondents are not reported.

## 6. Survey Postcard Invitation

Approximately 25,000 B.C. international student survey postcards were printed and sent to all of the B.C. public post-secondary institutions participating in the survey for distribution to international students. The LearnLiveBC website also posted the survey postcard. Institutions received the postcards at the end of August 2008. In addition, PowerPoint slides of the postcard were emailed to institutions to incorporate the information into their orientation to new international students. The image of the postcard is displayed below.

<p><b>Your opinion counts!</b></p> <p><b>B.C. International Student Survey</b></p> <p>October to December 2008</p> <p>Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development</p> <p> <b>BCStats</b> <a href="http://www.LearnLiveBC.ca">www.LearnLiveBC.ca</a></p>	  
<p><b>B.C. International Student Survey</b></p> <p>Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development</p> <p><b>WHAT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First ever system-wide survey of B.C. international students.</li> </ul> <p><b>WHY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information to improve the experience of international students in B.C.</li> </ul> <p><b>HOW IT WORKS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will receive an email from BC Stats with a link to the survey.</li> <li>Follow the link to respond to the survey.</li> <li>Responding will only take 15 minutes of your time.</li> <li>Your personal information is confidential.</li> </ul> <p><b>Have your say. Your opinion counts! Thank you.</b></p> <p> <b>BCStats</b> <a href="http://www.LearnLiveBC.ca">www.LearnLiveBC.ca</a></p>	  

## 7. Survey Email Invitation

**From:** B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development

**Subject:** B.C. Survey of International Students

Dear [first name of the student],

The B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, BC Stats, and [name of institution] are inviting you to complete a province-wide survey on living and learning experiences of international students in B.C. post-secondary institutions. The purpose of this survey is to gain a better understanding of the diverse needs of international students in B.C. so as to improve their experiences. By participating in this survey, you are providing valuable information for that purpose.

Your participation is voluntary and your identity is protected by law. All the information from this survey will be reported as group data and used only for statistical purposes.

To access the survey, [please click here](#). The survey will take you approximately 15 minutes to complete. The closing time of the survey is 11:30 p.m. on [date].

In case the link above does not work for you, please copy and paste the following link into your web browser: [web survey link].

If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact the International Education Office at your institution. Thank you in advance for your timely response.

[Name of the sender]

[Professional title of the sender]

## 8. Survey Questionnaire

(Please note that survey is not formatted as it will appear on screen.)

This survey is intended to collect information about the experiences of international students in British Columbia. Your responses are confidential and your privacy will be respected.

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback. Please complete the survey in one sitting. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. If you are ready to begin now please click the continue button.

[START]

### Section 1: Introductory Questions

#### Question 1

To confirm, are you currently registered as a student at <INSTITUTION>?

- Yes - GO TO Question 2
- No - GO TO Question 1A

Question 1A Are you:

- Question 1AA. Registered at a different institution?  
What Institution are you registered at now? [SHOW INSTITUTION LIST AND OTHER SPECIFY]  
[NOTE: INSERT THIS INSTITUTION TO QUESTIONS WHERE APPROPRIATE]
- Question 1AB. Not studying anymore?  
If you are not registered at any institution now, please tell us where you were last registered. [SHOW INSTITUTION LIST AND OTHER SPECIFY]  
[NOTE: INSERT THIS INSTITUTION TO QUESTIONS WHERE APPROPRIATE]

#### Question 2

Our records indicate that you are/were in the <NAME OF PROGRAM> program. Is that correct?

- Yes
- No - GO TO Question 2A

Question 2A What are/were you studying?

- I am studying \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 3**

Are you studying on a full time or part time course load? [HAVE NOTE INDICATING WHAT IS FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME]

- Full Time
- Part Time
- Unsure/Don't Know

**Question 4**

How many classroom and lab hours are scheduled to you each week?

- Please enter a number between 1 and 40: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure/Don't Know

**Question 5**

What type of program are/were you taking? Please check all that apply.

- Bachelor degree
- Masters or doctorate degree
- Diploma or certificate
- Trades or apprentice
- English language training
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 6**

Which of the following best describes when you began learning English?

- English is my first language
- Age 12 or earlier
- As a teenager (Age 13 to 17)
- As an adult (Age 18 and older)

**Question 7**

Which of the following best describes your living accommodations?

[IF YES TO Question 1AB, SHOW "Question 7 Which of the following best describes your living accommodations when you attended the <INSTITUTION>?]

- Living on campus
- Living off campus with a homestay family
- Living off campus by myself
- Living off campus with friends
- Living off campus with relatives, spouse or family

**Question 8**

Which of the following best describes your current status in Canada?

- Canada Study Permit holder
- Diplomatic visa holder
- Work Permit holder
- Permanent Resident
- Other (please specify)

**Section 2: Student Information and Decisions to Study in B.C.****Question 9**

Had you ever visited British Columbia before deciding to study here?

- Yes
- No

**Question 10**

Did you attend high school in Canada?

- Yes, British Columbia
- Yes, A Canadian Province other than B.C.
- No, which country did you attend high school \_\_\_\_ [SHOW COUNTRY LIST AND OTHER SPECIFY]

**Question 11**

How did you learn about post-secondary studies in B.C.? Please check all that apply.

INTERNET	PEOPLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Canadian Government website <input type="checkbox"/> LearnLiveBC website <input type="checkbox"/> Web sites of post secondary institutions in B.C. <input type="checkbox"/> Other internet sites (please specify)_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops or School Fairs in My Home Country	<input type="checkbox"/> Agent <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from my institution <input type="checkbox"/> Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> School counsellor or teacher in my home country <input type="checkbox"/> Person at a Canadian Education Centre in my home country <input type="checkbox"/> Other source (please specify)_____

**Question 12**

What other countries/regions (if any) did you consider as a country/region for your studies? Please select your top 3 countries.

- I only considered Canada [Skip Question 13]  
 Country \_\_\_\_\_ [SHOW COUNTRY LIST]  
 Country \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country \_\_\_\_\_

[ONLY ASK Question 13 IF ONE OR MORE COUNTRIES/REGIONS SELECTED IN Question 12]

**Question 13**

Was Canada your first choice?

- Yes  
 No, which Country was your first choice [SHOW COUNTRY LIST-EXCLUDING CANADA]

**Question 14**

How many countries (outside of your country of birth) had you travelled to before starting your studies in B.C.?

Please estimate; enter a number between 0 to 98:

- \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unsure/Don't Know

**Question 15**

What other educational institutions (if any) did you apply to for your studies?  
 Please select your top 3 institutions.

- I only considered <INSTITUTION> [Skip Q16]  
 Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ [SHOW INSTITUTION LIST AND OTHER SPECIFY]  
 Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ [SHOW INSTITUTION LIST AND OTHER SPECIFY]  
 Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ [SHOW INSTITUTION LIST AND OTHER SPECIFY]

[ONLY ASK Q16 IF ONE OR MORE INSTITUTIONS SELECTED IN Q15]

**Question 16**

Was <INSTITUTION> your first choice university or college?

- Yes  
 No, which institution was your first choice [SHOW INSTITUTION LIST-EXCLUDING THE INSTITUTION]

## Question 17

How did you hear about <INSTITUTION>? Please check all that apply.

INTERNET	PEOPLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Canadian Government website <input type="checkbox"/> LearnLiveBC website <input type="checkbox"/> <institution's> Web site <input type="checkbox"/> Other internet sites (please specify)_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Agent <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from my institution <input type="checkbox"/> Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> School counsellor or teacher in my home country <input type="checkbox"/> Person at a Canadian Education Centre in my home country <input type="checkbox"/> Other source (please specify)_____

## Question 18

Why did you choose to study abroad?

Please type your answer in the box:

- \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unsure/Don't Know

## Question 19

How important were the following things in your decision to study in British Columbia?

	Not at all important				Very important
Quality of education	1	2	3	4	5
Costs (tuition and living)	1	2	3	4	5
Safety and security	1	2	3	4	5
Friendly people	1	2	3	4	5
Beautiful landscape	1	2	3	4	5
Multicultural environment	1	2	3	4	5
Future employment goal	1	2	3	4	5
Desire to live in Canada	1	2	3	4	5
Reputation of institution	1	2	3	4	5

**Question 20**

How useful were the following sources of information in helping you prepare for your studies in B.C.?

	Not at all useful				Very useful	Did not use
Advertisements or stories in Magazines, Newspapers or on TV or Radio shows	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Institution] website	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional recruiter or educational agent	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brochures/pamphlets about institution	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct communications from institution (email, letter, fax, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talking with students/alumni from institution	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
School counselor or teacher in my home country	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends or acquaintances	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational/college fair	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Canadian Education Centre in my country	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 21**

Before coming to [INSTITUTION], how easy was it to find information about the following topics?

	Not at all difficult				Very difficult	Did not have questions about this topic
Visa requirements (Study Permit)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional student "lifestyle"	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.C. culture	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
English admission requirements	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program availability	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admission deadlines	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program and course information	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
A place to live	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial assistance and scholarships	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 22**

What was your experience with the Canadian study permit or visa process (immigration) in your home country?

- I applied once, and got approved in less than 3 months
- I applied once, and got approved between 3 and 6 months
- I applied once, but it took more than 6 months
- I applied more than once before I was successful

**Question 23**

Please select the words below that you would use to describe your experience completing the paperwork required to enter Canada. Check all that you feel apply.

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy      | <input type="checkbox"/> Complicated    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hard      | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confusing | <input type="checkbox"/> Well explained |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Simple    | <input type="checkbox"/> Time consuming |

**Section 3: Arrival Experiences**

The next set of questions ask you about your experiences as a new student at <INSTITUTION>

**Question 24**

Do you recall attending an orientation session at your current institution?

[IF YES TO Q1AB, SHOW "Q24 Do you recall attending an orientation session at <INSTITUTION>]?

- Yes [ASK Q24b AND Q24c]
- No
- Unsure

Question 24b How helpful was the orientation that you received when you first arrived at <INSTITUTION>?

- Not at all helpful
- A little bit helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Very helpful

Question 24c Were there any additional topics that you would have liked included in the orientation?

- No
- Yes, Please describe \_\_\_\_\_

This next set of questions asks about your overall adjustment to B.C. and your satisfaction with your studies.

### Question 25

How difficult has it been to adjust to the following processes as a new international student?

	Very difficult				Not at all difficult
Different teaching/learning styles	1	2	3	4	5
Dealing with teamwork in classes	1	2	3	4	5
Getting involved in extra curricular activities at the institution	1	2	3	4	5
Interacting with instructors & professors	1	2	3	4	5
Academic expectations	1	2	3	4	5
Living in the community	1	2	3	4	5
Making friends with other international students	1	2	3	4	5
Making friends with Canadians	1	2	3	4	5

### Question 26

When you have academic questions, how helpful are/were the following?

	Not at all Helpful				Very Helpful	Does not apply to me
Canadian classmates	1	2	3	4	5	6
International students from my own country	1	2	3	4	5	6
Other international students	1	2	3	4	5	6
Institutional faculty and staff	1	2	3	4	5	6
Canadians in the community	1	2	3	4	5	6
My homestay family	1	2	3	4	5	6
Academic advising/program advising	1	2	3	4	5	6

**Question 27**

When you have personal questions, how helpful are/were the following?

	Not at all Helpful				Very Helpful	Does not apply to me
Canadian classmates	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other international students	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
International students from my own country	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional faculty and staff	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Canadians in the community	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
My homestay family	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counselling professionals at my institution	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 28**

How satisfied are you with each of the following?

	Very dissatisfied				Very satisfied	Does not apply to me
Experience obtaining Study Permit	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admissions and registration at <INSTITUTION>	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student Services (library, health care, etc)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities (classrooms and equipment)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreational facilities on campus	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
My teachers	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
The quality of education I receive	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
My lifestyle in Canada	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
The place where I stay (housing)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
My local social network (e.g. friends, faculty and fellow students)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 29**

Please list those programs and/or services that helped you adjust to your studies and community as a new student.

Please type your answer in the box:

- \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unsure/Don't Know

**Question 30**

Overall, how satisfied are you with <INSTITUTION>?

<b>Very dissatisfied</b>				<b>Very satisfied</b>
1	2	3	4	5

**Question 31**

Overall, how satisfied are you with your program at <INSTITUTION>?

<b>Very dissatisfied</b>				<b>Very satisfied</b>
1	2	3	4	5

**Question 32**

How likely are you to recommend each of the following to others?

	<b>Very Likely</b>				<b>Very Unlikely</b>
Canada?	1	2	3	4	5
British Columbia?	1	2	3	4	5
<INSTITUTION>?	1	2	3	4	5

**Section 4: Work Plans and Future Plans**

The next set of questions asks about your plans for work now, and in the future.

**Question 33**

Have you worked for pay or wages while in B.C.?

- Yes → Was it:  On campus  Off campus  Both on and off campus  
 No, I have not worked [GO TO Q35]

[ASKED ONLY IF Q33 = YES]

**Question 34**

How well do each of the following statements explain why you worked during your stay in B.C.?

	Does not explain				Explains very well	Does not apply to me
To help with English language skills	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
For additional spending money	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work was related to my program of study	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
To meet people	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
To pay tuition fees	1	2	3	4	4	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 35**

Have you obtained a Canadian Social Insurance Number (SIN)?

- Yes  
 No  
 Unsure

**Question 36**

Have you participated in a co-op placement or an internship while attending <INSTITUTION>?

- Yes  
 No  
 Unsure

**Question 37**

What best describes your plans after you leave <INSTITUTION>? Please select one.

- Return to home country for work  
 Return to home country for further education  
 Go to another country for further education  
 Go to another country for work  
 More education in B.C.  
 More education in another Canadian province  
 Work in B.C.  
 Work in another Canadian province  
 Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 38**

Have you obtained an Off-Campus work permit?

- Yes  
 No

Question 38a [IF Q38 = YES] how did you hear about the Off-Campus Work Permit Program?

- Canadian Citizenship and Immigration Canada website  
 LearnLiveBC website  
 Institution's international student services department  
 Classmates  
 International students at the institution  
 Education Agent  
 Parents or family  
 Other (please specify)

Question 38b [IF Q38 = NO] Are you planning to apply to the Off-Campus Work Permit Program?

- Yes  
 No  
 Unsure  
 Never heard of the Off-Campus Work Permit Program

[ONLY ASK Question 39 IF Question 5 = 1-thru-4] (i.e.: Bachelor degree, Masters or doctorate degree, Diploma or certificate, or Trades or apprentice.)

**Question 39**

Are you planning to apply for a Canadian post-graduate work permit?

- Yes  
 No  
 Never heard of the post-graduate work permit

Question 39 b [ASK IF Q39=YES] how did you hear about this program?

- Canadian Citizenship and Immigration Canada website  
 LearnLiveBC website  
 Institution's international student services department  
 Classmates  
 International students at the institution  
 Education Agent  
 Parents or family  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**(LAST SURVEY WINDOW)**

Thank you for your participation in this survey. If you have any final comments you would like to make, please use this space.

**For Universities**

This survey will be used by [name of university]. Under an agreement in the *BC Statistics Act*, you may refuse to share your results with [name of university] by writing to the Executive Director of Statistics before December 31, 2008

Executive Director, BC Stats  
PO Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8W 9V1

**For Colleges and Institutes**

This survey will be used by the B.C. public post-secondary institutions and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. Under an agreement in the *BC Statistics Act*, you may refuse to share your results with any of these organizations by writing to the Executive Director of Statistics before December 31, 2008.

Executive Director, BC Stats  
PO Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8W 9V1

[END]