

Quick facts on Canada's skills gap

- 1** **Canada needs more university, college and trades grads.** Canada needs more university, college and trades graduates. In order to compete in the new global knowledge economy, we have to equip all Canadians to achieve their potential and contribute to a prosperous Canada.

- 2** **There is strong demand for university grads.** According to a recent CIBC report, most jobs in high demand in Canada require a university degree. For example: managers in health, education, social and community services; human resources and business service professionals; and supervisors in manufacturing and processing.¹

- 3** **University grads have in-demand skills.** Today's employers are seeking employees with global awareness, critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities and strong communication and interpersonal skills. These are all skills developed and honed through a university education.²

- 4** **Grads have close connection between studies and career.** University graduates are typically employed in an area connected to their studies soon after graduation. For example, in Ontario two years after graduation (in 2011), 93 percent of university graduates were working and 82 percent of those working full-time considered their work closely or somewhat closely related to their university education.³

- 5** **University grads adapt to job market changes.** Many of the most in-demand occupations today did not exist 10 or 20 years ago. University education equips young Canadians with skills to adapt to changing labour market needs.⁴

- 6** **Opportunities are strongest for university grads.** The demand for university graduates is strong across Canada. For example, even in resource-rich Alberta, more than 40 percent of new jobs since 2000 have been for university graduates, 26 percent for college graduates and 10 percent for skilled tradespeople.⁵

- 7** **Job growth for university graduates continues in a tough economy.** Strong job growth for university grads continues, even during difficult times. Between July 2008 and July 2012, 700,000 net new jobs were created for university graduates, compared to 320,000 net new jobs for college and trades graduates, while a total of 640,000 jobs were lost for high school grads.⁶

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- 8** **Canada has room to grow.** According to the OECD, Canada ranks first in the world in college attainment, while only 15th for university degree attainment.⁷
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- 9** **Job projections are favourable for university grads.** According to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's estimates, 70 percent of new jobs in the coming decade will require postsecondary education.⁸ Between 2011 and 2020, AUCC estimates there will be 2.1 million jobs created for university graduates.
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- 10** **University students get hands-on career preparation.** Universities are increasing the programs and services they offer to help graduates transition to careers. Half of all Canadian university students across all disciplines now complete at least one co-op experience, practicum, internship or field placement by the time they graduate.⁹
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- 11** **We must narrow the Aboriginal education gap.** There are more than 560,000 Aboriginals under the age of 25 across Canada. Only eight percent of Aboriginal people aged 25 to 64 in Canada have a university degree. Comparatively, 23 percent of non-Aboriginals of the same age group have a university degree. Tremendous opportunities exist – for Aboriginals in Canada and for the country – if we increase access to university education for Aboriginals of all ages.¹⁰

SOURCES

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4. *Canada's Skills Crisis: What We Heard*, Canadian Chamber of Commerce report on cross-country consultations in 2012
5. Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey*
6. Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey*
7. OECD, *Education at a Glance 2012*
8. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (<http://www23.hrsdc.gc.ca/1.3bd.2t.i1shtml@-eng.jsp?lid=16&fid=1&lang=en>)
9. Canadian University Survey Consortium, *2012 Survey of Graduating Undergraduate Students*
10. Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population