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Executive Summary

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The 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes Survey was conducted with former Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) students who enrolled in upper

percent) said that they relied on employment income as a main source of financial support while studying.

2.3.2.2. Financial Support

Of the 1,347 former ESL students who were eligible to participate in the 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes Survey, 630 completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 47 percent. The median age of eligible students was 33, and 70 percent were female. Almost all (98 percent) of the former ESL students came from a country other than Canada, and of these, 81 percent were permanent residents or landed immigrants, and 15 percent were Canadian citizens. Three quarters of those who came from another country had some previous post secondary education, and 65 percent had a post secondary credential.

When asked for their most important reason for enrolling, most former ESL students said *to prepare for further studies* (41 percent) or *to use English better in daily life* (36 percent). The majority (85 percent) of former ESL students said their courses were *very helpful* or *helpful* in achieving their most important goal.

Overall, 94 percent of former students said they were *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with the courses they took. Most students rated aspects of their courses favourably, with 84 percent saying the quality of teaching was *very good* or *good*. ESL courses helped students develop a number of skills: 83 percent found their courses helpful in developing English writing skills, and 76 percent found their courses helped them feel self confident.

ESL courses helped students to achieve positive education and labour market outcomes. By the time the survey was conducted, 61 percent of former students had enrolled in further education, and of these, 93 percent said their ESL courses helped prepare them for their subsequent studies. At the time the survey was conducted, 50 percent of former ESL students were employed, and among those whose jobs required English, 75 percent said their ESL courses helped them use English at work.

The Adult Basic Education Student Assistance Program (ABESAP) helps many students with the costs of ESL courses: 40 percent of students surveyed applied for ABESAP funding, and 84 percent of those who applied received funding. Many students cited support from family and friends (45 percent) or employment while studying (32 percent) as a main source of financial support.

Introduction

After years of strong economic growth, British Columbia

Canadian culture to people who need higher levels of English to help them graduate from high school, find jobs, or take vocational, career/technical, and academic programs.

Separate Surveys for Developmental Education Students

In past years, groups of developmental education students have been surveyed separately. The most recent ABE and ESL student outcomes surveys were:

2007 English as a Second Language Student Outcomes Survey

This survey included students who enrolled in ESL courses at a B.C. public post secondary institution between September 1, 2005 and August 31, 2006. In total, 4,050 past ESL students were identified in the survey cohort, and 1,821 completed the survey.


2005 Adult Basic Education Survey

This survey included students enrolled in at least one ABE course at any level (fundamental, intermediate, or advanced) at a B.C. public post secondary institution between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004. In total, 17,253 former students were identified as eligible for the survey. To limit costs, only 4,989 were targeted by a sampling strategy, of which 4,249 completed the survey.

Purpose of the 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes Survey

The purpose of the 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes Survey was to ask former upper level ABE and ESL students to evaluate their educational experiences and to report on their transitions to the labour market and further education. This information is used by post secondary institutions and government to:

- support post secondary curriculum planning, policy development, and accountability;
- provide information for program and service evaluations and educational planning; and
- guide educational choices for future students.

To be included in this survey, former students must have been enrolled in at least three courses in their respective program area (ABE or ESL), between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2008. Furthermore, students must have been enrolled in at least one upper level course in their respective program area between July 1, 2007, and June 30, 2008, and must not have enrolled in any further courses in their program area since July 1, 2008. Refer to Appendix: Survey Methodology, for additional information on the .

Previous Name	Current Name
Capilano College	Capilano University
Kwantlen University College	Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Malaspina University College	Vancouver Island University
University College of the Fraser Valley	University of the Fraser Valley

The above changes occurred in

Findings: Former ABE Students

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In total, 3,480 former Adult Basic Education (ABE) students from 19 different institutions were eligible to participate in the 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes Survey. Of these, 1,533 completed the survey, yielding an overall response rate of 44 percent. The

For the majority of students, preparing for future studies was the most important reason for enrolling



Ratings of helpfulness of courses in achieving most important goal varied by region

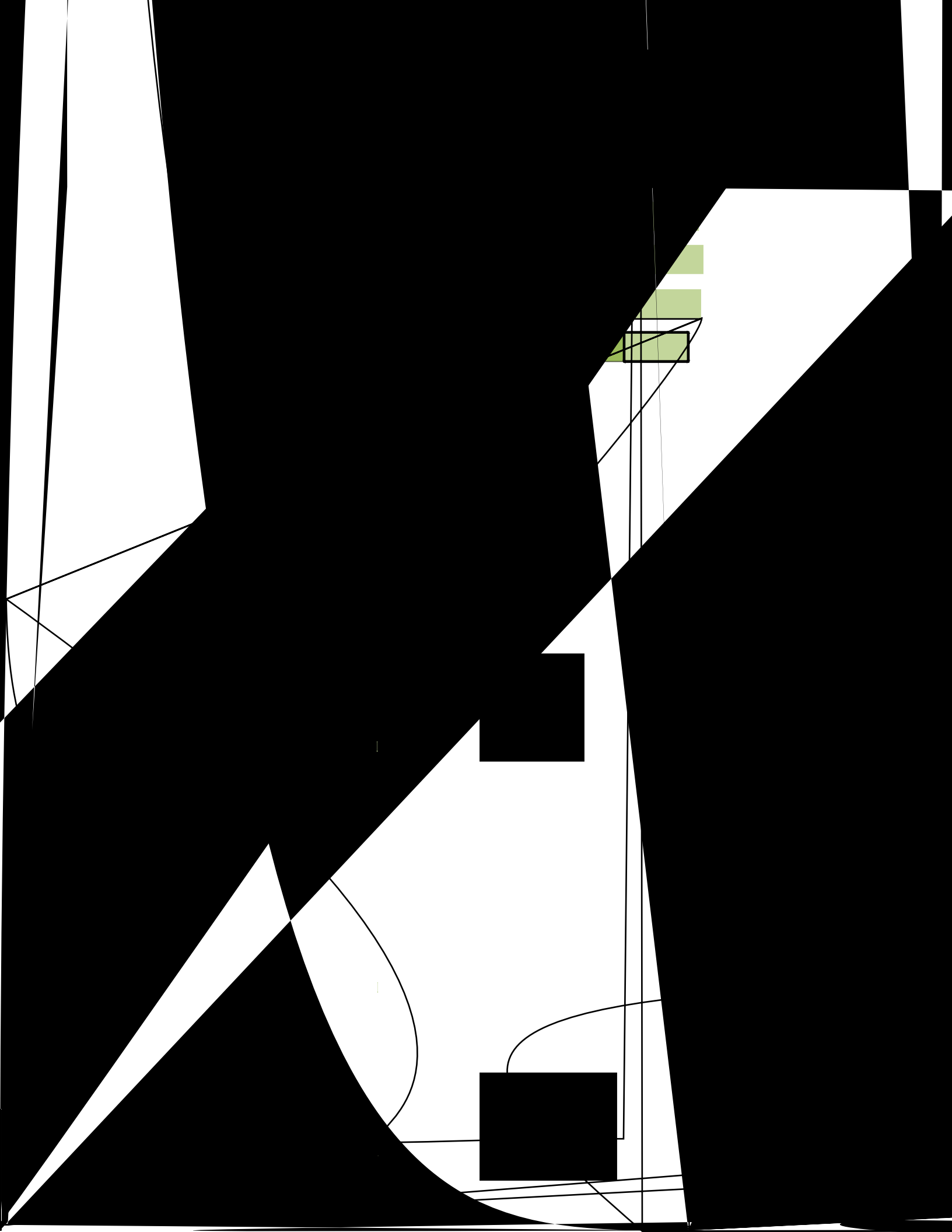


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Evaluation of courses

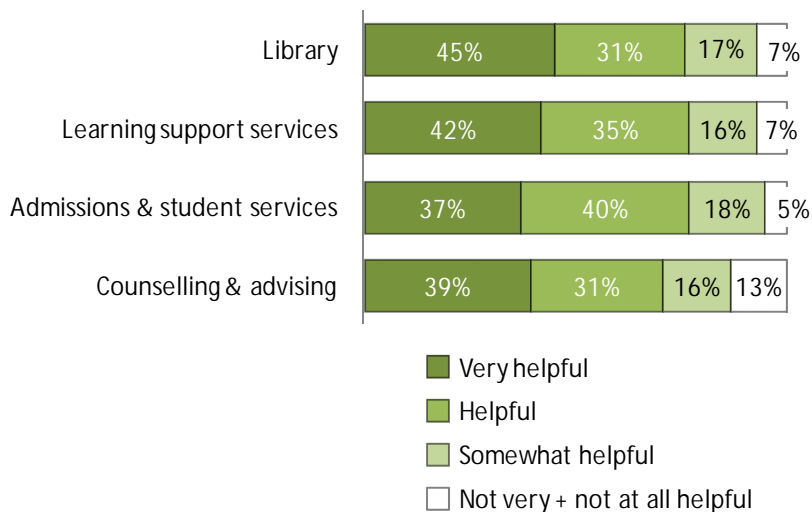
Former students were asked to rate the helpfulness of their courses in developing their writing, reading, speaking, math, computer, and science skills, and had the option of saying *not applicable* to skills not relevant to the courses they took.⁴ Excluding those who said *not applicable*, respondents gave the highest ratings for

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The majority of students provided ratings for the library, learning support services, admissions and student services, and counselling and advising services.⁶ Each of these resources was rated as *very helpful* or *helpful* by the majority of students. Former students gave particularly high ratings to the library (76 percent *very helpful* or *helpful*), learning support services (77 percent), and admissions and student services (77 per cent).

The majority of former ABE students rated institutional resources positively

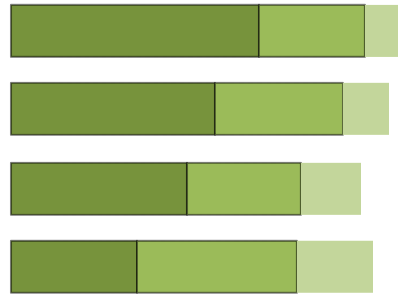


Resources such as financial aid services, health services, disability support services, and Aboriginal support services are generally used by a smaller subset of the population.⁷ Again, each of these services was rated positively by the majority of respondents. Of those who self identified as Aboriginal, 84 percent rated Aboriginal support services as *very helpful* or *helpful*. Disability support services also received particularly high ratings, with 79 percent of respondents giving positive ratings.

⁶ *Not applicable* responses ranged from 10 percent (admissions and student services) to 29 percent (counselling and advising services).

⁷ *Not applicable* responses ranged from 61 percent (financial aid services) to 89 percent (disability support services).

Health, financial aid, and support services were rated positively by most former students



Although many of these comments were very general, a large number (35 percent of those who gave a comment) provided a positive comment about the quality of their instructors or tutors.

The teachers were excellent, easy to talk to and approach. They were inspirational.

...I enjoyed math for the first time in my life and thank [institution] for hiring the best teacher!

On the other hand, quality of instruction was also one of the most common complaints (mentioned in 12 percent of comments).

The teaching standards need to be improved.

Teacher was obviously intelligent, just not very good as a teacher (in my opinion at least).

Other common topics included: suggestions to improve course content, organization, or materials (mentioned in 13 percent of comments), and suggestions to improve course scheduling (mentioned in 5 percent of comments).

The courses should develop critical thinking and public speaking skills to a greater degree.

The school should offer more paced classes, not just self paced ones. I didn't enjoy the learning style of the self paced classes.

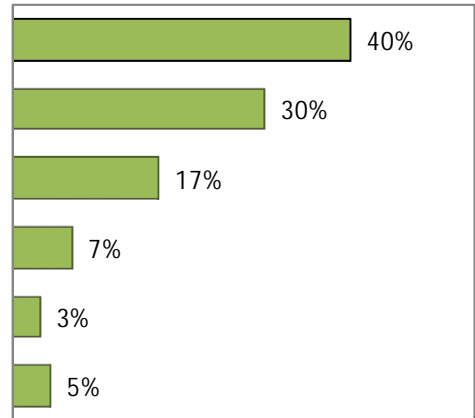
It is great that the courses are available, but they should also be available in the evening for those who work during the day.

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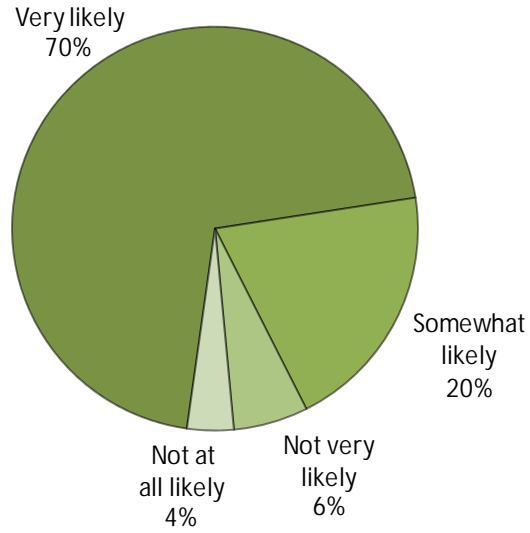
After completing their ABE courses, many students went on to take further studies or additional ABE courses. Seven percent took additional ABE courses, and more than two thirds (68 percent) went on to take further studies other than ABE. From this point on, the discussion of further studies refers to studies other than ABE.

The proportion of students who went on to further studies varied with both family status and age. Younger students (under age 25) were the most likely to pursue further education: 73 percent had enrolled in further studies by the time the survey was conducted. Students without partners and/or children were also more likely than other groups to pursue further education.

Students who enrolled in further studies took a variety of different programs



The majority of former ABE students said it was very likely that they would enrol at a B.C. public post secondary institution again



The proportion of students who said they were *very likely* or *somewhat likely* to enrol in any more courses at a B.C. public post secondary institution was consistent across males and females, but varied with age. The students, ghed6(e)TJ/C201Tf0Tc00.4810Tpe0003Tj/TT01Tf02Tf062

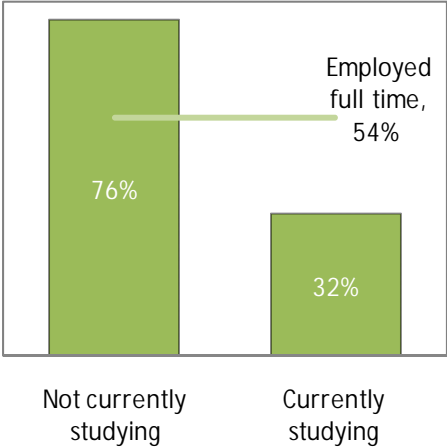
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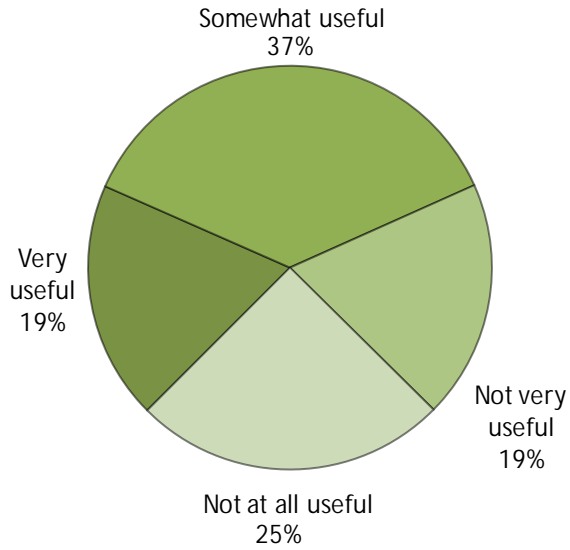
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Labour market outcomes varied somewhat, based upon the region where students were living at the time of the survey.⁹ Although labour force

Students who were enrolled in further studies were less likely to be working full time at the time of the survey

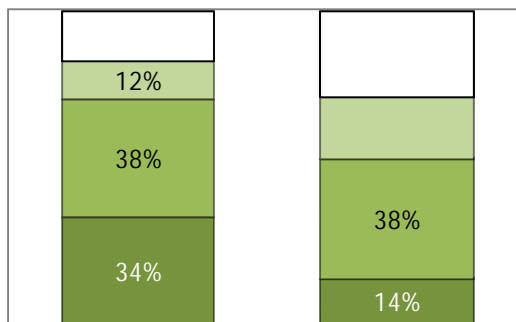


Employed students found the knowledge and skills gained in their ABE courses were useful in performing their jobs



Whether or not employed students found the knowledge and skills gained in their ABE courses useful in performing their jobs may be related to their main goal or reason for enrolling. Compared to students whose main goal was to prepare for further studies, students whose main goal was to improve their employment situation were far more likely to say that the knowledge and skills they gained were useful in performing their job. Of those whose main goal was to improve their employment situation, the majority (72 percent) found their courses *very* or *somewhat* useful.

Employed students who enrolled to improve their job situation found the knowledge and skills they gained useful in performing their jobs



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Students taking Adult Basic Education courses at B.C. public post secondary institutions may be eligible to receive financial assistance through the Adult Basic Education Student Assistance Program (ABESAP), offered through StudentAid BC. The ABESAP program provides funding in the form of a non repayable grant to students enrolled in development programs who can demonstrate financial need. Students can receive funding for tuition fees, books and

who applied for ABESAP funding actually received funding, compared to just 68 percent of students who were part of a couple.

More than one third of single parents applied for ABESAP funding

of students who did not have children, but was a main source of funding for only 36 percent of those who did have children. Single parents were more likely than other students to say ABESAP was one of their main sources of funding (14 percent), and less likely than other students to say support from family and friends (15 percent) was a main source.

Financial constraints can cause students to interrupt their studies or to end them sooner than they otherwise had planned. When asked if they ever had to stop their studies at their institution for financial reasons, 14 percent of respondents said *yes*. Among single parents, this figure was 23 percent.

The costs of relocating to attend school represent an additional financial strain to some students. Overall, 11 percent of former ABE students said that they moved from their home community to attend their institution. Given the large number **yes**

Findings: Former ESL Students

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In total, 1,347 former English as a Second Language (ESL) students from 15 different institutions were eligible to participate in the 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes Survey. Of these, 630 completed the survey, yielding an overall response rate of 47 per cent. The number of eligible students and respondents by institution can be found in

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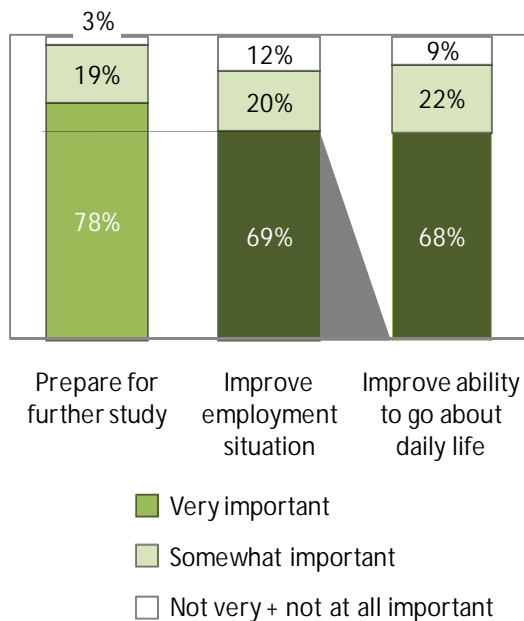
Three quarters of ESL students who came from another country had taken post secondary studies before coming to Canada

Highest Level of Education before coming to Canada	
Did not complete high school	6%
High school diploma	19%
Some post secondary (no credential)	10%
Post secondary certificate, diploma, or trades qualification	13%
Bachelor's degree	38%
Certificate or diploma above bachelor's level	2%
Masters, doctorate, law, go about daily life was <i>very or some</i>	

what important, and 88 percent said improving

their employment situation was *very or somewhat* important. Of those who provided a valid response to each of the three questions, 81 percent said all three goals were *very or somewhat* important to them.

ESL students had multiple reasons for taking English language training



After rating the importance of each goal described above (preparing for further study, improving employment situation, improving ability to go about daily life), former students were asked to provide the single most important goal or reason they had for enrolling in their courses. The most common response (41 percent) was to prepare for

further study, followed closely by using English better in daily life (36 percent). Approximately one fifth (19 percent) said their most important goal was to improve their employment situation, and a handful (4 percent) gave other goals, such as to complete high school or upgrade their skills.

More than half of all former students said that their ESL courses were *very helpful* in achieving their most important goal or reason for enrolling. Together, 85 percent found them very

The majority of ESL students chose their institution on the basis of its reputation

Why did you choose to attend [institution]?	
Reputation of institution	63%
It was located where I wanted to go to school	18%
I didn't have to move	17%
Transferability of courses	8%
Convenient schedule	7%
Less expensive	7%
It was the only place I could get these courses	6%
I was accepted into this institution	5%
I didn't have to wait too long to start	4%
Other	12%

Note: Multiple responses were allowed; percentages may add to more than 100%.

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Evaluation of courses

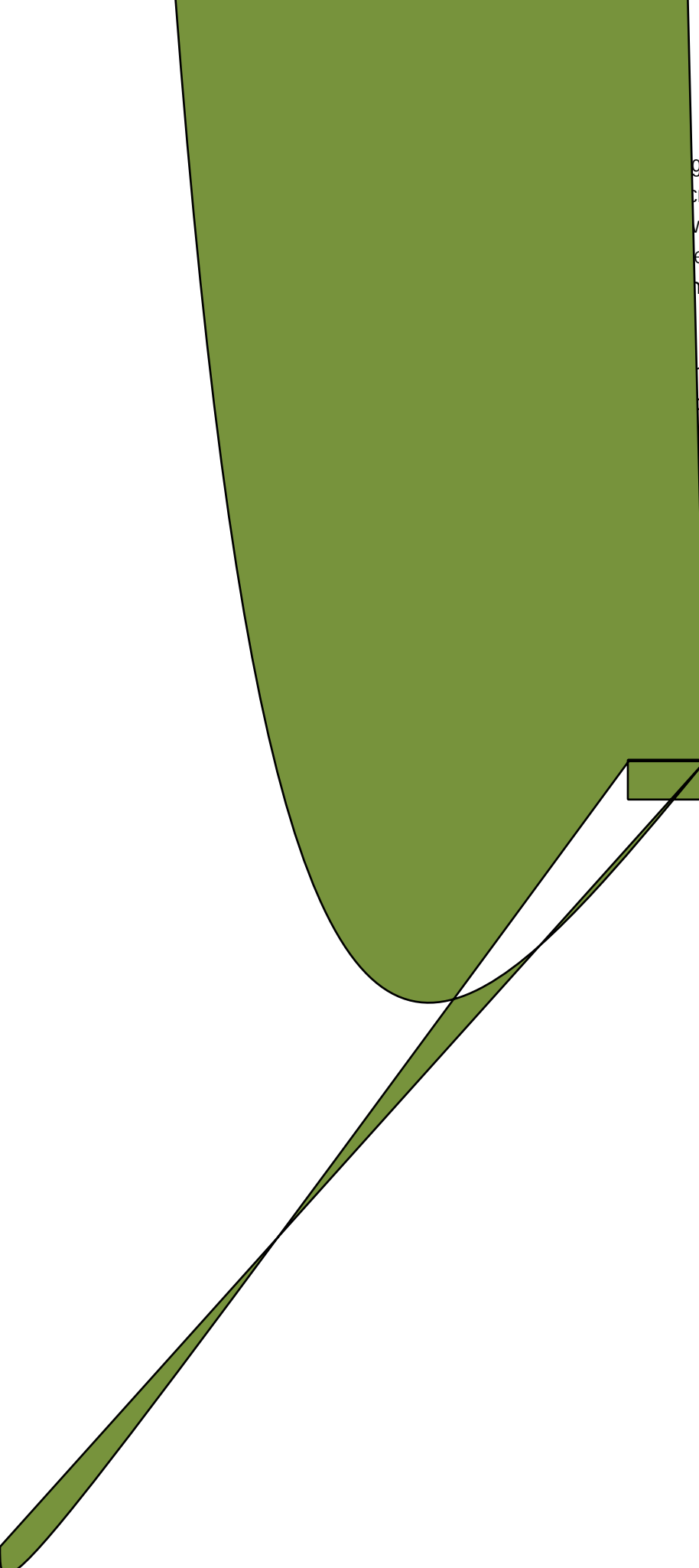
ESL courses aim to help students with all aspects of the English language: writing, reading, listening, and speaking. When asked about the helpfulness of their courses in each of these areas, the majority of students gave positive ratings. In general, however, students found their ESL courses the most helpful in developing English writing and reading skills.¹³

ESL courses helped

g, listening, and speaking skills, ESL courses
critical thinking, problem solving, working ef
vn, and feeling self confident. Respondents
helped them perform each of these skills, and
the skill was not relevant to the courses they

helpfulness of their ESL courses in each skill
overall ratings were: feel self confident (76
) and work with others (74 percent).

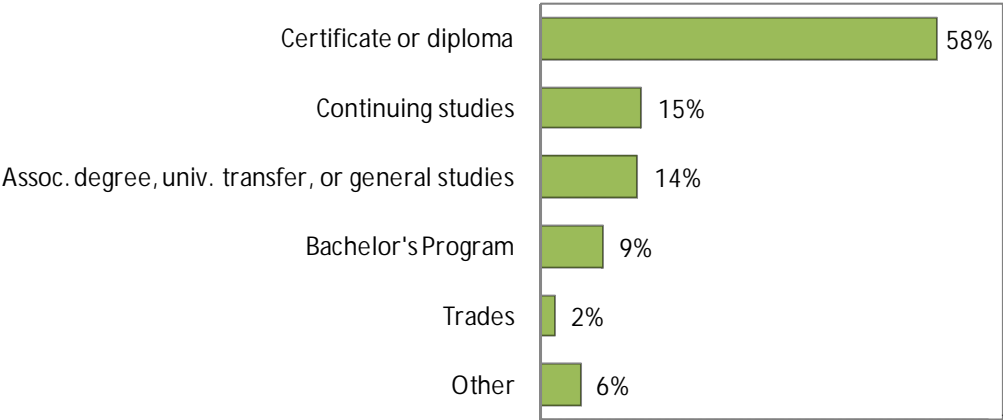
develop a number of important skills(ed)TJ/C2Ieae1Tf0Tc34mBD



The majority of former ESL students rated

*The class was meant to teach English but too much time was spent on Cana
~~Time~~*

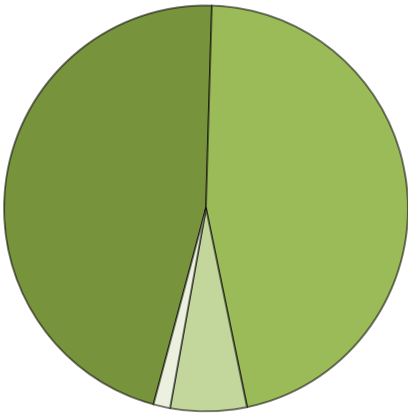
More than half of those who took further studies were enrolled in a certificate or diploma program



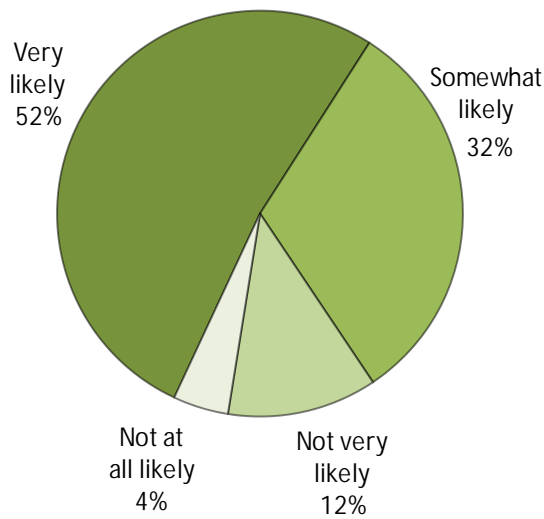
Note: Multiple responses were allowed; percentages may add to more than 100%.

Given that pursuing further studies is an important goal to so many former ESL students, it is essential that ESL courses adequately prepare students for higher levels of study. Of the students who went on to further studies, 93 percent said they were *very well* or *somewhat* prepared for the courses they took after leaving their ESL training.

ESL courses helped students prepare for further studies

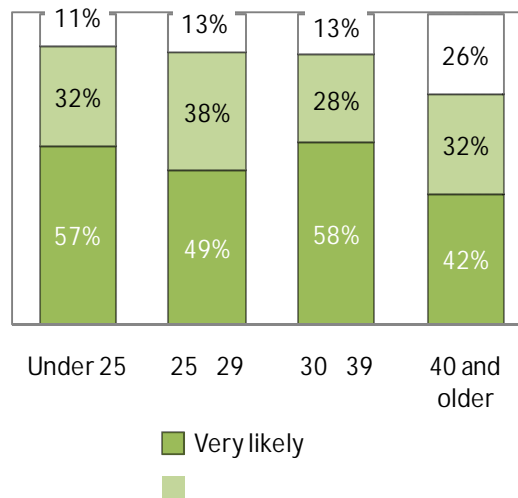


Just over half of all students said it was very likely they would enrol in a B.C. college, institute, or university again



The proportion of students who said they were *very likely* or *somewhat likely* to enrol in any more courses at a B.C. public post secondary institution was consistent across males and females, but varied with age. In general, younger students were more inclined to say that it was likely that they would enrol again.

In general, younger students were more likely to say they would enrol in a B.C. public post secondary institution again



1. Labour Market Outcomes

Overall, two thirds (67 percent) of former ESL students were in the labour force, that is, either working or looking for work. Exactly half of all former students were employed at the time of the survey, and about one quarter (24 percent) of those in the labour force were unemployed.

Labour market outcomes varied somewhat, based upon the region where students were living at the time of the survey.¹⁷ Although all three indicators (labour force participation, employment, and unemployment) were less favourable in the Mainland/Southwest region, only the difference in employment rates was actually significant. Among former students living in this region, the overall employment rate was only 49 percent, compared with 67 percent for former students living in the rest of the province.

*The proportion of respondents
who were*

Employed students who were enrolled in further studies

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Conclusion

The purpose of the 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes Survey was to ask former upper level Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) students to evaluate their educational experiences and to report on their transitions to the labour market and further education. This information is used by post secondary institutions and government to support post secondary curriculum planning, policy development, and accountability; provide information for program and service evaluations and educational planning; and guide educational choices for future students.

Although the ABE and ESL groups had very different characteristics and outcomes, they had similar goals for enrolling in their programs of study and they both gave positive ratings to many aspects of their courses. Most former ABE and ESL students said preparing for further education was an important goal to them; those who went on to further studies reported that their courses did a good job of preparing them. Likewise, the former students who were employed said that their studies provided them with useful skills. Almost all of the former students from both groups said they were satisfied with their courses.

Figure 1.1: Demographic Characteristics of Former ABE Students

Former ABE students were relatively young—the median age of students eligible for the survey was 23, and the large majority were under age 30. Almost two thirds of former ABE students were female, and most respondents were single with no children at the time they were studying. At the time they enrolled, most respondents had already completed their high school diploma, and some had taken previous post secondary education.

When asked to rate the importance of various reasons for enrolling, almost all former ABE students

Overlap between Cohorts

Approximately two percent of students included in the survey met the criteria for both ABE and ESL cohorts.¹⁹ These students were assigned to only **one** group, based on the majority of their courses completed during the exposure period (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2008). If the number of ABE and ESL courses were equal, then the student was assigned to a group based on the most recent course.

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The 2009 Developmental Student Outcomes (DEVSO)

Appendix:

Response rates by institution, ABE

In total, 3,480 former ABE students were eligible to participate in the survey. Of these, 1,533 completed the survey, yielding an overall response rate among ABE students of 44 percent.

Institution	Eligible for survey	Number of respondents	Response rate
British Columbia Institute of Technology	99	55	56%
Camosun College	305	103	34%
Capilano University	345	139	40%
College of New Caledonia	154	70	45%
College of the Rockies	60	26	43%
Douglas College	110	53	48%
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	460	232	50%
Langara College	64	28	44%
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	47	23	49%
North Island College	151	68	45%
Northern Lights College	42	15	36%
Northwest Community College	72	41	57%
Okanagan College	321	137	43%
Selkirk College	109	50	46%
Thompson Rivers University		102	38%
Thompson Rivers University Open Learning	9	4	44%
University of the Fraser Valley	1939	870	45%
Vancouver Community College	110	49	44%

Response rates by institution, ESL

In total, 1,347 former ESL students were eligible to participate in the survey. Of these, 630 completed the survey, yielding an overall response rate among ESL students of 47 percent.

Institution	Eligible for survey	Number of respondents	Response rate
British Columbia Institute of Technology	121	71	59%
Camosun College	41	17	41%
Capilano University	33	15	45%
College of New Caledonia	10	5	50%
College of the Rockies	2	0	0%
Douglas College	111	63	57%
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	179	80	45%
Langara College	62	37	60%
North Island College	10	4	40%
Okanagan College	51	26	51%
Selkirk College	9	7	78%
Thompson Rivers University	11	4	36%
University of the Fraser Valley	80		

Although interviewers with multiple language skills were available to help respondents with understanding, the survey interviews were conducted in English. The

