

Surveying Graduates in Ireland

Graduate Contact Information – 30 March 2021

Valerie Harvey
Head of Performance Evaluation
Higher Education Authority (Ireland)

Outline

Today's Presentation

- Higher Education in Ireland
- Graduate Outcomes Survey
- Graduate Contact Details – some case studies



Higher Education in Ireland

Size, scale etc.

- Ireland: population 5m
- Higher education system is mainly publicly funded
- 235k students each year in public system
- 78k graduates each year, 43k female and 35k male



GRADUATE
OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?

Higher Education in Ireland

Size, scale etc.

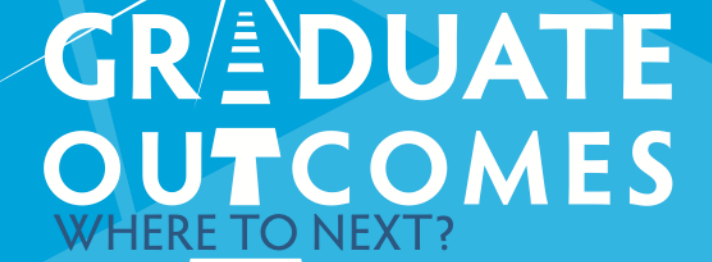
- 4 types of higher education institution – universities, technological universities, institutes of technology and specialist colleges
 - Dublin – 6 HEIs
 - Cork/Kerry – 2 HEIs
 - Limerick – 3 HEIs
 - Galway – 2 HEIs
 - Others (regional) – 7 HEIs



GRADUATE
OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?

Graduate Tracking

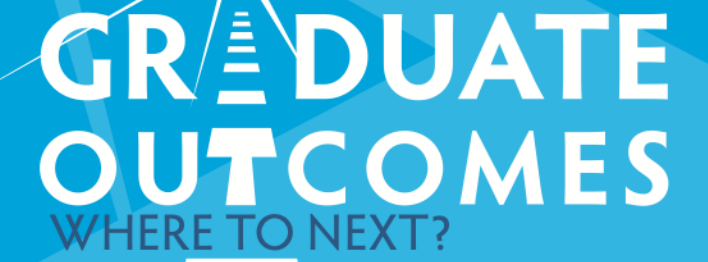
What happens in Ireland?



- Two approaches to graduate tracking in Ireland
- Survey: Graduate Outcomes Survey, coordinated by **Higher Education Authority** (state agency for Higher Education – funding, policy, statistics)
 - Annual Survey
 - Nine months after graduation (31 March census date) – new alumni
- Administrative: coordinated by **Central Statistics Office** (national statistics agency), allows for longitudinal tracking
- Will focus on **Graduate Outcomes Survey** today

Graduate Outcomes Survey

How was it developed?



- *Irish HEIs have carried out graduate surveys for many decades...*
- Current **Graduate Outcomes Survey** was fully introduced in 2018
- Started work on it in 2015 - Steering Group and subgroups (survey, implementation)
 - Consulted across HEIs, and at different levels within HEIs, both strategic/senior buy in, also those in implementation (Careers, IT/MIS, Data Protection, Communications)
 - Consulted with Ministry, other state agencies
- Gave HEIs the opportunity for a pilot year of survey in 2017
- Slow approach to build trust and cooperation

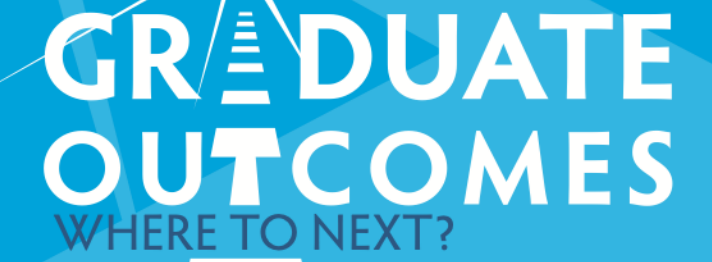
Who carries out the Survey?

And when?



- The Graduate Outcomes Survey is a single national survey for all graduates
- Carried out across all (publicly funded) HEIs in Spring/Summer of each year
- Managed by careers offices in each HEI
- Careers offices contact graduates of the previous year, compile responses, and return data to the HEA
 - The HEA holds the national dataset and carries out national analysis, data must be returned to the HEA by September of each year
 - HEIs use their own data for internal processes: quality assurance, programmatic review, marketing, alumni etc.

How is the Survey carried out?



- Graduates are first contacted by emails/texts
 - Graduates are asked to follow a link or log in to their student system to access the survey
- If no response after a number of texts/emails, HEIs then follow up with phone calls to graduates
- Survey response rate is 50% overall
 - It varies from 30% to 70% in different HEIs
 - How do HEIs ensure they have good **contact details** for those who have just graduated, and for a survey with a **fixed fieldwork** window?
 - Some HEIs (TUs/IoTs) do NOT have dedicated alumni offices so there are not formal structures in place! Work occurs in careers offices

Data Protection

Data Collection Notice

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OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?

- Issued to all students at registration
- Graduate Outcomes Survey:

You will be contacted approximately 9 months post-graduation by your Institution to fill out the survey



Graduate Outcomes Survey

Some case studies

- University of Limerick
- University College Cork
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
- Dundalk Institute of Technology



GRADUATE
OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?

University of Limerick

Case Study

GRADUATE
OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?

University of Limerick (UL)

Mid-West of Ireland

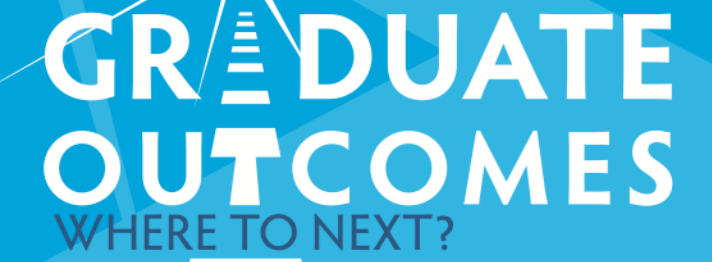
4,700 graduates each year

Nearly 70% response rate to
Graduate Outcomes Survey



University of Limerick

Case Study



- Basis for contact details is those collected in student information system (SITS)
 - Each student's UL email address and personal email address
 - Each student's home address
 - Each student's contact phone number
- Final year students are requested to review and update their contact information. They are contacted twice by email and twice by text to do this.
- UL also heavily uses **LinkedIn**, and encourages final year students to connect to the page and stay in contact after graduation

University of Limerick

Case Study



- Nearly 70% response rate to Graduate Outcomes Survey
- 40% of the response rate is obtained through email/text contact
- 30% of the response rate is through phone calls to graduates
- UL estimate that between 10% to 20% are uncontactable i.e. no email/phone, email bounce-back, phone does not ring

University College Cork

Case study

GRADUATE
OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?

University College Cork

South of Ireland

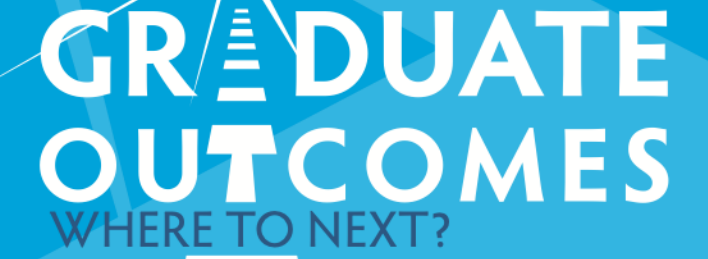
7,000 graduates each year

67% response rate to Graduate Outcomes Survey



University College Cork

Case study



- Basis for contact details is those collected in student information system
 - First email the UCC student accounts (these are active for life)
 - Then email the graduates' personal accounts (Gmail)
 - Then text the graduates' mobile phone numbers
- Then the social media campaign starts (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook)
- After a number of reminders, UCC start on 6-8 weeks of phone calls, starting with the mobile phone number and then the home number

University College Cork

Case study



- UCC provide careers supports to graduates for one year after graduation, careers consultations, access to jobs hub etc. so graduates are incentivized to stay in touch with the University

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

Case study

GRADUATE
OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?



Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

2,000 Graduates each year

5 campuses in the West of Ireland

No alumni office

Nearly 70% response rate to Graduate Outcomes Survey

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

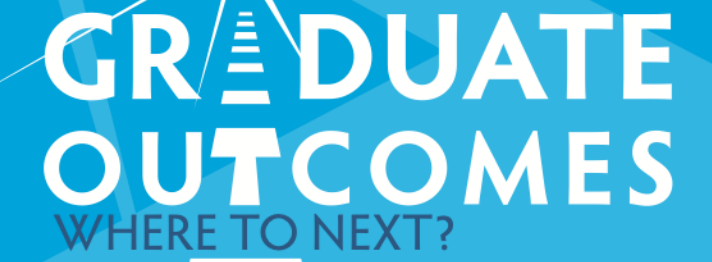
Case Study



- Basis for contact details is those collected in student information system (Banner)
- Update graduate contact details **at the graduation ceremony**
- First Name/ Surname/ GMIT ID no./ Current email address/ Current mobile number, in compliance with GDPR.
- When running the survey, they update all the contact details of all graduates eligible to receive the survey.
- This is an extensive and manual job. Problems include: Wrong GMIT ID, Phone number 1234567, email address nobody@gmail.com

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

Case Study



- Nearly 70% response to survey
- About 20% provide incorrect email addresses
- Phone call follow up done after initial period of contact by email/text

Dundalk Institute of Technology

Case study

GRADUATE
OUTCOMES
WHERE TO NEXT?



Dundalk Institute of Technology
(DKIT)

1,300 Graduates each year

Regional HEI, on border with
Northern Ireland

No alumni office

51% response rate to Graduate
Outcomes Survey

Dundalk Institute of Technology

Case Study



- Basis for contact details is those collected in student information system (Banner)
- Students are asked to update this every year
- **At graduation**, graduates are asked to sign up as alumni of the Institute, which entitles them to additional careers support. They also are told about the Survey and are encouraged to give their feedback and build a relationship with DKIT
- It takes 5-6 staff for 1,300 graduates each year, pen and paper approach

Dundalk Institute of Technology

Case Study



- Last year, there was no graduation ceremony (Covid)
 - Graduates were asked to update details online
 - Don't think there will be a negative impact on response rates
- Also use **LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook**, particularly academics' and departments' own pages to engage with students/graduates

Summary

Graduate Contact Information




- Survey is devolved to each HEI and they have different approaches
- Student Information System is the basis for contact details
- Details can be updated through
 - Request to final year students
 - At graduation
- Social media used a lot to connect with students in their final year
- Even without alumni offices, it is possible to build a good database of graduate contact details for those who have just graduated

Our contacts!

Get in touch

- Web: www.graduateoutcomes.ie
- Twitter: @gradsurveyIRL
- LinkedIn:
[linkedin.com/showcase/hea-graduate-outcomes/](https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/hea-graduate-outcomes/)





GRADUATE OUTCOMES

WHERE TO NEXT?