



2008 Survey of Qualified Applicants Final Report

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NRG Research Group

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hypothesis: The labour market is having the largest influence on students' decisions not to attend the institutions at which they were granted admission.

The key finding of this study is that getting a job was the most cited reason (20%) for not attending the institution Qualified Applicants were granted admission to; however, statistically speaking, it shares the top spot with financial reasons (17%).

Rounding out the top five reasons are:

- Simply changing their mind (14%)
- Attending an institution outside Alberta (11%)
- Family or personal reasons (7% each)

By sector¹, the labour market clearly had the largest influence on Polytechnical Institution (PI) Qualified Applicants as 31% found a job. Comprehensive Academic & Research Institution (CARI) Qualified Applicants did not attend their granted institution for two main reasons:

- found employment (17%); or
- changed their mind (11%).

For Comprehensive Community Institution (CCI) and Baccalaureate & Applied Studies Institution (BASI) Qualified Applicants, financial reasons and finding employment are cited almost equally.

PI Qualified Applicants are most likely to have taken employment in:

- Mining, Oil & Gas industry (15%); or
- Utilities (8%).

Reflecting the demographics of PI Qualified Applicants, men and those whose study area was Trades are also most likely to have been influenced by the labour market and specifically, in the Mining, Oil & Gas Industry (13% among men and 28% among Trades). Men are also likely to have found employment in Construction (11%).

CCI Qualified Applicants are more likely to be women, older, married and Aboriginal (15%). However, there is a distinct group here; they are Aboriginal women who may or may not have completed high school and have applied for Preparatory and Upgrade courses. The main reason they did not attend is financial, followed by personal and family reasons. This is the group who are most likely to attend an Alberta post-secondary institution in the next five years, but not this coming year.

CARI Qualified Applicants are not a distinct group except in terms of their parent's education which is most likely to be a Bachelor's or Graduate Degree. This group tends to be younger and the most likely to have left the province for their education in Arts or Applied Sciences. Furthermore, this group is the least likely to return to Alberta for post-secondary education. The other significant reason CARI Qualified Applicants gave for not attending is that they simply changed their mind, decided they needed some time off or were not ready for university yet. These are reasons most likely given by young adults

¹ This study was stratified by Alberta's post-secondary six sector model. A detailed list of institutions in each of the six sectors is available on Page 4 in Table 3-1. A small sample in the Independent Academic and Specialized Arts & Culture Institutions means that results may not be presented to the extent the other four sectors are presented.

who have just completed high school. Accordingly, they are the most likely to attend an Alberta post-secondary institution in the next year.

BASI Qualified Applicants are more likely to be women, aged 20-24, single, and to have completed high school. Their main reasons for not attending the institution granting admission include:

- financial reasons
- finding employment
- changing their mind

More than one-half of this group however, is planning to attend Alberta post-secondary this coming year.

Among the 16% who are not planning to pursue their post-secondary education in Alberta in the next five years, the most common reasons given are:

- plan to attend an institution outside of Alberta (34%);
- have a job (16%); and
- don't live in Alberta anymore/don't plan to move back (11%).

The younger the applicant, the more likely they are to pursue their education outside of Alberta. Conversely, the older the applicant, the more likely they are to have already found a job.

By sector, CARI Applicants are more likely to have chosen an institution outside of Alberta, while PI Applicants are more likely to have found a job.

2. SURVEY OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology (AET) works in partnership with post-secondary institutions to ensure that Alberta's post-secondary system is accessible, responsive, affordable and accountable. AET provides grant funding to 26 public post-secondary institutions comprising four universities, two colleges offering baccalaureate degrees, one specialized arts and culture institution, 11 colleges, two technical institutions and six private colleges with degree granting status.

Each year, many students apply for post-secondary education in Alberta. Each institution assesses the applications they receive and issues letters of acceptance to those students meeting their requirements. However, sending acceptance letters to potential students does not always result in students choosing to study at the institution issuing the acceptance letter.

Accordingly, AET contracted NRG Research Group to conduct a quantitative survey of Qualified Applicants to determine why they decided not to attend a post-secondary institution in Alberta. Hence, the primary objective of the research is to determine what factors play the largest role in determining that the Applicant would not attend an institution in Alberta.

For the purposes of this study, a Qualified Applicant is a student who was a resident of Alberta at the time they submitted their application to an Alberta post secondary institution but chose not to attend any institution in Alberta.

The results of the survey are presented in this report.

3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND RESPONSE RATES

A random telephone survey of qualified applicants was conducted between August 6th and September 14th, 2008. While on-line completion of the survey was offered to those who refused to participate in the telephone survey, only one person accepted this option and completed the survey on-line. In total, 1,632 surveys were completed. The distribution by sector and institution is shown in Table 3-1:

Table 3-1 Number of survey completes by Sector and Institution

Sector	# of completes	Sector	# of completes
Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution (CARI)	407	Comprehensive Community Institution (CCI)	483
University of Alberta	101	Bow Valley	45
University of Calgary	101	Grande Prairie	40
University of Lethbridge	105	Keyano	6
Athabasca University	100	Lakeland	22
Independent Academic Institution (IAI)	40	Lethbridge	48
Ambrose	0	Medicine Hat	56
Canadian	4	NorQuest	30
Concordia	20	Northern Lakes	73
St. Mary's	3	Olds	17
Taylor	2	Portage	45
King's	11	Red Deer	101
Baccalaureate and Applied Studies Institution (BASI)	370	Polytechnical Institution (PI)	320
Grant MacEwan	188	Northern Alberta	198
Mount Royal	182	Southern Alberta	122
		Specialized Arts and Culture Institution (SACI)	12
		Alberta College of Art and Design	12

While the original goal was to complete 400 interviews per sector with a minimum 100 per institution, this was not achieved in all cases due to limited sample for some institutions and a delay in receiving sample files from others. The overall response rate for this study is 36%. A detailed breakdown of the call dispositions can be found in appendix B along with response rates by sector, institution and area of study.

The sample of Qualified Applicants was provided by AET and the institutions. AET used the Alberta Student Number (ASN) to separate students who are enrolled in an Alberta Institution and those who had applied but are not enrolled in the system. This data file was then sent to each institution to populate with the student's contact information, date of birth and field of study. These forms were then submitted directly to NRG.

When telephone interviewing started on August 6th, it was without sample files from University of Alberta and three colleges: Ambrose, Olds and Taylor. University of Alberta sent their sample file through on August 12th while the three colleges sent theirs on August 26th.

For any out-of-service or wrong numbers encountered, NRG used a variety of sources to locate the up-to-date number including telephone directories, online directories and directory assistance.

Table 3-2 General area of study

Area of study	n	%
Languages, Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities (Arts)	419	26%
Physical, Natural & Applied Sciences (Science)	262	16%
Business	214	13%
Preparatory & Basic Upgrading (Preparatory)	175	11%
Health Sciences (Health Sci.)	168	10%
Trades & Technologists (Trade)	109	7%
Other*	228	14%
Undeclared/unknown	57	3%

Base: All respondents, n=1,632; *other includes education, legal & security, recreation and other fields of study.

Margins of Error

The following table outlines the maximum margins of error at the 95% level of confidence associated with the total sample and the various sector sub-samples:

Table 3-3 Margins of error by sector

Sector or Institution	Sample Sizes	Max. Margin of Error
Total	1,632	+/-2%
Comprehensive Community Institution	483	+/-4%
Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution	407	+/-5%
Baccalaureate and Applied Studies Institution	370	+/-5%
Polytechnical Institution	320	+/-5%

Independent Academic Institutions and Specialized Arts and Culture Institutions both have sub-sample sizes less than 50. Therefore, those results should be viewed with caution. Throughout this report, we present results for various sub-groups of demographic characteristics, sectors of institution and areas of studies applied for. We have limited our comments to those findings that are statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence. To determine significance, we used independent T-Tests for means and Z-Tests for percentages.

4. SURVEY RESULTS

4a Demographics

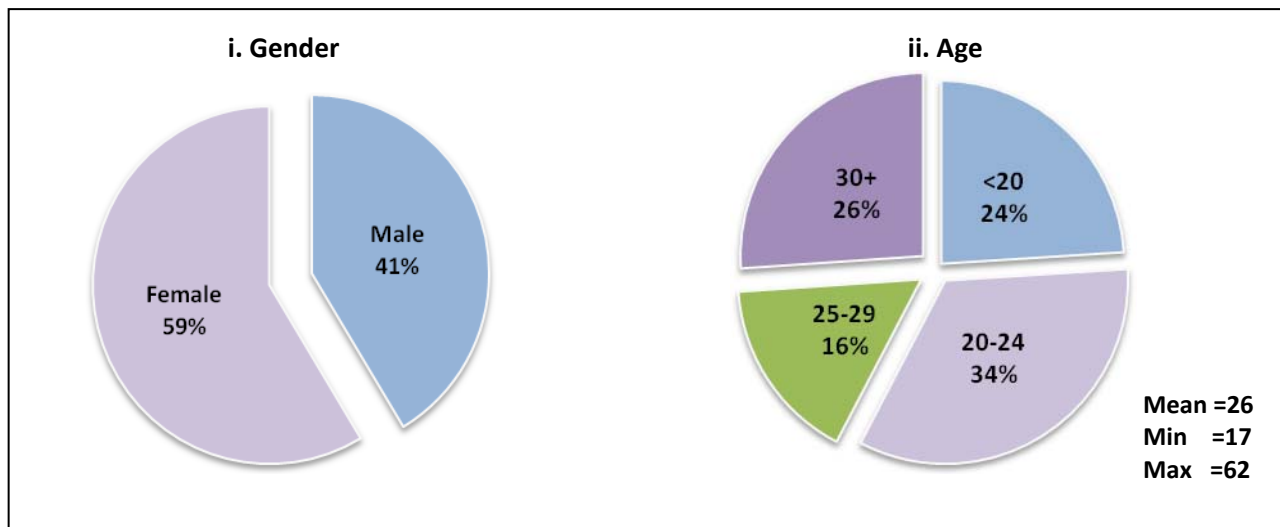
Key respondent demographic characteristics include gender, age, marital status, respondent's highest education level and their parents' highest education level, as well as whether the respondent belongs to a visible minority group, and/or their Aboriginal identity and status.

Qualified Applicants not attending post secondary in Alberta are more likely to be women (59%). Almost six in ten are under the age of 25 while 16% are between 25 and 29 years and one-quarter are 30 years of age or older. Given the predominance of younger respondents, it is not unexpected that almost 70% are single, never married.

The highest level of education completed for four in ten Qualified Applicants is high school while almost one-quarter have some post-secondary education. More than one-quarter of Qualified Applicants have completed post-secondary education, either at a college, technical institute or university. Among parents of Qualified Applicants, the majority have completed post secondary education; almost four in ten have completed university with either a Bachelor's or Graduate Degree while almost two in ten have completed post secondary at a college or technical school.

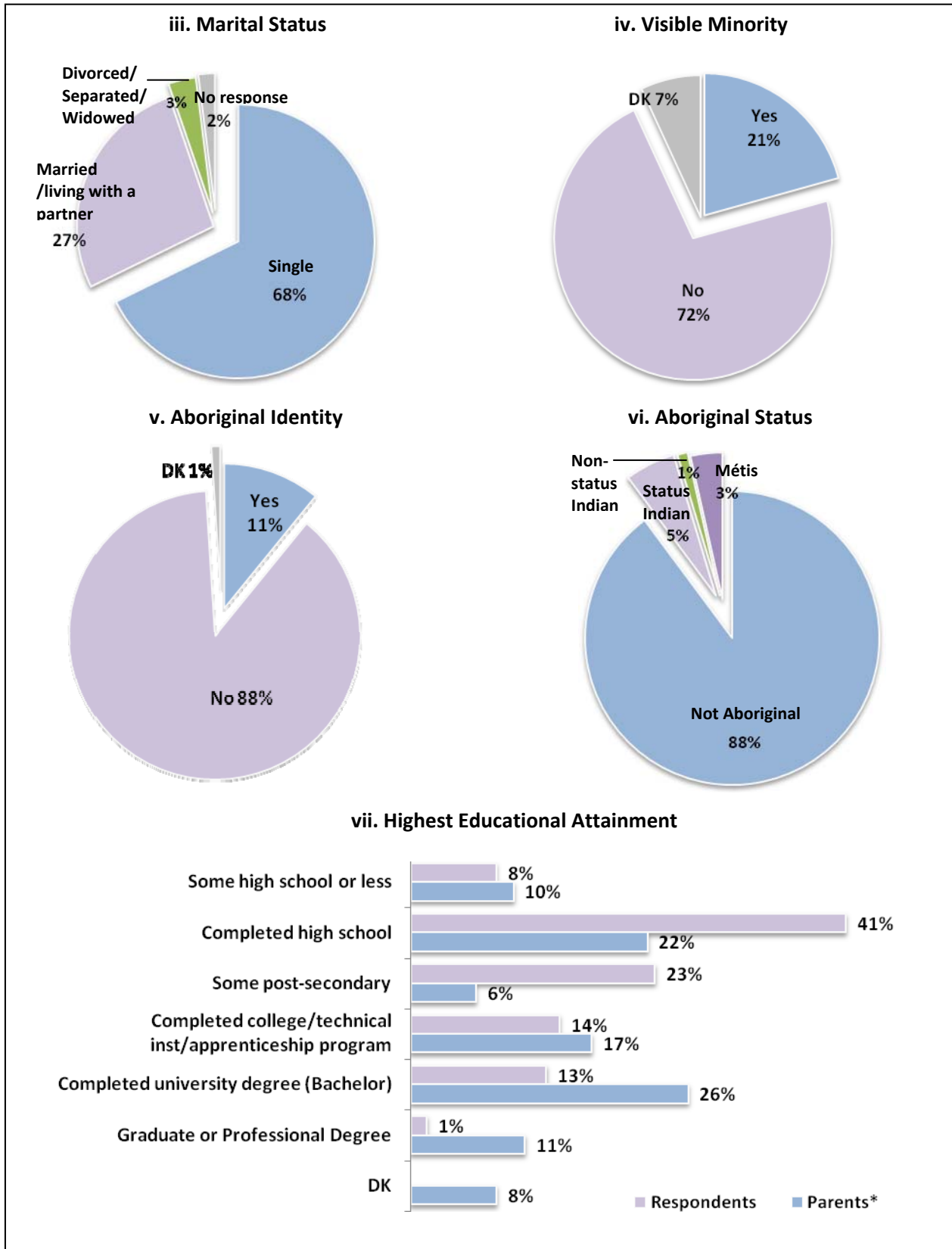
Two in ten Qualified Applicants consider themselves to be a member of a visible minority group and one in ten consider themselves to be Aboriginal, with almost one-half being Status Indian, followed by Métis. Interestingly, five percent of Aboriginals do not consider themselves to be a member of a minority group.

Figure 4a-1 Key demographic characteristics



Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Figure 4a-1 Key demographic characteristics (Cont'd)



Base: All respondents, n=1,632; *achieved by either parent

i. Profile By Gender

By gender, there are some notable demographic differences (shown in Table 4a-1). Men tend to be younger (i.e. 39% are aged 20-24 compared to 30% among women) thus are more likely to be single (79%). Conversely, women are more likely to be 30 years or older (30% vs. 20% among men) and married (33%).

Men are more likely to have completed high school (48% vs. 36% among women) and their parents are more likely to have completed university with either a Bachelor's or Graduate Degree (45% vs. 31% among women). Women are twice as likely as men to have not finished high school (10% vs. 5%), but they are also more likely to have completed post secondary at a college or technical institution (17% vs. 10% among men). Parents of female Qualified Applicants are also more likely to have not completed high school (12% vs. 6% among parents of male Qualified Applicants).

While men are more likely to be a member of a visible minority (24% vs. 19% among women), women are more likely to be Aboriginal (13% vs. 7% among men).

Table 4a-1 Demographic characteristics by Gender

Demographic Characteristic	Male (n=675)	Female (n=957)	Total (n=1,632)
Age Range			
< 20	25%	23%	24%
20 - 24	39%	30%	34%
25 - 29	15%	17%	16%
30+	20%	30%	26%
Marital Status			
Single - never married	79%	61%	68%
Married or living with a partner	18%	33%	27%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	2%	4%	3%
No response	1%	2%	1%
Member of a Visible Minority Group			
Yes	24%	19%	21%
No	72%	73%	72%
DK/No response	5%	8%	7%
Aboriginal Person			
Yes	7%	13%	11%
No	92%	85%	88%
DK/No response	1%	2%	1%
Highest level of education			
Some high school or less	5%	10%	8%
Completed high school	48%	36%	41%
Some post-secondary	24%	22%	23%
Completed college/technical inst/apprenticeship	10%	17%	14%
Completed university degree	12%	13%	13%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1%	1%	1%

Demographic Characteristic	Male (n=675)	Female (n=957)	Total (n=1,632)
No response	0%	1%	0%
Parents' highest level of education			
Some high school or less	6%	12%	10%
Completed high school	20%	24%	22%
Some post-secondary	6%	6%	6%
Completed college/technical inst/apprenticeship	16%	18%	17%
Completed university degree	32%	22%	26%
Graduate or Professional Degree	13%	9%	11%
DK/No response	7%	9%	9%

ii. Profile By Sector

By Institution Sector, Qualified Applicants of Comprehensive Community Institutions (CCI) are the most identifiable group (Table 4a-2). They are more likely to be women (72%), older (33% are 30+ years), married (37%), Aboriginal (24%) and to have not completed high school (22%).

Polytechnical Institutions (PI) have the highest proportion of male Qualified Applicants (67%) and are more likely to have just completed high school (48%). These applicants are also more likely to be a member of a visible minority (26%) but not necessarily of Aboriginal background.

Qualified Applicants of both PIs and Baccalaureate and Applied Studies Institutions (BASI) are more likely than Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution (CARI) and CCI Qualified Applicants to be aged 20-24, single and to have completed high school. BASI Qualified Applicants are also slightly skewed female (64%).

CARI Qualified Applicants are not a distinct group except in terms of their education and their parent's education. These applicants are more likely to have some post secondary education (32%) or already have a Bachelor's Degree (21%) while their parents are most likely to have completed university with either a Bachelor's Degree (34%) or Graduate Degree (19%).

By study area, CCIs have the highest proportion of those applying in Preparatory & Basic Upgrading courses (30%) while not surprisingly, PIs have the highest proportion of Trades & Technologists (26%), followed by Physical, Natural & Applied Sciences (23%). CARIs have the highest proportion of Languages, Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities (33%) and Physical, Natural & Applied Sciences (26%) applicants.

Table 4a-2 Demographic characteristics by Sector of institution

Demographic Characteristic	Sector						Total (n=1,632)
	CARI (n=407)	BASI (n=370)	CCI (n=483)	PI (n=320)	IAI (n=40)*	SACI (n=12)*	
Gender							
Male	41%	36%	28%	67%	48%	33%	41%
Female	59%	64%	72%	33%	53%	67%	59%
Age Range							
< 20	27%	28%	19%	22%	23%	67%	24%
20 - 24	29%	38%	30%	39%	40%	25%	34%
25 - 29	17%	15%	18%	16%	13%	8%	16%

Demographic Characteristic	Sector						Total (n=1,632)
	CARI (n=407)	BASI (n=370)	CCI (n=483)	PI (n=320)	IAI (n=40)*	SACI (n=12)*	
30+	27%	19%	33%	23%	25%	0%	26%
Marital Status							
Single - never married	67%	76%	57%	75%	83%	100%	68%
Married or living with a partner	28%	20%	37%	23%	10%	0%	27%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	4%	3%	5%	1%	5%	0%	3%
No response	1%	1%	2%	0%	3%	0%	1%
Member of a Visible Minority Group							
Yes	13%	19%	27%	26%	15%	17%	21%
No	86%	77%	58%	69%	80%	83%	72%
DK/No response	1%	4%	16%	5%	5%	0%	7%
Aboriginal Person							
Yes	2%	6%	24%	8%	10%	0%	11%
No	98%	92%	73%	91%	90%	100%	88%
DK/No response	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Aboriginal Status							
Not an Aboriginal person	98%	92%	73%	91%	0%	100%	88%
Status Indian	1%	1%	15%	3%	5%	0%	5%
Non-status Indian	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Inuit	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Métis	1%	2%	6%	4%	3%	0%	3%
Other	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
DK/No response	0%	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%	0%
Highest level of education							
Some high school or less	1%	2%	22%	3%	5%	0%	8%
Completed high school	28%	51%	38%	48%	50%	58%	41%
Some post-secondary	32%	23%	17%	20%	18%	33%	23%
Completed college/technical inst/apprenticeship	16%	12%	13%	14%	13%	0%	14%
Completed university degree	21%	11%	8%	12%	15%	8%	13%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1%	1%	1%	3%	0%	0%	1%
No response	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Parents' highest level of education							
Some high school or less	7%	6%	18%	6%	6%	0%	10%
Completed high school	15%	23%	26%	25%	23%	17%	22%
Some post-secondary	6%	6%	7%	5%	8%	0%	6%
Completed college/technical inst/apprenticeship	15%	18%	17%	18%	28%	0%	17%
Completed university degree	34%	27%	17%	28%	28%	42%	26%
Graduate or Professional Degree	19%	11%	4%	10%	8%	25%	11%

Demographic Characteristic	Sector						Total (n=1,632)
	CARI (n=407)	BASI (n=370)	CCI (n=483)	PI (n=320)	IAI (n=40)*	SACI (n=12)*	
DK/No response	5%	9%	12%	8%	3%	17%	8%
Area of Study							
Languages, Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities (Arts)	33%	28%	17%	22%	38%	100%	26%
Physical, Natural & Applied Sciences (Science)	26%	9%	8%	23%	18%	0%	16%
Business	14%	14%	13%	12%	10%	0%	13%
Preparatory & Basic Upgrading (Preparatory)	0%	8%	30%	1%	0%	0%	11%
Health Sciences (Health Sci.)	11%	11%	11%	5%	23%	0%	10%
Trades & Technologists (Trades)	0%	1%	5%	26%	0%	0%	7%
Other ¹	9%	22%	16%	9%	13%	0%	14%
Undeclared/unknown	5%	8%	0%	3%	0%	0%	3%

Note: *Interpret with caution given the small sample size

¹Other includes education, legal & security, recreation and other fields of study.

iii. Profile By Area of Study

By study area, those who applied in Preparatory Studies did so primarily at CCIs (see Table 4a3 below). The demographic profile of this group of Qualified Applicants is similar to that of CCIs; that is, women who are older, married, most likely to be Aboriginal and who have not completed high school.

Those applying in Health Sciences are also more likely to be women (86%), older (37% are 30+ years) and married but they are more likely to have completed post secondary at a college or technical institution (26%) and are not a visible minority or Aboriginal. This profile is similar for those applying in Education; women (89%), older (34% aged 30+) and married (34%). However, this group is more likely to already have a Bachelor's Degree (24%).

Those applying in Physical, Natural & Applied Sciences studies are skewed male (68%), tend to be younger (71% under aged 25) and therefore, single (84%). They are more likely to be a visible minority (24%) but not an Aboriginal person (4%). Their highest level of education attained to-date is high school completion while their parents are most likely to have a completed University with a Bachelor's Degree (35%) or Graduate Degree (15%).

The other two study areas that are skewed male are Trades (75%) and Recreation (54%). Trades also has a higher than average proportion of Aboriginal persons (17%).

Table 4a-3 Demographic characteristics by Area of study

Demographic Characteristic	Area of Study						Total (n=1,632)
	Business (n=214)	Health Sci (n=168)	Arts (n=419)	Science (n=262)	Preparatory (n=175)	Trades (n=109)	
Gender							
Male	35%	14%	39%	68%	31%	75%	41%
Female	65%	86%	61%	32%	69%	25%	59%
Age Range							
< 20	18%	23%	27%	32%	13%	27%	24%
20 - 24	38%	24%	32%	39%	33%	33%	34%
25 - 29	18%	16%	16%	11%	23%	11%	16%
30+	26%	37%	26%	17%	31%	29%	26%
Marital Status							
Single - never married	64%	57%	70%	84%	56%	71%	68%
Married or living with a partner	32%	38%	26%	14%	37%	28%	27%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	3%	4%	3%	2%	5%	1%	3%
DK/No response	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Member of a Visible Minority Group							
Yes	21%	16%	16%	24%	37%	19%	21%
No	73%	82%	78%	72%	39%	70%	72%
DK/No response	5%	2%	6%	4%	23%	11%	8%
Aboriginal Person							
Yes	11%	5%	6%	4%	35%	17%	11%
No	87%	94%	92%	96%	62%	79%	88%
DK/No response	2%	1%	1%	0%	3%	4%	1%
Aboriginal Status							
Not an Aboriginal person	89%	95%	94%	96%	65%	83%	88%
Status Indian	5%	2%	3%	2%	25%	7%	5%
Non-status Indian	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	4%	1%
Inuit	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Métis	4%	3%	3%	2%	6%	4%	3%
Other	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	3%	0%
Highest level of education							
Some high school or less	6%	1%	3%	2%	44%	9%	8%
Completed high school	34%	34%	44%	42%	36%	49%	41%
Some post-secondary	25%	24%	26%	29%	8%	11%	23%
Completed college/technical inst/apprenticeship	23%	26%	12%	10%	5%	14%	14%
Completed university degree	11%	13%	13%	16%	6%	16%	13%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%
No response	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

iv. Impact of Parents' Education

Perhaps not unexpected, there is a correlation between parents' education and that of their children in that the higher the parents' education, the higher the child's education. Qualified Applicants who have not completed high school are significantly more likely to have parents who also did not complete high school (37% vs. 7% among all others). Conversely, Qualified Applicants who have completed university are significantly more likely to have a parent who also has a university degree (56% vs. 33% among all others). Another trend relates to age; the older the Qualified Applicant, the less likely either of their parents are to have post secondary education

In turn, these demographic trends reflect the profile of Qualified Applicants by sector and area of study. CCI Qualified Applicants are more likely to have parents who have no more than high school education (18% vs. 6% among all others) while CARI Qualified Applicants are more likely to have parents who have university degrees (53% vs. 31% among all others).

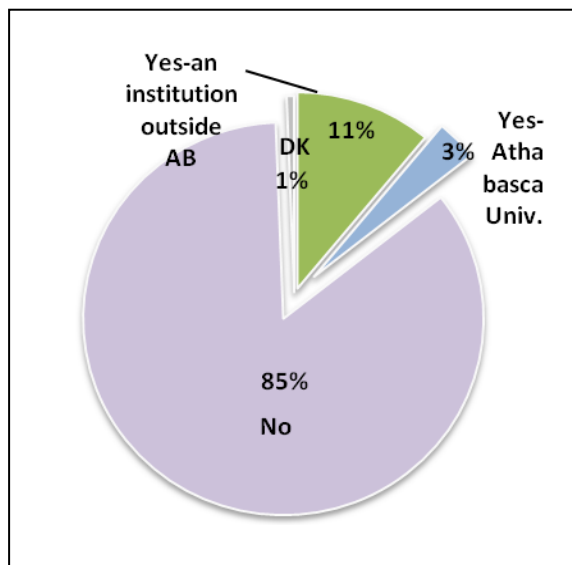
Those applying for Preparatory and Upgrade courses tend to do so at CCIs, therefore, their parents are also most likely to have no more than high school education. Applied Sciences and Arts Qualified Applicants are more likely to have parents with University Degrees. Qualified Applicants in the Trade and Technology area are more likely to have parents who have completed a college, technical Institution or an apprenticeship program (28% vs. 16% among other Qualified Applicants).

4b Attendance Outside Alberta

Among Qualified Applicants, 11% did choose an out-of-province institution and while another three percent technically did not “attend” an Alberta institution, they did take some courses on-line through Athabasca University (Figure 4b-1).

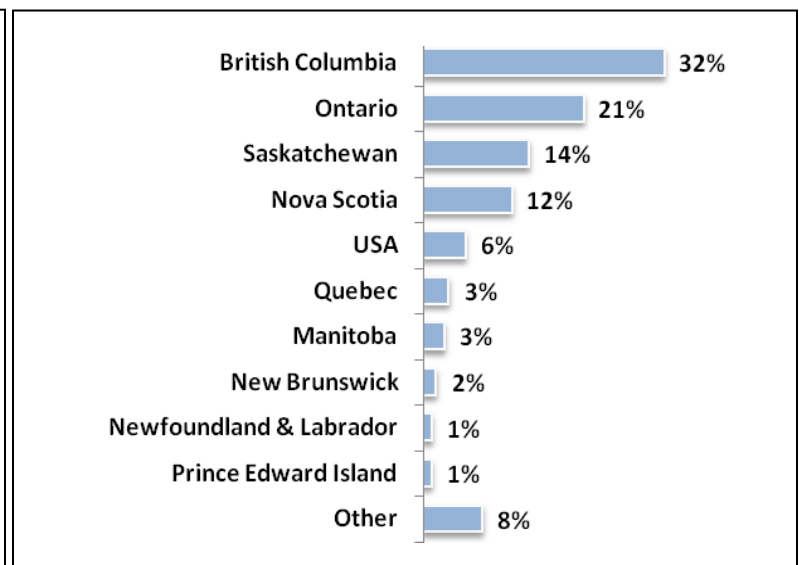
Among those leaving the province, the top four destinations include British Columbia (32%), Ontario (21%), Saskatchewan (14%) and Nova Scotia (12%). All other locations were mentioned by less than 10% (Figure 4b-2).

Figure 4b-1 Attendance of a post-secondary institution outside AB in fall 07/winter 08



Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Figure 4b-2 Location of the post-secondary institution outside AB



Base: Respondents who attended a post-secondary institution outside Alberta during the Fall of 07 and/or Winter 08 semester (excluding Athabasca University), n=180

Those leaving the province are equally likely to be male or female, but they definitely tend to be younger (48% are under 20 years of age and 39% are 20-24 years, Table 4b-1). The majority (57%) has some post-secondary education; therefore, perhaps it is not unexpected that 61% of those leaving the province are CARI Qualified Applicants. Language Arts (29%) and Applied Sciences (28%) are the areas of study students are most likely to pursue outside of Alberta.

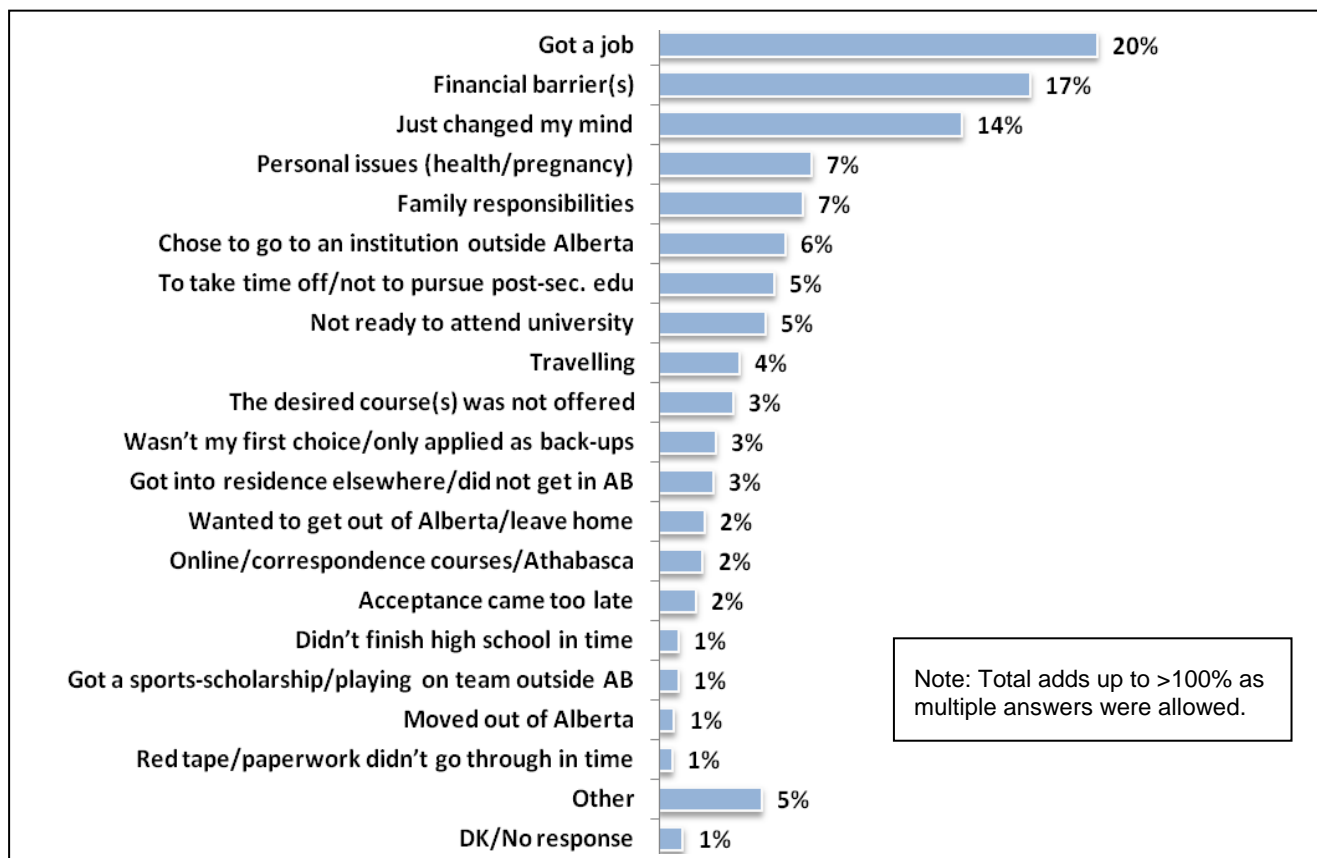
4c Reasons for Currently Not Attending

The top three reasons for not currently attending an Alberta post-secondary institution are: got a job (20%), financial reasons (17%), and changed their mind (14%, Figure 4c-1). Aside from the 11% who chose to leave the province to go to school, other main reasons for not attending included a desire to take time off/do some travelling (9%), family responsibilities (7%), and personal issues (7%). Other less common reasons, each mentioned by no more than three percent, include paperwork not going through in time, not finishing high school in time, acceptance coming too late, only applied as back up, and did not offer desired courses

Among those who got a job, the top five industries which account for 40% of all jobs were Mining, Oil and Gas (10%), Retail (10%), Health Care (8%), Professional and Technical Services (6%) and Construction (6%, Figure 4c-3).

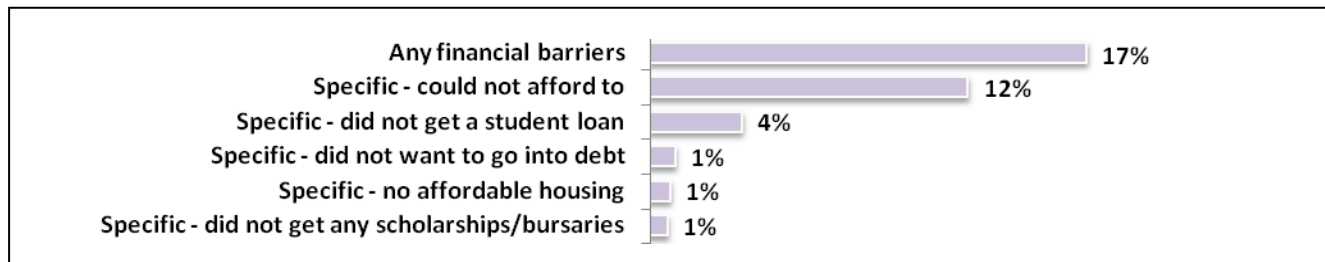
Among those citing financial reasons, the majority simply stated they could not afford to attend (12%) while four percent specifically mentioned they did not get a student loan (Figure 4c-2).

Figure 4c-1 Reasons for not attending an AB post-secondary institution in fall 07/winter 08



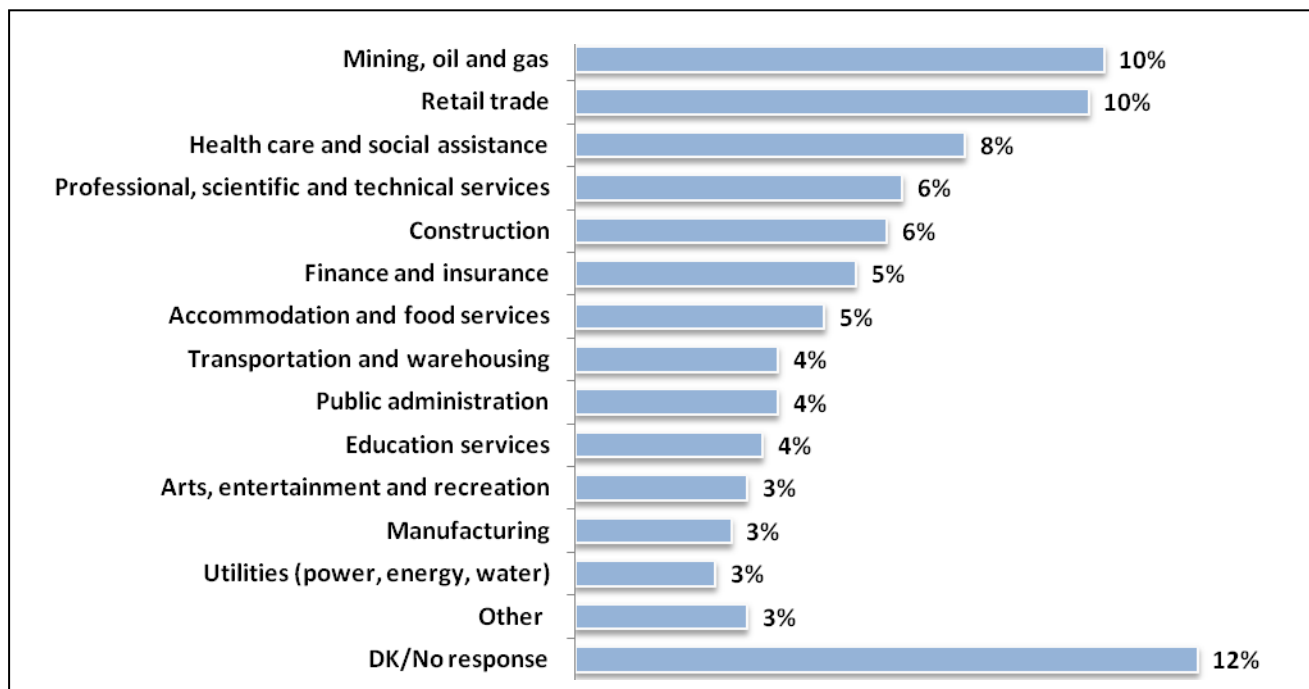
Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Figure 4c-2 Various financial barriers



Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Figure 4c-3 Industry of current employment



Base: Respondents who got a job and thus did not attend a post-secondary institution in AB in fall 2007/winter 2008, n=328; categories accounting for <3% are not presented.

Men are more likely to have found employment while women are more likely to not attend because of personal and family reasons (refer to Table 4c-1). Older Qualified Applicants are also more likely to cite employment, financial, personal and family responsibilities as reasons while younger Qualified Applicants are more likely to have simply “changed their minds”. Aboriginals are most likely to cite not attending for financial reasons, and more specifically, for not getting a student loan.

Those with some high school or less education are most likely to cite financial reasons (33%) while those who have completed high school are most likely to want time off/to travel (15%) or they feel they are not yet ready for university (7%).

By sector and study area, PIs and those studying Trades have the highest proportion of Qualified Applicants who found employment (31% for both). CCI Qualified Applicants and those taking Upgrading Courses tend to be women, older, married and are more likely to cite financial, family and personal reasons. CARI Qualified Applicants are the least likely to cite financial barriers as a reason for not attending and the most likely to have gone out-of-province, as are those who applied for Sciences.

Table 4c-1 Reasons for not attending an AB post-secondary institution in fall 07/winter 08 by Demographic characteristics

Demographic Characteristic	n	Reason(s) ²				
		Job	Financial	Changed mind	Personal	Family
Gender						
Male	675	25%	16%	14%	4%	3%
Female	957	16%	17%	14%	9%	9%
Age Range						
< 20	391	14%	9%	19%	4%	2%
20 - 24	549	19%	18%	16%	7%	4%
25 - 29	265	28%	22%	9%	7%	9%
30+	425	23%	20%	9%	11%	13%
Aboriginal Person						
Yes	177	16%	32%	8%	11%	11%
No	1,432	20%	15%	15%	7%	6%
Highest level of education						
Some high school or less	130	10%	33%	10%	13%	15%
Completed high school	665	21%	17%	17%	6%	4%
Some post-secondary	373	15%	14%	10%	6%	6%
Completed college/technical inst/apprenticeship	227	32%	17%	12%	6%	9%
Completed university degree	207	21%	11%	13%	9%	8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	24	25%	17%	21%	4%	13%
Sector						
Comprehensive Academic & Research Ins.	407	17%	7%	11%	5%	5%
Baccalaureate & Applied Studies Institution	370	16%	19%	14%	6%	7%
Comprehensive Community Institution	483	19%	22%	14%	11%	10%
Polytechnical Institution	320	31%	19%	17%	6%	3%
Independent Academic Institution ¹	40	20%	18%	15%	10%	5%
Specialized Arts and Culture Institution ¹	12	0%	25%	8%	0%	8%
Areas of Study						
Languages, Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities	419	20%	13%	14%	6%	7%
Physical, Natural & Applied Sciences	262	19%	15%	13%	4%	3%
Business	214	25%	13%	14%	7%	7%
Preparatory & Basic Upgrading	175	18%	29%	6%	10%	15%
Health Sciences	168	15%	14%	16%	7%	10%
Trades & Technologists	109	31%	23%	17%	6%	1%
Other*	228	18%	21%	16%	12%	6%

Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Note: ¹ Interpret with caution given the small sample size

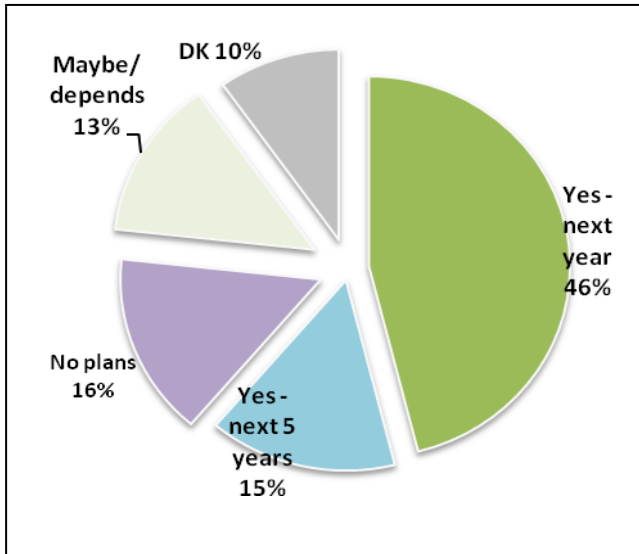
² Reasons are not mutually exclusive.

* Other includes education, legal & security, recreation and other fields of study.

4d Future Attendance Plans

More than six in ten Qualified Applicants plan to attend an Alberta post-secondary institution within the next five years including 46% who plan on attending in the next academic year (Figure 4d-1). While almost one-quarter are undecided about their future education in Alberta, 16% have decided that they will not attend an Alberta post-secondary institution in the next five years.

Figure 4d-1 Plans to attend an AB post-secondary institution in the next five years

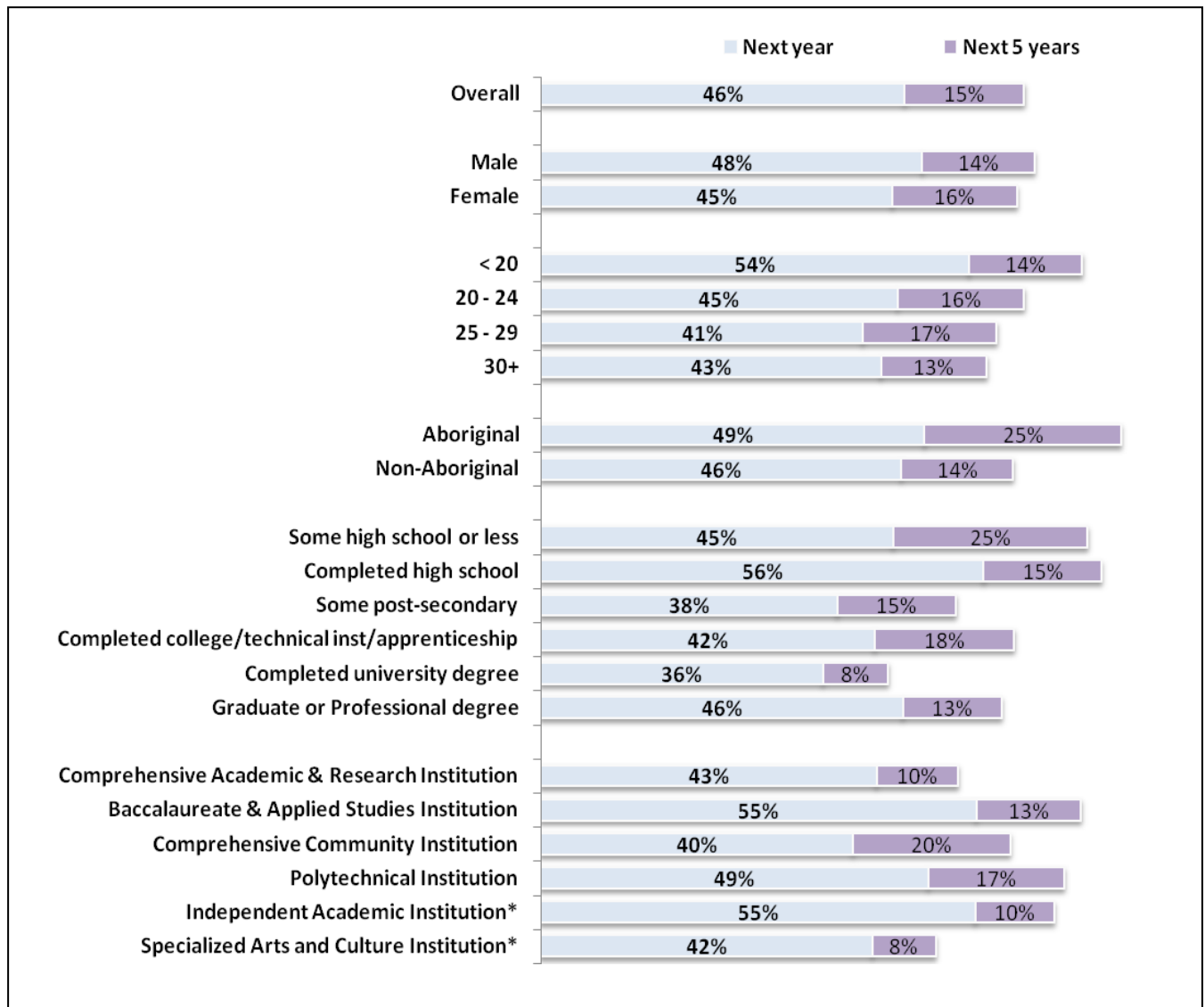


Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Those most likely to attend an Alberta post-secondary institution in the next year are young, that is, under 20 years of age (54%), and have completed their high school education (56%). They are most likely to have applied at a BASI (55%).

Those who are most likely to attend an Alberta post-secondary institution in the next five years, but not this coming year, are Aboriginal persons who have applied at CCIs and are most likely taking Upgrading courses as they have not completed high school.

Figure 4d-2 Plans to attend an AB post-secondary institution in the next five years by Demographic characteristics



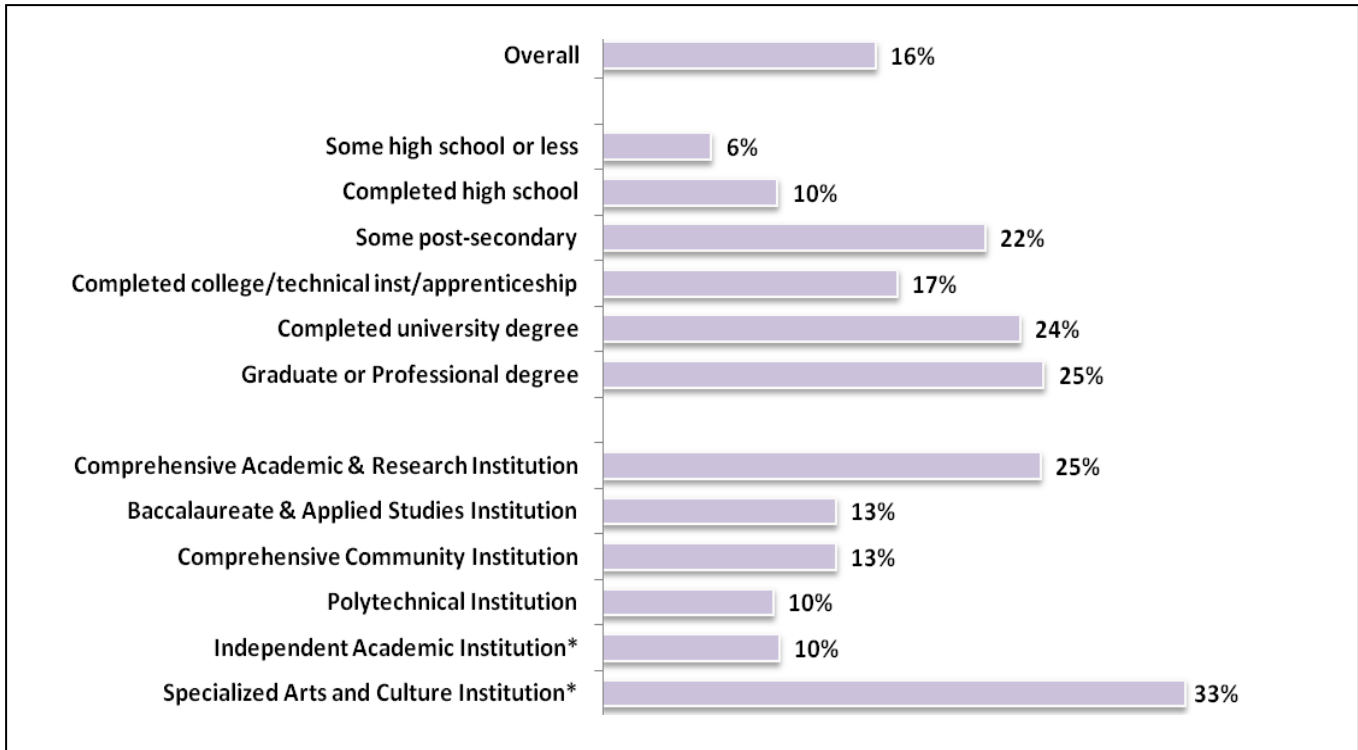
Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Note: * Interpret with caution given the small sample size

4e Reasons for Not Attending in Future

Overall, 16% of Qualified Applicants are not planning to pursue their post-secondary education in Alberta in the next five years. These Applicants are more likely to already have some post-secondary or have completed post-secondary education. It fits then, that they are also more likely to have applied at CARIs.

Figure 4e-1 Respondents not pursuing post-secondary education in AB in the next 5 years by Demographic characteristics



Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

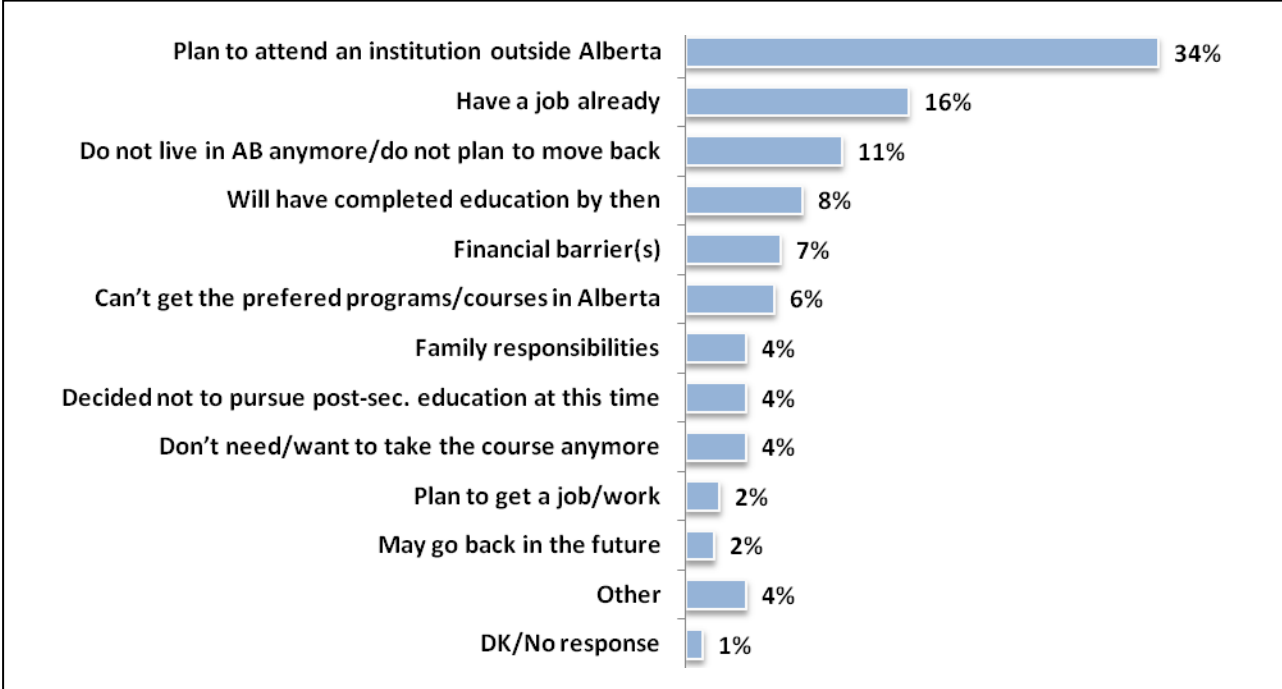
Note: * Interpret with caution given the small sample size

The most significant reason why these Qualified Applicants will not be pursuing their post-secondary education in Alberta is because they are already attending or plan to attend an institution outside of Alberta (34%, Figure 4e-2) while another eight percent indicated they will have completed their education by then, which suggests they are currently attending an institution outside the province. The second most common deterrent is having found employment (16%) or a plan to do so (2%). Just over one in ten mentioned they do not live in Alberta anymore or are not planning on moving back. Other reasons include financial barriers (7%), not having the desired program/courses in Alberta (6%) and family responsibilities (4%).

The younger the applicant, the more likely they are to pursue their education outside of Alberta. Conversely, the older the applicant, the more likely they are to have already found a job. For men, they are more likely to have found a job whereas for women, they are more likely to cite financial barriers and family responsibilities as deterrents.

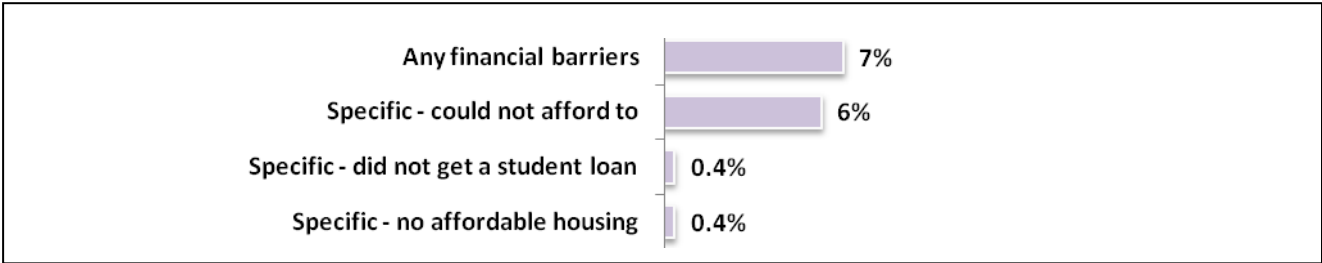
By sector, CARI Applicants are more likely to have chosen an institution outside of Alberta, while PI Applicants are more likely to have found a job and CCI Applicants are most likely to cite financial barriers.

Figure 4e-2 Reasons for not attending an AB post-secondary institution in the future



Base: Respondents who indicated they would not pursue post-secondary education in AB in the next 5 years, n=253.

Figure 4e-3 Various financial barriers



Base: Respondents who indicated they would not pursue post-secondary education in AB in the next 5 years, n=253.

4f Suggestions

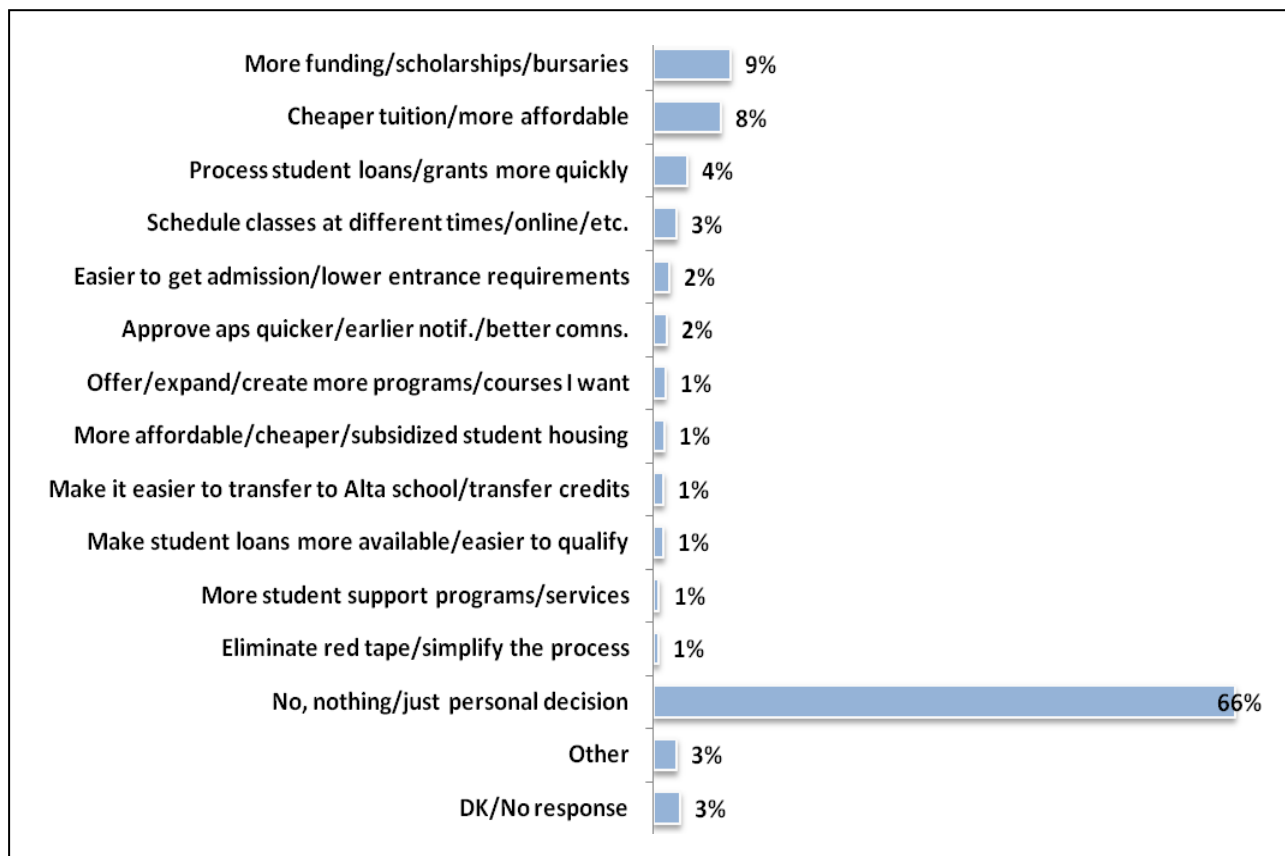
Two-thirds of Qualified Applicants indicate that there was nothing the Government of Alberta or the Post-Secondary Institutions could have done to have changed their decision not to attend an Alberta Post-Secondary Institute last year; that it was just their own personal decision to not attend. The younger the Qualified Applicant, the more likely they are to have provided this response.

Among the suggestions provided, more financial assistance topped the list. Specifically, more funding/scholarships/bursaries (9%), cheaper/more affordable tuition (8%), more affordable/cheaper student housing (1%) and make student loans more available/easier to qualify (1%). The older the applicant, the more likely they are to suggest more funding/scholarships/bursaries.

Quicker processing of applications or less “red tape” was second on the list; namely process student loans quicker (4%), notify students earlier/acceptance came too late (2%), simplify the process (1%).

The third most common theme for suggestions revolves around programming/scheduling; more flexibility/scheduling classes at different times (3%) and offer more programs/the courses I want (1%). Lastly, two percent suggested lower entrance requirements while one percent suggested making it easier to transfer credits and another one percent suggested having more student support programs/services.

Figure 4f-1 Suggestions



Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Table 4f-1 Suggestions by Age groups

Top 4 suggestions*	Age Group				Total
	<20	20-24	25-29	30+	
More funding/scholarships/bursaries	6%	9%	9%	11%	9%
Cheaper tuition/more affordable	6%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Process student loans/grants more quickly	1%	2%	7%	6%	4%
Schedule classes at different times/online	1%	1%	3%	5%	3%
No, nothing/just personal decision	80%	69%	58%	56%	66%

Base: All respondents, n=1,632.

Note: *Only presents response categories accounting for 3% or higher

5. RECOMMENDATIONS TO AET

To summarize, there are a variety of reasons why Qualified Applicants do not attend the institution where they were granted admission. We have classified these into permanent non-attendance and temporary postponement groupings.

Permanent reasons include choosing an institution outside of the province and finding employment. The first is primarily a reason given by younger students who have recently graduated from high school while the latter is given by slightly older Qualified Applicants and those who already have some post-secondary education. For this latter group, furthering their education was potentially a second option to finding employment to perhaps start their career. It is unlikely that AET could have done anything to change their minds. The first group, however, are recent high school graduates who had likely made the decision to attend post-secondary with the only decision being where. The opportunity here is for AET to promote Alberta Institutions to high school students prior to their grade 12 year, if not already doing so. In particular, AET needs to communicate what their Universities offer, the benefits, and how they compare to other Canadian Universities (particularly in BC and Ontario). While offering incentives may entice some, for many it is simply their own decision to go elsewhere, so the challenge is to give them an offering in Alberta they want to choose.

Among the “temporary” reasons are financial, personal responsibilities, family responsibilities, need time off and not being ready. These are all reasons which essentially delayed one’s post-secondary education or continuation thereof. A large portion of those citing financial reasons are Aboriginal women who are trying to upgrade their education. For this group, financial assistance in the form of bursaries or student loans would undoubtedly make a difference. Also, for those depending on student loans, quicker processing and/or communication of the decision was suggested as an improvement required. For those with personal and family responsibilities, scheduling flexibility (i.e. evening courses, weekend courses, on-line) would be helpful.

Lastly, for those who need more time before embarking on their post-secondary education, they are also likely to be younger, recent high school graduates. Again, this is a personal decision which AET may or may not be able to impact. So perhaps, rather than trying to encourage them to attend when they are not ready, a process of applying, accepting and deferring their attendance for a year or two could be designed to secure their future attendance at an Alberta institution.

APPENDIX A– ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

AB	Alberta
AET	Alberta Advanced Education and Technology
BASI	Baccalaureate & Applied Studies Institution
CARI	Comprehensive Academic & Research Institution
CCI	Comprehensive Community Institution
IAI	Independent Academic Institution
PI	Polytechnical Institutions
SACI	Specialized Arts and Culture Institution

APPENDIX B– DISPOSITION REPORTS

Table B-1 Overall disposition list

CATEGORY	N
AET records¹	14,027
<i>Numbers removed²</i>	4,316
<i>Loadable institution records³</i>	9,711
Unused sample⁴	552
Unqualified sample	891
Did not apply/get accepted in Alberta	274
Attended an Alberta institution	617
Unusable sample⁵	3,782
No answer	494
Busy	23
Answering machine	1,443
Business number	149
Not in service	889
Fax/modem	70
Wrong number	709
Hearing impaired	5
Usable sample	4,486
Completed interview	1,632
Language barrier	81
Not available during survey period	325
Soft refusal	179
Hard refusal	359
Never call again	173
Partial complete	101
Abusive respondent	10
Callback	1,600
Applicant wants to complete survey online	26
Response rate⁶	36.4%

Note: ¹ includes people who did not attend an AB institution that they were accepted (qualified respondents)

² includes AET records that are non-match to the institution applicant list, duplicates, do-not-call numbers, and unsuccessful look-up of unlisted phone numbers.

³ these are unique AET records, including unused, unqualified, unusable and usable samples.

⁴ all of these are Athabasca University records

⁵ includes numbers that are wrong, unreachable, or cannot be looked up

⁶ is calculated as the % of survey completes in the usable sample

Table B-2 Response rate by Institution and Sector

SECTOR/INSTITUTION	RESPONSE RATE*
Comprehensive Academic & Research Institution	29.6%
University of Alberta	35.3%
University of Calgary	37.4%
University of Lethbridge	37.5%
Athabasca University	18.6%
Specialized Arts and Culture Institution	54.5%
Alberta College of Art and Design	54.5%
Baccalaureate and Applied Studies Institution	40.8%
Grant MacEwan College	40.5%
Mount Royal College	41.2%
Comprehensive Community Institution	35.9%
Bow Valley College	25.4%
Grande Prairie Regional College	38.8%
Keyano College	37.5%
Lakeland College	40.7%
Lethbridge College	38.1%
Medicine Hat College	51.9%
NorQuest College	33.3%
Northern Lakes College	38.6%
Olds College	22.7%
Portage College	34.4%
Red Deer College	36.3%
Polytechnical Institution	43.6%
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	44.2%
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology	42.7%
Independent Academic Institution	39.2%
Ambrose University College	0.0%
Canadian University College	28.6%
Concordia University College of Alberta	41.7%
St. Mary's University College	33.3%
Taylor University College and Seminary	40.0%
King's University College	45.8%
Total	36.4%

Note: * is calculated as the % of survey completes in the usable sample

Table B-3 Response rate by Area of study

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSE RATE*
Business	32.2%
Education	36.6%
Health Sciences	34.3%
Languages, Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities	33.7%
Legal & Security	36.0%
Recreation	41.3%
Physical, Natural & Applied Sciences	42.5%
Preparatory & Basic Upgrading	34.5%
Trades & Technologists	48.0%
Other	37.5%
Undeclared	39.7%
Total	36.4%

Note: * is calculated as the % of survey completes in the usable sample

APPENDIX C– SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Qualified Applicant Survey

Hello, may I please speak to _____ (name of applicant)?

Hi, my name is _____, I'm with NRG Research Group and I'm calling on behalf of Alberta Advanced Education and Technology. We are conducting a survey of qualified post-secondary applicants who were accepted but chose not to attend an institution in Alberta in the fall of 2007.

Before we start, I'd like to assure you that your participation is voluntary and that any information you provide will be kept confidential and is protected by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. All personally identifiable information will be removed from the survey results and published information will only occur in a summarized or aggregate form.

For quality control purposes, this call may be recorded.

Your feedback will provide the ministry and the institutions with a better understanding of the factors influencing eligible students' decisions not to attend an Alberta post-secondary institution.

If R wants to verify study, they can call Meghann Eagle at 780-415-5830

Web Survey Option:

Only for Hard refusals or on 5th attempt to get a telephone complete, read:

Would you be willing to spend a minute or 2 to complete the survey on line? This can be done at your convenience anytime between now and August 31st.

If yes and have email address on file: Can I just confirm your email address so that we can send you the link to the survey?

If yes but do not have email address on file: Could I please get your email address so that we can send you the link to the survey?

If no, thank and terminate.

1. According to our records, you were accepted at ___ (number) Alberta institutions in the Fall of 2007.
Interviewer Note: R could have only applied for just one course or for a full program.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No - it was ___ number of institutions [enter number]
 - i. Could you please tell me the names of those institutions? [choose names of institutions from list of 26 + Other & DK- may need to remind respondent it is only AB institutions- record up to 6]
 - c. No – I did not apply or get accepted at any Alberta institutions. [end survey]

2. Did you attend a post-secondary institution during the Fall of 07 or Winter 08 semester?
 - a. Yes - go to q3
 - b. No- go to q4
 - c. Don't know - go to q4
 - d. No response/Refused - go to q4

3. What is the location of this institution? [do not read]
 - a. AB [end survey]
 - b. BC
 - c. SK
 - d. MB
 - e. ON
 - f. QC
 - g. NB
 - h. NS
 - i. NFLD
 - j. PEI
 - k. Northern Territories
 - l. USA
 - m. Other, please specify country

4. What was the main reason you decided not to attend the Alberta institution(s) you were accepted at last fall. [Do not read, check all that apply].
 - a. Chose to go to an institution outside Alberta
 - b. Wanted to get out of Alberta/leave home.
 - c. Got a job [if yes, in what industry are you employed? -include drop down menu of sector choices, included at end of survey]
 - d. Financial barriers:
 - i. Did not get a student loan
 - ii. Did not get any scholarships/bursaries
 - iii. Did not want to go into debt.
 - iv. No affordable housing.
 - v. Could not afford to
 - e. Family responsibilities/issues [family reasons prevented respondent from attending]
 - f. Decided to take some time off before proceeding with post-secondary education/Decided not to pursue post-secondary education at this time.
 - g. Travelling
 - h. Applied because of family expectations/parents wanted me to
 - i. Wasn't my first choice/only applied as back-ups
 - j. Got into residence elsewhere/did not get residence in AB
 - k. Personal issues (health/pregnancy)
 - l. Acceptance came too late
 - m. Just change my mind/decided not to go
 - n. Other, please specify

5. Do you plan to pursue post-secondary education in Alberta this coming academic year (2008/09)?
 - a. Yes - go to q8
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know/Not sure – go to Q8
 - d. No response/Refused [do not read] – go to Q8

6. And what about over the next 5 years?
 - a. Yes – go to q8
 - b. No
 - c. Maybe/depends – Go to Q8
 - d. Don't know – go to Q8
 - e. No response/Refused [do not read] – Go to Q8

7. What is the main reason you do not plan to pursue post-secondary education in Alberta in the next 5 years? [Do not read, check all that apply].
 - a. Already attending/Plan to attend an institution outside Alberta.
 - b. Have a job already
 - c. Plan to get a job/work [if yes, in what industry are you hoping to get a job? -include drop down menu of sector choices, included at end of survey]
 - d. Financial barriers:
 - i. Did not get a student loan
 - ii. Did not get any scholarships/bursaries
 - iii. Did not want to go into debt.
 - iv. No affordable housing.
 - v. Could not afford to
 - e. Family responsibilities [family reasons are preventing respondent from attending]
 - f. Decided not to pursue post-secondary education at this time.
 - g. Travelling
 - h. Applied because of family expectations/parents wanted me to
 - i. Do not live in Alberta anymore/not planning to move back
 - j. May go back in the future
 - k. Other, please specify

8. What is the highest level of education attained by either one of your parents? Read list only if necessary
 - a. Elementary or junior high school
 - b. Some high school
 - c. Completed high school
 - d. Some post-secondary (any of college, university or technical institute)
 - e. Completed college, technical institute or apprenticeship program (i.e. diploma or certificate)
 - f. Completed university degree (Bachelor)
 - g. Graduate or Professional Degree (Masters, PhD, M.D. Lawyer, Dentist)
 - h. Other, please specify
 - i. Don't know
 - j. No response [do not read]

9. What is your highest level of education? Read list only if necessary
- Elementary or junior high school
 - Some high school
 - Completed high school
 - Some post-secondary (any of college, university or technical institute)
 - Completed college, technical institute or apprenticeship program (i.e. diploma or certificate)
 - Completed university degree (Bachelor)
 - Graduate or Professional Degree (Masters, PhD, M.D. Lawyer, Dentist)
 - Other, please specify
 - Don't know
 - No response [do not read]
10. What is your marital status? Read if necessary
- Single – never married
 - Married or living with a partner
 - Divorced/Separated/Widowed
 - Don't know
 - No response [do not read]
11. Do you consider yourself to be a member of a visible minority?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
 - No response [do not read]
12. Do you consider yourself to be an Aboriginal person?
- Yes - go to q13
 - No – go to q14
 - Don't know – go to q14
 - No response – go to q14 [do not read]
13. Are you (read)
- Status Indian
 - Non-status Indian
 - Inuit
 - Métis
 - Other
 - Don't know
 - No response [do not read]
14. Is there anything the Government of Alberta or Alberta Post-Secondary Institutions could have done that would have altered your decision to attend an institution in Alberta in the fall of 2007? [Open ended response].

We've reached the end of our questions and I would like to thank you very much for your time and interest.