

A study on the labour market outcomes of Humanities graduates from the public universities in Catalonia

A follow-up six years after graduation

A study commissioned by the social councils of the seven public universities in Catalonia

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Via Laietana, 28, 5a planta

08003 Barcelona

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent studies on graduate labour market outcomes carried out by the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU Catalunya) have shown that the job situation of graduates in the Humanities, three years after obtaining their degrees, is clearly unfavourable in comparison to that of other disciplines. The aim of this study was to establish whether, within six years after completing their degrees, graduates in the Humanities manage to be as successful as degree holders from other disciplines, or if they need more time to find a suitable job.

For the purposes of the study, a survey was carried out in 2008 of Humanities graduates who completed their studies in 2001 and whose job duties in 2005 were not on a level with their university studies, together with those who, because of the sample that was used, were not included in the 2005 survey.

The results obtained were as follows:

- The analysis shows that progress was made in the quality of graduate labour market outcomes, and that one third of all Humanities graduates improved their job situation.
- Out of the group that did not have job duties on a level with their university studies three years after obtaining their degree in the Humanities, the job situation after six years had improved for almost half of them, while the rest (53.5%) continued to be mismatched (in a situation of education-job mismatch).
- Graduates with qualifications in the Humanities require more time to find a suitable job (with a good education-job match): the situation of Humanities graduates six years after obtaining their degrees was equivalent to the situation of graduates in other disciplines after three years. This result supports the thesis that points to university education being a long-term career commitment, and even more so in the Humanities.

INTRODUCTION

Concern about the employability of young adults has been, and still is, high on all political agendas. Reports such as the Mainguet report (1999) have made it very clear that governments are interested in this subject and that there are difficulties in analysing the results of national surveys due to numerous methodological issues. In the case of young university graduates, there are certain peculiarities in relation to this. While it is true to say that a university education is recognised as a value in itself, it is evident that there is an increasing need for university education to enable graduates to enter the labour market and obtain a suitable and related job. The universities have come to be accepted as being responsible for the **professional relevance** of graduates (fulfilment of the requirements and expectations of the professional field for which students are prepared) and their own **flexibility and innovative capability** to anticipate and respond quickly to the issues and requirements of employers and new advances being made in the different professional fields.

In the Declaration approved by the Higher Education Ministers in Leuven (2009), the employability of university graduates is number three out of the ten priorities established for higher education for the next decade:

“With labour markets increasingly relying on higher skill levels and transversal competences, higher education should equip students with the advanced knowledge, skills and competences they need throughout their professional lives. Employability empowers the individual to fully seize the opportunities in changing labour markets. [...]”¹

Furthermore, given the exigencies of accountability, graduate employability is considered to be a significant indicator of a university’s performance, although in certain contexts the relevance of this indicator is debatable. Harvey et al. (2002) are critical of this indicator as they consider it to be a personal achievement in which the institution is less responsible, above all when it is inadequately defined and measured or at certain times when it is obtained (for example, after just six months, which is what usually happens in the United Kingdom).

Other authors, such as Knight (2001), have argued that the relationship between employability and employment (potential and actual) is very adversely affected by both structural factors of inequality in access and the supply (volume of graduates) and demand for employment. The

¹ Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for higher education, Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009.

ideas of Morley (2001) are similar, and she asserts quite simply that employability as a signifier overlooks how social structures such as gender, race, social class and disability interact with labour market opportunities. Moreau and Leatherwood (2006), on the other hand, point out that the discourse on the employability of university graduates has transferred the issue of employability on to training the individual, while structural factors in the labour market have become of secondary importance. In this way, with the focus of the responsibility of "finding a job" being on the graduate as an individual, the responsibility of graduates obtaining suitable labour market outcomes also gets transferred to the institution that trains them.

As pointed out in the work of Rodríguez et al. (2007), it seems necessary and desirable, from the research point of view, to place the discourse on the employability of university graduate within its true context. One should remember that this concept covers not just graduates having acquired a series of required competences to meet the changing demands of employers (so they can hold on to their jobs), but also those required to obtain the job in the first place.

It is possibly obvious to state that, in the contemporary history of the university, there has always been the "intention" to educate for the purposes of professional practice; nevertheless, the analysis of this educational purpose cannot be said to have been of particular interest, at least within the context of Spain. Knowledge of the labour market situation of graduates with a particular degree or from a specific university and the analysis of how graduates assess their studies in terms of "professional accomplishment" did not appear on the agenda of institutions here until the 1990s.

Within the context of Catalonia, AQU Catalunya, with the support of the social councils of the public universities, has been following up three cohorts of graduates over approximately the last ten years (1998, 2001 and 2004), with samples of over ten thousand graduates in each survey, with an post-graduation interval period of three years.² Using the databases that have been set up, various types of studies have been carried out in which detailed analyses have been made of different issues associated with the employment and labour market outcomes of university graduates in Catalonia.³ The disciplinary dimension (the type of degree taken) has been a key variable for analysis in a considerable number of these studies, which have made clear its influence in graduates achieving suitable career outcomes.

The results obtained in the three graduate labour market outcome surveys have all also shown that the situation of studies in the Humanities is more unfavourable in comparison to other disciplines. The concern to analyse the situation of the Humanities, both from the point of view of the choice of these studies and their approach and employability, is clear from institutional studies that have been carried out, such as those by Berger et al. (2001) for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Allan (2006), for the Higher Education Academy in the UK, and Louvel (2007) on the situation in France.

² For the descriptive results of these surveys, see <http://www.aqu.cat/activitats/insercio_laboral/index.html>.

³ Rodríguez (2003), Serra (2007) and Rodríguez et al. (2010).

However, where it has been possible to carry out a "double follow-up", or an analysis of the job situation of the same people at different times in their professional careers, it has been shown that the negative differential of their first job (after two or three years) decreases as the interval between graduation and the assessment of their first job (five or six years) increases.

The work of Finnie (2001) provides the most significant example of this in that data obtained from the National Graduate Survey was used to analyse the situation of three cohorts of graduates in Canada (in all disciplines) two and five years after graduation. Irrespective of any difference in context, the results of the study by Ross Finnie showed that, for example, in terms of annual income and general satisfaction with their job situation, there was considerable improvement for graduates in the Arts and Humanities (the highest after graduates in Law and the Health Sciences). In fact, a significant proportion of Humanities graduates obtain employment in jobs where there is the need for a certain level of managerial ability.

On the other hand, in the extensive study by Allen (1998) on employment in the Canadian population with different types and levels of education between 1970 and 1995, regarding the rate of social returns of university graduates, the Humanities were at an intermediate position between the Health Sciences (the highest) and the Arts (the lowest).

From a qualitative point of view, the 2006 study by Allan, which analyses the academic and work careers of 24 graduates between 1970 and 1995, is very interesting. Amongst the interesting findings (which coincide with previous studies by the Higher Education Academy) are the following:

- Humanities graduates are capable of a wide range of tasks.
- Many of the competences that graduates need in their jobs are acquired through their experience at university.
- The choice of studies by Humanities graduates is defined more by the subject in which they were better at or which they enjoyed more than by prospective employability.
- It may be that Humanities graduates take longer to settle into a career.

This last piece of information, together with the findings of the studies by Allen (1998), showed the importance of checking *in situ* – i.e. in the local context, and in this case, in Catalonia – whether the size of the interval between graduation and the time when an assessment of entry into work is made was associated or not with differences in the status and quality of the professional career outcomes of Humanities graduates. Given that the studies by AQU Catalunya on graduate labour market outcomes have been carried out with a three-year interval, it was clear that a new study was needed which, in the case of the Humanities, used an interval of six years between graduation and the graduates' own assessment of their work experience and career outcomes.

STUDY CHARACTERISTICS

As mentioned above, the Humanities is the field of study with the highest proportion of mismatched graduates, which can be defined as the situation of graduates who, at the time of the survey, were working or had worked consistently since completing their studies, but whose job duties were not of a university level.

This result led to the hypothesis (as seen in other international studies) that Humanities graduates possibly need more time to find a suitable job in comparison to graduates from other disciplines.

Three objectives were set for the follow-up study (see table 1):

- **Methodology.** The study was designed to control the existence of any bias in the 2005 sample. It was necessary to establish whether the sample surveyed in 2005 was representative of the total university graduate population or, in other words, if the job situation of the people interviewed and those not covered by, i.e. excluded from, the survey, was equivalent. Before dealing with this, however, it was necessary to assess the reliability of the memory of those not covered by the survey regarding their job situation.
- **Changes in the quality of graduate employment.** An analysis was required of whether the situation of mismatch in the labour market outcomes of Humanities graduates three years after completing their studies (2005 survey) had improved after a further three years (2008).
- **Comparison between cohorts.** From the snapshots of different moments in time and for different graduate cohorts, it would be clear whether the situation of graduates in the Humanities was any better in comparison to other disciplines.

Table 1 summarises the objectives, the sample and the contrast variables used.

Table 1. Summary of the analytical procedure

Objectives	Groups analysed	Contrast variables and description
1A. To establish the reliability of their memory	Group A – Made up of 368 individuals who were mismatched in 2005 ⁴	Socio-economic status and match: to establish whether their perception of the past in 2008 was equivalent to the response given concerning their situation in 2005
1B. To establish the bias in the survey. Analysis of those who did not form part of the survey	Group B - Made up of 245 individuals who did not form part of the 2005 survey Results of the 2005 labour market outcomes survey for the Humanities	Socio-economic status and match: comparison of the data obtained on the Humanities from the 2005 labour market outcomes survey with their situation in 2005 as perceived in 2008
2. Establish the changes in the quality of employment outcomes of Humanities graduates after three years: was it any better, the same or worse in 2008 as compared to 2005?		
2.1. Trends among graduates surveyed in 2005	Group A - Made up of 368 individuals who were mismatched in 2005	Socio-economic status and match: comparison of their situation in 2005 (responses to the 2005 labour market outcomes survey) and 2008
2.2. Changes according to memory	Group B1 - Individuals not covered by the survey in 2005 who were mismatched in 2005 (<i>n</i> = 103)	Socio-economic status and match: comparison of their perception of their situation in 2005 with their situation in 2008
	Group B2 - Individuals not covered by the survey in 2005 who were matched in 2005 (<i>n</i> = 142)	
3. In 2008, comparison of the situation of Humanities graduates six years after obtaining their degrees (2001 cohort) relative to other graduates three years after obtaining their degree: any better, the same or worse off?	Group B - Made up of 245 individuals who did not form part of the survey in 2005 Results of the 2008 labour market outcomes survey	Socio-economic status, type of contract, match and income: comparison of the situation in 2008 of those who graduates in the Humanities in 2001 compared to those who graduated from other disciplines in 2004

⁴ This decision to include only mismatched respondents in the survey design meant that Humanities graduates who completed their studies in 2001 and who had never worked since were not included for selection in the sample. Bearing in mind the end objective of this study, these cases would also correspond to cases of mismatch, and it would be interesting for these to be taken into consideration in prospective studies in the future.



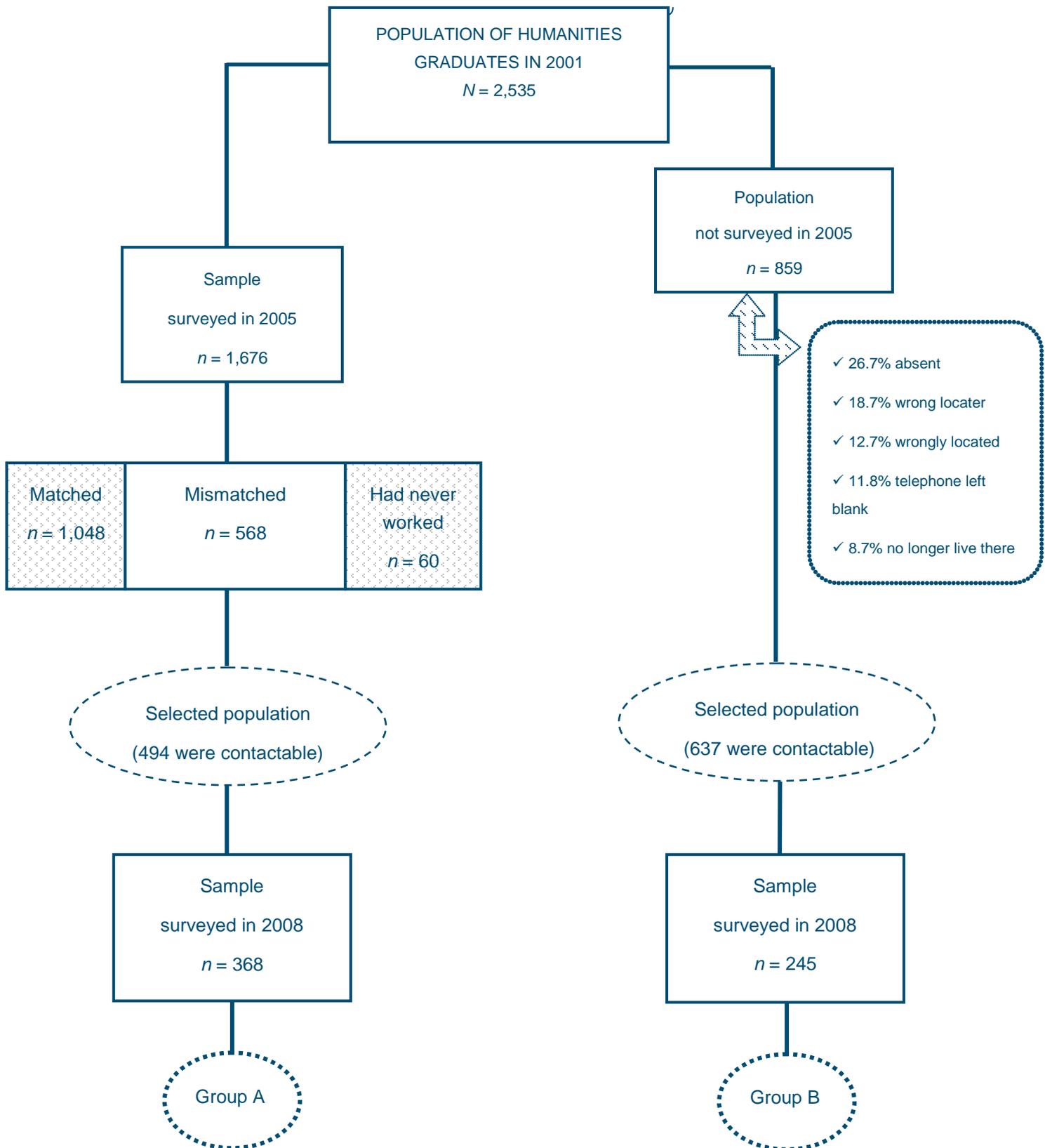
Field work

In 2008, the focus of our interest was to survey Humanities graduates surveyed in 2005 that were mismatched and also all of those who, for reasons concerning the sample, were not included in the 2005 survey. The CATI telephone surveying technique was used to gather the information.

Population and survey

Figure 1 summarises the survey selection process based on the corresponding populations, for both those with a mismatched job situation in 2005 and those who were not included in the survey and whose situation was therefore unknown.

Figure 1. Survey selection process for the Humanities follow-up survey



Tables 2 and 3 show the figures for the two groups, with the population distribution, the sample, the response rate and the sampling error for each of the seven public universities in Catalonia.

Table 2. Population and survey according to university - Group A

Group A – Mismatched respondents	Population	Number of respondents	Response rate/ population	Sampling error
University of Barcelona (UB)	207	148	71.49%	4.40%
Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)	119	92	77.31%	4.99%
Technical University of Catalonia (UPC)	-	-	-	-
Pompeu Fabra University	34	22	64.70%	12.86%
University of Girona	76	57	75%	6.67%
University of Lleida	25	23	92%	6.02%
Rovira and Virgili University	33	26	78.79%	9.17%
Total	494	368	74.49%	2.64%

As can be seen from table 2, 75% (three quarters) of all mismatched graduates in 2005 were covered by the survey, which gives a margin of confidence for analysing the results for match and labour market outcomes. For those who were “Unknown/Not surveyed in 2005” (see table 3), there was a lower response rate (39%). It should be pointed out that, for this group, there was an added difficulty of contact in that it was not possible to telephone all of the types of “non-respondent” not included in the survey in 2005 (for example, 8.7% were no longer living at the same place, 0.6% were deceased, etc.).

Table 3. Population and survey according to university - Group B

Group B – Unknown/Not surveyed in 2005	Population	Number of respondents	Response rate/ population	Sample error
University of Barcelona (UB)	360	133	36,94%	6,90%
Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)	123	38	30,89%	13,54%
Technical University of Catalonia (UPC)	-	-	-	-
Pompeu Fabra University	62	34	54,84%	11,62%
University of Girona	34	18	52,94%	16,41%
University of Lleida	31	14	45,16%	20,12%
Rovira and Virgili University	27	8	29,63%	30,22%
Total	637	245	38,46%	5,02%

Given the figures for the sample errors for each university and according to the criteria adopted by AQU Catalunya in all the studies that it has carried out on this subject, the analysis focused exclusively on the Humanities and was not disaggregated according to university.

RESULTS

1A. RELIABILITY OF THE MEMORY OF THE POPULATION IN THE 2005 SURVEY

In 2008, the previously surveyed population (group A) was asked about its job situation and education-job match in 2005. The fact that this information was available from the previous survey allowed the reliability of their memory to be checked, with the following two objectives:

- As a study in itself: to see if their memory is reliable.
- If their memory is seen to be reliable for the group that has been surveyed at two different times, to establish whether the memory of those only surveyed in the last study (group B) is reliable.

The only variables that can be used for this comparison are job situation and the education-job match.

Analysis of the memory of their job situation

In terms of job status, 85% (see table 4) “were right” about their job situation in the past. If a distinction is made between the three groups according to job situation in 2005, it can be seen that:

- Out of those who actually had a job in 2005, 99.3% remembered that they were in employment; the memory is therefore highly reliable.
- On the other hand, out of those who were unemployed or inactive, only 8.6% and 25%, respectively, “were right” about their actual job situation three years earlier; in other words, the reliability of the memory for those who were not working is much lower.

To sum up, the responses of those who in 2005 were in employment regarding their job situation in the past can be considered to be reliable, whereas this is not so for those who were either unemployed or inactive in 2005.

Table 4. Job situation. Actual situation in 2005 compared to how it was perceived in 2008

% (n)		What they thought in 2008 of their social status in 2005					
Corrected residuals		In employment 3 years ago		Unemployed or inactive 3 years ago		Total	
Job situation in 2005	In employment	99.3%	(303)	0.7%	(2)	100%	(305)
		6.2		-6.2			
	Unemployed	91.4%	(32)	8.6%	(3)	100%	(35)
		-1.9		1.9			
	Inactive	75.0%	(21)	25.0%	(7)	100%	(28)
		-6.7		6.7			
Total		96.7%	(356)	3.3%	(12)	100%	(368)

Those who were either unemployed or inactive in 2005 tended, three years later, to be positively bias their perception of the past, either by improving their past situation in the face of an “unknown context” or because of the unreliability of their responses due to uncertainty about the time of the survey (the 2005 survey was carried out between January and March, and they may have found work at some point during the other nine months of the year).

Analysis of the memory of their education-job match

Table 5 shows the contrast between the education-job match in 2005 and their memory of it. The reader is reminded that the focus of our interest was, in 2008, to survey all of those who had been mismatched in 2005.

Out of the total number of mismatched graduates who were surveyed in 2008, 88% remembered being mismatched in terms of their job duties and the level of their university studies. This means that 12% had job duties that were matched with their studies whereas in actual fact, and according to the figures from the 2005 survey, the situation was the opposite.

In terms of education-job match, their perception of their situation can be considered to correspond with how it actually was: 9 out of 10 “were right” about their situation in the past.

⁵ Corrected residuals show the difference between the observed and actual distribution. The expected distribution assumes that there is no dependence between the two variables. If the corrected residuals are higher than the actual value 1.96 in absolute value, the differences between the observed and expected values are significant and there is therefore dependence between the variables.

Table 5. Education-job match. Actual situation in 2005 compared to how it was perceived in 2008

		In 2008, their perception of their education-job match in 2005					
		Mismatch		Match		Total	
Match in 2005	Mismatched	88%	(279)	12%	(38)	(317)	100%
	Total	88%	(279)	12%	(38)	(317)	100%

It is therefore possible to rely on the perception of those who were in employment in 2005, in terms of both their job situation and education-job match. In the case of those who were either unemployed or inactive, there was a high level of memory bias due to uncertainty about the time of the survey; this was not the case however with the education-job match, and 9 out of 10 “were right” about their situation in the past.

1B. BIAS IN THE 2005 SURVEY. AN ANALYSIS OF THOSE NOT INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

In order to answer the question about whether the 2005 survey was biased, a check was made to see if the perception of those not covered by the survey in 2005 (group B) coincided with the picture of the total of all the Humanities graduates surveyed in 2005, on the basis of the data from the graduate labour market outcomes report.⁶

The only variables that can be used for this comparison are job situation and the education-job match.

NB: Together with the results on the education-job match in 2005, the only results on job situation that are accepted as being reliable are of those who were in employment. Those who were unemployed tended to positively bias their job situation in the past.

Job situation

The perception of people not covered by the survey in 2005 was of a better job situation compared to the actual situation of the Humanities group surveyed in 2005 (see table 6). 98% remembered being in employment three years earlier, which was 12% higher than the actual figure for Humanities graduates in employment in 2005 (85.56%). This difference is statistically significant from the contrast of two proportions (see table 7).

Table 6. The job situation in 2005 of Humanities graduates who completed their studies in 2001, and the perception in 2008 of those not included in the survey of their job situation in 2005

Humanities graduates / completed studies in 2001		Percentage	<i>n</i>	Accumulated percentage
Situation in 2005 of those who graduated in 2001	Employed	85.86	1,439	85.86
	Unemployed	7.58	127	93.44
	Inactive	6.56	110	100
The perception in 2008 of their situation in 2005	Individuals not included in the 2005 survey (group B)	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Accumulated percentage
	In employment three years ago	98	240	98
	Unemployed or inactive three years before	2	5	100
	Total	100	245	

⁶ <http://www.aqu.cat/doc/doc_32522413_1.pdf>.

Table 7. Job situation. Result of contrasting two proportions for two independent samples⁷

	<i>n</i>	<i>Pm</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>Z</i> _{95%}	<i>p</i> -value
Survey 1	1,439	0.858	0.875	-5.298	-1.65	0,000
Survey 2	240	0.98				
Total	1,679					

It is not possible to compare the memory of those not included in the survey (group B) with the situation as it appears in the 2005 survey and deduce that memory, “improves the situation in the past“. The statistically significant difference of 12 points between the proportions may be because those who were actually unemployed or inactive in 2005 tended, later on, to positively bias their job situation in the past. Their progress as seen from the data would thus not be as much as expected.

Education-job match

The perception of being in a situation of education-job match (see table 8) gives a lower percentage than the actual figure for matched Humanities graduates in 2005. This difference however is not statistically significant with a confidence level of 95% (see table 9). The situation in 2005 of those who were not covered by the survey is therefore equivalent, in terms of the education-job match, to the situation of the Humanities graduates surveyed in 2005.

Table 8. Education-job match in 2005 of Humanities students who graduated in 2001 and their perception in 2008 of their match in 2005

Humanities students who graduated in 2001		Percentage	<i>n</i>	Accumulated percentage
Situation in 2005 of graduates in 2001	Match	64.15	1,000	64.15
	Mismatch	35.85	559	100
Perceived situation in 2008 of their situation in 2005	Individuals not surveyed in 2005 (group B)	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Accumulated percentage
	Match	59.2	142	59.2
	Mismatch	40.8	98	100
	Total	100	240	

⁷ Result of the chi-square test for the comparison of two proportions from two independent samples with a confidence level of 95%.

Table 9. Education-job match. Result of the comparison of two proportions from two independent samples

	<i>n</i>	<i>Pm</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>Z</i> _{95%}	<i>p</i> -value
Survey 1	1,000	0.641	0.635	1.146	1.65	0.1271
Survey 2	142	0.592				
Total	1,142					

The job situation in 2005 of Humanities graduates and the perceived job situation of those who were not covered by the survey can be considered to be equivalent, provided that account is taken of the possible bias in the group of unemployed and inactive graduates' perception of their job situation in the past.

With regard to the education-job match, the situation in 2005 of those who were not covered by the survey is equivalent to the situation of the Humanities graduates in the 2005 labour market outcomes survey.

The sampling methodology used in the labour market outcomes study enabled a representative sample of the study population to be obtained.

2. CHANGES IN THE QUALITY OF GRADUATE LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES: WAS THE SITUATION IN 2008 ANY BETTER, THE SAME OR WORSE THAN IN 2005?

In order for make the results more comprehensible, a brief summary is given of the 2005 graduate labour market outcomes survey in relation to Humanities graduates.

Results of the 2005 graduate labour market outcomes survey according to job situation and match

Overall, 85.9% of Humanities graduates were in a situation of employment, 7.6% were unemployed and the remaining 6.6% were inactive. 64.1% had job duties on a level with their university studies, whereas the remaining 35,9% did not.

Out of the 64.1% of Humanities graduates with job duties on a level with their university studies, 91.88% were in employment, 4.5% were unemployed and 3.7% were inactive. Out of the remaining 35.9%, i.e. those who did not have job duties on a level with their university studies (including those who had not worked consistently), 83.5% were in employment, 10% were unemployed and the remaining 6.4% were inactive.

The fact that group A consists of all of the mismatched Humanities graduates in 2005 and group B all the Humanities graduates (matched and mismatched) in 2005 means that a joint sample cannot be used on its own for this analysis.

The decision was made therefore to take three groups for analysis:



As information was only available at two times for group A1 (2005 and 2008) and, as seen in the previous results, those who were surveyed just once (2008) tended to positively bias the memory of their past job situation, an analysis is only made of the progress, stability or deterioration over time of group A1, using the responses obtained on the two occasions (2005 and 2008). For groups B1 and B2, an analysis of their progress, stability or deterioration over time is made from memory. This means that, for these two groups, we used their perception of

the past, taking into consideration their tendency, according to their memory, to positively bias the situation.

Trends among graduates who were mismatched according to the 2005 survey: were they better off, in the same situation, or worse off in 2008?

A comparison of the data on mismatched graduates surveyed in 2005 is made below. The variables that this comparison can be extracted from are job situation and education-job match.

Job situation

Table 10 shows, for each job situation in 2005, the progress, stability or deterioration after three years. The following was observed:

- Out of those who were in employment in 2005, for 93.4% (285 individuals) there was no variation three years later, whereas for 6.6% (20) there was a deterioration (they had either become unemployed and/or were inactive).
- 94.3% (33) of those unemployed and 71.4% (20) of those inactive in 2005 had improved their job situation three years later and found a job.
- 28.5% (8) of those inactive and 5.8% (2) of those unemployed continued to be in the same situation six years after obtaining their degree.

Table 10. Job situation: progress, stability or deterioration in 2008⁸

Job situation in 2005 - % (n)	2008		
	Progress	Stable	Deterioration
In employment	-	93.4% (285)	6.6% (20)
Unemployed	94.3% (33)	5.8% (2)	-
Inactive	71.4% (20)	28.5% (8)	-

To sum up, there was no change for the greater majority of those who were in employment. Only 6.6% (20) went from being in employment to being unemployed or inactive three years later.

⁸ *Progress*: if their job situation went from one of being unemployed or inactive to currently being in employment.

Stability: if their situation was the same as in the past. Also included are those who were unemployed or inactive and who did NOT enter into employment.

Deterioration: if the job situation changed from "in employment" and was currently one of unemployment or inactivity.

84.1% (53) of the Humanities graduates who in 2005 were unemployed or inactive had improved their job situation three years later. Out of the total of those who were inactive (28), 28% (8) continued to be in the same situation in 2008.

Education-job match

One should bear in mind that group A1 was selected for the fact that, during 2005, 100% of them had jobs with duties that were on a level with their university studies. Table 11 shows the progress (green), stability (orange) and/or deterioration (red) of those who in 2005 had jobs with duties that were not on a level with their university studies.

The situation in 2008 was clearly more positive than in 2005, and there was improvement for almost half of them (46.5%). The results could also be read negatively, however, in that more than half of those who were mismatched in 2005 (53.5%) still continued to be mismatched.

The fact that a university degree was a requirement in order to obtain their job in the past appeared to contribute to the improvement in match after three years. The percentage of progress for those who were required to have a university degree to obtain their job was 63.6%, which is 20 points higher than the percentage of progress of those who were not required to have a university qualification.

Table 11. Education-job match: progress, stability or deterioration⁹

Match in 2005 - % (n)	2008		
	Progress	Stable	Deterioration
University degree, job duties not on the same level	63.6% (35)	5.5% (3)	30.9% (17)
No qualification, job duties not on the same level	43.4% (132)	56.6% (172)	-
Total job duties not on the same level	46.5% (167)	53.5% (192)	-

The fact that a university degree is a requirement for obtaining a job seems to increase the probability of graduates ultimately having job duties that are on a level with their university studies. For example, the percentage of people with the highest match¹⁰ is higher for the group

⁹ *Progress*: if in the earlier situation their job duties were not on a level with their university studies and where the current job duties require a university qualification.

Stability: if they are in the same situation as in the past.

Deterioration: if, for their job in 2005, they were required to have a university degree, even though the job duties were not on a level with their university studies, and for their current job they were not required to have a university degree and their job duties were not on a level with their university studies.

¹⁰ The maximum match is where the job requirements were a specific degree in the Humanities and where their job duties were on a level with their university studies.



that were required to have a university qualification than for those who were not required to have any degree (24% compared to 14%) and, on the contrary, the mismatch percentage is higher for those who were not required to have a degree (51% compared to 31%), as can be seen from table 12.

Table 12. Education-job match: job requirements and job duties

% (n)	Education-job match in 2008													
	Specific qualifications, associated job duties		Specific qualifications, unassociated job duties		University qualification, job duties on same level		University qualification, job duties not on same level		No degree, job duties on same level		No degree, job duties not on same level		Total	
University qualification, job duties not on the same level as their degree (2005)	23.6%	(13)	12.7%	(7)	18.2%	(10)	5.5%	(3)	9.1%	(5)	30.9%	(17)	100%	(55)
	1.9		2.4		.8		.1		-.4		-2.8			
No degree, job duties not on the same level (2005)	13.8%	(42)	4.6%	(14)	14.1%	(43)	5.3%	(16)	10.9%	(33)	51.3%	(156)	100%	(304)
	-1.9		-2.4		-.8		-.1		.4		2.8			
Total job duties not on the same level	15.3%	(55)	5.8%	(21)	14.8%	(53)	5.3%	(19)	10.6%	(38)	48.2%	(173)	100%	(359)

It should be possible to see, however, if a change in their job or job duties in relation to 2005 also has an influence on progress in the education-job match. Table 13 shows this relationship.

A change of job or a change of duties in the same job for those who in 2005 were mismatched does in fact contribute to their progress three years later. It can also be seen that staying in the same job contributed to them remaining in a situation of mismatch over time: 72.3% were in the same situation as they had been three years previously.

Table 13. Education-job match: progress, stability or deterioration

Match in 2005 - % (n)	Have you changed your job or job duties since 2005?	2008		
		Progress	Stable	Deterioration
Job duties not on the same level as their university studies	Same job and same job duties as in 2005	27.7% (38)	72.3% (99)	-
	Same job but different job duties as in 2005	40.5% (15)	59.5% (22)	-
	Not the same job as in 2005	60.9% (109)	39.1% (70)	-

Analysis of the trends according to memory: in 2008, were they any better, the same or worse than in 2005?

In relation to this point, it is important to remember the analysis for those people who were not covered by the survey in 2005 (group B, see page 7), where the conclusion was reached that there was a certain tendency to positively bias their job situation in the past (the difference was seen to be 12 points more than the percentage of Humanities graduates in employment in 2005). This result has an influence on the figures for progress, stability or deterioration that are given below: as such, their actual progress is less.

The reader is reminded that group B covers both graduates that were mismatched (group B1) and matched (group B2) in 2005.

GROUP B1 - Individuals not covered by the survey in 2005 who were mismatched in 2005 (n = 103)

Job situation

It appears that, in principle, there was not very much change between what those not covered by the survey (group B) in 2005 thought their situation was and what their job situation in 2008 was (see table 14), i.e. 94.9% of those who remembered being in employment in 2005 were still in that situation three years later. 5.1% experienced deterioration in their job situation (they were unemployed or inactive in 2008).

Out of the five individuals who remembered being unemployed or inactive in 2005, only one Humanities graduate from 2001 managed to improve three years later. The rest remained in the same situation. Nevertheless, given the tendency to perceive the past in a better light, progress was probably higher than it appears to be.

Table 14. Job situation: progress, stability or deterioration

Job situation in 2005 - % (n)	2008		
	Progress	Stable	Deterioration
In employment	-	94.9% (93)	5.1% (5)
Unemployed or inactive	20% (1)	80% (4)	-

Education-job match

In relation to the group of Humanities graduates who in 2005 were mismatched in their jobs, it can be seen that more than half (67.3%) continued to do job duties that were not on a level with their university studies six years after obtaining their degree, whereas 32.7% had improved their situation (see the total in table 15).

From Table 15 an analysis can be made of whether a change in their job or job duties had an influence in their progress, stability or deterioration.

Progress in terms of education-job match is associated more with a change in their job than with a change in their duties in the same job. Out of those who did not change their job but who changed their job duties, the great majority (85.7%) continued to have job duties that were not on a level with their university studies. Only 14.3% made progress regarding their job duties and in 2008 had job duties that were on a level with their university studies.

On the other hand, out of those who changed their job in relation to 2005, more than half saw an improvement in their match situation: 58.5% ended up with job duties that were on a level with their university studies six years after obtaining their degree. The remaining 41.5%, even though they changed their job, continued to do job duties that were not on a level with their university studies.

Lastly, those who changed neither their job nor their job duties in relation to 2005 remained in the same situation.

Table 15. Education-job match: progress, stability or deterioration

Match in 2005 - % (n)	Have you changed either your job or your job duties since 2005?	2008		
		Progress	Stable	Deterioration
Job duties not on a level with their university studies	Same job and same job duties as in 2005		100% (38)	-
	Same job but different job duties compared to 2005	14.3% (1)	85.7% (6)	-
	Not in the same job as in 2005	58.5% (31)	41.5% (22)	-
	Total	32.7% (32)	67.3% (66)	-

Aside from acquiring a different job, it can be seen that, as with group A1, the fact that a university qualification was a requirement for a job seems to increase the probability of their ultimately having job duties that are on a level with their university studies. So, for example, the percentage of people with the maximum match¹¹ is higher for the group that was required to have a university degree than for those who were not required to have any higher education qualification (20% compared to 13%) and, on the contrary, the mismatch percentage is higher for those who were not required to have any university qualification (66% compared to 10%), as can be seen from table 16.

¹¹ The maximum match is where a requirement of the graduate's job was a specific qualification in the Humanities and where his/her job duties are on a level with their university studies.

Table 16. Education-job match: job requirements and job duties

Match in 2005 - % (n)	Education-job match in 2008													
	Specific qualifications, associated job duties		Specific qualifications, unassociated job duties		University qualification, job duties on same level		University qualification, job duties not on same level		No degree, job duties on same level		No degree, job duties not on same level		Total	
University qualification, job duties on same level (2005)	20%	(2)	0%	(0)	40%	(4)	30%	(3)	0%	(0)	10%	(1)	100%	(10)
	.7		-.3		2.6		3.0		-.8		-3.4			
No degree, job duties not on same level as univ. degree (2005)	12.5%	(11)	1.1%	(1)	10.2%	(9)	4.5%	(4)	5.7%	(5)	65.9%	(58)	100%	(88)
	-.7		.3		-2.6		-3.0		.8		3.4			
Total	13.3%	(13)	1%	(1)	13.3%	(13)	7.1%	(7)	5.1%	(5)	60.2%	(59)	100%	(98)

To sum up:

- Job stability predominates over an improvement in their situation.
- This means that there was less progress in the mismatched group, due possibly, as seen above, to the positive bias in their memory of the past.
- The match only improves for one third, and this would appear to be associated with a change of job and also with the job requirement of a degree.

GROUP B2 - Individuals not covered by the survey in 2005 who were matched in 2005 ($n = 142$)

Job situation

Job stability predominates in this group according to the analysis: 99.3% continued to be in employment six years after obtaining their degree. Only 0.7% experienced deterioration in their job situation.

Table 17. Job situation: progress, stability or deterioration

Job situation in 2005 - % (n)	2008		
	Progress	Stable	Deterioration
In employment	-	99.3% (141)	0.7% (5)

Education-job match

This group was matched education-job situation in 2005: 142 of those not covered by the survey in 2005 remember having job duties on a level with their university studies in 2005. 91.5% continued to have university job duties on a level with their university studies in 2008, whereas the remaining 8.5% experienced deterioration in their education-job match (job duties not on a level with their university studies).

Table 18. Education-job match: progress, stability or deterioration

Match in 2005 - % (n)	2008		
	Progress	Stable	Deterioration
Matched	-	91.5% (130)	8.5% (12)

This deterioration could have been due either to a change in their job duties or to a change in their job. Table 19 shows this relationship, from which the following conclusions can be made:

- Out of the group that in 2008 had the same job and the same job duties as in 2005, all of them continued to job duties on a level with their university studies.
- Out of those who had changed their duties in the same job, 25% had a deteriorated job match and job duties that were not on a level with their university studies.
- Out of those who, in relation to 2005, had changed their jobs and whose job duties were on a level with their university studies in 2005, the great majority (80%) continued to have job duties on a level with their university studies in 2008, compared to 16.4% who ended up with job duties that were not on a level with their university studies.

Table 19. Education-job match: progress, stability or deterioration

Match in 2005 - % (n)	Have you changed either your job or your job duties since 2005?	2008		
		Progress	Stable	Deterioration
Job duties on a level with their university studies	Same job and same job duties as in 2005	-	100% (73)	-
	Same job but different job duties compared to 2005	-	75% (6)	25% (2)
	Not in the same job as in 2005	-	83.6% (51)	16.4% (10)

We also analysed whether job requirements that called for a degree also had an influence on their progress, stability or deterioration. The results, as can be seen in table 20, were as follows:¹²

Progress

The highest percentage for progress corresponds to those individuals who, in 2005, were required to have a university qualification in their jobs and whose job duties were on a level with their university studies: in 2008, 18.8% were required to have a specific qualification in the Humanities as a job requirement and had job duties associated with their degree. Individuals

¹² The fact that all of the individuals in this group in 2005 had job duties on a level with their university studies leads to doubts regarding the classification of progress and/or deterioration of situations where, in 2008, the job requirements were different to those of three years before. In the cases where in 2005 there was a maximum match and in 2008 the entry requirement was any university qualification, but where the job duties continued to be on a level with their university studies, one could think, in principle, that there was a slight deterioration in the match as regards the job requirements, although this could also have been due to advancement in their job position and/or category and would therefore correspond to progress and not a deterioration. For this reason, by considering these cases as “unknown” situations, the result focuses only on what can actually be identified as progress, stability or deterioration.

who were not required to have any university qualification but whose job duties were on a level with their university studies are those who progressed “the least”: only 4.8%, in 2008, were required to have their specific qualification for their jobs and had job duties associated with their degree.

Stability

The situation for the majority was one of a maximum level of match (their job requirement was a specific qualification with job duties associated with their degree); having a maximum match three years after obtaining a degree in the Humanities ensures the maximum match three years later (more than 90% did not change their conditions). For the other situations (coloured in orange), the conditions did not change.

Deterioration

The highest deterioration was seen in cases where, in 2005, no university qualification had been necessary for a job, even though the job duties were of a university level: in 2008 23.8% were in jobs where their duties were not on a level with their university studies.

Table 20. Education-job match: job requirements and job duties

Match in 2005 - % (n)	Education-job match in 2008													
	Specific qualification, job duties on same level		Specific qualifications, job duties not on same level		University qualification, job duties on same level		University qualification, job duties not on same level		No degree, job duties on same level		No degree, job duties not on same level		Total	
Specific qualifications, job duties on same level	92.6%	(75)	.0%	(0)	2.5%	(2)	2.5%	(2)	1.2%	(1)	1.2%	(19)	100%	(81)
	9.5		-2.9		-5.3		-.8		-4.5		-2.3			
Specific qualifications, job duties not on same level	12.5%	(1)	75.0%	(6)	.0%	(0)	12.5%	(1)	.0%	(0)	.0%	(0)	100%	(8)
	-2.7		10.2		-1.3		1.4		-1.1		-.7			
University degree, job duties on same level	18.8%	(6)	.0%	(0)	65.6%	(21)	6.3%	(2)	6.3%	(2)	3.1%	(1)	100%	(32)
	-5.2		-1.3		8.4		1.0		-1.1		-.5			
No degree, job duties on same level	4.8%	(1)	.0%	(0)	4.8%	(1)	.0%	(0)	66.7%	(14)	23.8%	(5)	100%	(21)
	-5.4		-1.0		-1.6		-.9		8.4		4.3			
Total	58.5%	(83)	4.2%	(6)	16.9%	(24)	3.5%	(5)	12.0%	(17)	4.9%	(7)	100%	(142)

To sum up:

- More than 90% had the same job duties as three years before, i.e. their job duties were either specific to their degree or on a level with their university studies.
- If their job requirements in 2005 called for either their specific qualifications in the Humanities or a university qualification and if their job duties were on a level with their university studies, it is probable that they had a maximum education-job match in 2008.
- In cases where no university qualification was required, even though the job duties in 2005 were on a level with their university studies, there was a slight tendency, three years later, for them to be doing job duties that were not on a level with their university studies. There are no available data to assess whether this change is due to advancement (from technical job duties to managerial duties) or deterioration in their job situation (from technical job duties to job duties where no qualifications were required).

3. DO HUMANITIES GRADUATES NEED MORE TIME TO FIND A SUITABLE JOB?

One of the initial hypotheses of this study was that Humanities graduates take more time (years) to acquire a suitable job (with a good education-job match). This hypothesis is tested in the section below.

The snapshot from 2005 shows that Humanities graduates, three years after obtaining their degrees, had poorer labour market (employment) outcomes than all of the other disciplines (fields of study). Were their employment outcomes any better six years after obtaining their degrees, i.e. does the 2008 snapshot show better results than in 2005 for this group?

What reference group is used?

One should bear in mind that there are two groups in the sample (see figure 1, page 7):

- Group A: made up of 368 individuals who, in 2005, were in an unmatched education-job situation.
- Group B: made up of 245 individuals who did not form part of the 2005 sample.

In order to assess whether it is possible to jointly analyse the two groups and to consider both A and B as one sample, an analysis was made of the education-job match variable.

Table 21. Job match: job requirements and job duties

Job match. Situation in 2008						
	Surveyed in 2005 (group A)		Not surveyed in 2005 (grup B)		Total	
Job duties on a level with their university studies	46.52%	167	67.22%	162	54.83%	329
	-5.0		5.0			
Job duties not on a level with their university studies	53.48%	192	32.78%	79	45.17%	271
	5.0		-5.0			
Total	100%	359	100%	241	100%	600

As can be seen from table 21, the two groups cannot be considered as just one sample. To do so would lead to a bias towards a poorer job situation in the results, as the situation in 2008 would be conditioned by the past situation of mismatch.

To test the hypothesis that Humanities graduates take more time (years) to acquire a suitable job (with a good education-job match), a comparison was made of the results in 2008 for the Humanities graduates who graduated in 2001 (group B) with the results of the five main disciplines covered by the previous graduate labour market outcomes studies (2005 and 2008) carried out by AQU Catalunya.

For this comparison, an analysis was made of the four most significant variables in the labour market outcomes survey: job situation, type of contract, education-job match and income.

Job situation

For those surveyed in 2005, the employment rate for the Humanities was the lowest, together with the Experimental Sciences. For the other three disciplines, the employment rate was higher than 91%.

For the people surveyed in 2008, the lowest employment rate, as in the previous study, was in the Humanities and Experimental Sciences, although the percentages were higher. The fact that the results for their job situation was more favourable in 2008 than in 2005 shows that the survey was carried out at a peak time in the economic cycle.

If the results are compared with the Humanities group six years after graduation, this group had the highest employment rate and the lowest unemployment rate. It can therefore be concluded that Humanities graduates need six years to achieve employment and unemployment rates that are comparable to those achieved by the other disciplines in three years.

Table 22. Job situation in 2005 and 2008. Comparison of the 2001 and 2004 cohorts in the Humanities with other disciplines

%	Humanities			Social Sciences		Experimental Sciences		Health Sciences		Eng./Arch.	
	2001		2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004
Cohort	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008
Employment rate	96	85.9	89.4	91	94.2	83.7	90.4	93.8	95.3	92.4	95
Unemployment rate	2	7.6	5.8	4.3	2.9	6.1	3	2.8	2.1	4.3	2.3
Inactivity rate	2	6.6	4.8	4.7	2.9	10.2	6.6	3.3	2.6	3.3	2.6
<i>n</i>	245	1,676	1,704	4,890	5,474	990	1,015	1,053	1,293	2,847	2,772

Type of contract

The percentage of temporary contracts six years after completing their studies was lower than that of Humanities graduates after three years and similar to that of other disciplines after three years, according to the results of the 2005 survey; however, it was higher than for the other disciplines after a further three years (2008 survey). A qualification in the Humanities therefore implies an unfavourable situation regarding the type of contract as compared to other disciplines.

They took six years to improve the permanent contract rate in relation to that of graduates in the Experimental Sciences three years after completing their studies.

The most notable percentage is that of the self-employed. Apart from the Health Sciences and Engineering and Architecture, a higher proportion of the graduates in the Humanities were self-employed six years after obtaining their degrees.

Table 23. Type of contract in 2005 and 2008. Comparison of the 2001 and 2004 cohorts in the Humanities with other disciplines

%	Humanities			Social Sciences		Experimental Sciences		Health Sciences		Eng./Arch.	
	2001		2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004
Cohort	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008
Perm. contract	49	40	46.1	54.1	62.4	47.6	47.9	47.6	51.9	62	65.5
Self-employed	11.6	8.5	8	6.7	5.4	4	2.5	12.8	12.8	12.4	11
Temporary	37.8	46	39.8	36.3	30.3	35	35.3	37.1	32.9	23.4	20.6
Grant	1.2	3.3	4.4	1.7	1.4	11.9	14.1	1.3	1.8	1.9	2.7
No contract	0.4	2.2	1.7	1.2	0.5	1.5	0.2	1.1	0.5	0.3	0.1
<i>n</i>	241	1,464	1,675	4,569	5,427	721	977	892	1,286	2,684	2,747

Is being self-employed then an option for graduates to improve their education-job match? 11.7% of those with job duties on a level with their university studies six years after obtaining their degrees were self-employed. However, the same can be said for 11.4% of those whose job duties were not on a level with their university studies six years after graduating.

Match

As we have seen up until now, in 2008 the 2001 cohort of Humanities graduates saw a slight improvement in the education-job match of those with job duties not on a level with their university studies in relation to 2005 (an increase of 3 percentage points). Nevertheless, in relation to six years after obtaining their degrees, the Humanities continued to be the discipline with the poorest education-job match, and the match in 2008 for the 2004 cohort in the Humanities (three years after obtaining their degrees) was even better than the situation of the 2001 cohort (six years after obtaining their degrees).

Table 24. Job duties in 2005 and 2008. Comparison of the 2001 and 2004 cohorts in the Humanities with other disciplines

%	Humanities			Social Sciences		Experimental Sciences		Health Sciences		Eng./Arch.	
	2001		2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004
Cohort	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008
Job duties on a level with univ. studies	67.2	64.1	70.2	78.9	84.4	80.2	85.7	96.4	95.7	87	90.8
Job duties not on a level with univ. studies	32.8	35.9	29.8	21.1	15.6	19.8	14.3	3.6	4.3	13	9.2
<i>n</i>	241	1,559	1,675	4,722	5,427	839	977	1,012	1,286	2,764	2,747

Monthly income

In terms of monthly income, there was an important improvement in the Humanities group.

If a comparison is made between the survey results (2005 compared to 2008), Humanities graduates continued to have the highest percentage of those with an income of less than €1,000 a month. Nevertheless, the proportion of Humanities graduates who were earning more than €2,000 a month six years after obtaining their degrees in 2008 was slightly above that of graduates in the Social Sciences and Experimental Sciences.

Table 25. Monthly income in 2005 and 2008. Comparison of the 2001 and 2004 cohorts in the Humanities with other disciplines

%	Humanities			Social Sciences		Experimental Sciences		Health Sciences		Eng./Arch.	
	2001		2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004
Cohort	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008
€1,000	34.8	47.9	44.4	28.4	24.3	29.1	31.3	23.9	26	8.8	8.5
€1,000 – €2,000	35.7	49.9	40.2	66.4	48.9	65.9	41.9	65	38.5	68.4	29.7
Over €2,000	29.4	2.3	15.5	5.2	26.8	5	26.8	11.1	35.5	22.8	61.8
<i>n</i>	221	1,464	1,546	4,569	5,124	721	947	892	1,187	2,684	2,602

CONCLUSIONS

Recent studies on graduate labour market outcomes carried out by AQU Catalunya have shown that the job situation of graduates in the Humanities, three years after obtaining their degrees, is clearly unfavourable in relation to other disciplines. The questions that we have sought to answer in this study is: Do Humanities graduates need more time to find a suitable job? Do they manage to have comparable outcomes to graduates in other disciplines within six years after obtaining their degrees?

The objectives were divided into three groups, and the results are as follows:

1. On the methodology

The reliability of memory

The study of the reliability of graduates' memory was a prior step for being able to accept the validity of the analysis of the changes in the labour market outcomes of a group that has only been surveyed once. This analysis was carried out using the group for which data were available from the 2005 study and asking them about their situation in the past.

The analysis shows that there was a tendency for those who were either unemployed or inactive to positively bias their job situation in the past. In the case of those who were in employment, the responses to their job situation in the past can be considered to be reliable.

With regard to the education-job match, we can consider that their perception corresponds to the actual situation.

Bias in the 2005 sample

This present study, with its survey of a group that was not covered by the 2005 survey, enabled us to analyse whether the sampling technique used gives an unbiased sample or, in other words, if the cases that were left out of the survey behave in the same way as the Humanities graduates that were surveyed.

The perceived job situation of those who were not covered by the survey in the second graduate labour market outcomes study can be taken as being equivalent, provided that we take into account the abovementioned tendency by those who were unemployed and inactive to positively bias their perception of the past.

With regard to the match, the situation in 2005 was equivalent, i.e. the results from the selected sample are representative and can therefore be extrapolated to the corresponding population.

2. Changes in the quality of graduate labour market outcomes

The progress of Humanities graduates after three years: was their situation in 2008 any better, the same or worse than in 2005?

This question is answered through an analysis of the group of Humanities graduates that was mismatched according to the 2005 graduate labour market outcomes study:

- Out of those who were in employment, the great majority continued to be in employment.
- There was progress among those who were either unemployed or inactive: 84.1% were in employment in 2008. Out of the total of those who were inactive, 28% continued to be in the same situation in 2008.
- There are two factors that contributed to an improvement in the match of the mismatched group: a change in job duties and/or a change of job. Mobility is therefore necessary, either in the same job with a change of duties or in another job.
- In terms of mobility in the same job, the fact that a university qualification was a requirement to get the job in the past, even though this did not mean having job duties on a level with their university studies, seems to increase the probability of graduates doing job duties on a level with their university studies.

Analysis of the trends according to memory: in 2008, were they better, the same or worse than in 2005?

This analysis was carried out using the group of Humanities graduates who were left out of the sample and consequently the survey as well, in the 2005 graduate labour market outcomes survey.

Those who perceived themselves to be mismatched in 2005:

- Tended to positively bias their job situation in the past: the results on their progress, stability or deterioration are therefore “less real”.
- There was less progress in terms of their employment, possibly because their memory is more positive about the situation than it really was. Job stability predominated over improvement in terms of their situation.
- The match only improved for one third of the graduates, and this was associated with a change of job and the requirements for getting a job.

Those who were matched in 2005:

- Job stability predominated in this group of analysis, in terms of both job situation and education-job match.
- Only those who varied their job duties in the same job underwent a poorer match by ending up doing job duties not on a level with their university studies.
- The highest percentage of progress (those who were required to have specific qualifications for their job) was in those individuals who were required to have a university qualification for their job and where their job duties were on a level with their university studies. Least progress was made by Humanities graduates who were not required to have any university qualification.
- Having the maximum match (the job requirements being specific qualifications and job duties associated with their degree) three years after obtaining their degrees in the Humanities ensured a maximum match for graduates after a further three years.

3. Comparison between cohorts

Humanities graduates six years after obtaining their degrees

A comparison between the results of Humanities graduates who obtained their degrees six years before and who were left out of the 2005 sample and those of graduates in other disciplines three years after their graduation leads to the following conclusions:

- **Job situation.** While graduates in the Social Sciences, Health Sciences and Engineering and Architecture, three years after obtaining their degrees, had an employment rate that was higher than 91% in 2005 and more than 94% in 2008, in the Humanities (96%) six years were required to get an equal result.
- **Type of contract.** Humanities graduates managed to improve the proportion of permanent contracts (an increase in the permanent contract rate), grant holders and those without a contract (a decrease in the proportion of grant holders and those without a contract) six years after obtaining their degrees. Apart from the Health Sciences and Engineering and Architecture, the Humanities had a higher proportion of self-employed graduates six years after graduating.
- **Match.** The match of Humanities graduates with job duties not on a level with their university studies improved slightly six years after obtaining their degrees. Nevertheless, it continued to be the discipline with the poorest education-job match six years after graduation.
- **Monthly income.** There was an important improvement in this aspect in that the proportion of Humanities graduates with an income of more than two thousand euros a month six years after obtaining their degrees was at the same level as that for graduates in the Social Sciences and Experimental Sciences.

For follow-up studies in the future...

This follow-up study was carried out on the group of Humanities graduates who graduated in 2001 and who, in 2005, were in a situation of education-job mismatch (their job duties were not on a level with their university studies), together with all of those who, because of the sample, were left out of the survey.

This decision to “filter out” all other graduates apart from those surveyed in 2005 who were mismatched meant:

1. Leaving out of the analysis Humanities graduates who graduated in 2001, who had never worked since completing their studies and who would also correspond to cases of a mismatch.
2. It was not possible to analyse all Humanities graduates as one sample, given that mismatch in the past conditioned their job situation later on in the future.

It would therefore be advisable for the total number of Humanities graduates to be included in follow-up studies in the future. In this way:

1. It will be possible to establish the progress, stability or deterioration of the entire group of graduates in the Humanities six years after obtaining their degrees.
2. A joint analysis could be made of Humanities graduates that have been surveyed twice (in the graduate labour market outcome study and the follow-up study) and also those who, because of the sample, were left out of the survey. This would allow for the results to be compared with those of other disciplines.

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