

# Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey

To qualify for federal financial aid, most for-profit programs and certificate programs at private nonprofit and public institutions must prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation. To comply with the U.S. Department of Education's Gainful Employment Regulations – and to remain eligible for federal student aid – a program's graduates must have annual loan payments that are less than 8 percent of their wages, or less than 20 percent of their discretionary income (discretionary income is the amount you earn above the poverty line).

## Who is conducting the survey?

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VMCAD is conducting the Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey, in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education's Gainful Employment Regulations.

## What is this survey about?

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To ensure their continued eligibility for important federal student aid, institutions like ours may wish to appeal the Debt-to-Earnings Ratio calculated by the Department of Education. These institutions can appeal by submitting results from the Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey. The brief survey includes 3 questions about the types of earnings you have received since you graduated.

## How long will it take to complete the survey?

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The survey should take 5 minutes or less to complete.

## Who is asked to participate?

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VMCAD is reaching out to recent Fashion Design, Fashion Merchandising, Graphic Design, Interior Design, and Digital Media graduates to complete this survey. Participation is completely voluntary, but the more graduates who complete the survey, the more accurate your institution data will be.

## How will the survey be conducted?

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The survey can be completed in a number of ways. We may ask you to complete the survey by mail, via the Web, or through a telephone interview.

## How will the data be used?

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The survey will be used only to recalculate institution/programs' Debt-to-Earnings Ratios, as specified by the Gainful Employment Regulations.

## Will my answers remain confidential?

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Your individual survey answers will not be disclosed and will only be combined with the answers from your institutions other recent Fashion Design, Fashion Merchandising, Interior Design, Graphic Design, and Digital Media graduates to recalculate your institution's Debt-to-Earnings Ratio.

For More Information About The Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey, Contact:  
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For More Information About The Gainful Employment Regulations, Please Visit  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/10/31/2014-25594/program-integrity-gainful-employment>