TRENDS
IN MARITIME HIGHER EDUCATION

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Six-Years On: Outcomes and Retention of Nursing Graduates

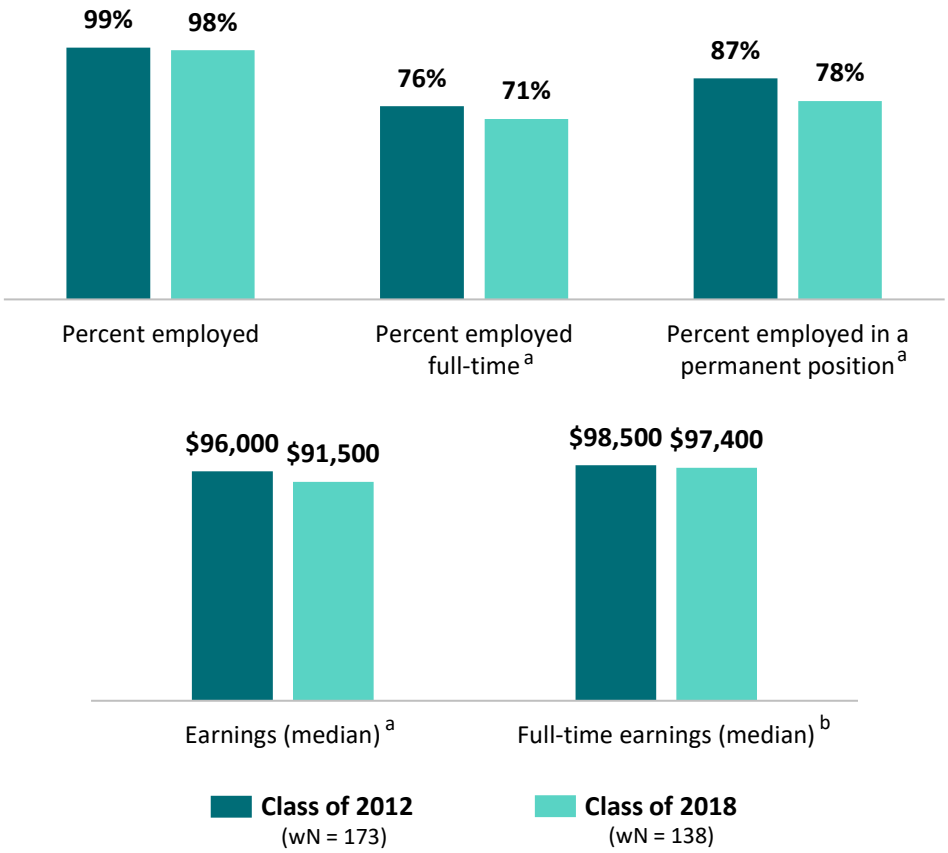
Highlights

- This report presents the six-year follow-up survey results for graduates of bachelor's degree programs in nursing at Maritime universities from the Classes of 2012 and 2018.[1] It examines employment outcomes, further education pathways, and regional retention among nursing graduates.
- Six years after graduation, 99% of the Class of 2012 and 98% of the Class of 2018 graduates in the labour force were employed. The proportions of employed graduates working full-time were 76% and 71% for the Classes of 2012 and 2018, respectively. For both classes, median annual earnings, expressed in constant 2025 dollars, exceeded $90,000, while median full-time earnings exceeded $97,000.
- The vast majority of employed nursing graduates worked in health-related industries and occupations. For the Classes of 2012 and 2018, respectively, 89% and 91% worked in the health care and social assistance sector, and 93% and 91% worked in professional occupations in health. For both classes, a small proportion of employed graduates worked in the educational services sector, primarily in post-secondary teaching occupations (2012: 5%; 2018: 4%).
- For both graduating classes, over 90% reported that their job was related to their nursing program to a considerable or great extent. Ninety percent of the Class of 2012 and 78% of the Class of 2018 reported using the skills acquired during their program in their work to a considerable or great extent. At least 8 in 10 graduates also reported that, to a considerable or great extent, their education was worth the financial investment (2012: 84%; 2018: 82%) and the investment of time required for classes and studies (2012: 85%; 2018: 80%).
- Over one-third of nursing graduates (2012: 34%; 2018: 38%) pursued further education within six years of graduation. Among those who pursued further education, a university degree, particularly a master's degree, was the most common credential pursued. Career advancement or promotion was the most frequently reported reason for pursuing further education in both graduating classes (2012: 36%; 2018: 35%).
- The proportion of graduates residing in the Maritimes six years after graduation increased from 72% for the Class of 2012 to 83% for the Class of 2018. Retention was highest among graduates originally from the Maritimes, at 81% for the Class of 2012 and 93% for the Class of 2018. Among Class of 2018 graduates living in their province of graduation, the most frequently reported reasons for staying were being closer to family and friends (78%) and obtaining employment (52%).

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1. The outcomes of four classes of nursing graduates two years after graduation were previously presented in: MPHEC, Profile, Employment Outcomes, and Retention of Maritime University Bachelor's Graduates: Nursing, February 2024.

Employment Outcomes of Nursing Graduates



Percent employed: The number employed divided by the total number in the labour force.

Earnings: Annualized earnings were calculated from self-reported wages or salaries, including tips and commissions, before taxes and other deductions, based on respondents' reported pay basis or period (hourly, biweekly, monthly, etc.). Median earnings are expressed in constant 2025 dollars and rounded to the nearest $100.

[a] Among employed graduates
[b] Among graduates employed full-time

Percentage of Nursing Graduates by Industry Sector of Employment[a]

	Industry sector	Class of 2012 (wN = 168)	Class of 2018 (wN = 135)
1	Health care and social assistance	**89%**	**91%**
2	Educational services	**5%**	**4%**
3	Other	**6%**	**5%**

[a] Among employed graduates

Industry sectors: Industries were classified according to the sectors defined in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Industry sectors not reported separately were grouped into "Other".

Percentage of Nursing Graduates by Occupation Group of Employment[a]

	Occupation group	Class of 2012 (wN = 170)	Class of 2018 (wN = 135)
1	Professional occupations in health[1]	93%	91%
2	Professional occupations in law, education, social, community, and government services[2]	4%	5%
3	Other	3%	4%

[a] Among employed graduates

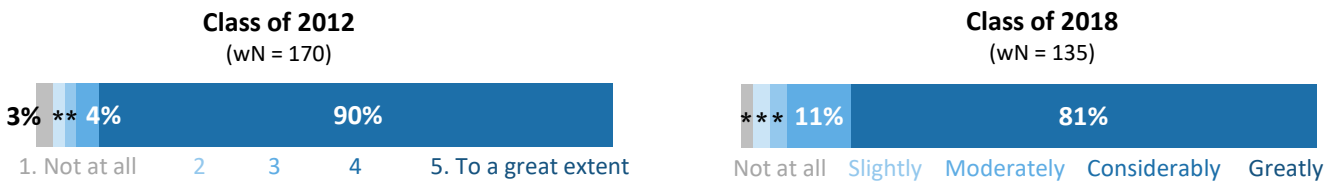
Occupation groups: Occupations were classified according to the major groups defined in the National Occupational Classification (NOC) system. Occupation groups not reported separately were grouped into "Other".

[1] Includes "registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses", "nursing co-ordinators and supervisors", and "nurse practitioners".

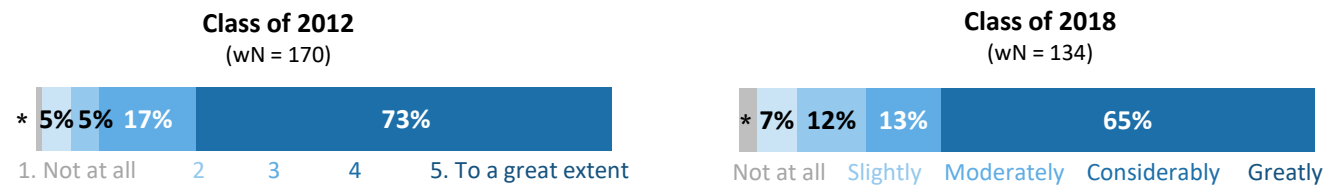
[2] Includes "university professors and lecturers", "college and other vocational instructors", and "post-secondary teaching and research assistants".

Perceived Educational and Employment Outcomes Among Nursing Graduates

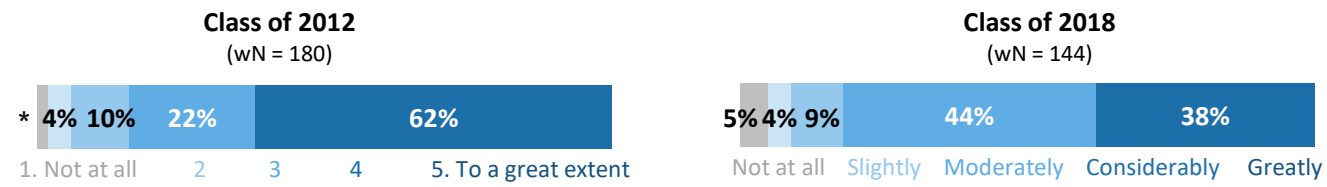
Their Job Was Related to Their Program[a]



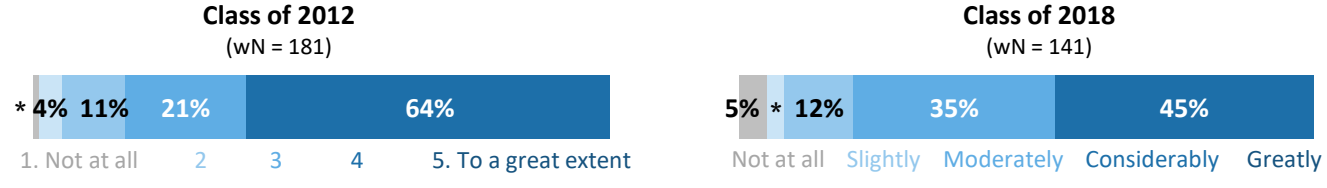
They Used Skills Learned During Their Program in their Job[a]



Their Education Was Worth the Financial Investment



Their Education Was Worth the Investment of Time

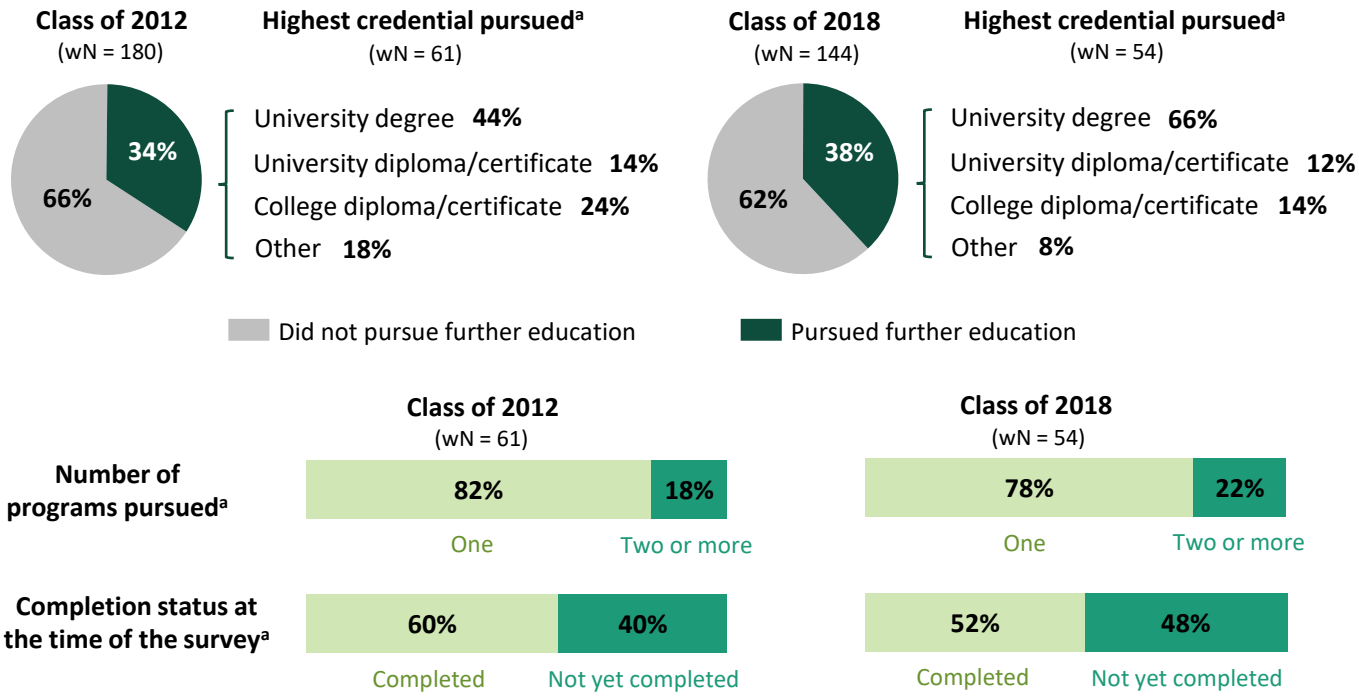


[a] Among employed graduates

* Data suppressed due to small cell size (unweighted n < 5)

Note: Response scales differed between the two surveys. Categories are labelled as they appeared in each survey.

Education Pursued Following Completion of Nursing Program

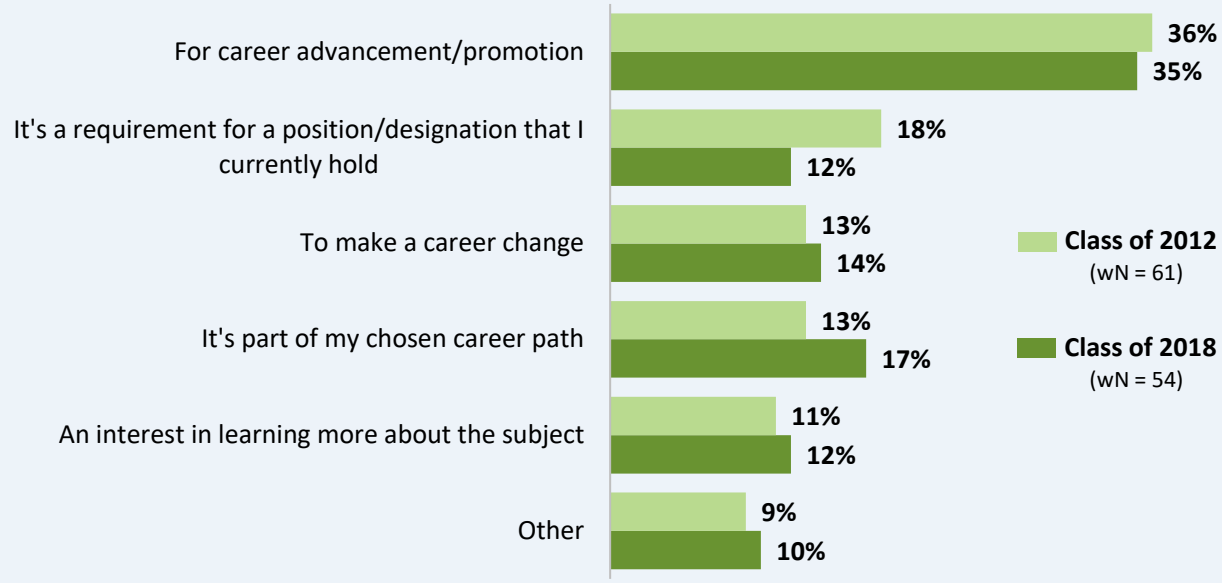


[a] Among graduates who pursued further education

Further education: Participation in an education program leading to a diploma, certificate, or degree after graduation from the nursing program. For graduates who reported more than one further education program, classification was based on the highest credential pursued or completed. Credentials are classified into the following categories:

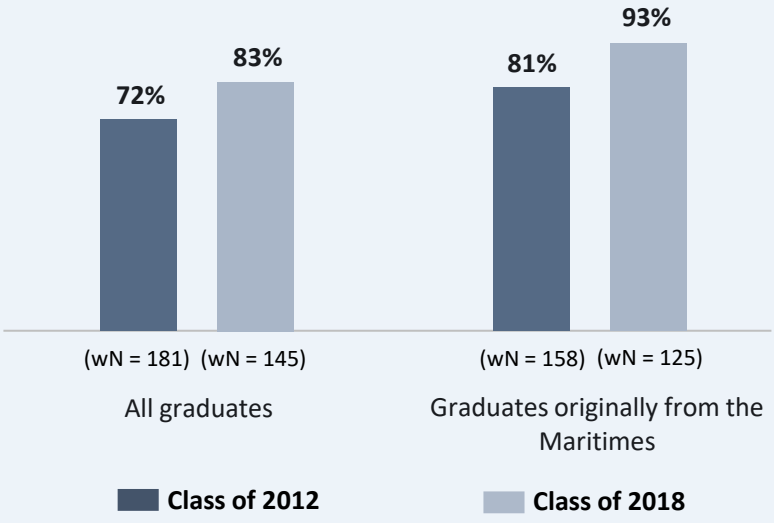
- University degree (includes bachelor's, master's, PhD/doctorate, and professional health doctorate)
- University diploma/certificate
- College diploma/certificate (includes public or private college, training school, apprenticeship, and CEGEP credentials)
- Other (includes professional designations and other diplomas or certificates)

Main Reason for Pursuing Further Education[a]

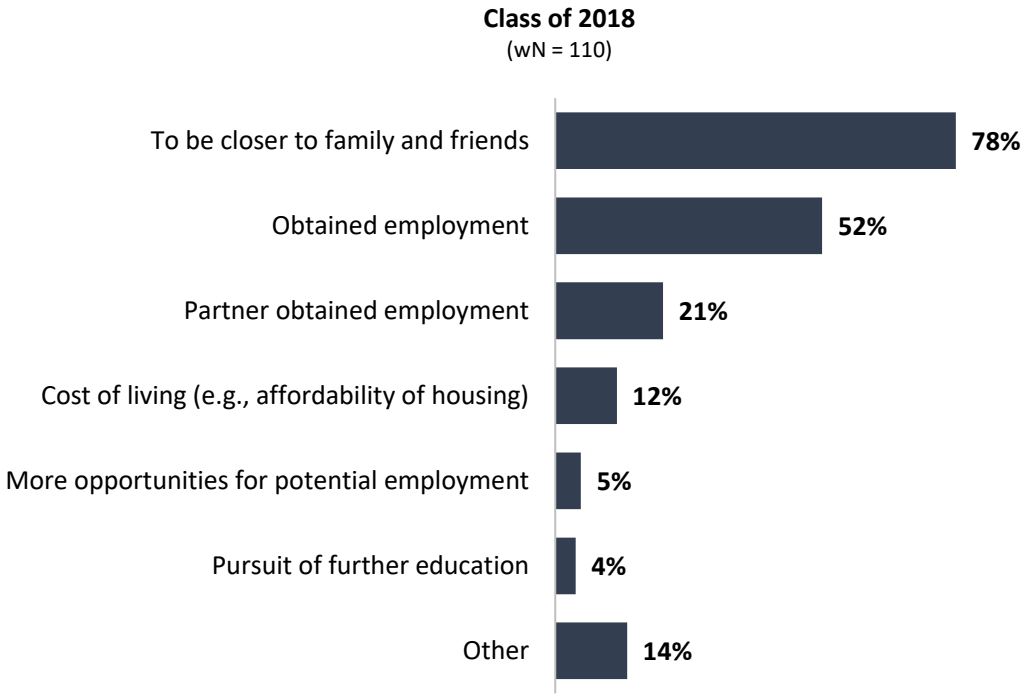


[a] Among graduates who pursued further education

Percentage of Nursing Graduates Residing in the Maritimes, by Region of Origin



Reasons for Staying in the Province of Graduation[a]



[a] Among graduates residing in their province of graduation six years after graduation

Note: This question was asked only in the 2024 survey of the Class of 2018. Percentages sum to more than 100% because respondents could select multiple options.

Methodological Notes

Data sources:
MPHEC Graduate Outcomes (GO) Survey.

Research sample:
The analyses included graduates of bachelor's degree programs classified under the following code from the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Canada 2021:
- 51.3801: Registered nursing/registered nurse (RN, ASN, BSN, BScN, MSN, MScN)

The sample included graduates of Bachelor of Nursing and Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs at the following universities:
- **Nova Scotia**: Cape Breton University, Dalhousie University, and St. Francis Xavier University
- **New Brunswick**: University of New Brunswick and Université de Moncton
- **Prince Edward Island**: University of Prince Edward Island

Survey sample and response rates

Survey	Graduates	Completed surveys Unweighted (weighted)	Response rate	Margin of error*
Class of 2012 in 2018	792	201 (181)	25%	±6.0 pp
Class of 2018 in 2024	771	137 (145)	18%	±7.6 pp

* Margin of error at the 95% confidence level (19 times out of 20).

All statistics are based on data weighted by university of graduation and graduate gender. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Item nonresponses were excluded from the relevant analyses. Estimates based on small subsamples (unweighted n < 50) are not presented because of reduced reliability, and cells with small counts (unweighted n < 5) are suppressed or combined into the "Other" category to protect respondent confidentiality. Data coded using earlier versions of the CIP, NOC, and NAICS classifications were converted to the latest versions (CIP Canada 2021, NOC 2021, and NAICS Canada 2022) to support comparisons between surveys.

Note: wN represents the weighted number of respondents who provided valid responses to the relevant question.

Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission
Telephone: (506) 453-2844
Email: mphec@mphec.ca
www.mphec.ca