



ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF PHNOM PENH QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT



TRACER STUDY 2014 GRADUATES OF YEAR 2012

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Graduates of Year 2012
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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ELOs	Expected Learning Outcomes
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IFL	Institute of Foreign Languages
MoEYS	Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NIE	National Institute of Education
QA	Quality Assurance
QAU	Quality Assurance Unit
RUPP	Royal University of Phnom Penh

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Abstract

The primary objectives of the study were to find out the answers to the research questions related to the questions re: how the University helped the graduates to get jobs, how long they were trying to find a job after graduation from RUPP, what types of jobs they have, how gender issues affected the employment and career development opportunities/prospects of graduates, how much they earn from their careers, what kinds of skills learned at the University are related to their current work, and if they were satisfied with their studies at the RUPP, and how the University qualification contributes to their lifelong learning. To answer the queries above, a total of 565 samples were studied and drawn from a pool of 932 graduates who were randomly selected amongst the whole population. Those participants were interviewed through mobile phones and they were contacted at least twice in order to get the complete information related to their current employment. This study reports the findings of a tracer study conducted in 2014 by the RUPP Quality Assurance Unit. Overall, results show that 86.4 per cent of graduates have found gainful employment after they had left the university for 12 months and the remainder are either in graduate school or still looking for acceptable work. On average, RUPP graduates can earn approximately US\$100 to US\$ 2,000 per month; the ones living in the city have more opportunities to earn more revenue than those living in the provinces. According to the respondents, 45.3 per cent of them intend to pursue further graduate education at the RUPP. In conclusion, the study finds that more MA labor-market relevant programs should be established after a labor market survey has been completed by the university.

Executive Summary

This tracer study has been done to promote a better understanding of the employment of the graduates who left the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) in 2012. It is important to wait for two years until some of the graduates have finished their pedagogical training at the National Institute of Education (NIE) and have found employment. The overall objectives of the study are focused on the employability and the conditions under which the graduates were employed, how they searched for a job and the length of time it took, and the relevance of the BA programs offered by the University.

The study targeted a pool of 1,450 graduates of both scholarship and fee-paying programs. Five hundred and seventy (570) graduates were drawn as the samples. However, five hundred and sixty-five (565) graduates were successfully reached and responded to the survey instruments. Out of the 565 graduates interviewed, there were 66 percent males and 34 percent females, 33.3 percent scholarship and 66.7 percent fee-paying. 93.5 percent of them were 24 to 28 years old and 82.7 percent were single. The majority of respondents (65.7%) lived in Phnom Penh city and the rest (34.3%) lived in all provinces of Cambodia. The study further revealed that the majority of graduates (96.1%) had spent 12 months looking for an acceptable job. In total, eighty-six point four percent (86.4%) of the respondents were employed and most of these (36.5%) worked in private sector, seventeen point three percent (17.3%) worked in public education- i.e. as teachers, fifteen percent (15%) ran their own business or were self-employed, thirteen point five percent (13.5%) worked for government institutions, nine point six percent (9.6%) were employed by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and seven point three percent (7.3%) worked in private education --i.e. teachers.

A number of conclusions can be drawn about the employment opportunities for new graduates and the relevance of higher education institutions (HEIs) in meeting the labor market needs and the labor market needs in the current Cambodian context. The following are the major conclusions which also address the research questions that the study set out to answer.

The Royal University of Phnom Penh still holds the confidence of stakeholders and by the public trust. Remarkably, most of the graduates leaving the RUPP had more opportunities to get jobs, even though they had with little or no work experience before graduation. For instance, for those that had been working part-time¹ during their studies made the switch to full-time employment² while the ones who had no working experience could find either part-time or full-time jobs after their graduation.

Moreover, the Royal University of Phnom Penh has produced qualified educational practitioners to serve current social needs and a majority of them had many opportunities to work in a wide range of occupations, such as the public or private education sector, governmental institutions, NGOs, and various areas in the private sectors.

Holding good degrees from the RUPP provided graduates with good opportunities to find employment and most of them could get relatively good jobs within one year after the completion of their undergraduate degree programs. It should be noted that a large number of the graduates have found work in the private sector and earn high rates of remuneration.

¹ *Part-time employees get hourly payment or irregularly paid or based on contract*

² *Full-time employees get monthly payment*

In addition to academic achievement, the graduates were required to have additional attitudes such as capacity for self-reflection, a sense of responsibility, self-confidence, reliability, problem-solving skills, initiative, willingness to learn, some ability to work under the pressure, and leadership competency. These qualities must be integral to all the programs of the RUPP.

Regarding gender, both men and women have fairly equal opportunities for employment and careers; and many of them chose common procedures to search for employment, such as public announcements, job advertisements in the newspapers and/or through the Internet postings.

In terms of the academic perceptions, most graduates were generally satisfied with the qualifications and skills obtained in their years at the RUPP.

However, the many programs taught at the RUPP still reflect the earlier goal of the RUPP -- to produce high school teachers. The findings, on the contrary, reveal that many fresh graduates were working in various fields other than teaching. Therefore, it is important to identify new academic inputs related to real and future market requirements as well as to equip the students with the relevant soft skills. It is also needed that the RUPP provide students with pre-work experience—i.e. Internships or practical work in their fields.

Recommendations

The following recommendations and suggestions are based on the input of the graduates and the degree providers.

- Strengthening linkages between the University and the market and the creation of private sector/University partnerships could provide both undergraduates and employers a channel of communication. Additionally, the use of job fairs or internships would enable graduates to access the labor market needs or through bilateral communication which they can explore together the ever-changing needs of the labor market and academic inputs needed to meet these needs.
- A short-course training program on work skills before the undergraduates leave the University would give the graduates a head start in the job market or it would give them more relevant skills and capacities for the market.
- An Employer Expectations Study should be carried out to gather feedback from employers regarding University outcomes or contributions. The findings would be used to assess the needs for new graduates and undergraduate programs and assist in the proposed review of current curriculum.
- The University should support research skills and projects which would create information related to the academic and market needs or even future needs for graduates in various areas of employment.
- A large-scale curriculum review needs to be undertaken which is focused on Cambodian social needs and current labor market demands. The results of curriculum review would be applied to the creation of new courses which are relevant to labor market need. This should include revision of both course content and instructional methods.

- Curricula need to be precisely defined in terms of outcomes or expected competencies, skills, attitudes, and knowledge to be achieved by graduates.
- The University management should encourage student input to the study programs of each department.
- There is need to emphasize the importance of efficient record-keeping in all departments and offices in the University. This could include the profiles of teaching staff, support staff, student records and the University partners and/or stakeholders.

1.1 Background of Study

The Royal University of Phnom Penh has been conducting Graduate Tracer Studies since 2004. The regular studies aim to help the University identify concurrence or mismatch between the training provided and the labor market. It is often asked if the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) and/or other HEIs in Cambodia are achieving satisfactory learning outcomes and/or value-added input to Cambodian society. To find solutions to these and other queries, this tracer study is designed to investigate the employability of graduates from the whole population of the University who graduated in 2012. In addition, it focuses on the quality of higher education and the condition under which the graduates have been employed and its role in job-seeking, the length of time graduates took before getting employed and how their areas of work are related to the programs offered by the University. Additionally, the study is expected to help identify which programs are still relevant to current market demands and the findings of the study are to inform future improvement as well as further studies. From this point of view, the report is organized as follows:

After the Executive Summary, Chapter 1 discusses the background of the study and the specific activities that were carried out, as well as the objectives of the research. Chapter 2 is a literature review of materials considered to be relevant to the study and it also defines the research questions that guide this assignment. Chapter 3 presents the methodology used to gather the information and data analysis. Chapter 4 provides the research findings of the graduate tracer study. Chapter 5 deals with rating

information of qualifications and the labor market. Chapter 6 discusses constraints and other limitations to the study and Chapter 7 offers some conclusions, based on the research questions. The set of recommendations of this study is found in the Executive Summary.

1. 2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The overall objectives of the study are to obtain a better understanding of the graduates' employability, how they searched for a job, how the coursework they had done at the RUPP helped them first to get a job and then to do well at that job. Additionally, this study is intended to survey the quality of education provided by the Royal University of Phnom Penh as indicated through access to and success in the fields of work. Thus, the study will explore the following:

- investigate how the graduates moved from the University into various workplaces;
- disclose the influence of personal factors in the job search in terms of gender, and the background of the graduates;
- compare the skills attained from the course of study and the requirements of the labor market which contribute to the success to the graduates;
- analyze a broad prospective of the relationship between graduates' study and work experience, looking at personal goals such as job satisfaction, monthly income, and job stability;
- find out the job search methods employed by graduates during their transitional process;
- relate the experience and views of graduates as they evaluate RUPP teaching and learning materials, institutional facilities and curriculum, in order to plan for future improvement;

- identify key aspects of the life-long learning of graduates, and offer feedback on the quality of RUPP programs; and
- ascertain the weak areas of programs which have to be improved in order to satisfy the expected learning outcomes.

The literature review related to tracer studies in the Cambodian context was limited because the previous university employment studies have not yet been taken into serious account. Given this background, it was extremely hard for any interested party or person to access other studies. Therefore, most of the graduate tracer studies done by the RUPP came from a strong desire to provide beneficial information and facts regarding the graduates, but most of them have not been open to the public or printed for general use.

2.1 Related Graduate Tracer Studies

The tracer studies presented below are relevant to this survey.

- RUPP Students' Employability 2004 (not for public) was done by the Quality Assurance Unit to investigate the graduate employment conditions in our Cambodian context. The study also assessed the supply of human resources produced by the University and its findings were supposed to inform the policy makers and curriculum committee on how to update the course contents which would provide the graduates more job opportunities in the labor market. (Roth, 2004)
- IFL-Tracer Study Report 2007 (not for public) was done by the Institute of Foreign Languages (IFL) to identify the effectiveness of the English language program run by local staff. The study also attempted to provide information to upgrade the curriculum and course contents which could help graduates meet the changes in market needs. (Anonymous, 2007)

- RUPP-Tracer Study Report 2010 (for only the internal stakeholders) was done by the Quality Assurance Unit to inform program managers and/or heads of departments regarding the demands of the graduates and update management on employment conditions in Cambodian labor markets. Its findings would be used to expand the existing programs at the University or introduce new programs related to changing market demands. (Vong, 2010)
- The RUPP-Tracer Study Report 2012 was made available for the public and it was done by the Quality Assurance Unit to verify the quality of higher education in this public University. The findings of the study would help the University identify its learning outcomes, the strengths and weaknesses of the University programs, and the relationships between education/training and the labor market needs. To assure the effectiveness of the University programs, the study was conducted with two different cohorts so that comparative information would be available. (Vong, 2012)

2.2 Research questions

Research questions are formulated to gather the crucial information which helps the educational providers better understand the needs of the stakeholders and the current labour markets.

2.3 Research Questions Related to the Graduate Tracer Study

1. How much do the University courses help the graduates to get jobs?
2. How long do graduates take to find the employment in their areas of expertise?

3. Where are the graduates being employed after graduation?
4. How does gender affect the employment and career development opportunities/prospects of graduates?
5. How much do the graduates earn from their careers?
6. To what extent are graduates working in areas not directly related to their areas of expertise?
7. What professional skills are necessary to be effective and succeed in the modern workforce?
8. In retrospect, were graduates satisfied with their studies at RUPP?
9. How much does the university qualification contribute to lifelong learning?

The study intends to establish a continuing evaluation process of the University performance and the findings of the study will help the University identify its expected learning outcomes (ELOs), the strengths and weaknesses of the University programs, and the relationships between education/ training and labor market needs. Hence, the methodology driven by the above research questions will promote better understanding of the graduates' employability. Basing on the research questions, 1,450 stratified samples were randomly drawn from a whole population of both scholarship and the fee-paying students.

To get the needed information, both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed for data collection and a questionnaire for interviewing was piloted to make sure the right information could be collected. Also, the interviewers were well trained to make sure they were able to interview well and collect the needed information. Although they were working independently, they were closely monitored by QA staff to make sure the information gathered in the survey would be reliable.

3.1 Sampling Technique for Tracer Study

The entire number of graduates in 2012 was 2,477, and most of their phone numbers which were provided by the Academic Office became our sampling frames from which a stratified sample of 1,450 graduates was randomly and systematically selected. Then, the number of five hundred and seventy (570) samples of required data were randomly drawn from the stratified sampling and an additional twenty-five percent (25%) of the stratified sample size (approximately 362 alumni) were reserved

to be substituted for graduates who could not be contacted for whatever reasons. Thus, a bigger sample size than what was being targeted was selected in order to replace those graduates who could not be traced and/or contacted due either to a change of phone numbers or withdrawal from the study. In this regard, a snowballing technique was employed and the next contact lists were ready to be used when the pitfalls occurred. Among the selected samples, five hundred and sixty-five (565) graduates including 66% males and 34% females could be fully reached and agreed to participate in the whole interviewing process.

3.2 Sample Size

It was difficult to trace the graduates' contact addresses because many of them had been changed over time thereby making them unreliable. On the other hand, a certain limited number of graduates for each specific field of study would be too small to make any statistical significance; therefore it is difficult to compare the results within the respective institution. An increase of the sample size per academic field might solve the problem but it would not be financially feasible. Given all of this, the sample size was calculated and selected with a margin of error =0.05 in order to attain a reliable representation of the population. The sample number of participants in this survey is a sufficient number to represent the employable opportunities of the University graduates in year 2012.

3.3 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into six different groups of questions each one aimed at a specific objective. The first group of questions was related to the graduate's personal information and the reasons of choosing to study at the University. This part

of the questionnaire provided a rich source of graduate's profiles such as year of graduation, age, marital status, and current residence and so on. The second group in the questionnaire is entitled working experience before and/or during study at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP). This group of questions contains the necessary indicators to compare the responses to present employability. The third group of questions was designed to gather information re: graduates' current occupation and how the knowledge and skills they had learnt from the RUPP was contributing to their work/careers. It was also used to investigate the graduate's workplaces, salary and whether they were working in the fields for which they were prepared at the RUPP. The part fourth of questionnaire was to trace the methods of job search and the period of time that it took to get a job. The fifth group of questions was used to gather graduates' satisfaction with the quality of courses provided by the University and the correlation between their newly-gained knowledge and the market needs. The final set of questions was designed to gather information regarding the intentions of the graduates to go on for further study at the RUPP.

3.4 Data Collection

To gather data, the QAU started to collect the phone numbers of graduates from the Academic Office in May. In late June, the interviewers were recruited and trained and in early July the questionnaire was piloted and trialed. It is also important to note that the study relied primarily on telephone interviews because electronic mail (email) was not convenient for the alumni living in the remote areas of Cambodia and the ordinary postal services are not reliable in this country. For these reasons, all survey participants were contacted by mobile phones at least twice in order to confirm the full information regarding their current employment and the interviewers, who had been thoroughly trained how to decode the data, had to complete or circle the

questionnaire items in as detailed a manner as possible. Depending on the participant availability, the interview took a minimum of twenty minutes per respondent. The respondents were invited to answer the questionnaire mostly by rating on a *five-point scale*; for instance, 1 represented *totally disagree* and 5 was *totally agree* and the results were carefully recorded and then converted to SPSS for analysis.

3.5 Data Coding and Entry

The data collection was completely done in early October; then, they were coded by the QA Officer who was responsible for the study. In mid-October a data entry team was trained on how to enter data into the SPSS system. The process of data entry took almost three weeks and was completed by the end of October. The study outcomes were only meaningful and therefore useful if the respondents agreed to participate until the end of the interviewing process. Therefore, the qualitative data responses were first coded and classified in separate categories before they were processed; then, the Statistical Software Package for Social Science (SPSS 15.0) was employed to manage and analyze data.

3.6 Data Analysis

In early November, the data analysis process was conducted. The next part of the study was to analyze the answers to the survey. The information was categorized into three sections; the first one includes the profile of the graduates responding to the survey. The second section measures the educational experience and the graduates' subsequent careers. The last section is dedicated to the evaluation of professional knowledge and skills obtained by the graduates, and their intention to pursue future study.

- Statistics of quantitative data (ranking of 1-5) are converted into percentages shown in the table and used to express participants' point of views.
- For qualitative data in general comments are first coded and classified in separate categories, and then the frequency of each one is tabulated.
- The results, which measure participant satisfaction, are reflected through the percentage retrieved from the SPSS system. The interpretation of each questions item is correlated to the numerical decrease or increase.

4.1 Response Rates

Amongst the targeted samples of 932 phone numbers, only 565 of them were able to be reached. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the phone numbers could not be contacted and one point three percent (1.3%) withdrawn due to their personal unavailability.

Table 1: Responses by Fields of Study

No.	Degree Program	N=565
1	Mathematics	9.2%
2	Physics	2.8%
3	Chemistry	6.5%
4	Biology	2.8%
5	Computer Science	29.7%
6	Environment	1.6%
7	Khmer Literature	7.6%
8	Geography	5.3%
9	Psychology	1.9%

No.	Degree Program	N=565
10	Sociology	7.3%
11	Philosophy	2.8%
12	History	1.1%
13	Media and Communication	1.9%
14	Tourism	1.2%
15	French	4.4%
16	English	6.2%
17	Japanese	4.2%
18	Korean	3.2%
	Total	100%

4.2 The Profile of the Respondents

The collected parameters to illustrate the respondent's profile have been classified into age, gender, marital status, enrollment status, and current address.

4.2.1 Type of Respondents

93.5% of respondents were from 24 to 28 years old and amongst those 66 % of them were male and 34% were female. 82.7% were single and 16.8% were married. The majority of participants (66.7%) were from the fee-paying programs and 33.3% were scholarship students.

Figure 1: Gender

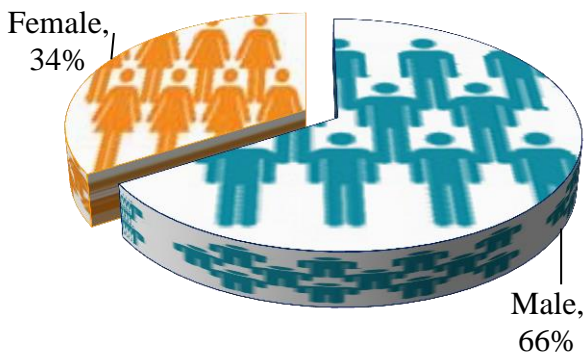
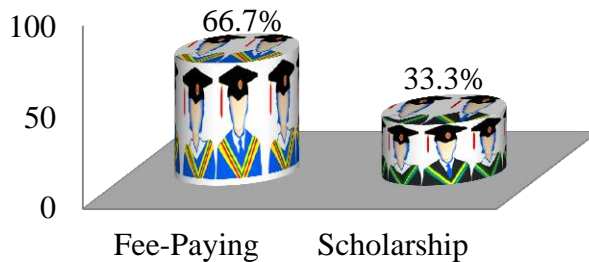


Figure 2: Marital Status



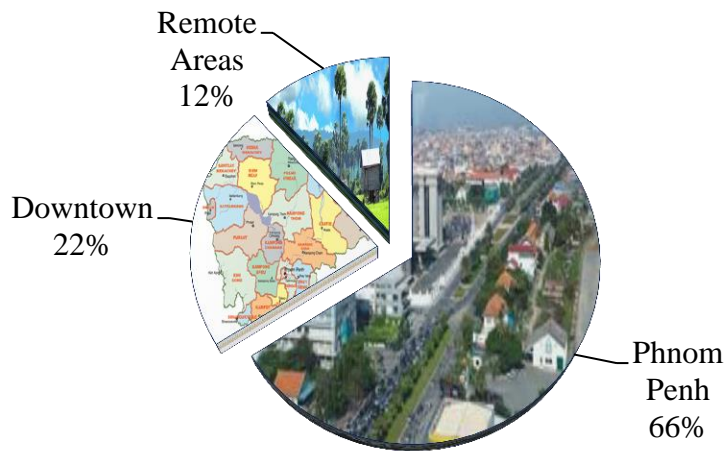
Figure 3: Types of Participants



4.2.2 Locations of Respondents

The results indicated that the respondents of this study, who graduated from RUPP in year 2012, are now living either in cities or provinces in Cambodia. The findings showed sixty-five point three percent (65.3%) of the respondents are currently working and living in Phnom Penh city, and other 22.1 % are in the provincial towns and 11.6% of them are in the rural or remote areas of Cambodia. Amongst those respondents, there were eighty-two point seven percent (82.7%) living with their relatives and families. These statistics can be interpreted that the graduates have chosen to work in somewhere their family are living; therefore, it could be assumed that the well-trained and well-educated teachers are likely gathering in the city other than in the remote areas or countryside.

Figure 4: Current Locations of Working Places



4.3 Educational Experience and Graduate Employability

While the respondents considered the benefits of education/training at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, 73.8% of them confirmed that they had more access to get a job due to the skills and quality of their studies. Those employment opportunities coincided since they were in year 2.

4.3.1 Work Experience while studying in the undergraduate years

According to data analysis, 13% of undergraduates were working before enrolling at the University. When asked about work experience while studying at the University, 45.8% of 565 samples claimed that they were working and 33 % of employed undergraduates earned from US\$ 100 to US\$150 and another 8% earned up to US\$ 300 per month. The first three top-earning groups, who were working while studying, were the respondents from Computer Science (32.4%), Khmer Literature program (11.6%), and mathematics students (10.4%). The majority (31.2%) of working students were working part-time. Statistics indicate that those undergraduates had tried to integrate themselves into the labor market and gained some experience before they applied for a permanent job while the majority concentrated on their studies. It is not clear if there were a correlation effect between employment workload and time needed for study. Thus, this is an area that can be followed up with further research.

Table *below* gives a brief comparison graduates who were working while studying and those who started working only after leaving the University.

Table 2: Comparison of Working Experience

No.	Working Experience	Percentage	Types of Employment (N=565)	
			Full-Time	Part-Time
1	While studying at the University	45.8%	13.5%	31.2%
2	After leaving the University	86.4%	78.1%	5.7%

4.3.2 Employment Status of Graduates in current year 2014

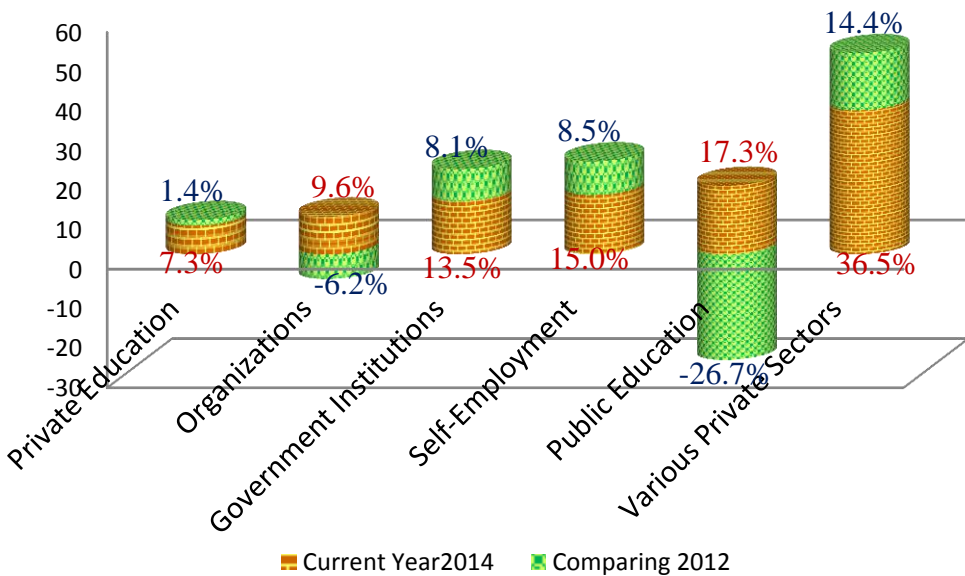
According to the interviews, the responses indicated that 86.4% of the 565 sample graduates are employed, and the remainder are either pursuing further studies and/or professional training or still looking for a regular job. In general, it took some graduates 12 months to get a permanent job because they wanted to be teachers and had to take pedagogy courses in the National Institute of Education (NIE); thus, the process of transitioning from the University to work was a bit long. It should be recognized that amongst the graduates who found a job, 78.1% of graduates are working full-time and another 5.7% of them are working part-time. Specifically after graduation, the numbers of graduates in full-time employment increased sharply from 13.5% to 78.1%, while the number of the part-time working graduates dramatically declined from 31.3 % to 5.7 %. This is a logical and expected course of events.

4.3.3 Major Area of Current Employment 2014

Regarding the graduates' employment, 34.2 % from scholarship and 65.8 % from fee-paying programs are working full-time. According to their respective careers, most of the graduates (36.5%) worked in various private businesses, seventeen point three

percent (17.3%) worked in public education, fifteen percent (15%) ran their own businesses (self-employment), thirteen point five percent (13.5%) worked for government institutions, nine point six percent (9.6%) were employed by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and seven point three percent (7.3%) taught in private educational institutions. Compared to previous study on careers, we learn that the graduates who are working in the private sector has increased 14.4%, in self-employment 8.5% increase, becoming a teacher in the public educational fields decreased 26.7%, NGO work decreased to 6.2 %, government sector employment increased gradually to 8.1% and teaching in private educational institutions climbed 1.4%.

Figure 5: Comparison of Current Employment 2014



In terms of part-time employment, of the 32 respondents who worked in part-time, (43.8%) worked for various private sector businesses; eighteen point eight percent

(18.8%) worked in public education, fifteen point six percent (15.6%) taught in private education institutions, and twelve point five percent (12.5%) were employed by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

Table 3: Description of Current Employment Status 2014

Types of Employment	Full-time (N=441)	Part-time (N=32)	Total (N=565)
Various Private Sectors	40.4%	43.8%	36.5%
Public Education (teachers)	19.0%	18.8%	17.3%
Government Institutions	17.0%	0.0%	13.5%
Organizations (NGOs)	10.7%	12.5%	9.6%
Private Education(teachers)	7.5%	15.6%	7.3%
Self-employment / Own Business	4.8%	3.1%	4.8%

4.3.4 Working hours and Salary

Those employees earned remarkable salary ranging from US\$150 to US\$1,500. Respectively, these 29% earned between US\$150 and US\$ 200, other 34.5% earned from US\$250 to US\$ 900, and 5.1% of graduates earned up to US\$ 1,500. Majority (55.8%) of full-time employees were working between 40 and 48 hours per week while the 28.1% of part-time ones were working between 8 and 16 hours per week.

A comparison of remuneration given to various degree holders, Comparing degree holders, the majority (20.7%) of computer science degree holders earned high salaries, between US\$1,000-US\$1,500 and 25% (N=4) earned more than US\$ 2,000 per month. Other top-earning programs include 17.2% of Korean language, 13.8% of

Japanese language, and 13.8% of English language degree holders earned between US\$1,000-US\$1,500. The table below provided detailed information of the monthly salaries.

Table 4: Comparison of Degree Holders and Remuneration

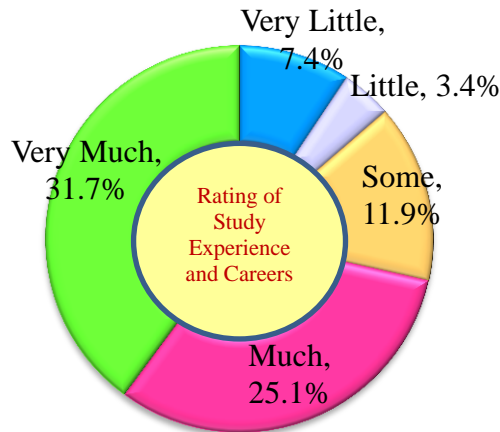
Major	No Responses (N=147)	\$100-\$120 (N=22)	\$120-\$150 (N=53)	\$150-\$200 (N=111)	\$200-\$300 (N=112)	\$350-\$500 (N=69)	\$500-\$900 (N=14)	\$1,000-\$1,500 (N=29)	Total (N=565)
Mathematics	15.60%	0.00%	5.70%	10.80%	7.10%	4.30%	7.10%	6.90%	9.20%
Physics	4.80%	0.00%	0.00%	7.20%	0.90%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.80%
Chemistry	8.80%	9.10%	1.90%	13.50%	4.50%	1.40%	0.00%	0.00%	6.50%
Biology	4.80%	4.50%	5.70%	1.80%	1.80%	1.40%	0.00%	0.00%	2.80%
Computer Science	19.00%	22.70%	26.40%	30.60%	43.80%	34.80%	42.90%	20.70%	29.70%
Environment	1.40%	0.00%	1.90%	1.80%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	10.30%	1.60%
Khmer Literature	8.20%	27.30%	20.80%	7.20%	2.70%	4.30%	0.00%	0.00%	7.60%
Geography	12.20%	4.50%	0.00%	5.40%	3.60%	1.40%	0.00%	0.00%	5.30%
Psychology	2.00%	0.00%	1.90%	1.80%	2.70%	2.90%	0.00%	0.00%	1.90%
Sociology	4.10%	9.10%	5.70%	8.10%	11.60%	10.10%	7.10%	0.00%	7.30%
Philosophy	2.00%	0.00%	20.80%	1.80%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.80%
History	0.70%	4.50%	1.90%	1.80%	0.00%	1.40%	0.00%	0.00%	1.10%
Media and Communication	1.40%	0.00%	3.80%	0.00%	1.80%	2.90%	0.00%	10.30%	1.90%
Tourism	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.80%	1.80%	1.40%	0.00%	3.40%	1.10%
French	2.70%	0.00%	3.80%	3.60%	2.70%	11.60%	7.10%	3.40%	4.40%
English	6.10%	18.20%	0.00%	0.90%	7.10%	8.70%	14.30%	13.80%	6.20%
Japanese	3.40%	0.00%	0.00%	0.90%	5.40%	7.20%	21.40%	13.80%	4.20%
Korea	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.90%	2.70%	5.80%	0.00%	17.20%	3.20%

Further analysis took into consideration equity issues such as genders and socio-economic status. The results revealed that 66 % of males and 34% of females have had a regular job. Amongst those, 66.4% of males and 33.6% of females are full-time employees. In short, it is clear that males and females had the same opportunities to get jobs and received similar salaries. No discriminations were raised by our respondents.

4.4 Rating of Study Experience Contributed to the Employability

The study also attempted to establish the views of graduates regarding the study experience at RUPP in which supported their current employment and sought their assessments of the programs. 68.1% of them confirmed that their current employment was related to what they had studied at the University. Specifically, when asked how their skills, experience, and knowledge studied at the RUPP contributed to their jobs, 31.7% answered that they were *very much* related to what they are doing and another 25.1% claimed that they were *much* related to their careers. In short, we can conclude that the majority of graduates have received benefit from their study and been satisfied with their studies at the RUPP. Also, the quality of education at the RUPP appears to have improved over the years and serves the needs both of the graduates and of society. Overall, the qualification earned from the University and the improvement of their capacities and skills appeared to give the recent graduates better access to the labor market than previously.

Figure 6: Studying Experience and Employability



4.5 When do Graduates start looking for Gainful Employment?

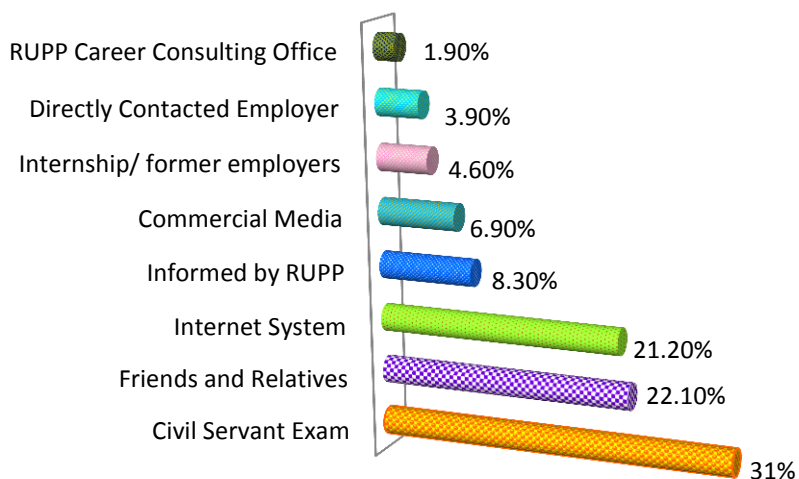
The study confirmed that most students started searching for employment at the time of completion. 62.4 % indicated that they had started searching for work shortly after completion of their studies (1 – 3 months after completion). This excluded the 17.7% of graduates who took the pedagogy course at the National Institute of Education (NIE) because they wanted to become teachers in upper secondary/ tertiary teacher or become public civil servants.

4.5.1 Job Search Methods by which Graduates Got their gainful Employment

The survey looked at the methods that the graduates used to acquire their first jobs. They were included Public Service Recruitment/ Civil Servant Examination, Personal contacts through friends and/or relatives, contacting an employer without knowing about a vacancy, RUPP Career Office, RUPP Student Association Services, Job Ads, setting up personal business, working with same employer who had hired as before completion of studies, surfing on the Internet, and internships. Some had worked in family businesses during university and continued in these areas after their studies.

The findings showed that the majority of graduates had limited access to job information from the RUPP Student’s Association (only 0.7% had used) and RUPP Career Advising Office (only 1.2% had used as this service is relatively new to the campus). The study further revealed that the 488 (86.4%) graduates who were currently employed (aggregate of both full-time and part-time jobs) used diverse methods to find work/job. The most common methods included taking the Public Service Recruitment/ Civil Servant Examination³ 31%, which means they got jobs through an open, competitive and transparent method compared to 22.1% who found jobs through personal contacts with either friends or relatives, surfing on the Internet 21.2%, 8.3 % used the RUPP bulletin board, another 6.9% used job advertisements in the public or commercial media, 4.6% returned to their internship fields or previous employment, 3.9% directly contacted employers, and RUPP Advising Office 1.9% of the graduates.

Figure 7: Common Job Searching Methods



The figure shows the comparison of Job Search Methods the graduates used in the transitional period of seeking for work. Civil Servant Exam in the figure including Ministries of Militaries.

³ Civil Servant Examination is announced in public and open to all graduates who are competent. Currently, the Cambodia government has recruited new graduates in various fields ranging from MoEYS to governmental institutions, Civil Servant Ministries and Ministries of Militaries. The university graduates are eligible to apply for entrance exams as many as they want.

5.1 Professional Knowledge and Skills

Graduates were asked to rate the relevance the knowledge, skills and competencies which enabled them the most in their professional careers. Then they were asked to evaluate the RUPP programs and how qualified they feel in their work because of the knowledge attained at RUPP. Overall, most of respondents believed their academic programs gave them reasonable competency in their fields. The table below indicates how the programs were rated. It should be recognized that the graduates' satisfaction with the respective programs were calculated in percentages.

Table 5: Program Evaluation and Career Requirement

(Rating Scale: 1=Totally disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=No idea; 4=Agree; 5=Totally agree)

Educational Experience at RUPP (N=565)		1	2	3	4	5
1	All subjects of your course are very useful for your career	2.8	6.4	8.0	49.7%	32.4%
2	Education done at RUPP relates theories to practice	0.7	4.8	13.8	66.4%	12.9%
3	The course done at RUPP sharpened your current career	1.4	5.8	11.9	61.9%	18.2%
4	The skills attained from RUPP closely linked to what you are doing	1.9	11.5	10.1	49.6%	26.0%
5	What you have learnt from RUPP is very necessary for Cambodian society	0.4	3.4	9.7	65%	20.9%
6	You are satisfied with the knowledge and quality of education attained from RUPP	0.2	1.9	3.7	65.8%	27.1%
7	The course provided the opportunities to get a suitable job	0.9	3.2	6.2	66.7%	21.6%
8	You wish other students to take the similar course you did	5.1	8.3	12.0	45.8%	27.6%

5.2 Pursuing Further Education at RUPP

With the aim of identifying the continued learning of RUPP graduates, the participants were asked if they wanted to continue on for the next degree. We find that only 21.9 % of them have continued their study and among those, 5.3% were provided scholarships while another 11.2% have paid the tuition fees by themselves. For those who continued their studies, 12.2% chose the same majors while another 66.4% decided to choose different fields in order to meet the needs of the labor market or add new, different knowledge. With respect to the types of degrees, 2.3% of them are pursuing MA degrees. When asked if they wanted to pursue further graduate education at the RUPP, 51 % of respondents wanted to do MA degrees and other 14.9% wished to study for PhD degrees.

It is interesting to note that 2.1% of those who chose to study different subjects⁴ for graduate schools have such reasons as seeking new knowledge in fields they had studied at the undergraduate level; some were responding to the current labor market requirements 0.9%; other were attempting to study more so that they have the skills to change to better jobs 3.2%. However, those who did not continue their studies raised a number of important reasons.

- Did not have enough money to support their study 33.6%.
- Too busy with their current employment 23%.
- Wished to get more work experience before pursuing the next degrees 7.1%.
- Had various reasons related to family and location 3.1%.
- Wished to study overseas 0.9%
- Waited for scholarship opportunities 0.5%

⁴ *Choosing different subjects for graduate school here refers to pursuing other higher degrees which are not related to the BA degrees earned from RUPP.*

The study faced a number of challenges during data collection. These included:

- Poor records of students' profiles was the biggest challenges of the study.
- Collecting the graduate's contacts was time-consuming because student lists provided by the academic office contained only students' names, and most of them had no contact addresses or phone numbers. In many cases, the telephone numbers listed were unreliable; therefore, more than one sampling method was applied.
- Many participants refused to provide the contact information of their employers, so it is hard to ascertain the view of the employers regarding the academic preparation and attitudinal quality of the graduates who work for them. Lacking that information, it was difficult to verify how the outcomes produced by RUPP were satisfactory for employers.
- The budget for this study was limited, so it affected the process of data collection and data entry because we could not employ many interviewers or data entry teams to speed up the process.

From the above findings, a number of conclusions can be drawn about employment opportunities from our graduates currently in the field, and the relevance of the University qualifications which did/did not help them find and keep good jobs. The following are the major conclusions which respond to the research questions that were set out for this study.

- The Royal University of Phnom Penh has the trust and confidence of the stakeholders and the public. Most of the graduates leaving the University had many opportunities to get jobs, even though they had little or no initial working experience before graduation. For instance, for those that had been working part-time during their studies switched to full-time employment while the ones who had no working experience were employed either in part-time or full-time jobs soon after their graduation.
- For many years, the Royal University of Phnom Penh has been producing qualified educational practitioners to serve the national educational needs; a majority of them had a many opportunities to work in a wide range of public fields such as the public or private education sectors, governmental institutions, NGOs, and various private sectors. Most professional teaching jobs were full-time which provided the graduates with reasonable earnings even if they were still quite limited. To survive as teachers in the current Cambodian context, many graduates have to work extra hours in part-time jobs in order to earn extra revenue.
- Holding high-quality degrees provided RUPP graduates with opportunities to find gainful employment and most of them could get permanent jobs within one

year after the completion of their studies. A significant number of the graduates work in the private sector and earn high rates of remuneration.

- Besides professional knowledge and skills which graduates applied in their workplaces, other attitudinal qualities such as a sense of responsibility, self-confidence, reliability, problem-solving, initiative, willingness to learn, ability to work under pressure, leadership and office behavior are in strong demand. Employers in many studies find these personal skills (soft skills) lacking in Cambodian graduates.
- Regarding gender, both men and women have fairly equal opportunities for employment and careers, and many of them chose the common procedures to search for jobs such as listening for public announcements, reading job advertisements in the newspapers and/or through the Internet.
- In terms of the academic perceptions, many of them were generally satisfied with the qualifications and skills obtained from the RUPP. A large number of graduates felt they were able to work in the careers they expected at the time of graduation. The University assists this process of improvement by annual tracer studies and course evaluations.
- Formerly, the majority of programs at the RUPP were intended to produce high school teachers, but now, through the findings of this study, it is clear that many new graduates are working in various fields rather than the majority becoming teachers. Therefore, it is important to identify the current market requirements and the academic inputs which are needed to equip the students with the right skills and competencies for today's Cambodian and ASEAN workplace.

Appendix: Tracer Study Questionnaire 2014

**Royal University of Phnom Penh
Quality Assurance Unit**

**Tracer Study on the Gainful Employability
Graduates of Year 2012**

The primary purpose of this study is to trace the employability of RUPP graduates of year 2012. The findings of the survey are used to improving the quality of educational management done at the Royal University of Phnom Penh. *Your personal information is confidential.*

If you wish to discuss any matter of this survey, contact Mr. Chorvy VONG at 012-229-279 or chorvyvong@ymail.com

I. PERSONAL DATA

Gender: (1) Male (2) Female
Former student: (1) Scholarship (2) Fee-Paying
Major: **Graduation year:** 2012

1. How old are you?	.....
2. Marital status:	Single.....1 Married.....2 Widowed.....3 Divorced.....4 No answers.....5
3. How many members are there in your family?	.....
4. With whom do you live?	Own family.....1 Parents.....2 Relatives.....3 Alone.....4 Other.....5
5. What city/province are you living?	P. Penh..... (if P. Penh, go to II)
6. If province, in town or rural?	town.....1 | rural.....2
7. What encourage you to pursue a higher education degree?	Family/ Relatives.....1 Friends.....2 Preference.....3 Society needs.....4

II. WORK EXPERIENCE DURING UNDERGRADUATE YEARS

8. Had you had a job when you enrolled at RUPP	yes.....1	no.....2
9. Did you have a job while studying at RUPP?	Yes.....1 No.....2 (skip to III)	

10. How many jobs did you do while studying?	.....
11. Was your last job full-time or part-time?	full-time.....1	part-time.....2
12. Did you get any payment from the job?	Yes.....1 No.....2 (skip to III)	
13. How much were you paid?	US\$.....	Riels.....

III. CURRENT EMPLOYMENT 2014

14. Do you currently have a regular job?	yes.....1 no.....2 (skip to IV)	
15. Is your current employment related to the experience, skills, and knowledge attained from RUPP?	yes.....1 no.....2 (skip to 17)	
16. How much do the knowledge, skills, and experience help you in your work?	very little.....1 little.....2 some.....3 a lot.....4 very much.....5	
17. Is the job full-time or part-time?	full-time.....1	part-time.....2
18. What type of employer do you work for? (If other, specify)	1. public educational institution 2. private educational institution 3. government 4. private 5. organization 6. other.....	
19. Can we have contact information of your employer? Name company/Tel: _____	Yes.....1	No.....2
20. How long have you been working for this job?	.....years	.....months
21. How many hours do you work per week?	.....hours/week	
22. How much are you paid?	.....USD/Riels	
23. Do you have another job?	yes.....1 no.....2 (skip to IV)	
24. What type of your second employer? (this 2 nd job) (If other, specify)	1. public educational institution 2. private educational institution 3. government 4. private 5. organization 6. other.....	
25. Can we have contact information of your employer? Name company/Tel: _____	Yes.....1	No.....2
26. How long have you been working for this job?	.....years	.....months
27. How many hours do you work per week?	.....hours/week	
28. How much are you paid?	.....USD	

IV. JOB SEARCH METHODS

29. After graduation from RUPP, how long have you waited to get a job?yearsmonths
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30. What methods have you used to find a job? (If other, specify)	RUPP Career Advising Center.....1	
	RUPP Bulletin Board.....2	
	Civil service exam.....3	
	RUPP Student Association.....4	
	family/friends/acquaintances.....5	
	Job advertisements.....6	
	directly contacting employers.....7	
	Internet.....8	
	other (specify).....9	
31. Do the skills you learnt help get a job easily?	yes.....1	no.....2

V. YOUR PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN STUDY EXPERIENCES AT RUPP AND THE EMPLOYABILITY

How would you agree with the following statements?
(1=totally disagree, 2=disagree, 3=no idea, 4=agree, 5=totally agree)

32. Your course is very useful for your current career.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Education done at RUPP relates theories to practice.	1	2	3	4	5
34. The course done at RUPP helped you shape your current career.	1	2	3	4	5
35. The skills attained from RUPP closely linked to what you are doing	1	2	3	4	5
36. What you learnt from RUPP is very necessary for Cambodian society.	1	2	3	4	5
37. You are satisfied with the knowledge and quality attained from RUPP.	1	2	3	4	5
38. The RUPP course provided the opportunities to get a suitable job.	1	2	3	4	5
39. You wish other students to take a similar course you did.	1	2	3	4	5
40:Additional comments related to the educational fields done at RUPP and current labor market:					

VI. PUESUING FURTHER STUDIES

41. Have you recently pursued other or higher degree?	yes.....1	no.....2 (skip to 45)
42. Have you got a scholarship or paid by yourself?	scholarship..1	paying.....2

43. What's the degree?	Same level of BA .....1 BA+1/NIE.....2 Grad. Dip.....3 Master degree.....4 Doctor/PhD.....5	
44. Have you chosen the same major?	yes.....1 (skip to 46) no.....2 (skip to 47)	
45. Why haven't you continued your study?		
46. Do you intend to return to RUPP? (End the interview.)	yes.....1	no.....2
47. Why have you chosen a different major?		
48. Do you intend to return to RUPP? (End the interview.)	yes.....1	no.....2

Thank you for spending your precious time responding to this interview, and may you succeed in your careers and/or any endeavor.

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