



Highlights



The educational profile of appointees

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The Public Service Commission (PSC) is an independent agency reporting to Parliament, mandated to safeguard the integrity of the public service staffing system and the political neutrality of the public service. In addition, the PSC recruits qualified Canadians from across the country.

This statistical study examines the educational profile of recruits appointed to the public service from the general public (external appointees) and employees appointed within the public service (internal appointees) through competitive processes.¹ The study is based on the Public Service Commission of Canada's (PSC) Survey of Appointments data from July 2000 through March 2005.

What did the Public Service Commission find?

The study found that recruits had higher education levels than appointees already in the federal public service. It also found that employees appointed to the permanent public service work force from outside the public service had higher education levels than those from the temporary (term) work force.

The study also found that overall education levels were higher for appointees in knowledge-based categories compared with other categories; for younger appointees compared with older appointees; and for male appointees compared with female appointees.

- Fifty-five percent of those appointed to indeterminate (permanent) positions, external and internal appointees combined, had a university degree. More than two-thirds of those recruited externally had a university degree, compared with only half of internal appointees. In a similar vein, 29% of external appointees had a post-graduate degree, compared with 18% of internal appointees.
- Differences in the levels of education varied significantly across occupational categories. Virtually all appointees in the Scientific and Professional category had a university degree, compared with 54% in the Administrative and Foreign Service category, 40% in the Technical category, 21% in the Administrative Support category and 15% in the Operational category.
- While these differences in educational levels persist for both external and internal appointments, external appointees to the Administration and Foreign Service category have significantly higher levels of education than their internal counterparts. Within this category, 78% of external appointees had a university degree and

¹ All appointments made over the study period were made under the previous *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA). Since the coming into force of the current PSEA, the term "competitive" is no longer used to refer to staffing processes. The current PSEA refers to "advertised" and "non-advertised" processes. External appointment processes were restricted to those resulting in an indeterminate (permanent) appointment. Internal appointment processes were restricted to those resulting in an indeterminate promotion or a change in employment tenure from specified period (term) to indeterminate.

24% had a post-graduate degree. For internal appointees, the comparative figures are 48% and 11%, respectively. It is worth noting that this occupational category represented over half (51%) of all survey respondents over the study period.

- For those newly appointed to the indeterminate work force, 69% of external appointees, and 46% of appointees from the temporary work force had a university degree. Similarly, 29% of external appointees had a post-graduate degree, compared with 16% of those appointed from the temporary work force.
- Overall, younger appointees had higher levels of education than their older counterparts. Sixty-eight percent of appointees aged 25 to 34 have a university degree, compared with 48% of those 35 to 44 and 43% of those 45 to 54.
- Overall, male appointees had higher levels of education than female appointees. Almost two thirds of male appointees had a university degree, compared with nearly half of female appointees. These differences are less pronounced in the case of external appointments.

What is next?

The PSC will communicate the study findings to deputy heads and heads of human resources. It is our hope that managers and human resources planners will find this information useful as they look at their future staffing needs.

