Graduate Survey 2013
Bachelor’s Degree in Global Nutrition and Health
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1.0 Introduction

The questionnaire was sent to 54 graduates who had taken a Bachelor's Degree in Global Nutrition and Health; 21 graduates completed the questionnaire, corresponding to a reply rate of 39%. The respondents had graduated between January 2012 and spring 2013.

The present text will compare these recent findings with those from the previous graduate survey, which was carried out in 2011, with a view to identifying any specific trends. In addition, the findings will be compared with findings from the qualitative surveys among relevant employers for the graduates from the programme that were carried out in 2010 and 2012.

The Bachelor’s Degree Programme in Global Nutrition and Health contains two specializations: Lifestyle Coaching & Fitness Management (labelled Lifestyle and Health Education in the new curriculum) and Public Health Nutrition and Food Policy; respectively LCFM and PHNFP in the following.

2.0 The graduates’ job situation

The survey asked the graduates what they are currently doing in order to provide an overview of where the graduates go after graduation. As illustrated in the graph below, 10% are employed in a job that is relevant to their degree, 24% have other employment, 43% are enrolled in further education, 14% are unemployed, and 10% are doing something else. “Other” includes, respectively, a new bachelor’s programme and a food-related teaching position that could easily be categorized as relevant to the degree. It is noteworthy that so many of the graduates are enrolled in further education.

Figure 1. Are you at the present time...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working in a professional field relevant to your education</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in a professional field that is not relevant to your education</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying for a further education</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (write below)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared with the 2011 graduate survey, slightly more graduates are working, but fewer have jobs relevant to their degree. Another finding is
that the rate of unemployment is higher.

A comparison between the two specializations shows that a larger share of PNHFP graduates has jobs, compared with LCFM – whether relevant or not relevant to their education.

3.0 General satisfaction with the programme

To obtain a general assessment of the programme when the graduates reflect on it after some time, we asked the graduates about their general satisfaction with the programme, understood as their overall assessment of the structure of the programme, the teaching, the study environment, the academic level etc. As illustrated in Figure 2, 19% say “to a large degree”, while 57% say “to some degree”. 10% are satisfied “to a lesser degree”, and 14% were “not at all” satisfied.

As the figure also illustrates there is a slight difference between the two specializations. PHNFP graduates are generally more satisfied than LCFM graduates. It should be noted, however, that there are only 12 and 9 respondents, respectively, in the two groups, which means that small variations will have a relatively large impact.

Overall, 76% are satisfied to a large or some degree, which is a satisfactory result.

Figure 2. How satisfied are you with your education as a Bachelor in Global Nutrition and Health?
4.0 The work load of the programme

The survey focused on the workload of the programme, including the students’ work effort and their perception of the programme requirements.

As part of this focus, the graduates were asked whether they perceive the programme as a full-time programme or as either more or less than a full-time programme. Here, about half (48%) respond that they perceive the programme as a full-time programme, and 43% say that they perceive it as less than a full-time programme. Thus, relatively many graduates state that they spent less than 37 hours a week studying.

Figure 3. How did you experience the overall workload during your education?

The graduates state that they have put great effort into their studies. All the graduates rate their own effort as either “very big”, “big” or “average”, with the largest group of respondents choosing “big effort” as illustrated in Figure 4 below.
The graduates were also asked whether the perceived requirements they encountered were appropriate. Here, the largest single category regards the requirements as appropriate, while the rest of the responses are broadly distributed, although most rate the demands as low.

**Figure 4. What level of effort did you put in your education?**

![Bar chart showing distribution of effort levels](chart1)

**Figure 5. How did you experience the requirements for participation to you as a student during the education?**

![Bar chart showing distribution of perceived requirements](chart2)

A general analysis of the replies concerning the workload indicate that a large group views the programme as less than a full-time programme, and many find the requirements to be too low. This is especially pronounced for LCFM graduates. On the other hand, the graduates do feel that they have put a big effort into their studies. This might suggest the possibility of raising the requirements for participation, especially at LCFM; however, one should not ignore the fact that some respondents rate the current requirements as
excessive. Nevertheless, the implied call for higher requirements has not prevented the students from putting a big effort into their studies.

5.0 Retention
Ten of the respondents (48%) say that they thought about breaking off their studies before graduation. In a follow-up question, they were asked why they stayed in the programme after all. The answers are listed in the text box to the right. Most reply that they did not want to quit or did not want to have to start over. Two say that they stayed on for economic reasons. Two others say that they were motivated by the programme itself, and one that she received support from a teacher. The latter two reasons are especially interesting, as these are factors that the programme itself can influence.

6.0 What should have a higher priority in the programme?
The graduates were asked whether there were topics or areas that should have a higher priority in the programme to ensure a better match with the requirements of the workplace. This question was only asked of the graduates who have or have had a relevant job. They graduates had many ideas and suggestions for improving the programme. The topics are presented in the text boxes below along with a number indicating how many respondents mentioned the given topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics that should have a higher priority in the programme – LCFM</th>
<th>Topics that should have a higher priority in the programme – PHNFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Method (qualitative and quantitative)</td>
<td>Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of complete health interventions</td>
<td>Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>Project management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td>Intervention mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link between nutrition and agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nutrition and HIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons for continuing studies
- Did not want to quit: 3
- Did not want to start over: 3
- Interesting programme: 2
- Economic reasons: 2
- Support from family/friends: 1
- Support from teacher: 1
- Hope that matters would improve: 1

Quite a few graduates from both specializations mention method, both qualitative and quantitative method (with special mention of statistics). Some refer specifically to research methodology. Some mention method specifically with a view to further education, while others point out that the skill is necessary in relation to future workplace requirements.
Other topics also relate to method, albeit more in relation to specific professional tasks, including LFA and intervention mapping. This strong emphasis on method is new in comparison with the 2011 graduate survey.

7.0 The relevance of professional competencies in relation to the graduate’s work function

We wanted an indication of the degree to which the competencies that the graduates acquire through their studies actually match the requirements and needs that they encounter in the workplace. Therefore we asked the graduates who have jobs that are relevant to their degree in Global Nutrition and Health whether they find that their professional competencies are relevant for their work function. It should be noted here that these findings are based only on the nine respondents who have or have had relevant employment.

As illustrated in Figure 6 below, three graduates state that their competencies are relevant “to a large degree”, four state that they are relevant “to some degree”, while two reply “to a lesser degree”. No one chooses “not at all”.

Figure 6. To what degree do you think that your professional competencies, as a Bachelor in Global Nutrition and Health, are relevant to the work function you are performing?

It is difficult to draw a direct comparison with previous surveys, as the data from this small programme is rather limited. However, the graduates in this survey do rate their competencies as more relevant than the graduates in the 2011 survey. The previous surveys of relevant employers suggest that the employers find the graduates’ competencies highly relevant.

8.0 The importance of the graduates’ competencies and the graduates’ competence level

We asked the graduates about 10 key competencies that are part of the curriculum, and which they therefore ought to have acquired as part of their studies. The graduates were asked how important they consider the individual competencies, and how they rate their own competency level. Here again, it should be noted that the findings are based only on the 9 respondents who
have or have had relevant jobs. As there are fewer than 10 respondents, the graphs present the findings in absolute figures instead of percentages.

**Importance of competencies**

All the competencies are rated as “very important” or “important” by at least 7 of the respondents. Three competencies are rated as either “very important” or “important” by all the respondents. These are:

- Manage, implement, and evaluate nutrition and health interventions
- Independently search for, critically evaluate and apply results from research and development work
- Apply development-oriented and innovative solutions in relation to health promotion and disease prevention

The two competencies that appear as the least important are

- Reflect on one’s own and others’ practice
- Undertake and evaluate health promotion activities in public and private institutions and enterprises

**Figure 7. How important do you think that the competencies listed below are, if you are to perform your tasks as a Bachelor in Global Nutrition and Health?**

Graduates with relevant jobs were also asked which three competencies they consider the most important for their ability to perform their work functions. Here, three competencies rated as particularly important. They are:

1. Manage, implement, and evaluate nutrition and health interventions
2. Apply development-oriented and innovative solutions in relation to health promotion and disease prevention
3. Educate and support individuals’, groups’ and communities’ health competencies
4. Independently search for, critically evaluate and apply results from research and development work
5. Participate in development work
6. Promote and sustain public knowledge and awareness of the impacts of healthy eating
7. Support the competences of individuals and groups in order to sustain achieved lifestyle changes
8. Reflect on one’s own and others’ practice
9. Advice public and private actors as well as voluntary organizations in food and nutrition matters
10. Undertake and evaluate health promotion activities in public and private institutions and enterprises
- Manage, implement, and evaluate nutrition and health interventions
- Advice public and private actors as well as voluntary organizations in food and nutrition matters
- Independently search for, critically evaluate and apply results from research and development work

Figure 8 below presents the distribution of 1st, 2nd and 3rd priority for all the competencies.

Figure 8. Prioritize up to three of the competencies listed below, that you think are most important in order to perform your tasks as a Bachelor in Global Nutrition and Health?

1. Manage, implement, and evaluate nutrition and health interventions
   - 1st priority: 3
   - 2nd priority: 2
   - 3rd priority: 2

2. Apply development-oriented and innovative solutions in relation to health promotion and disease prevention
   - 1st priority: 1
   - 2nd priority: 1

3. Educate and support individuals’, groups’ and communities’ health competencies
   - 1st priority: 2

4. Independently search for, critically evaluate and apply results from research and development work
   - 1st priority: 2
   - 2nd priority: 2

5. Participate in development work
   - 1st priority: 1

6. Promote and sustain public knowledge and awareness of the impacts of healthy eating
   - 0th priority: 0

7. Support the competences of individuals and groups in order to sustain achieved lifestyle changes
   - 1st priority: 1

8. Reflect on one’s own and others’ practice
   - 1st priority: 1
   - 2nd priority: 1

9. Advice public and private actors as well as voluntary organizations in food and nutrition matters
   - 1st priority: 1
   - 2nd priority: 3
   - 3rd priority: 2

10. Undertake and evaluate health promotion activities in public and private institutions and enterprises
    - 1st priority: 1
    - 2nd priority: 1

The graduates’ competency levels

The graduates are asked how they rate their own level for each of the 10 selected competencies. For eight of the competencies, at least seven respondents rate their own level as “medium” or higher.

For the three competencies below all the graduates rate their own level as “medium” or higher:

- Independently search for, critically evaluate and apply results from research and development work
- Participate in development work
- Promote and sustain public knowledge and awareness of the impacts of healthy eating

For two competencies three graduates rate their own level as “low” or “very low”. They are:

- Reflect on one’s own and others’ practice
- Support the competences of individuals and groups in order to sustain achieved lifestyle changes

The replies for all the selected competencies are shown in Figure 9 below:

Figure 9. What professional level would you estimate you are at, in regard to each of the selected competencies?
Connection between importance and competency level
There is a certain overlap between the competencies that are rated as the most important and the ones where the level is high. Similarly, there is an overlap between the competencies that are considered least important and the ones with the lowest rating.

A comparison of importance and competency level for the individual competencies is illustrated in Figure 10 below.
Figure 10. Comparison of the importance of competencies and the graduates’ competency level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance:</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates’ level:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Competency 4</td>
<td>Competency 3</td>
<td>Competency 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Competency 1, Competency 9</td>
<td>Competency 2</td>
<td>Competency 5, Competency 7, Competency 8, Competency 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The category that represents a medium rating (the median) is stated – that is, the category that is found at the 50% mark in the figures showing the importance of the competencies' and the graduates' competency level.*

Of the three most important competencies (1, 4 and 9), one is on a high level: “Independently search for, critically evaluate and apply results from research and development work” (comp. 4), in fact it has the highest rating. Competency 9, “Advice public and private actors as well as voluntary organizations in food and nutrition matters”, and competency 1, “Manage, implement, and evaluate nutrition and health interventions”, however, are on a medium level although they are considered among the most important. It should be noted, however, that for both competencies only one graduate rates his or her own competency level as being below medium, but still it may give cause to consider the priorities in the curriculum.

The other competencies that can be said to be on a “medium” level are all categorized as “important”.

**Other important competencies**

The graduates were also asked whether there are other competencies besides the 10 that they would rate as important. Only one graduate mentioned a competency: the understanding of working on an equal footing with people who have fundamentally different life experiences and values. Others stated their satisfaction with the competencies mentioned in the survey.
This concludes the graduate survey report for GNH. In order to see the findings in a broader perspective and across study programmes, see *Tværgående Dimittenrapport 2013* (in Danish only). This report includes analyses across all the programmes at the Metropolitan University College.