



# CACEE RESEARCH BRIEF

## *Career Centre Resources, Services and Metrics: A pan-Canadian benchmarking survey*

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Canada, there has been little objective, aggregate data available about how post-secondary career centres operate. This study was developed to be able to provide current benchmarking data to career services leaders about three major areas of concern:

- Financial, human and spacial resources
- Services provided to students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders
- Metrics collected and reported

In addition to collecting this data in aggregate across Canada, this study also looked for differences in these areas across institution type, geographic region, and career centre type. Relationships between these three areas - resources, services and metrics - were also investigated in an attempt to provide career centres with useful data to use when making decisions.

This study provided three significant conclusions reported in this research brief:

- Career centres continue to do more with fewer resources. Career centres would benefit from increased collaboration around best practices for how they are increasing efficiency, utilizing technology and avoiding staff burnout.
- Career centres who can position themselves more central to their institutional mission generally receive more funding and staffing.
- Career centres would benefit from longitudinal data to better identify trends, successes and challenges.

It is hoped that career centre staff, institutional administrations and others can use the data presented in this research brief to make better-informed decisions about how to operate their career centres.

CACEE proposes to run a similar survey every two years to collect longitudinal data and, thus, would appreciate feedback on how this study could be more useful to you in your day to day work.

To submit feedback about this brief and what you'd like to see included in future iterations, please send your comments to Christine Sjolander at [csjoland@sfu.ca](mailto:csjoland@sfu.ca).

# Contents

Survey Methodology .....	3
Demographics of Participants .....	3
Philosophical Orientations .....	4
Themes of Change for Career Centres.....	4
Changes Over Past Five Years.....	4
Current Issues in Career Centres.....	5
Anticipated Changes to Career Centres .....	5
Career Centre Resources:.....	6
Financial Resources.....	6
Human Resources .....	7
Space as a Resource.....	9
Career Centre Services: .....	10
Student Services .....	10
Career Centre Workshops .....	13
Online Resources.....	14
Alumni Services and Engagement.....	15
Alumni Career Services.....	15
Alumni Engagement .....	15
Employer Services.....	16
Employer Engagement Activities.....	18
Services for Faculty .....	19
Services for Parents .....	20
Internal Collaborations .....	21
Career Centre Metrics .....	22
Overall Career Centre Usage Rates .....	22
Student/Alumni Services and Metrics.....	22
Employer Services and Metrics.....	24
Other Metrics.....	25
Relationships Between Resources, Metrics and Services.....	26
Relationships Between Resources and Services: Financial Resources.....	26
Relationships Between Resources and Services: Human Resources .....	27
Relationships Between Metrics and Services .....	28
Relationships Between Metrics and Resources.....	29
Summary .....	30
Bibliography.....	32

# Survey Methodology

The driving idea for this survey came out of a doctoral research project of a CACEE member and long-time career development practitioner. The initial survey draft was developed based upon current literature and best practices before CACEE was approached as a partner.

In June 2016, ten senior career professionals from across Canada, including members of CACEE’s Research Committee, volunteered to serve as a panel of experts to review the survey draft and questions for comprehensiveness and clarity in two iterations of survey design. After their feedback was incorporated, a pilot group of four career professionals took the online survey and participated in a focus group to provide additional feedback on the survey itself. The final survey instrument had 158 questions and took about two hours to complete.

In August 2016, the final survey was distributed via direct email to 290 career development professionals representing more than 150 institutions across Canada and through CACEE’s membership list and LinkedIn group. The survey was intended to be inclusive of all career centre and institutional types. By December 2016, respondents from 63 unique career centres had completed the survey. The results that follow are based upon those complete responses.

## Demographics of Participants

Table 1: Demographics of survey respondents by career centre type, institution type, and geographic region (n=63)

Career Centre Type		Institution Type		Geographic Location	
Centralized with co-op	14	University	49	Atlantic	10
Centralized without co-op	23	College	8	Ontario	26
Centralized center – co-op exclusive	2	Polytechnic	4	Quebec	4
De-centralized with co-op - Business	7	Other	2	Canada West	23
De-centralized with co-op – non-Business	5				
Decentralized without co-op - Business	7				
Decentralized without co-op – non-Business	1				
Individual career specialist working in another unit	3				
Other	1				

About 60% of participating career centres report to student affairs. The level career centres report to within their institutions varied considerably. Only one career centre reported directly to the president.

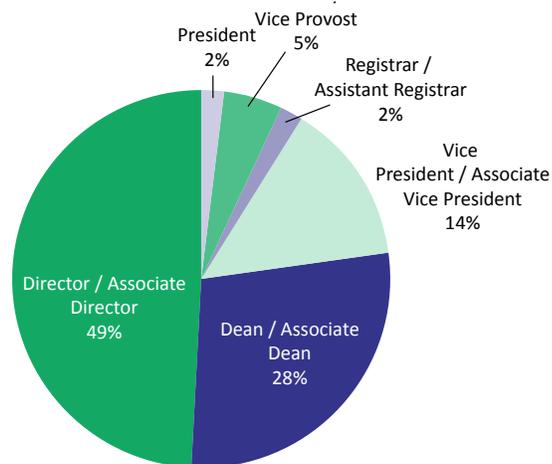
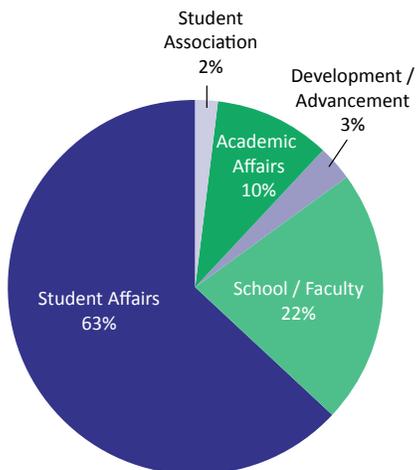


Figure 1 Reporting units for career centres

Figure 2: Reporting level for career centres

Table 2: Individual survey respondent background (n = 63)

Senior role in their department	75%
Average years with current centre	8.4 years
Average years experience in field	13 years
Doctoral degree (or in progress)	11%
Masters degree (or in progress)	57%
Bachelors degree (or in progress)	95%

Table 3: Student populations served

English-speaking institutions	95%
Total number students served	120 – 60,000
Average total students served	15,000
International students	15.4%
Average of total student body utilizing services	32%

## Philosophical Orientations

When asked an open-ended question about the theoretical or philosophical orientation of their career centre, 94% were able to provide a description. These descriptions were analyzed and coded based on the theoretical orientations as described in the citations listed in the references section. Very brief paraphrased descriptions of each theory are included below.

**Chaos Theory of Careers:** An individual’s career development is the interaction of one complex dynamical system (the person) with a series of more or less generalized other complex dynamical systems including other individuals, organizations, cultures, legislations and social contexts. (Pryor & Bright, 2014)

**Constructivist:** Evolved from the notion that young people did not lack information about careers but that they did not feel empowered or motivated to put that knowledge to work; Designed to help clients take a proactive, mindful approach to their career. (Hoskins, 1995)

**Career Development Theory:** A career is defined as the combination and sequence of roles played by a person during the course of a lifetime. (Super, 1980)

**Placement Orientation:** Helping the student find relevant openings, conducting an effective job search and presenting themselves effectively to employers. (Lent & Brown, 2013)

**Planned Happen-stance:** Teaching clients the importance of engaging in a variety of interesting and beneficial activities, ascertaining their reactions, remaining alert to alternative opportunities, and learning skills for succeeding in each new activity. (Krumboltz, 2009)

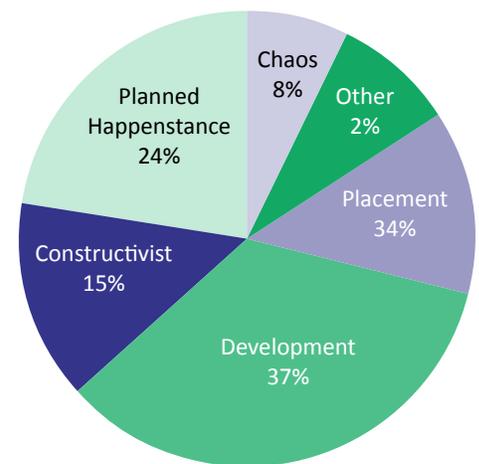


Figure 3: Philosophical Orientations

## Themes of Change for Career Centres

In order to identify changes career centres have experienced over the past several years, current issues of discussion, and expected changes in the next few years, respondents were asked three broad, open-ended questions:

- What changes have career centres in Canada experienced in the last five years?
- What career services issues are you reading about or talking about with your colleagues?
- Do you foresee any changes to your career centre mandate in the next few years?

The open-ended responses were coded and analyzed to identify the broad themes. There was no limit to the number of themes each respondent could have included and they were not asked to prioritize the different changes they catalogued.

### Changes Over Past Five Years

After analysis, nine primary themes emerged as significant changes to the career services landscape over the past five years. Using this methodology, the most often cited change was the increased use of technology within career centres to meet

an increased demand for online resources and services and to more effectively communicate with students and employers through social media as can be seen in Table 4. Regarding changes to student population and demand, some centres cited increases in the volume of students seeking assistance. Some of the reasons cited for this increased demand were: wider use of on-line platforms making career centres more accessible to more students; institutional growth into new programs; and earlier engagement with students in their academic careers to assist with major and program selection with one Ontario-based college citing that they were “working with students from day 1 to graduation and beyond.”

Table 4: Changes to career centres over past five years

Theme: Changes over five years	Ranked by frequency mentioned
Use of technology	1
Changes to student population/demand	2
Increased expectations from institutional leaders, provincial governments, students and parents	3
Budget / resource constraints	4
Philosophical changes in career centre orientation	5
Integrating career and academics	6
Changes to employer expectations/recruiting patterns	7
Experiential learning / Work integrated learning	8
Emerging careers and employment types	9

## Current Issues in Career Centres

When asked what they’re reading about or talking about with their colleagues, the focus of the question was on what is happening right now on campus. As you can see from Table 5, how to help different populations of students is at the forefront of respondents’ minds. While the most referenced population of students were international students, other key groups were students with disabilities, Aboriginal students, students living in rural areas and non-traditional, returning students.

Table 5: Current issues within post-secondary career centres

Themes: Current issues	Ranked by frequency mentioned
Reaching and servicing different student populations	1
Internal issues such as service improvement, staff development, accountability	2
Student participation/awareness	3
Labour market	4
Use of technology	5
Student characteristics	6
Budget / resource constraints	7
Work integrated learning	8
Emerging careers and employment types and employer expectations	9
Integrating career and academics	10
Philosophical changes in career centre orientation	11
Mental health issues	12

## Anticipated Changes to Career Centres

When asked about what changes respondents expect to see with their career centre mandates, there were three primary areas that stood out as common themes. The most

common response was the addition of more experiential learning opportunities for students. Eleven career centres indicated that this was an area they expected to see expand. In many cases, this was a general focus “on experiential learning and related supports provided.” Others such as this Ontario-based centre, said they “expected growth with new co-op programs and significant expansion of current co-op programs.”

Next most frequently cited was expansion of services to better serve specific populations such as commuter students and 1st and 2nd year students, to expand the type of services such as increased focus on professional development topics beyond traditional job search areas, and just generally adding new programs and services to the centres as noted by one Ontario-based university career centre who will “continue to broaden the breadth of what we offer. e.g. we have recently piloted an off-campus paid internship program.” The third area frequently mentioned was increased collaboration across campus including with academic areas to better integrate with the curriculum and academics and to work with other student services units to increase student success.

## Career Centre Resources:

This study looked at three different types of resources available to career centres: financial, human and space. This report will showcase highlights from each of these areas.

### Financial Resources

Statistical analysis indicated a relationship between career centre type and operational and total budget per student as shown in Table 6. However, no relationship was found between institutional type or geographic region and per student budget.

Table 6: Budget per student by career centre type (n = 38) in CAD dollars

Career Centre Type	Operational Budget			Total Budget		
	Mean	Median	Range	Mean	Median	Range
Centralized career centre with co-op	4.68	1.94	0.83 – 18.73	71.13	35.13	16.48 – 253.45
Centralized career centre without co-op	4.42	2.40	0.51 – 20.59	26.95	33.20	2.50 – 48.04
Decentralized career centre with co-op - business	33.62	26.70	26.70 – 63.51	338.87	273.96	150.10 – 733.78
Decentralized career centre without co-op - business	74.41	58.54	13.89 – 166.67	764.83	186.05	111.11 – 3083.33

Regarding budget changes over the past three years, 41% reported a budget increase, 31% reported a budget decrease and 28% reported that their budgets remained the same. Centres that did not have co-op embedded in them saw the least variability in their budgets; centres with co-op were more likely to have a significant increase or a significant decrease in their overall budgets.

Only 43 of the 63 (68%) participating respondents knew the source of their career centre funding. Of those, 60% reported that at least half of their funding was through an institutional budget allocation. When this allocation is determined, the majority of career centres (58%) report that they formally submit a budget for approval each year while 35% report that they receive a pre-determined percentage of a larger budget such as a student services departmental budget.

The next most common source of funding was from student fees. About 28% of career centres reported that at least half of their funding comes from student fees charged by the institution. Eleven of the 43 career centres (26%) reported generating a portion of their operating budget through employer fees ranging from 2% to 50% of their total operating budget. About 21% charge students a fee for specific services. Table 7 highlights the factors that were considered important in determining career centre budgets. Respondents could choose multiple responses.

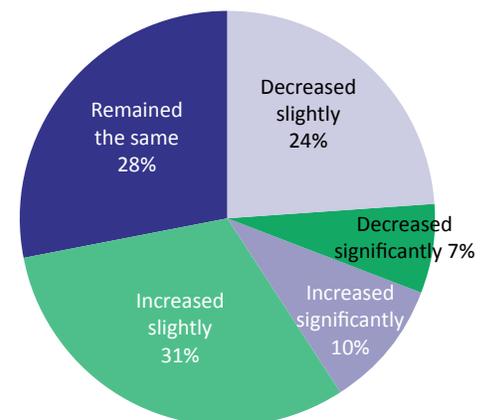


Figure 4: Budget changes over past 3 years

Table 7: Importance of factors in budget determination (n = 50)

Factor	Primary Consideration	Important Consideration	Consideration	Not a Consideration	Unknown
Impact of external factors (i.e. increased student population, inflation, etc.)	12%	16%	28%	10%	8%
Proposed new career centre programs / services	12%	21%	24%	14%	7%
Usage rates of students, alumni and employers	5%	14%	28%	14%	10%
Quality measures of career centre programs / services	3%	17%	20%	17%	12%
Impact of budget cut on services	9%	19%	21%	10%	12%
Expectation of generation of external funds	5%	7%	21%	19%	16%

## Human Resources

The average number of professional staff across all institutions was nine full-time equivalents (FTE) and the median was 10.6 FTEs. The average number of total staff (professional and administrative) per centre was 11.5 FTEs with a median of 13.7 FTEs.

Table 8: Total staff by institutional type

	Mean	Median	Range
College	8.9	6	1 – 25
Polytechnic	12.5	8.75	4 – 28.5
University	11.1	9	1 - 60

Table 9: Total staff by geographic region

	Mean	Median	Range
Atlantic	5.7	4	1 – 13.5
Ontario	11.8	12	3 – 28.5
Quebec	10	10.5	5 – 14
West	11.5	8.5	1 – 60

Table 10: Total staff by career centre type

	Mean	Median	Range
Centralized with co-op	13.7	11.5	1 – 28.5
Centralized no co-op	7.8	5	1.5 – 19
De-centralized with co-op - Business	14.9	12	9 – 33
De-centralized with co-op – non-Business	5.8	5	1 - 12
Decentralized without co-op - Business	7.6	8	3 – 12

More useful for comparisons are the student to staff ratios. The average professional staff to student ratio was 1:2,315 and the average total staff to student ratio was 1:1,841 (n= 58). Statistical analysis shows that there are no differences in staff to student ratios across institutional types or geographic regions but there are across career centre types.

Table 11: Students per individual professional staff member by career centre type (n = 58)

	Mean	Median	Range
Centralized with co-op	2100	1225	280 – 6142
Centralized no co-op	3846	3431	1092 – 13191
De-centralized with co-op - Business	357	261	168 – 909
De-centralized with co-op – non-Business	3352	2500	660 – 10000
Decentralized without co-op - Business	603	477	24 – 1285

In most career centres (89%), no staff hold faculty positions. In only 3% of career centres, all staff is faculty. As can be seen in Table 12, traditional coaching/counselling roles make up the largest percentage of staff roles. Dual roles are slightly more common in career centres that have co-op embedded within them at 25% of total staff compared to career centers without co-op at 11% of total staff.

Most career centres (79%) reported using student staff to supplement their staffing needs. Twenty-eight (44%) of career centres reported they currently use a peer advisor program and another 17 (27%) indicated that they had plans to implement one. About 19% of career centres also used paid consultants to supplement their staff to provide services such as specialized workshops/skill development training for students, career advisement for a students/ sub-group of students, development of marketing materials and websites, assessments, event management and program reviews.

Table 12: Percentage of total professional staff by role across all career centres (n = 565.5)

Role type	Percentage
Advisors/Coaches/Counselors (either co-op or career)	42%
Dual advising/coaching roles and employer relations (either co-op or career)	20%
Directors/Managers	15%
Employer Relations Specialists (either co-op or career)	10%
Marketing specialists	2%
Event Specialists	2%
Other	7%

As shown in Table 13, almost 86% reported that there was a minimum educational level for their staff positions; 27% reported that a higher level of education was required for directors and managers. Educational level requirements were associated with institution type. Only 22% of career centres require their staff to have any career development professional designation although many others prefer or encourage them. The CCC from the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Associate was considered most desirable.

Table 13: Minimum staff education requirements by institution type (n = 63)

	Colleges	Polytechnics	Universities
Masters Degrees	12%	0%	18%
Undergraduate Degrees	38%	25%	64%
College/University Certificate	25%	75%	4%
None	25%	0%	14%

75% of career centres indicated that they have a performance management program in place and 64% reported that it works well for their office. For those with performance management programs, 35% reported that it directly tied to staff compensation while 65% reported that it did not. Another 8% indicated that they are in the process of implementing a performance management program. Staff professional development is important to career centres with 100% reporting providing some professional development opportunities for staff. Table 14 indicates the type of professional development available.

Table 14: Centres offering professional development opportunities for staff (n = 63)

Type of Professional Development	% Offering
Conference registration / travel	90%
Membership in professional associations (CACEE, CACUSS, CAFCE, etc.)	87%
Tuition waived or discounted for courses at your institution	86%
Association webinars	79%
Participation in institutional PD events (through HR or other units)	79%
In-house professional development by internal experts (paid or unpaid)	65%
Formal related training programs (MBTI, CACEE Career Educator, etc.)	59%
In-house professional development training by paid external consultants	52%
Provide professional development funds to be utilized by staff at their discretion	33%
In-house professional development by partner employer organizations (unpaid or heavily discounted)	14%

Many career centres, almost 83%, offered professional development on specific topics of importance for the centre, as can be seen in Table 15. Other professional development topics offered less frequently were Outcomes Assessment, Fundraising, Career Centre Metrics and Employment Law. For workshops with special student populations, career centres reported that working with English as an Additional Language/International students (33%) and working with Aboriginal/Indigenous students (25%) were the most common followed by Students with Disabilities (17%), Students with Mental Health Issues (14%), general diversity/equity students (8%) and First Generation students (3%).

Table 15: Professional development topics for staff (n = 63)

Professional Development Topics	Percentage offering
Career advisement/counseling/coaching skills	57%
Working with special student populations	46%
Mental/emotional health training	40%
Job search/employment tools	38%
Employer outreach/development	35%
Labour market/employment outlook information	35%
Social media training	35%
Presentation skills / workshop facilitation	33%
Self-assessment instruments	30%
Technology specific training (Prezi, CRM system, etc.)	22%
Ethics and professional standards	11%

In addition to supporting the career development of staff, the majority (95%) of career centres encourage their staff to contribute to the field of career services as shown in Table 16. Other ways mentioned by survey respondents included mentoring other staff, networking with colleagues at other institutions and providing service to their home institution.

Table 16: Ways career centre staff are encouraged to contribute to their field (n = 63)

Type of contributions to field	Percentage Encouraging
Reading/sharing relevant publications with colleagues	81%
Volunteering in professional associations	79%
Presenting at conferences	76%
Supervising/training interns	49%
Writing for trade publications	17%
Writing for academic journals	16%

## Space as a Resource

In looking at where career centres are located on campus, institution type makes a difference. As universities generally have large campuses, where career centres are located varies more significantly, as can be seen in Table 17.

Table 17: Where career centres are located on campus (n = 58)

	College	Polytechnic	University
Within a student services dedicated building	43%	25%	28%
Within a mixed use building (academic/student services)	43%	0%	17%
Within the student union	0%	50%	2%
Within the faculty they serve	0%	0%	35%
They have their own building	0%	0%	11%
Multiple locations on the same campus	0%	35%	6%
Individual Offices (not in a centre)	14%	0%	0%

In general, career centres across Canada report an average of 2,321 sq. ft. of dedicated space to their centres with a range from 60 to 17,000 sq. ft. In addition to the space usage reported in Table 18, a few career centres reported other types of spaces within them including a changing room with lockers for students to use before interviews, spaces for student staff, a staff kitchen, and a Skype call centre.

Table 18: Space usage within career centres (n = 61)

Type of space	Overall
Private offices for counseling/advising team	67%
Interview rooms	54%
Resource/Library area	54%
Private offices for all professional staff	52%
Student workspaces	52%
Workshop/classroom space	35%
Boardroom/conference room	8%

There are some relationships between space usage and institution type. For example, 88% of colleges report having a resource/library area for students compared to 53% of universities and none reported within polytechnic institutions. Also, 75% of polytechnics report private offices for all staff compare to 57% of universities and 12% of colleges. One difference was found by geographic region as well - 100% of the career centres in Quebec reported having student workspace embedded in their centre compared to 61% in the West, 50% in Ontario and 20% in the Atlantic region.

Only ten career centres (16%) reported that they specifically anticipated a change to the career centre footprint over the next few years and another four (6%) indicated that there might be a change depending upon what happened with other units at the institution. Anticipated changes cited most frequently were combining career centres with other student support units and moving to higher visibility areas on campus to attract more students. Other changes included annexing a nearby classroom as a workshop space and creating dedicated recruiter space, several respondents indicated a push for additional financial resources to support the new space.

## Career Centre Services:

### Student Services

Each career centre is offering an average of 24 different types of student services with a range from 8 – 37 different types of services. The most common services offered, and the percentage of centres currently offering them, are listed in Table 19 along with an indication if the trend is to add this service, remove it, or if it remains the same. Those indicating that they are up significantly had at least 10 (16% of all career centres surveyed) career centres indicate they had added it in the last two years or planned to add it within the next two years.

Table 19: Services offered to students (n = 63)

Service	Percentage	Trend
Resume / cover letter critiques	98%	Same
Interview preparation	98%	Same
Counseling / advising appointments - in-person	97%	Same
Mock Interviews with staff	97%	Up
Career information resources - online	95%	Up
Job Board	94%	Up
Counseling / advising advisement - drop in	92%	Up Significantly
Workshops on career topics	84%	Up
Networking events (not company sponsored)	83%	Up
LinkedIn Profile reviews	78%	Up
Career topic guest speakers	76%	Up
Career fair (all job types)	73%	Down
Career panels	71%	Up
Self-assessments - online	65%	Up
Job alerts/ subscriptions	65%	Up
Career information library (physical space)	63%	Down
Counseling / advising advisement - on-line	59%	Up Significantly
Informational interview referrals	59%	Up
Specialized services for international students	57%	Up Significantly
Small group skills sessions	56%	Up Significantly
Corporate mock interviews	54%	Up Significantly
Mock networking opportunities	52%	Up
Career fair - faculty / major specific	51%	Same
Graduate school information	49%	Up
Student newsletter / blog	48%	Up Significantly
Specialized services for students with disabilities	41%	Up Significantly
Self-assessments - pen/paper	40%	Same
Career fair - Summer jobs	40%	Same
Mentoring program with alumni / employers	37%	Up Significantly
Company tours - local	37%	Up Significantly
Mock interviews with peers/students	35%	Up
Advisor to student clubs	35%	Same
Peer advising program	33%	Up
Career conferences / Days	33%	Up Significantly
Consulting / Case interviewing preparation	30%	Up
Job club / small group job search sessions	30%	Up
Co-curricular record	29%	Up
Peer mentoring program	17%	Up
Company tours - non-local, in Canada	17%	Up
Academic advising	13%	Same
Job shadowing	10%	Up Significantly
Career fair - virtual	10%	Up
Company tours - non-local, international	6%	Same
Externships	6%	Same
Credential file service	5%	Same

There were several differences found in the services offered to students by institutional type, geographic region or career centre type. For example, career centres in Quebec (100%) are much more likely to have case interview preparation programs than career centres in other geographic areas - Ontario (33%), West (26%) or Atlantic (12%). Institutional differences included that career centres within universities are much less likely to offer academic advisement within the career centre with only 4% reporting this service compared to 50% of polytechnics and 37% of colleges. On the other hand, university-based career centres are much more likely to offer group advisement (63%) compared to colleges (37%) and polytechnics which didn't report offering it at all. College based career centres were much more likely to offer virtual career fairs (50%) whereas almost no universities (4%) and polytechnics (0%) do. Alternatively, about half of universities (55%) and polytechnics (50%) have student newsletters and no colleges reported having them. University-based career centres were more likely to bring in guest speakers (88%) compared to college career centres (50%) and polytechnic institutions (25%). Universities were also more likely to provide career workshops as shown in Figure 5.

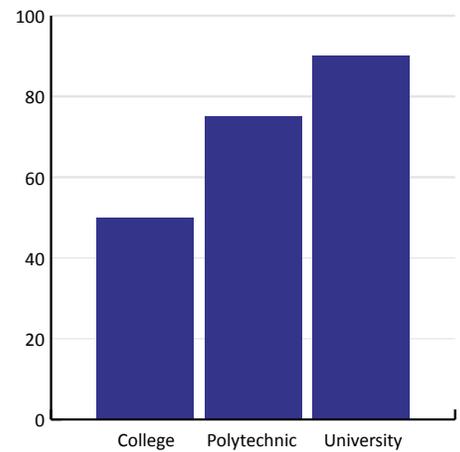


Figure 5: Percentage providing workshops for students by institution type

Differences by career centre type included that business school career centres and centralized career centres with co-op were significantly more likely to offer online assessments than career centres of other types as can be seen in Figure 6.

Decentralized business school career centres were most likely to offer local company tours than other career centres with 86% of those with co-op and 71% of those without reporting running company tours for students. Only 23% of centralized career centres without co-op, 20% of other decentralized career centres and 14% of centralized career centres with co-op reported offering tours. Similarly, business school career centres were also most likely to offer company tours around different parts of Canada to their students with 57% of business school career centres (both with and without co-op) reporting these tours and only up to 14% of other types.

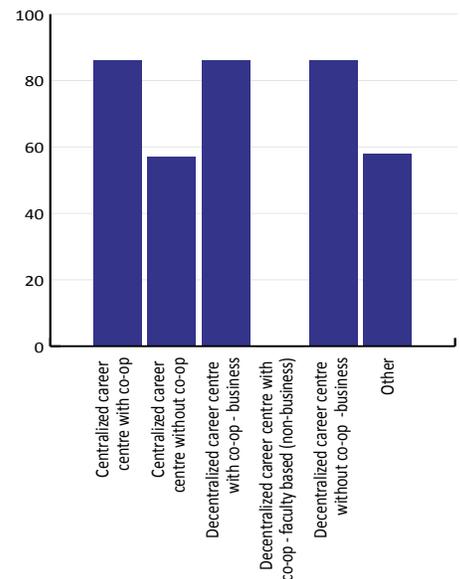


Figure 6: Online assessments by career centre type

Another service more likely to be found in business school career centres was LinkedIn profile reviews as 100% of business school career centres reported offering them compared to 82% of centralized career centres without co-op, 80% of other decentralized career centres and 64% of centralized career centres with co-op. Business school career centres were also more likely to offer mentoring programs for students as can be seen in Figure 7.

On the other hand, the service mostly likely to be found in centralized career centres are general career fairs as 93% of centralized career centres with co-op and 82% of those without hold a general career fair.

Only 60% of decentralized career centers – non-business, 58% of business career centres with co-op and 43% of business career centres without co-op hold general career fairs for their students. Other services reported by career centres included:

- Roaming drop-in career lounges (basically drop-in services pop up around campus)
- Opportunities for students to “win” a career-oriented activity (i.e. CEO for a day program)
- Train the trainer programs for teaching assistants
- Specialized programming by industry area (consulting preparation, investment banking, etc.)
- C.V. reviews, academic careers planning advisement and access to research opportunities
- Volunteer programs for community service
- Federal Work/Study program oversight
- Specialized programming for other student groups (i.e. LGBTQ, Aboriginal students, student athletes, etc.)
- Helping student organizations find sponsors and promoting their initiatives to employers

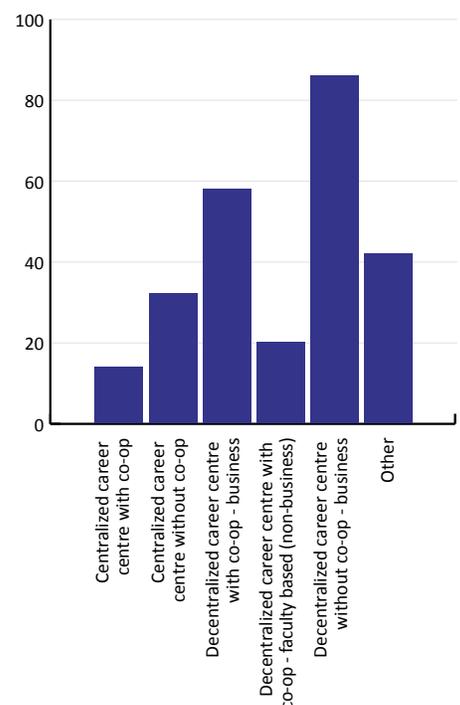


Figure 7: Mentoring programs by career centre type

As entrepreneurship is a current trend within post-secondary institutions (Csorba & Termuende, 2015), this survey investigated how career centres are supporting potential student entrepreneurs. Only 44% of the career centres surveyed reporting having any services specific to entrepreneurs, as shown in Table 20.

Table 20: Frequency of service in career centres who offer entrepreneurship resources to students (n = 28)

Resource	Percentage
Access to online resources	68%
Career speakers/panels on entrepreneurship	57%
Fairs with start-up companies	32%
Support student entrepreneurship clubs	32%
Workshops on starting your own business	25%
Workshops on business plan writing	18%
Entrepreneur in Residence program	14%

When asked if their career centre had a career course or series, 40% indicated that they currently have one, 16% indicated that they have one in development and 46% indicated that they didn't plan to implement one. Of the career centres that have them, only 8% report that they are credit-bearing and required for all students that they serve with another 8% indicating that they have one required for some of their students, as shown in Figure 8.

### Career Centre Workshops

The majority (88%) of career centres overall offer workshops to students and alumni on career topics. In person workshop delivery is still the most prevalent delivery method with 87% of the workshops being presented in person, 7% presented in recorded video/online format and 5% as webinars.

Universities are currently the only institution type offering dining etiquette and graduate school preparation workshops. Professional dress workshops are offered most often by colleges (88%) and universities (52%) and they weren't reported as offered at all at polytechnics.

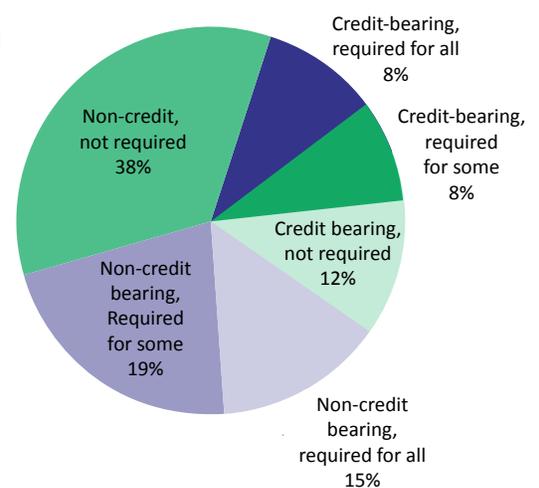


Figure 8: Career courses by type

Table 21: Workshops by topic offered by career centres (n = 56)

Workshop Topic	Percentage offering	Workshop Topic	Percentage offering
Resume writing	100%	Salary/offer negotiation	52%
Interviews	98%	Professional / business etiquette	52%
Job Search	98%	Social job search	52%
Cover letters	96%	Preparing for co-op	46%
LinkedIn profiles	91%	Finding internships	46%
Networking	89%	Portfolio development	43%
Hidden Job Market	84%	Working on campus	41%
Academic careers / CV prep	80%	Presentation skills	41%
Informational interviews	80%	Graduate school preparation	41%
Career fair preparation	80%	Post-graduate success	39%
Personal branding	75%	Government / Public Service applications	39%
Careers in.....major specific	64%	Choosing a major / concentration	38%
Online job search / Application tracking systems	70%	Career planning by academic year	38%
Canadian work environment	61%	Dining etiquette	38%
MBTI or other specific assessment	61%	Case interviews	30%
Self-Assessment	60%	Professional school preparation	25%
Company research	57%	Time management	21%

Geographic region was related to whether or not a career centre offered portfolio development as a workshop. It is more likely to be offered in the Western region with 59% of career centres offering it and only 50% of centres in the Atlantic region and 23% in Ontario. It wasn't reported as offered at all in Quebec. Case interview preparation was much more common in business school career centres, offered at 71% of them, than other types of career centres at 33% of other decentralized career centres, 14% of centralized career centres with co-op and 13% of centralized career centres without co-op.

## Online Resources

On average, career centres reported utilizing 12.5 different online services within their centre. In general, most online resources fall into defined buckets: career exploration information; resume, cover letter and interview preparation tools; assessment tools; International opportunities guides; CRM systems; Networking platforms; social media platforms; job search or job matching tools; experiential learning / project tools; online learning tools and instructional tools; and other specialized databases and resources.

**Social media platforms:** Social media is the most common technology tool within career centers with 88% reporting that they use at least one social media channel, and an average of 2.8 channels, to communicate with students and alumni.

**Career exploration and education platforms:** Most career centres (70%) report providing at least one platform for career exploration and information. While most centres only offer one platform, a few offer two or even three different career exploration platforms. By far, the most popular platform is Career Cruising, reported as being used in 86% of the career centers who have any type of platform (n = 42). Most career centres (70%) report providing at least one platform for career exploration and information. While most centres only offer one platform, a few offer two or even three different career exploration platforms. By far, the most popular platform is Career Cruising, reported as being used in 86% of the career centers who have any platform.

**Self-assessments:** Most career centres (67%) provide at least one type of online assessment for students with an average of two per centre. In addition to the most common ones shown in Figure 10, career centres also reported using SkillScan, Luck Readiness Index, and OneLifeTools.

**Job search/job matching tools:** About 60% of centres report using one or more, averaging 1.5 different platforms per centre. Of those that offer these, jobpostings.ca is the most common at 72% followed by TalentEgg (61%), WhoPlusYou (Magnet) (19%) and HandShake (8%).

**International/global tools:** Three different platforms were reported to be in use currently: My World Abroad (43%), GoinGlobal (41%) and the Big Guide to Working Abroad (16%). Most centres only provide one of these to their students while a few offer two. Two additional schools reported plans to implement GoinGlobal in the next two years.

**Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems:** There are two primary systems in use in Canada that were developed specifically for the post-secondary market. Of the 34 centres that reported using one, 59% reported using Orbis, 35% use Simplicity and 6% use Salesforce. Another four schools reported planning to implement Orbis in the next two years.

**Resume, cover letter and interview preparation tools:** Only 45% of career centres report using any type of online tool for a resume, cover letter or interview preparation. The majority of these use InterviewStream (83%), which can be compared directly to Optimal Interview (16%). Another three schools indicated plans to add InterviewStream in the next two years. Resume and cover letter tools were less common including Optimal Letter (28%), Optimal Resume (22%) and VMOCK (11%).

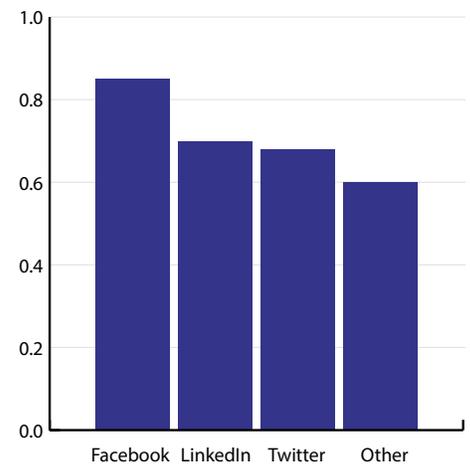


Figure 9: Social media platforms

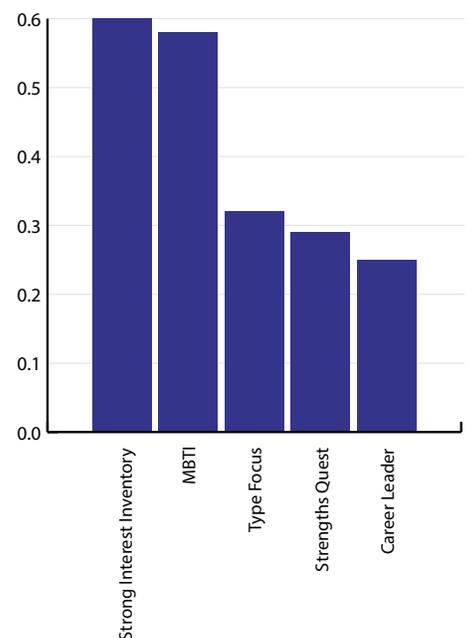


Figure 10: Self assessments by type

**Networking platforms:** The fastest growing technology platforms were those that help students network and make connections. While only 33% of career centres currently use either 10,000 Coffees (65%) or FirstHand/Evisors (35%), 10% of career centres plan to implement one or the other in the next two years.

**Other technology tools:** Other online tools that were reported infrequently included: Research opportunities database; Career Platform by Purposely; Management Consulted; Webinars – purchased; Online chat with coaches; Road Trip Nation; Governmental databases; Lynda.com; Graduway; Ebooks and other online resources in collaboration with the campus library; Bridge: Worldwide Music Connection; BlackBoard and Canvas; and Riipen.

## Alumni Services and Engagement

When asked about interest in providing services to alumni, the majority of career centres (71%) reported an increase in interest both on campus to engage with alumni and from alumni themselves, particularly in one-on-one advising services. Another 24% indicated no change while only 5% reported a decrease. For those reporting a decrease, reduced funding was frequently cited as the cause for the reduction of interest on campus.

### Alumni Career Services

Ninety-two (92%) of career centres report providing career services to alumni. Table 22 summarizes the services offered by 50% or more career centres including the percentage of centres that only provide them for alumni 1-2 years out and those that provide them long-term. As can be seen from the table, at least 2/3's of career centres provide long-term access for alumni for the majority of their services.

Table 22: Career centre services for alumni by length of post-graduation services are accessible (n = 58)

Service for Alumni	Overall percentage offering	Alumni 1-2 years out only	Long term access
Career advisement appointments	93%	28%	72%
Resume / cover letter critiques	91%	28%	72%
Interview preparation	89%	29%	71%
Career information resources - online	88%	24%	76%
Access to student job board	81%	24%	76%
Career advisement - online (email, IM, webinar)	76%	23%	77%
Career advisement - drop in	66%	29%	71%
Career fair (all job types)	64%	32%	68%
Workshops on career topics	59%	32%	68%
Networking events (not company sponsored)	57%	27%	73%
Job alerts/ subscriptions	57%	27%	73%
Career information library (physical space)	57%	24%	76%
Informational interview referrals	50%	24%	76%

Only 8 of the 58 (14%) career centres reported charging alumni fees for access. Most reported charging for only one type of service such as for career advising appointment or online assessments while others charged for access to any of the services provided.

### Alumni Engagement

An institution's alumni population is also a rich resource for career centres who are seeking to connect their students with experiential learning opportunities, informational interviews and employment opportunities. 90% of survey respondents indicated that they do engage alumni in at least one way. The variety and frequency of ways are listed in Table 23.

Table 23: Career centre engagement with alumni by engagement type (n = 57)

Alumni engagement types	Percentage of Career centres using
Invitations to networking events with students	68%
LinkedIn Groups	63%
Direct referrals to alumni for informational interviews	53%
Assisting with career programming (resume critiques, speed interviewing, etc.)	46%
Mentoring program between students and alumni	44%
Participation in new student orientation	28%
Leading career workshops	33%
Connections to clubs or student groups	28%
Online tools such as a directory or database	26%
Provide opportunities for alumni to host students for dinners or events	21%
Contributions to student newsletters / blogs	18%
Geographic region based events	16%

Four of these engagement opportunities were significantly more common within business school career centres. For example, 100% of business school career centres reported that they would provide students with direct referrals to alumni for informational interviews while only 40% of other decentralized career centres, 36% of centralized career centres with co-op and 26% of centralized career centres without co-op reported offering this. One hundred percent of business schools' centres also invite alumni to participate in networking events with their students compared to 80% of other decentralized centres, 50% of centralized career centres with co-op and 48% of centralized career centres without.

Business schools were also more likely to invite alumni to geographically based alumni networking events (57% of those without co-op; 29% of those with co-op) compared to less than 10% of all other types of career centres and to invite them to networking events with students. Finally, business school career centres were also more likely to tap into their alumni to be mentors for their current students (86% of those without co-op; 71% of those with co-op) compared to 40% of other decentralized centres, 30% of centralized career centres without co-op and 26% of centralized career centres with co-op. On the other hand, decentralized career centres reported being much more likely to tap alumni to participate in new student orientation.

## Employer Services

Almost all career centres (98%) reported providing some services specifically to employers. Geographic region is related to two different services. Offering hallway tables, where employers can host a display and talk to any passing students are much more prevalent in the Western region than elsewhere in the country. Alumni only job boards are almost exclusive to Ontario.

Institution type is related to five different services for employers. The first is pre-screening of candidates for employers as 75% of colleges will pre-screen candidates and 25% of universities while no polytechnics reported that they would pre-screen. Institution type was also related to whether or not the career centre would post paid internship opportunities for employers with 73% of universities reporting this service, 50% of colleges and no polytechnics. Only university-based career centres reported connecting employers to student clubs with 68% responding that they will do so. Surprisingly, 50% of college-based career centres reported still using a paper-based job board as did 10% of university-based career centres. No polytechnics are using them. Finally, 82% of university-based career centres will promote off-campus employer events while only 50% of polytechnics and 12% of colleges reported that they do.

Similar to student services as outlined in the earlier section, there are several services that are more common within a business school career centre than in other types of

career centres. These include whether a career centre offers office hours to employers (offered by at least 71% of all business career centers compared to less than 36% of all others), whether the career centre will provide resume books of its students to employers (offered by at least 67% of all business career centres compared to less than 20% of all other types) and whether or not they allow employers to present company information sessions via video conferencing (offered at least 43% of all business school centres compared to less than 20% of other types). On the other hand, decentralized career centres with co-op are most likely to provide wage subsidy information to employers (80% of those non-business centres; 71% of business centres) whereas business career centres without co-op are least likely to provide this information with none of them reporting this as a service. About 57% of centralized centres with co-op will provide it compared to 36% of centralized centres without co-op.

Career centres are more likely to charge fees for services to employers than they are to students with 33% reporting charging for one or more service. Services career centres are most like to charge for include general career fairs (21%), major-specific career fairs (17%), company information sessions (17%), summer job fairs (14%), hallway tables (13%) and print advertising (11%). Other services where career centres sometimes charge a fee include on-campus interviews, featured job postings, social media campaigns, banner advertising, corporate partner programs, and other types of job postings. Table 24 details the services offered to employers and whether the trend to offer each one is increasing, decreasing or remains the same.

Table 24: Employer services by percentage offering and trends

Employer services	Percentage of centres offering	Trend
Company Information Sessions	90%	Same
On Campus Interviews	87%	Same
Job postings - full-time/post graduate	84%	Same
Part-time job postings	85%	Same
Promotion of employer events off campus	73%	Same
Volunteer postings (with non-profit organizations)	73%	Same
Hallway tables	69%	Same
Career fair (all job types)	68%	Same
Introductions to faculty	68%	Same
Internship postings - paid	64%	Same
Career fair - faculty/major specific	51%	Same
Introductions to student clubs	51%	Same
Featured job postings	48%	Same
Career fair - summer jobs	47%	Same
Employer wage subsidy/tax credit information	47%	Same
Email blasts to students	45%	Same
Co-op Jobs	45%	Same
Employer office hours	40%	Same
Consultations on recruiting practices	40%	Up
Resume referrals	39%	Same
Print advertising	39%	Same
Social media campaigns	37%	Same
Video conference interviews	37%	Same
Internship postings - unpaid (other than non-profit organizations)	35%	Same
Candidate pre-screening	31%	Same
Resume books	24%	Up
Pre-employment exam proctoring	21%	Same

Online / banner advertising	19%	Same
Video conference presentation	19%	Same
Paper-based job board/bulletin board	16%	Down
Alumni only job board	15%	Same
Articles about company in student newsletters	15%	Up
Corporate partners program	13%	Same
Career fair - virtual	10%	Up
Employer Newsletter	8%	Same

## Employer Engagement Activities

In addition to providing recruiting services for employers, 90% of career centres report providing other engagement opportunities for employers on campus to help their students explore career paths or learn job-related skills. A list of the engagement activities for employers is listed in Table 25.

There is a relationship between whether a career centre uses employers as mock interviewers and institution type with 25% of colleges and polytechnics reporting that they use employers and 68% of university-based career centres utilizing them. There is also a relationship between whether a career centre invites employers as guests to sit with students at dining etiquette workshops; the practice is much more common in the Atlantic region (30%) than in other parts of the country: Quebec (25%), Ontario (18%) and the West (0%).

Table 25: Employer engagement activities (n = 57)

Employer Engagement Services	Percentage offering
Career panelists	82%
Mock interviewers	65%
Guest lecturers in class	56%
Special event invitations	53%
Provide resume critiques	44%
Take students on company tours	42%
Mentors for students	39%
Case competition coaches / judges	26%
Capstone project sponsors / judges	26%
Provide skills development workshops	26%
Take career centre staff on company tours	26%
Applied research project sponsors	25%
Provide career advising appointments	19%
Corporate / program advisory boards	16%
Dining etiquette workshop guests	16%
Recruiters / employers in residence	11%

Some engagement types are more common in business school career centres such as case competition coaching where at least 71% of business school career centres engage employers compared to less than 20% of other career centre types. Another engagement opportunity more common in business career centres is involvement in a corporate advisory board. While 57% of business school career centres with co-op and 29% of business school career centres without co-op report having employers on an advisory board, the only other career centre type that reported utilizing this engagement opportunity type at all was centralized career centres with co-op at 21%.

Respondents were also asked if they provided professional development opportunities for employers. Only six career centres indicated that they provide these types of

opportunities and 50% of those were located in the West. When offered, these professional development services were generally offered free of charge or for a cost recovery fee.

Table 26: Professional development services offered to employers by frequency offered

Professional Development for Employers	Frequency
Invitations to on-campus lectures	3
Newsletters with PD features or research	3
Labour market trend/hiring information	3
Best practices in campus recruiting	2
Small employer group meetings on trends (industry/geographic specific)	2
Nominate for awards/recognition	2
Invite to open house to showcase institution	2
Interview skills training	1
Generational specific recruiting methods	1
Large employer only forums/conferences	1
Employer only networking events	1
Provide space for external PD events	1
Peer-to-peer diversity workshops	1

More than half (56%) of the respondents indicated that their career centre maintains a type of target list of prospective new employers they wish to engage with. About 65% of the time, employer relations staff were generalists who worked with all employer types. Relationships with employers were also assigned by student group 31% of the time, by industry 22% of the time and by job type (i.e. co-op/full-time) 22% of the time.

## Services for Faculty

In this survey, respondents were asked about how their career centre works with faculty in two different ways: the faculty member as an individual who might be seeking a job change or research connections to support their internal career growth and the services the career centre provides to the faculty in the classroom to support students. When looking at how career centres support faculty as individuals, 54% of career centres reported that they provide services to faculty in this way. Ontario-based career centres are least likely to support faculty with their individual career development (34%) while those in Quebec are most likely to support them (100%) with Atlantic (70%) and the West (60%) in the middle.

Table 27: Percentage of career centres offering services for faculty as individuals (n = 63)

Services for Faculty as Individuals	Percentage offering
CV reviews	30%
Career counseling or advising	22%
Access to job board/alerts	21%
Research connections with industry	19%
Career counseling or advising for spouses	14%
Web-based career resources	14%
Professional development workshops	11%

On the other hand, 84% of career centres report working with faculty to provide support for their work in the classroom regardless of institution type, geographic region or career centre type.

Table 28: Percentage of career centres offering services for faculty in the classroom (n = 63)

Services for Faculty in the Classroom	Percentage offering
Career related workshops in class presented by staff	73%
Access to online resources for class	51%
Guest speakers for classes	43%
Major specific information for use in classes	41%
Employer connections for class projects	30%
Support for career-related assignments	26%
Reports on post-graduate employment	24%
Online self-assessments for class	24%
Pre- or post- experiential learning experience reflection assignment assistance	18%
Pen/paper based self-assessments for class	16%
Company tours for their classes	8%

Some of these services for faculty vary based upon career centre type. In particular, employer connections for class projects, guest speakers in the classroom and reports on post-graduate employment are much more prevalent in business school-based career centres as can be seen in Figure 11.

## Services for Parents

While no one would argue that the vast majority of post-secondary students are legally adults, career centres recognize the importance of bringing them into the career development process with 46% of career centres reporting they currently provide one or more services directed towards parents. Interest in engaging with parents is on the rise with ten career centres reporting that they plan to add additional parent facing services in the next two years. The fastest growing services for parents are guides for parents on how to support their student's career development and parent facing websites. The most common ways career centres are involved with parents are listed in Table 29. Other ways parents are involved with Canadian career centres include parents sitting on career panels or serving as mentors; providing workshops other than orientation specifically for parents; offering parent newsletters; and encouraging parents to post internship opportunities. Several respondents indicated that while the career centre did not provide services for parents, they were involved in supporting other groups on campus that did such as student services offices.

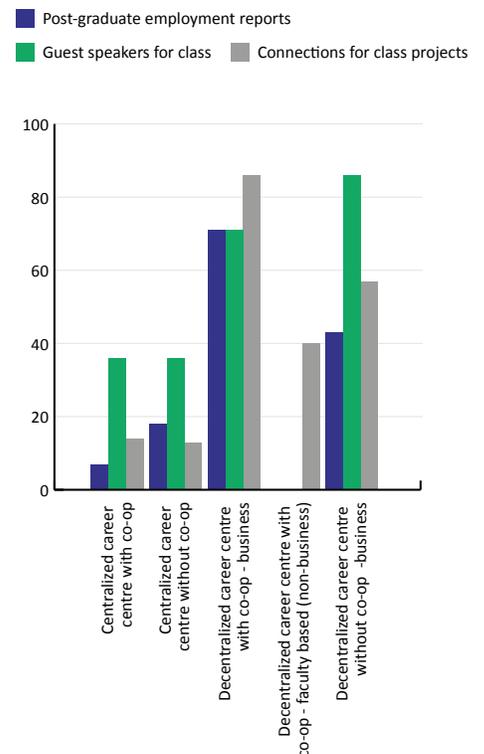


Figure 11: Faculty classroom based services by career centre type

Table 29: Career centres engagement with parents

Service or engagement type	Percentage of career centres offering of those reporting parent involvement (n = 29)	Total percentage of career centres offering (n = 63)
Allow parents to join students at advising meetings (with student consent)	66%	30%
Parent Orientation	55%	25%
Guide for parents on supporting student's career development	31%	14%
Encouraged to post co-op jobs for students	28%	28%
Encouraged to post-post-graduate jobs for students	13%	13%

## Internal Collaborations

As a general rule, career centres are collaborative with 60 out of 63 centres reporting that they collaborate with one or more internal groups on campus. The frequency of collaborations varies widely across internal units from ad hoc to weekly. Other than one relationship between geographic region and collaboration with dining services that shows that career centres in the Atlantic (60%) and Ontario (21%) regions are more likely than those in the West (0%) to collaborate, no association was found between Institution type, geographic region or career centre type.

Table 30: Partnerships with internal units (n = 63)

Internal units	Percent reporting Collaborations
Academic departments	87%
Alumni Relations	84%
International student office	80%
Admissions / Student recruitment	74%
Indigenous student office	70%
Students with Disabilities office	66%
Advancement/Development	62%
Other student services units on campus	61%

When asked about why they choose to collaborate, the rationale varied. Increasing student participation was most frequently cited as the most important consideration followed by reaching specific populations of students. Table 31 shows the rankings each respondent provided when considering collaborations with other units.

Table 31: Rationale for collaborating internally (n = 61)

	Most important consideration	Important consideration	Consideration	Not a consideration
Target specific student populations	36%	46%	13%	5%
Increase student participation / awareness as a whole	44%	41%	8%	3%
Tapping into expertise around campus	18%	59%	16%	7%
Desire to provide innovative services to students	26%	58%	8%	8%
Build reputation for career centre on campus	38%	32%	15%	5%
Sharing resources / costs for programming / services	26%	36%	33%	8%

Respondents were asked about one other type of collaboration: if they developed any products or services for sale to the general public or other career centres. Only five career centres reported that they did so and these services included sales of consulting services for recruiting program development to employers, selling in-house developed career development guides, games and webinars to other schools and selling toolkits on how to manage student staff internally to other units. There were too few of these types of collaborations to make any generalizations other than to comment that there is significant room for creativity to develop new opportunities in this area.

## Career Centre Metrics

The study investigated four different types of metrics: overall career centre usage / activity metrics not associated with a particular service; how career centres are tracking their activity with students and alumni by specific service and how they measure the impact of these services; metrics collected about employer services and how career centres solicit the opinion of these important stakeholders; and other ways career centres are measuring what they do.

### Overall Career Centre Usage Rates

Not surprisingly, 97% of career centres reported collecting statistics about overall office usage. Table 32 shows each of these metrics and, of those schools that collect these types of metrics (n = 61), the percentage of schools tracking them. By far, these metrics are used primarily for institutional internal use only with only 20 career centres (33%) indicating that they published any of these metrics externally.

Table 32: Percentage of career centres collecting office usage metrics by type (n = 61)

Metric	Percentage of career centres collecting
Total workshops offered	97%
Total appointments provided	95%
Total event attendance	95%
Total students who access centre	93%
Total jobs posted	89%
Total employer contacts	84%
Total alumni who access centre	62%
Total accessing online resources	44%
Post-graduate employment rate	43%
Co-op placement rate	41%
Total students who do NOT access centre	26%
Internship employment rate	25%
Graduate / professional school attendance	20%

The most commonly externally reported office metrics is post-graduate employment rate. Figure 12 shows that the time frame when the post-graduate data is collected varies significantly across institutions.

More than 60% of career centres reported that the number of metrics that they are collecting has increased slightly or significantly in the past five years. More than 50% of career centres report either slightly or significantly increased interest in their metrics over the past 5 years. Senior administration expressed the most interest with 86% of career centres indicating that they'd asked for them. Faculty expressed interest at 50% of the career centres and about a third of career centres reported interest from students and employers. Other stakeholders that expressed interest on some campuses included accreditation bodies, alumni, parents, the media and donors.

### Student/Alumni Services and Metrics

Most centres (97%) report tracking at least some usage statistics for their services. On average, career centres are tracking usage metrics on 21 different student services. In terms of reporting, 80% of career centres reported that they collect some of these metrics for internal institutional use and 62% reported that they collect some of these metrics for career centre use only. Only 18% indicated that they collected any of these statistics for external reporting purposes. On average, career centres collect 13 types of metrics for internal institutional uses, 12 types of metrics for career centre use only, and 7 for external reporting.

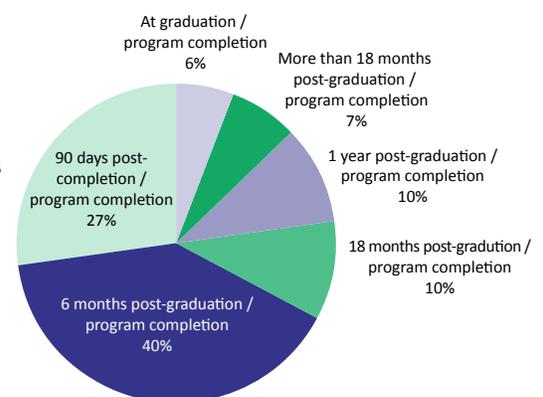


Figure 12: Timeline for post-graduate survey data collection

Table 33: Percentage of career centres collecting student usage metrics

Student usage metrics	Percentage of career centres collecting
Counseling/advising appointments – in person	92%
Resume / cover letter critiques	84%
Counseling / advisement drop ins	79%
Career topic workshop attendance	79%
Career panels attendance	70%
General career fair attendance	69%
Mock interviews with staff	69%
Guest speakers attendance	66%
Job board views	52%
Usage of online resources	52%
Usage of social media	51%

When it comes trying to determine the quality or impact of their services, most career centres which seek to measure this use surveys of their students. About 75% of career centres reported that they use either satisfaction surveys or learning outcomes measurements with their students to assess quality. It is much more common for career centres to conduct satisfaction surveys than learning outcomes assessments - 100% of career centres who do any type of surveying of students reported conducting satisfaction surveys and only 40% of these career centres were also looking at learning outcomes. On average, career centres reported conducting satisfaction surveys on 9 of their student services and measuring learning outcomes on 4 of their services. The services for which learning outcomes were most commonly measured by those that measured them at all were career topic workshops (42%), career advisement appointments (37%), resume / cover letter critiques (37%), job club / small group job search sessions (26%), career fairs – general (21%), specialized services for international students (21%) and peer advising programs (21%).

Table 34: Percentage of career centres who conduct satisfaction surveys on student services

Student services	Percentage of career centres who conduct satisfaction surveys
Career advisement appointments	72%
Career topic workshops	65%
Resume / cover letter critiques	57%
Career advisement - drop in	52%
Career fair - general	50%
Career panels	48%
Career topic guest speakers	43%
Mock Interviews with staff	35%
Specialized services for international students	33%
Career fair - faculty / major specific	33%
Mock networking opportunities	30%

Respondents were also asked if their centre had conducted a needs assessment with their students. The status of needs assessments is shown in Figure 13. When asked what the drivers were for conducting a needs assessment, 50% of the respondents (n = 32) indicated it was to address a mismatch between services offered and student needs. Other reasons included a desire to keep up with best practices in the field (47%), to provide justification for additional resources and support (31%), one was required by institutional leaders (9%) or external reviewers/accreditation bodies (9%). As only 57% of career centres have conducted needs assessments of their students and only half of those report the primary reason to do so was to align services offered with student needs, it's clear that despite collecting significant amounts of data for internal use, many decisions are not being driven by the data collected.

Respondents were also asked if their career centre had developed an overall set of learning objectives or competencies that students and alumni were expected to gain from interacting with the centre. Centres responded that they were in various stages of developing these learning objectives. Figure 14 highlights the status career centres are at in development learning objectives. Only 29% indicated that they didn't have, or plan to create, learning objectives. The most common reported rationale (n = 44) for developing them was to ensure students are benefiting from programs and services (75%). Other rationale included wanting to keep up with best practices in field (63%), to provide justification for additional resources and support (30%), required to define them by institutional leaders or practices (20%), desire to de-emphasize placement rate as outcome of services (11%) and accreditation requirements (5%).

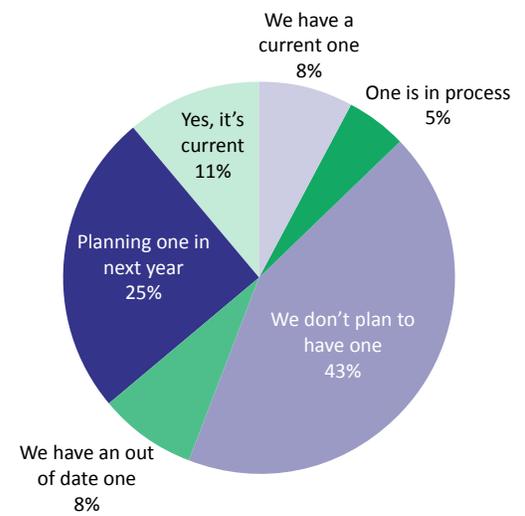


Figure 13: Status of student needs assessment

The concept of incorporating learning outcomes into post-secondary education began in the 1990's. A widely cited definition of learning outcomes was provided by Battersby (1999): "the essential and enduring knowledge, abilities (skills) and attitudes (values, dispositions) that constitute the integrated learning needed by a graduate of a course or program (p.8)." The integration of knowledge, abilities and attitudes was key to something being a learning outcome rather than a competency. For example, in a career centre setting, a learning objective provided by one survey respondent was "Understand the value of accumulated experiences – inside and outside the classroom – as a tool for career exploration, self-discovery and job search."

When asked to share the learning outcomes they'd developed for their services or career centre, only a few respondents provided responses. Of those that did, only two expressed their learning outcomes in a way that would meet the criteria set out by Battersby. Most others listed competencies that students accessing programs or services should achieve.

## Employer Services and Metrics

Data collection around usage of employer services isn't as widespread as it is for student services with only 78% of career centres reporting they track any employer metrics at all. For those that do, they average collecting usage data on 13 different types of employer services. In terms of how these metrics are used, 93% of career centres reported using at least one of these metrics to report internally within the institution. Another 89% indicated that they collected at least some of the metrics for internal career centre use only. Only 15% indicated that they used any employer metrics for external reporting. On average, career centres are collecting eight different metrics for internal career centre use, eight metrics for internal reporting purposes and 4 for external reporting purposes.

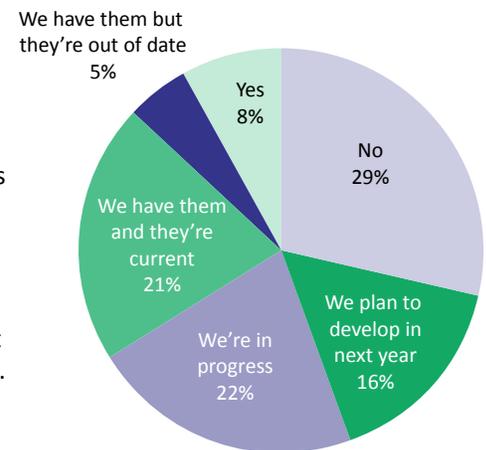


Figure 14: Status of learning outcomes development

Table 35: Employer metrics by frequency collected

Metric	Percent of career centres collecting
Job Postings – full time	76%
On campus interviews - companies	73%
On campus interviews – number of interviews	71%
Company information sessions – student attendance	69%
Companies attending general career fair	65%
Company information sessions – number of companies	63%
Job postings – part-time	61%
Companies hosting hallway tables	45%
Job postings – paid internships	45%
Job postings - volunteer	43%
Companies attending major specific career fair	41%

Many career centres, 83% in this survey, also seek feedback from employers about students and their own services. Whether a career centre seeks feedback is not related to institution type, geographic region or career centre type. Of those that

solicit feedback, 94% seek feedback about their students while 88% seek feedback about career centre services. The most common way to get feedback on students is through surveys of employers about their students (77%). Another 70% report using individual meetings/phone calls with employers and 12% report holding focus groups with the employer to get feedback on students. To receive feedback on their own services, surveys are the most common tool with 71% of career centres using them. Like feedback on students, this is followed by individual meetings/phone calls with employers (48%) and focus groups (12%).

## Other Metrics

About 1/3 of career centres collect and report metrics on other constituent groups. Many of these centres are tracking services for faculty (70%) and other units on campus (55%). In particular, respondents reported tracking the delivery of career programming for faculty including guest speakers and in-class workshops and the number of faculty who log into their systems. These were all reported as usage metrics rather than quality measures. With regards to other units on campus, tracking the presence of staff members from other units at career centre events and tracking interaction types such as workshops, panels, and presentations was reported. Another 30% tracking the services that they provide to general community members, in particular, the presence of community members at career centre events.

Career centres were also asked if they were responsible for helping their institution participate in national or international rankings. About 25% of career centres (n = 61) reported that they are responsible for supporting institutional rankings initiatives. As you can see from Figure 15, decentralized career centres are much more likely to be involved in rankings support than centralized centres. Of those who support rankings participation, the most common type of support is to provide direct data on post-graduate employment (50%) and post-graduate salaries (56%) to the ranking body. Another type of support provided was to distribute surveys to employers (31%) and alumni (13%). The rankings institutions were most commonly pursuing were QS World Ranking (50%), Financial Times (25%), McLeans (18%), World University Rankings (18%) and the Economist (18%).

Career centres were also asked if they had conducted an internal or external assessment of their career centre in the past five years. More than 40% indicated that they had conducted an assessment that was required by institutional leadership or an external body (21%) or not required (22%). While 16% didn't know, 41% reported that they had not had an internal or external assessment of their centre. When asked about plans to have an internal or external assessment, 54% reported that they didn't know if they would have one in the next few years while 10% knew that one would be required and another 22% planned to conduct one that wasn't required.

As can be seen in Figure 16, when asked if their career center had a strategic plan in place, respondents reported them in various stages from not having one at all to having one that is out of date or incomplete to having one that is up to date. Only 40% reported having a current strategic plan and about a quarter of respondents indicated that their career centre didn't have one or they didn't know if one existed.

Career centres were also asked if they created annual reports. About half of career centres reported creating them for internal use only while 11% indicated that they share them publicly. While 11% reported that they planned to create one in the next year, another 22% indicated that they didn't have one or plan to create one in the future.

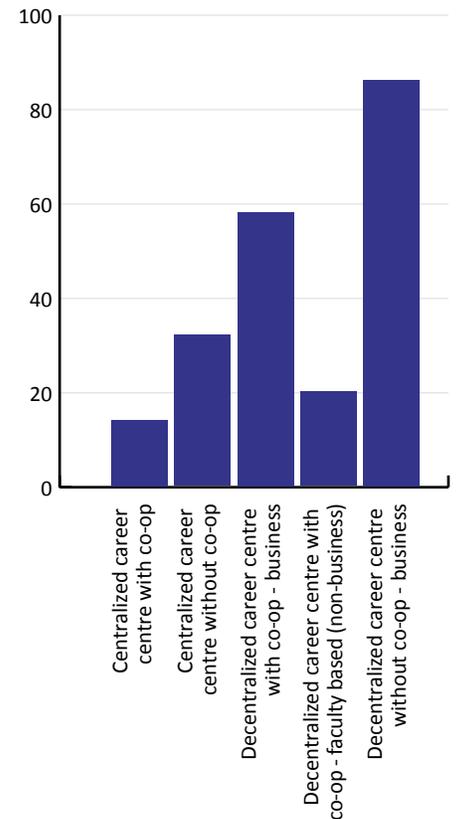


Figure 15: Career centres supporting institutional rankings participation

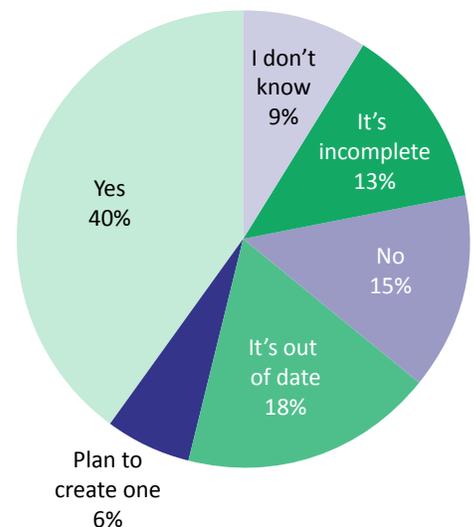


Figure 16: Status of career center strategic plan

## Relationships Between Resources, Metrics and Services

The following section will look the relationships between these three areas in pairs: Relationship between resources and services; relationship between metrics and services; and the relationship between metrics and resources. One of the goals of the following subsections was to identify how the themes of change identified earlier have impacted resources, services and metrics. An additional goal was to identify changes that career centres can make to improve their practice or increase resources for their centre.

### Relationships Between Resources and Services: Financial Resources

To partially answer the question about how changes in financial resources are impacting services, respondents were asked to rate the importance of the rationale for when considering what services to add to or eliminate from their career centres. Table 36 shows how respondents rated each factor when considering which new student services to add. Table 37 shows how respondents rated each factor when considering which student services to eliminate. Please note that respondents were able to choose more than one option as the “most important” consideration.

Table 36: Importance of considerations when adding of new student services (n = 50)

Factor	Most important Consideration	Important Consideration	Consideration	Not a Consideration
Address a gap in student career readiness	50%	38%	10%	2%
Student interest in service	30%	50%	16%	4%
Staff increases / changes	2%	34%	30%	34%
Similar to prior service but higher quality	10%	50%	14%	24%
Employer interest in services	14%	34%	28%	24%
Desire to be innovative in field	22%	54%	18%	8%
Raise money/increase revenue	10%	4%	18%	68%

Table 37: Importance of considerations when eliminating new student services (n = 42)

Factor	Most important Consideration	Important Consideration	Consideration	Not a Consideration
No longer necessary / students no longer need it	24%	33%	24%	17%
Student participation was low	31%	40%	17%	7%
Staff reductions / changes	14%	24%	36%	24%
Implemented similar new service of higher quality	14%	43%	14%	26%
Implemented similar new service with more efficiencies	21%	38%	12%	26%
Save money / cut costs	17%	19%	38%	24%

In looking at what career centres said were significant changes over the past five years and current issues of concern, budget and resource cut both featured prominently. However, as you can see from Table 36, despite these stated concerns about budgets and resources, very few career centres are seriously considering the potential for revenue generation when creating new student services. While saving money was more of a consideration as shown in Table 37, it still ranked 4th out of 6 as the “most important” rationale. No relationship was found between those that had experienced a budget change and their weighting of these considerations.

Respondents were also asked the rationale behind adding or eliminating new employer services. In the case of adding employer services, 32 career centres responded providing insight into the factors considered when adding new services. Table 38 shows the responses provided when asked about the rationale to add employer services and Table 39 shows the responses when asked about the rationale to eliminate employer services. Only 28 career respondents weighed in on the rationale for eliminating

services for employers but the data still provides some insights into these factors. While slightly more significant when considering changes to employer services than student services, raising money was only ranked as “most important” or “important” by 25% of respondents and saving money was only ranked as “most important” or “important” by 40% of respondents. Again, no relationship was found between those that had experienced a budget change and the weighting of the different considerations.

Table 38: Importance of considerations when adding of new employer services (n = 32)

Factor	Most important Consideration	Important Consideration	Consideration	Not a Consideration
Create opportunities for students	53%	41%	6%	0%
Employer requests for services	19%	47%	25%	9%
Staff increases / changes	3%	28%	34%	34%
Similar to prior service but higher quality	3%	50%	22%	25%
Student / alumni interest in services	16%	52%	16%	16%
Desire to be innovative in field	19%	40%	22%	19%
Raise money / increase revenue	9%	16%	25%	50%

Table 39: Importance of considerations when eliminating new employer services (n = 28)

Factor	Most important Consideration	Important Consideration	Consideration	Not a Consideration
Student interest declined	18%	43%	25%	14%
Employer participation	21%	25%	43%	11%
Staff reductions / changes	21%	25%	29%	25%
Implemented similar new service of higher quality	21%	21%	14%	43%
Implemented similar new service with more efficiencies	36%	7%	14%	43%
Save money / cut costs	25%	14%	32%	29%

Considering how vocal respondents were about budget reductions impacting their centres, it is surprising to see how little impact of these budget changes is shown in the analysis. Clearly, many career centres across Canada have found cost efficient ways to offer a large number of services to their students and employers. One implication for practice is that practitioners would benefit from a way to share best practices to increase efficiencies to reduce perceived budget stresses around service provision. One caveat to this analysis is that it does not look at measures of quality of these services. Future research is needed to see if reductions in financial resources, while not impacting the number of services offered, impacts the quality of the services being provided.

## Relationships Between Resources and Services: Human Resources

As many of the services provided by career centres require human resources, it was important to investigate if there was a relationship between a number of staff as well as student to staff ratios, and the number of student or services offered. Surprisingly, analysis showed there was no relationship found between either professional staff to student ratio or total staff ratio and number of student services. There was also no relationship between total staff ratio or professional staff, and number of employer services. This was particularly surprising because, logically, it makes sense that the lower the student to staff ratio, the more services a career centre would be able to provide.

On the other hand, analysis did show that there is a relationship between the number of professional staff and the total number of student services offered. There were no corresponding relationship with the number of employer services provided and number of staff. This analysis implies that if a career centre seeks to increase the number of services, it should strive to increase the number of professional staff available to provide those services. In looking at Tables 36 and 38, though, fully 1/3 of career centres reported that additional staff was not a consideration at all when considering adding

either new student or employer services and another 1/3 said staffing additions were only a “consideration.” In looking at reducing services in Tables 37 and 39, about 1/4 reported that staff reductions weren’t a factor at all in determining the elimination of services while about 1/3 report that it was a “consideration.” Clearly, career centres are making decisions about whether to add or subtract services from their portfolio without much emphasis on staff compliment size.

In looking at the overall relationship between resources and services, despite about 60% of career centres reporting budget and declines or stagnation and comments about decreasing staff contingencies, career centres have continued to increase both the total number services for students, employers and other stakeholders and the variety of types of services offered. This leads to the conclusion that resource considerations don’t seem to have much direct impact on the services provided by career centres today.

## Relationships Between Metrics and Services

As noted in Table 36, career centres most frequently cited that new services were added to address a gap or because student interest was high. Other services were eliminated most often because students no longer needed them or their interest was low. This implies that career centres were using data about student needs or satisfaction to make decisions. However, analysis shows that there are no correlations between the importance of addressing a student needs gap when adding services or when “students no longer needed the service” when eliminating one and whether or not a career centre had conducted a needs assessment of their students, those who had specified learning outcomes for their students or those who conduct student satisfaction surveys. There was also no significant correlation between whether or not a career centre collects feedback from employers about its students and the importance of addressing a student gap or the lack of necessity for a service.

However, it was found that career centres that had conducted student needs assessment were less likely to use student attendance as the determining factor of whether or not a service was worth continuing for their students. Those career centres that had current strategic plans were also most likely to cite that services were no longer necessary because students didn’t need them anymore as a rationale for cutting student services. Career centres without strategic plans reported that half the time, whether a service was necessary for their students wasn’t a consideration at all when cutting services. This analysis highlights that career centres who collect metrics, in particular those that have conducted a needs assessment and have a strategic plan, are using that information to make decisions about services they offer to students differently than those that don’t have these tools in place.

The final relationship that was identified was the importance of the impact the reduction in staffing levels had on student services was found to be related to rankings participation. Career centres that support institutional rankings were much less likely to take staffing reductions into account when having to cut services.

What’s not explicit in these findings is whether career centres who provide support for institutional rankings are less likely to see staff reductions, therefore making it less of a consideration, or if the importance placed on rankings requires career centres in these institutions to recognize that these services must be provided regardless of staffing levels so it is less of a concern. This led for a need for additional analysis of the impact of rankings participation on staff size. A look at the means for number of staff and student to staff ratios by rankings participation reveals that career centres that participate in supporting institutional rankings have higher average numbers of staff and lower average staff to student ratios.

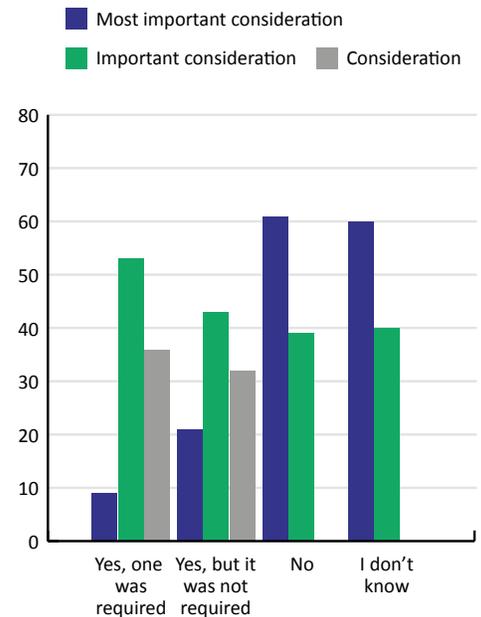


Figure 17: Importance of student participation when eliminating service by internal/external assessment

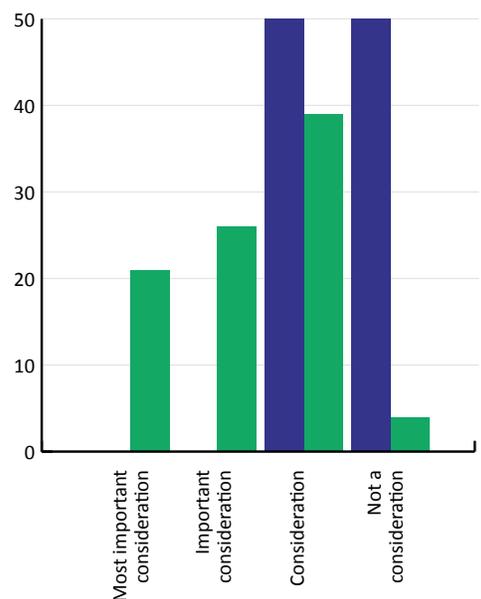


Figure 18: Importance of considering staffing reductions by international rankings participation

Table 40: Staffing levels compared to ranking participation

	Total staff	Prof. staff	Total staff ratio	Prof staff ratio
Participates in rankings	16.27	13.92	715.27	782.62
Does not participate in rankings	8.79	7.40	2435.68	3111.47

This supports the conclusion that career centres that support institutional rankings initiatives have more staff and, therefore, staffing levels are less of a consideration when adding or eliminating student services for these centres. These findings imply that supporting institutional rankings initiatives are a way to secure and protect staff. As rankings reflect institutional reputation, it makes sense that institutions that are actively pursuing participation in rankings would add resources to the areas that support those initiatives.

Next is a review of the relationships between these factors and services for employers offered by career centers. As noted in Table 38, respondents reported that new employer services were added to create new opportunities for students. The importance that this criterion was given was found to be related to two factors: whether the career centre had a strategic plan in place and whether or not the career centre had conducted an internal or external assessment of their services. As you can see in Figure 19, career centres with current or incomplete strategic plans were more likely to rate the creation of new opportunities as most the most important criteria. Career centers that had conducted needs assessments were also more likely to rank the importance of creating new opportunities for students as most important or very important was higher than for those that hadn't.

The only other relationship identified was one between whether a representative ranked being innovative in the field as an important consideration for adding employer services and whether or not a career centre had a strategic plan in place. In this case, career centres with a current or incomplete strategic plan were more likely to rank being innovative as the most important factor in creating new employer services while those with outdated strategic plans were most likely to rank this factor as not a consideration at all.

This analysis highlights that career centres who collect metrics, in particular those that have conducted a needs assessment and have a strategic plan are using that information to make decisions differently than those that don't have these tools in place. It also highlights that many decisions currently being made by career centres around services to offer and eliminate are not well supported by data.

## Relationships Between Metrics and Resources

In looking at whether or not budget changes are related to the type and number of metrics collected, the first analysis was to look at overall metrics collected and then at those collected for internal use and those collected and reported externally. Analysis showed no relationship between the total number of metrics collected and whether or not a career centre budget increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past several years.

Additional analysis found no relationship between reported changes in stakeholder interest in metrics and budget changes. Whether or not a career centre had a strategic plan, had conducted an internal or external assessment or whether they had done a needs assessment of their student body were also all found not to be related to budget changes. Finally, in looking at data collected about outcomes, whether they collected post-graduate employment data conducted satisfaction surveys or learning outcomes assessments with their students were all unrelated to whether or not a career centre had experienced a budget increase, decrease or if it remained the same.

The one relationship that did emerge was between whether or not a career centre supported the institution in collecting data for national and international rankings. In this case, the career centres who assisted in institutional rankings were more likely to have their budget increased over the past five years than those that did not. Rankings

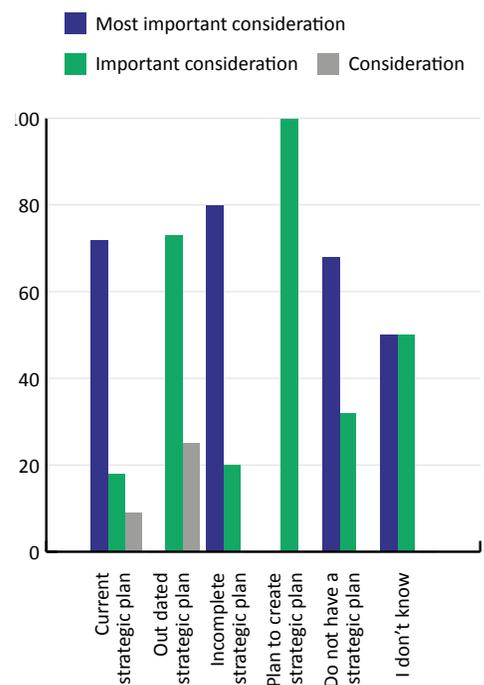


Figure 19: importance of creating new opportunities for students

participation, as discussed earlier, was also found to be related to staffing levels. Clearly when an institution wants to invest in its reputation through rankings participation, career centres that align with institutional goals reap the rewards.

## Summary

Much of the analysis presented in this study was descriptive and showcased the current situation for career centres across Canada in terms of the resources, metrics and services they provide. This data had not been collected before in Canada in such a comprehensive way so was not available for career centres looking to benchmark with their peer centres around the country. The collection and dissemination of this information was, in itself, a worthwhile endeavour.

However, there were three key findings worth noting that were uncovered through the data analysis that are worth highlighting in this summary.

### **Career centres continue to do more with less.**

It could easily be assumed that within a career centre setting, there would be a direct correlation between the resources a career centre has and its ability to provide services. If this were the case, an increase in operational budget would lead to an increase in the ability to provide services for students or a decrease in number of staff would lead to a decrease in services. As the analysis revealed, though, career centres are continuing to increase the number of services offered despite reported decreases in operational budgets. Staff salaries and benefits are the largest line item in almost all career centre budgets. Despite a clear relationship between the number of staff a career centre has and the number of services it can offer, staff decreases, when reported, are not necessarily leading to service reductions.

This implies that current career centre staff are having to stretch both their financial and human resources to maintain current levels of service. As noted by respondents as the primary change to the field, the increasing use of technology is one way career centres are becoming more efficient. Creating online versions of workshops that can be downloaded 24/7 is just one example of a technological advancement that has the potential to free up staff time.

In addition to technological changes, career centres are also tapping their external networks as a resource to expand capacity. Tapping alumni and employers as mock interviewers, workshop providers and for resume critiques expands the capacity of the career centre to provide these services without the addition of more staff.

While these are innovative initiatives, career centres tend to function in isolation. They would certainly benefit from increased collaboration, through organizations such as CACEE, around best practices on how they are increasing efficiency, utilizing technology and avoiding staff burnout.

### **Institutional alignment drives funding.**

Clearly this study showed a correlation between supporting institutional participate in national and international rankings and resource allocation. However, rankings are a proxy for institutional goals. For example, when an institution decides it wants to increase its reputation by becoming ranked in a particular ranking, the first thing institutional leaders will do is look at the methodology of the ranking and invest where it can to make an impact. The Financial Times MBA ranking weights the salary increases and career progression of its alumni three years post-graduate fairly heavily in its calculations. Institutions that want to increase their international reputation by being ranked in this prestigious publication need to invest resources into ensuring that their graduates have appropriate career outcomes – this frequently means the career centre.

However, rankings are just one way that career centres can align themselves with institutional goals and objectives and become necessary to an institution. Garis (2013) argues that career centres should lead the charge for creating value-add, collaborative,

institution-wide career programs and services. One example could include opening up career centre CRM systems to other on campus constituent groups looking to connect with corporate partners for research activities, experiential learning or other types of collaborations. Another example could be taking the lead on developing resources for use by academic advisement staff, faculty, admissions staff that outline steps students should take along their academic and career journey such as how Queen's has done with their Major Maps (<http://careers.queensu.ca/students/wondering-about-career-options/major-maps-2015>). This approach presents the career centre as an integral partner in many campus-wide activities which provides justification for additional resources and provides insulation from reductions in lean times.

**More data is needed.**

This study provides just a snapshot of the post-secondary career centre landscape. As career centres answer the call for increasing accountability, more data is needed to get a better picture of the trends, successes and challenges that they face. The release of this report is just a first step. Repeating this survey and analysis every two years would provide more powerful information for career centres to use as benchmarks in their strategic planning processes.

Additionally, a repository, perhaps through CACEE, where career centres could share the operational tools they've developed such as satisfaction surveys for programs and services, learning outcomes, needs assessments and other examples of best practices would add significant value to the field.

## Bibliography

- Battersby, M. (1999). *So, What's a Learning Outcome Anyway? So, What's a Learning Outcome Anyway?* Vancouver, BC. Retrieved from <http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&btnG=Search&q=intitle:So,+What's+a+Learning+Outcome+Anyway?#0>
- Csorba, E., & Termuende, E. (2015). Entrepreneurship: building curiosity in Canadian higher education. Retrieved April 21, 2017, from <https://forum.academica.ca/forum/entrepreneurship-building-curiosity-in-canadian-higher-education>
- Garis, J. W. (2013). Making the Value Proposition. In E. Contomanolis & T. Steinfeld (Eds.), *Leadership in Career Services: Voices from the Field* (pp. 91–100). Charleston, SC.
- Hoskins, M. (1995). Constructivist Approaches For Career Counselors. *ERIC Digest*. Retrieved from [http://www.counselling.org/resources/library/ERIC Digests/95-062.pdf](http://www.counselling.org/resources/library/ERIC%20Digests/95-062.pdf)
- Krumboltz, J. D. (2009). The Happenstance Learning Theory The Happenstance Learning Theory, (December 2008). <http://doi.org/10.1177/1069072708328861>
- Lent, R. W., & Brown, S. D. (2013). Understanding and Facilitating Career Development in the 21st Century. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Career and Development Counselling: Putting theory and research to work* (2nd ed., pp. 1–26). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Pryor, R. G., & Bright, J. E. (2014). The Chaos Theory of Careers (CTC): Ten years on and only just begun. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 23(1), 4–12. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1038416213518506>
- Super, D. E. (1980). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 16(3), 282–298. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791\(80\)90056-1](http://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(80)90056-1)

### About the author:

Christine Sjolander is currently the Director of Graduate Career Services and Employer Engagement at SFU's Beedie School of Business. She completed this survey and the corresponding analysis as part of her Doctorate in Education at Simon Fraser University. The complete analysis and results, along with the supporting review of the existing literature, will be available following her defense later in 2017. This report was developed with the generous support of the SFU Beedie School of Business. For additional information, please contact the author at [csjoland@sfu.ca](mailto:csjoland@sfu.ca).

