

ACAATO DOCUMENT

Multiple Pathways to College

A Secondary Analysis of the 2004 College Applicant Survey

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A Secondary Analysis of the 2004 College Applicant Survey

Report prepared for the School College Work Initiative

ACAATO Collaborative Research Project

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Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario Association des collèges d'arts appliqués et de technologie de l'Ontario

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Executive Summary

The 2004 College Applicant Survey (CAS) describes the college-bound applicant pool by covering a broad range of areas including key demographics, factors influencing college selection, academic background and financial preparedness. It is the most comprehensive and the richest source of survey data to date on applicants to the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. Acumen Research Group Inc. developed the survey tool and coordinated the survey in consultation with a college steering committee¹ and the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF). The Ontario College Application Services selected the random sample, distributed and collected the surveys. The research was primarily funded by the CMSF with supplemental funding from ACAATO. Due to an information sharing agreement, ACAATO was able to receive the data and perform secondary analysis on the 2004 CAS to look more closely at the factors affecting the transition from school to college and the characteristics of applicants who have taken various pathways to college. An exploration of applicant backgrounds shows that there are three distinct pathways to college: those applying directly from high school (Direct Entry), those who have not attended high school in the previous 12 months and have no post secondary education (Delayed Entry), and those with some postsecondary education (Previous PSE). This report focuses on these pathways in relation to their demographics (gender, income, age, etc.), academic profile (high school academics, college plans), and perceptions of college (individuals who influenced them, concerns, confidence).

Demographics

- **Income.** The family income of those coming directly from high school was higher than that of delayed entrants or those with previous PSE; however, it was similar to the general Ontario population.
- **Parental education.** Applicants applying directly from high school were most likely to have a parent who had attended college; those with previous PSE were the least likely. Delayed entrants (without PSE) were more likely to have a parent without a high school diploma.
- Age/ age of decision to attend college. At the time of application, over half of the delayed entrants were under 20, and only 14% were over 24. In contrast, those with previous PSE were much older; 45% were over 25. Only 20% of those applying directly from high school made their decision about attending college before the age of 15.
- **Dependents.** Nine percent of the total applicant group had dependent children; 2% of applicants applying from high school; 12% of delayed entrants; and 22% of those with previous PSE.
- Community size and region. Metro Toronto and applicants from outside of Ontario have disproportionate numbers of applicants with previous PSE, and fewer coming directly from high school. Similarly there is a linear trend in which as applicant community size increases so does the proportion who have previous PSE, and a reduction in those coming directly from high school.

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¹ The members of the steering committee included Henry Decock (Seneca), Peter Dietsche (Humber), Marjorie McColm (George Brown), Brenda Pander Scott (Fleming), Rosemary Stevens (Fanshawe), Bill Summers (ACAATO)

Academic profile

- When asked about overall grades in the final year of high school, those with previous PSE are academically the strongest, with 45% having an average of 80% or higher.
- Only 20% of delayed entrants self report a grade average over 80% and 29% have grade averages under 70%.
- Those applying directly from high school are in the moderate range of the three groups: 21% with grades under 70% and 27% having grades over 80%.
- Slightly more applicants coming directly from high school have taken "mostly university" type (U) of courses than have taken the "mostly college" type (C) of courses. About one fifth reported having taken mostly university / college courses.
- Of the delayed entrants (without PSE) who took the old curriculum (almost two thirds of the group), the General courses were taken slightly more often than Advanced (35% vs 29%). Similarly, within the new curriculum, College type courses were taken more frequently (18% vs 9%).
- As expected, the applicants with previous PSE had taken primarily Advanced courses in high school.
- Almost one in five of the applicants coming directly from high school are also applying to university.
- 58% of applicants who took mostly U courses in high school are applying to college only.
- 50% of applicants with previous PSE spent 10 or more hours investigating what they "would actually be doing" in the job arising from their first choice program. In contrast, 35% of direct entry and 40% of delayed entry applicants spent 10 or more hours on research. Almost 30% of direct and delayed entry applicants spent four hours or less on research.

College Perceptions

Level of Concern about attending college. In general, applicants were most concerned about employment after graduation, their ability to do well, future career and financing. In relative terms, students applying directly from high school were more concerned about what their future career would be and finding friends on campus. Delayed entry applicants were more concerned about financing. Applicants with previous PSE were more concerned about the availability of bursaries and student loans and finding co-op jobs or field placements.

Influence of individuals in deciding colleges of interest.

- For those applying directly from high school, parents exert the most influence in deciding on colleges of interest, followed by guidance counsellors, friends and college representatives.
- For delayed entrants (with and without previous PSE), parents, friends, and other family are the primary influencers. However, particularly for those with previous PSE, parental influence is diminished compared to those directly from high school.

Confidence. Most applicants are quite confident that they will succeed in their college program and that it will improve their career opportunities.

1. Introduction

College applicants are known to be a very heterogeneous group, and therefore it is often difficult to characterize an applicant profile. An applicant profile is important for recruitment strategies, for anticipation of student needs and services, and programming. The 2004 College Applicant Survey (CAS) is the most comprehensive and the richest source of survey data to date on applicants to the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. It covers a broad range of areas including key demographics, factors influencing college selection, academic background and financial preparedness. A pilot survey was originally administered to 12,000 applicants in June of 2003 with a 19% response rate. In 2004, 17,000 college applicants were randomly chosen and were mailed the refined survey with a response rate of 25%. Acumen Research Group Inc. developed the survey tool and coordinated the survey in consultation with a college steering committee² and the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF). The Ontario College Application Services selected the random sample, distributed and collected the surveys. The research was primarily funded by the CMSF with supplemental funding by ACAATO.

Due to an information sharing agreement, ACAATO was able to receive the data and perform secondary analysis on the 2004 CAS to look more closely at the factors affecting the transition from school to college and the characteristics of applicants who have taken various pathways to college. An exploration of applicant backgrounds shows that there are three distinct pathways to college: those applying directly from high school (Direct Entry), those who have not attended high school in the previous 12 months and have no post secondary education (Delayed Entry) and those with some postsecondary education (Previous PSE). Although within these three groups there is also much heterogeneity, an analysis of these three types of applicants provides more focus and clarity of the applicant characteristics.

Purpose

To perform secondary analyses of the 2004 CAS using the following categories:

- i. those applying directly from high school,
- ii. those who have never participated in post secondary education (PSE), but who are not applying directly from high school,
- iii. and those with previous PSE.

Key demographics, academic profile, and perceptions of these three groups are compared.

${\bf Methodology}^3$

As the CAS does not explicitly ask whether (and when) applicants graduated from high school, there was no clear divide of the applicants into the categories of direct entry, delayed entry and those with previous PSE.

Therefore, it was indirectly obtained from the two variables of:

- main activity in previous year;
- and highest education attained so far.

² The members of the steering committee included Henry Decock (Seneca), Peter Dietsche (Humber), Marjorie McColm (George Brown), Brenda Pander Scott (Fleming), Rosemary Stevens (Fanshawe), Bill Summers (ACAATO)

³ For details on survey methodology please see the final report, http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/research/ResearchSeries.asp.

Respondents were excluded who did not answer both questions. As well, a small proportion had what could be considered an incongruent background. For example, there were respondents who had a university or college background but also said they attended full time high school the previous year. While there may be cases when this can occur (i.e. obtaining college credits in high school, or situations of new immigrants), for the purposes of this analysis those respondents were excluded as well. For this analysis there was a sample size of 3739 in total, of which 2085 (56%) were considered "directly from high school", 700 were "delayed entrants" (no PSE) (19%) and 954 were "previous PSE" (26%). Data from OCAS shows that in 2004, 40% of applicants were directly from high school, 15% had previous PSE (based on documentation submission), and a remaining 45% were "delayed entrants." Therefore, this survey has an under representation of "delayed entrants", which should be kept in mind when looking at results for the whole group. However, comparisons between these three groups remain informative.

Specifically, the categories were then defined as:

Direct Entry:

Those indicating that that their main activity in the previous 12 months was full time high school <u>OR</u> working/ studying <u>AND</u> their highest education level was not beyond grade 13. (excluding those who reported any education beyond grade 13)

Delayed Entry:

Those indicating that that their main activity in the previous 12 months was <u>NOT</u> full time high school, working/studying, attending college or university <u>AND</u> their highest education level was not beyond grade 13.

Previous PSE:

Those indicating that that their main activity in the previous 12 months was <u>NOT</u> full time high school <u>AND</u> they had participated in any PSE greater than grade 13. (includes those who have and have not attained a PSE credential)

Throughout this report the applicants are categorized by these pathways in terms of demographics (gender, income, age, etc.) academic profile (high school academics, college plans) and perceptions of college (individuals who influenced them, concerns). A more in depth analysis of other factors is in the soon to be released system level report of the 2004 CAS.

2. Demographics

a. Gender

The overall sample was 62% female versus 38% male. In comparison, the actual applicant pool at the time of the survey (March 2004), showed that 56% of applicants were female (OCAS data). Table 1 shows that 53% of the female respondents came directly from high school, compared to 61% of the male respondents. A slightly higher proportion of males than females were delayed entrants. However, a much higher proportion of females (30%) than males (19%) of males had previous PSE. Compared to OCAS statistics for fall 2004, this survey contains an over representation of females coming directly from high school, and an under representation of males not coming directly from high school (including those with previous PSE) (see Appendix 1).

Figure 1

Gender Distribution

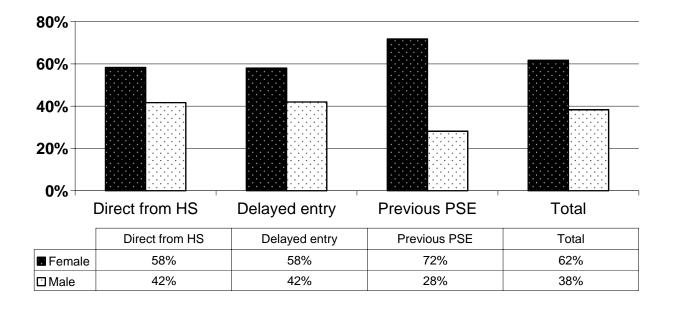


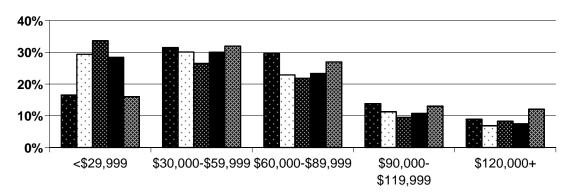
Table 1. Gender distribution

	Female	Male	Average
Direct from HS	53%	61%	56%
Delayed entry	18%	21%	19%
Previous PSE	30%	19%	26%

b. Income

The distribution of family income of applicants shows that the income of the applicants is much lower relative to the Ontario general population based on the 2001 census⁴. However, there is a clear income gap between those currently in high school and primarily living with their parents and the non-secondary applicants (not applying directly from high school). Family incomes of those applying directly from high school have a distribution very similar to the distribution for the general Ontario population. This supports previous research showing little difference in college participation rates among different income groups. The two non-secondary groups (previous PSE and no PSE) are similar to each other and indicate a much lower family income than those applying directly from high school, attributable to a combination of low wage jobs and current post secondary school attendance. Interestingly, a significant number (20%) of those who had a previous degree or college diploma and worked full time in the previous year had family incomes under \$20,000.

Please estimate your total household income last year (including parents and other family members who live with you).*



	<\$29,999	\$30,000- \$59,999	\$60,000- \$89,999	\$90,000- \$119,999	\$120,000+
■ Direct from HS	17%	32%	30%	14%	9%
☐ Delayed entry	29%	30%	23%	11%	7%
■ Previous PSE	34%	27%	22%	9%	8%
■ Group Average	28%	30%	23%	11%	7%
■ 2001 Census	16%	32%	27%	13%	12%

*A high number of respondents answered "don't know" for this question; 17%, 17%, and 11% respectively. The data here are the averages only of those who provided an answer to the question.

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⁴ Statistics Canada – 2001 Census, Cat. No. 97F0020XIE2001094

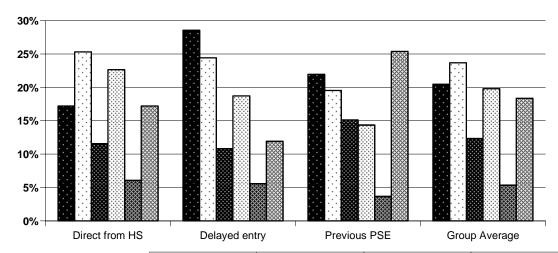
c. Parental Education

Parental education is one of the key indicators of PSE participation, particularly in university and somewhat for college. In comparison to data from the 2001 census⁵ (Ontario males aged 45-64), surveyed applicants' fathers are more likely to have graduated from high school and to have completed college, and are slightly less likely to have a university degree. Overall the Ontario males in this age group are more likely to have participated in some type of PSE compared to surveyed applicants' fathers (56% vs 62%). The trends for applicants' mothers are similar to applicants' fathers; however, the proportion who have attended some form of PSE is similar to the census population (54%), as well the proportion with a university degree is similar (15% vs 16% in census).

Those applying directly from high school are more likely to have a parent who has completed high school, and to have a college credential than those not applying directly from high school. Delayed entry applicants are more likely to have a parent who has not completed high school and to not have participated in any PSE. Applicants with previous PSE are less likely than both other groups to have a parent who has completed a college credential, and more likely to have a parent with a university degree.

Figure 3

What is the highest level of education attained by your father?



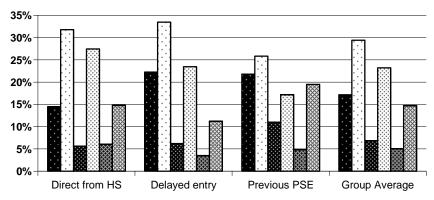
	Direct from HS	Delayed entry	Previous PSE	Group Average
■Less than High School	17%	29%	22%	20%
☐ Completed high school	25%	24%	20%	24%
Some trade/ vocational training	12%	11%	15%	12%
☐ Completed college or CEGEP	23%	19%	14%	20%
Some university	6%	6%	4%	5%
■ Completed university degree	17%	12%	25%	18%

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⁵ Statistics Canada- 2001 Census, Cat. No. 97F0017XCB2001001

Figure 4

What was the highest educational level attained by your mother?



	Direct from HS	Delayed entry	Previous PSE	Group Average
Less than High School	14%	22%	22%	17%
☐ Completed high school	32%	33%	26%	29%
■ Some trade/ vocational training	6%	6%	11%	7%
☐ Completed college or CEGEP	27%	23%	17%	23%
Some university	6%	3%	5%	5%
■ Completed university degree	15%	11%	19%	15%

d. Age

Over half of the delayed entrants are 19 years of age or under indicating that they have not been out of secondary school for a considerable length of time. This is in sharp contrast to the group with previous PSE in which 46% is over 25 years of age, and 30% over 30. As a group overall, ages of the survey respondents are similar to the OCAS applicant pool, which in 2004 had 48% who were 18 and under (49% in the survey) and 15% over 25 years (15% as well in the survey).

The age of decision to attend college for the applicants is also of interest, in part so that plans for intervention and education about PSE pathways can be made available at appropriate times. Only 20% of those applying directly from high school had decided to attend college by the age of 14 (generally grade nine). An analysis of the age of decision to attend college by applicant age shows that there was little difference in age of decision for those 17, 18 or 19 years of age when applying (78%, 78% and 81%, respectively deciding when the were 15 or over) (table 1). For the older age groups there is some evidence that there is a gap between when they decided and when they applied. For example, 33% of 25-29 year olds decided before the age of 20 and 24% of those over 30 decided to go to college when they were under 25. However, it must be noted that there may be some who have previously attended college in this group as well.

Figure 5

Age Distribution of Surveyed Applicants

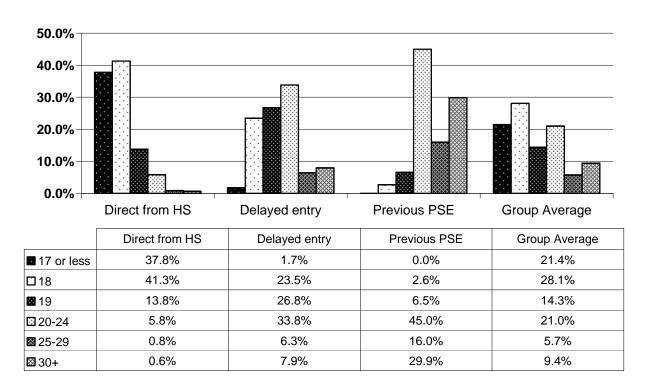
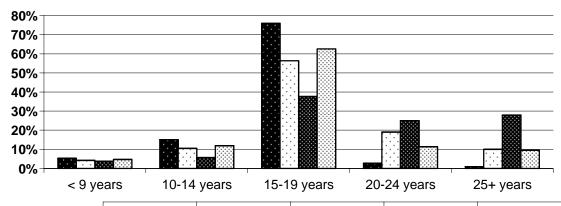


Figure 6

Age decided to attend college



	< 9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25+ years
■ Direct from HS	5%	15%	76%	3%	1%
☐ Delayed entry	4%	11%	56%	19%	10%
■ Previous PSE	4%	6%	38%	25%	28%
☐ Group Average	5%	12%	63%	11%	9%

Table 2. Age decided to attend college by current age

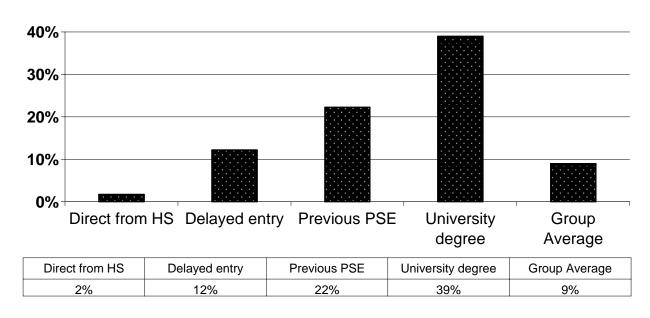
	Age decided to attend college						
Current Age	< 9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25+ years		
17 or less	5%	17%	78%	0%	0%		
18	6%	16%	78%	0%	0%		
19	5%	14%	81%	0%	0%		
20-24	5%	6%	49%	40%	0%		
25-29	2%	5%	26%	27%	40%		
30+	1%	3%	16%	4%	76%		
Average	5%	12%	63%	12%	9%		

e. Dependents

Overall, 9% of the applicants reported having dependent children. Of this group the majority (64%) had previous postsecondary education. In particular, almost 40% of applicants with university degrees reported having children to support.

Figure 7

Child Dependents

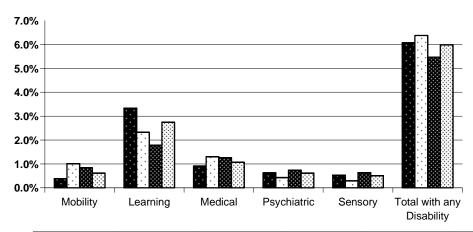


f. Disability

- 6% of the total group reported a disability; 45% of whom report a learning disability.
- Applicants coming directly from high school were more likely than others to report a learning disability (3.3%).

Figure 8

Are you are person with a disability?



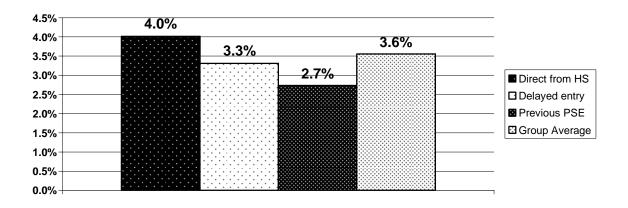
	Mobility	Learning	Medical	Psychiatric	Sensory	Total with any Disability
■ Direct from HS	0.4%	3.3%	0.9%	0.6%	0.5%	6.1%
☐ Delayed entry	1.0%	2.3%	1.3%	0.4%	0.3%	6.4%
■ Previous PSE	0.8%	1.8%	1.3%	0.7%	0.6%	5.5%
☐ Group Average	0.6%	2.7%	1.1%	0.6%	0.5%	6.0%

g. Aboriginal Status

Four per cent of applicants surveyed self identified as aboriginal (38% status, 37% non status, and 24% Métis). Compared to the non-aboriginal survey group, the aboriginal population was slightly more likely to come directly from high school (64% vs 55%), and less likely to have previous PSE (20% vs 26%).

Figure 9

Are you an Aboriginal Person?



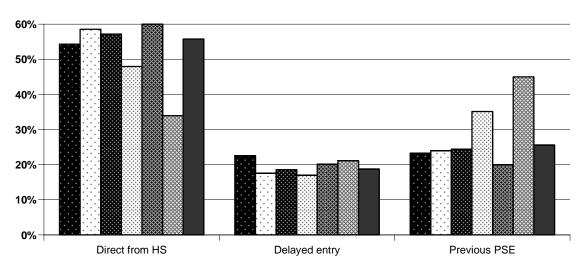
h. Community size and Region

The most notable regional difference is in the Metro Toronto region. A greater proportion of applicants have previous PSE (36% compared to 26% for the total group), with a correspondingly lower proportion of applicants coming directly from high school. This may be a function of the high concentration of various types of PSE institutions in the Toronto area, as well as the potential of immigrants with PSE from other countries seeking a Canadian credential. In addition, applicants from outside Ontario are much more likely to have some previous PSE (45%), with a corresponding lower proportion of applicants directly from high school. Applicant data from OCAS shows a similar trend; in fall 2004, only 36% of applicants from the census area of Metro Toronto were applying directly from high school, compared to the system average of 40%.

The relationship between community size and college application also exhibits a similar trend. As community size increases, the proportion applying with previous PSE increases and applicants who are applying directly from high school decreases. Possible reasons for this include the dispersion of colleges in smaller communities coupled with a greater range of PSE options in larger centres. In addition, colleges may have larger profiles in smaller towns. As well, larger centres attract more immigrants, many of whom come to Canada with previous PSE but are seeking Canadian credentials. The 2005 CAS addresses the immigrant status of applicants and will be able to address this question.

Figure 10

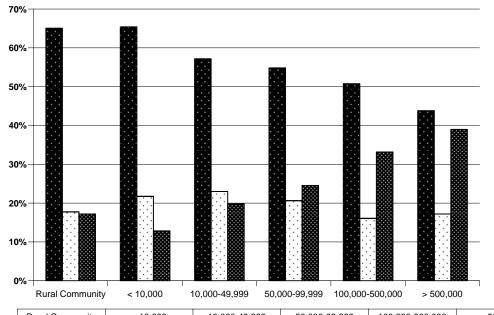
Ontario Region



	Direct from HS	Delayed entry	Previous PSE
■ Northern Ontario	54%	23%	23%
☐ SW Ontario	59%	17%	24%
Central Ontario	57%	18%	24%
■ Metro Toronto	48%	17%	35%
■ Eastern Ontario	60%	20%	20%
■ Outside Ontario	34%	21%	45%
■ Average	56%	19%	26%

Figure 11





	Rural Community	< 10,000	10,000-49,999	50,000-99,999	100,000-500,000	> 500,000
■ Direct from HS	65%	65%	57%	55%	51%	44%
□ Delayed entry	18%	22%	23%	21%	16%	17%
■ Previous PSE	17%	13%	20%	25%	33%	39%

3. Academic Profile

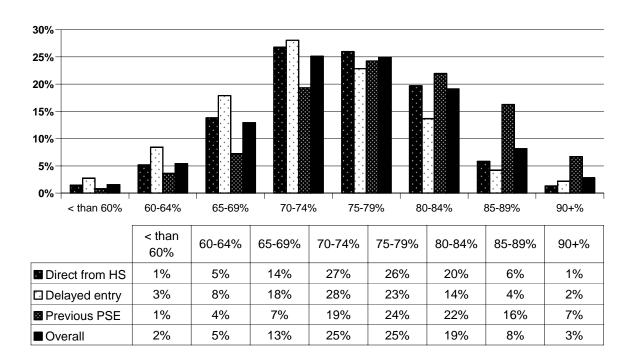
The academic profile of applicants (grades and courses taken in high school) has not traditionally been measured at a system level in Ontario. However, an understanding of the academic background of applicants can be helpful in creating smoother transitions from school to college. The data allows educators to answer the question of who is coming to college and what their backgrounds are. Additionally, it provides information on the new college and university preparation high school curricula and trends so that trends can be monitored over time.

a. Grades in last year of high school

Overall, the grades of the survey respondents are perhaps slightly higher than the actual applicant pool due to the overrepresentation of survey respondents with previous PSE, as well as a potential survey bias. Twenty percent report a grade average of under 70% in the last year of high school and 30% report averages over 80%. The distinct profiles of the applicant groups are evident. As expected, those with previous PSE are academically the strongest with 45% having an average of 80% or higher. In contrast, only 20% of delayed entrants self report a grade average over 80% and 29% have grade averages under 70%. Those applying directly from high school are in the moderate range of the three groups, with 21% with grades under 70% and 27% having grades over 80%.

Figure 12

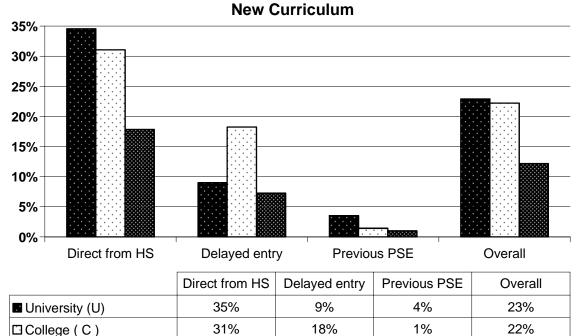
What was your approximate overall average in your last year of high school?



b. Type of course taken in high school

Another primary component of an academic profile is the type of course taken in high school. This is especially important since the destination - based curricula is relatively new. Secondary school and college educators are interested in tracking student success under the re-organized school program. A profile of college applicants gives some indication of the academic pathways students take to college. What is striking from the survey data is that slightly more applicants coming directly from high school have taken "mostly university" type of courses than have taken the "mostly college" type of courses. About one fifth reported having taken the university / college courses, which may have been interpreted by the respondents as taking a mixture of university and college prep courses, rather than specifically M type courses. Of the delayed entrants (without PSE) who took the old curriculum (almost two thirds of the group), the General courses were taken slightly more often than Advanced (35% vs 29%). Similarly, within the new curriculum, College type courses were taken more frequently (18% vs 9%). As expected, the applicants with previous PSE had taken primarily Advanced courses in high school.

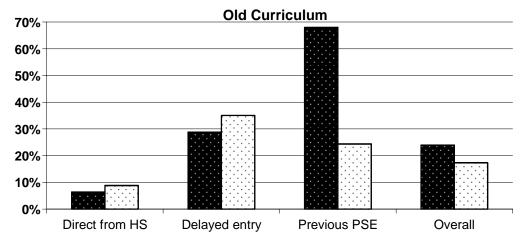
Figure 13
In high school grades 11 and 12, what type of courses did you take in the greatest number?



7%

1%

12%



18%

■ University/ College (U/C)

	Direct from HS	Delayed entry	Previous PSE	Overall
■ Advanced program	6%	29%	68%	24%
☐ General program	9%	35%	24%	17%

Workplace and Basic course types made up only 1% of the total and are excluded for the purposes of this report.

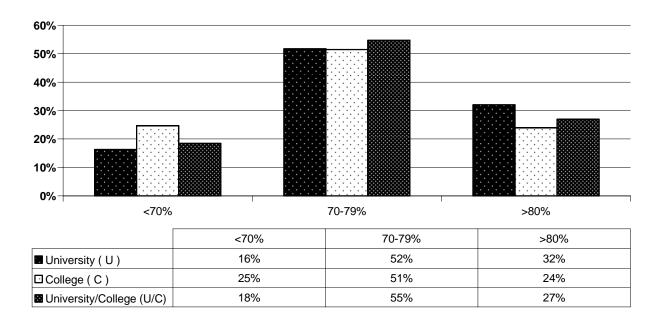
Applicants who indicated they did not attend high school in Ontario were excluded from the analysis.

c. Grades in new Ontario curriculum

Of the applicants who have taken the new Ontario curriculum, those taking the mostly U type of courses are getting higher grades, with 16% under 70 % average, and 32% over 80%. Although those taking predominately C courses have similar numbers in the mid range of averages in the 70's, there are greater numbers in the under 70 and fewer in the over 70 category than both the applicants taking mainly U courses or U/C courses.

Figure 14

Grades in the new Ontario curriculum

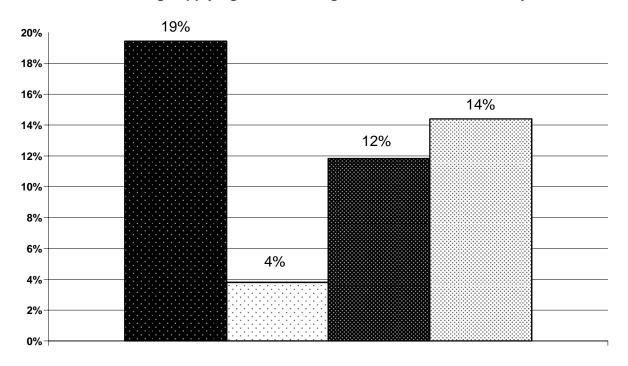


d. Academic profile of those also applying to university

Since the applicant profile includes applicants who are also applying to university, it is informative to compare the academic profile of those applying to both college and university with that of those applying to college only, particularly for those applying directly from high school. Almost one in five survey respondents applying directly from high school was also applying to an Ontario university. In contrast, very few delayed entry applicants have applied to both. Twelve percent of those with previous PSE applied to both. This data demonstrates the variety of educational pathways of college applicants.

Figure 15

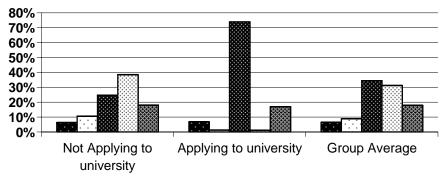
Percentage applying to both college and an Ontario university.



- Of those applying to both, 74% took mostly U courses. However, 58% of applicants who took mostly U courses are applying only to college.
- 22% of those not applying to university have grades below 70%, compared to only 13% of those applying to both. Other than this key difference, the grade distributions of the college applicants applying to university as well is similar to those applying to college only.

Figure 16

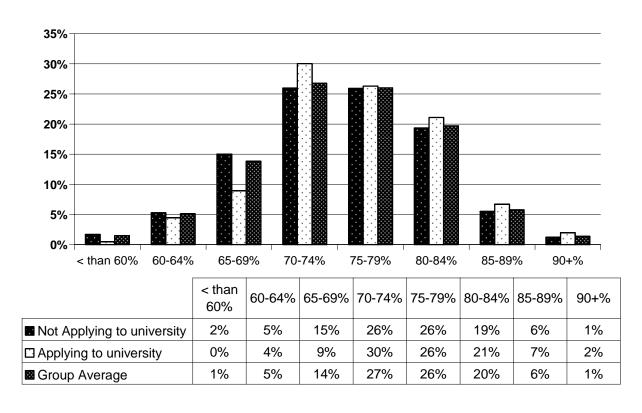
Comparison of type of courses taken in high school for applicants applying college and university (for those applying directly from HS)



	Not Applying to university	Applying to university	Group Average
■ Advanced Program	6%	7%	6%
☐ General Program	11%	1%	9%
■ University (U)	25%	74%	34%
☑ College (C)	39%	1%	31%
■ University/College (U/C)	18%	17%	18%

Figure 17

What was your approximate overall average in your last year of high school? (those applying directly from HS)

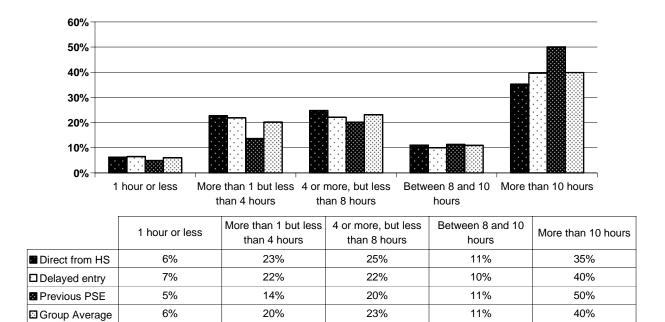


e. Plans for College

i. Time spent exploring college program

Applicants with previous PSE spent the most time researching their program of choice, with 50% spending 10 or more hours investigating what they "would actually be doing" in the job arising from their first choice program. In contrast, 35% of direct entry and 40% of delayed entry applicants spent 10 or more hours on research. The percentage of direct and delayed entry applicants who spent four hours or less on research was 30% and 27%, respectively.

About how much time have you spent exploring what you would actually be doing in the type of job to which you feel your first-choice program will lead?



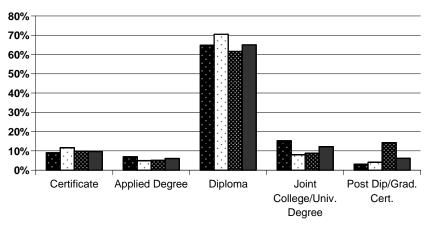
ii. Intended credential in college

Figure 18

The responses show that 22% of those coming directly from high school are intending to get either an applied or a joint college/ university degree. As expected, those with previous PSE are more interested in a post diploma/ graduate certificate. This survey question was not specific to the current program to which they were applying and may have indicated long term academic goals. According to OCAS enrolment statistics for fall 2004, only 1.4% of total first year enrolments were in applied degrees. Surveys of students' aspirations have traditionally shown that about one quarter of first year college students have aspirations to attain a degree, which may have explained the high numbers wanting a joint diploma/ degree.

Figure 19

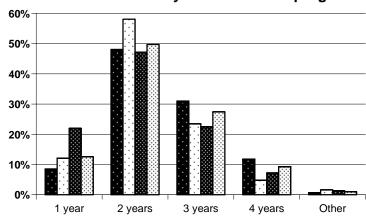
What credential do you intend to attain at college?



	Certificate	Applied Degree	Diploma	Joint College/Univ. Degree	Post Dip/Grad. Cert.
■ Direct from HS	9%	7%	65%	15%	3%
☐ Delayed entry	12%	5%	70%	8%	4%
■ Previous PSE	10%	5%	62%	9%	14%
■ Group Average	10%	6%	65%	12%	6%

Figure 20

What is the duration of your first choice program?



	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	Other
■ Direct from HS	8%	48%	31%	12%	1%
☐ Delayed entry	12%	58%	23%	5%	2%
■ Previous PSE	22%	47%	22%	7%	1%
☑ Group Average	13%	50%	27%	9%	1%

4. College Perceptions

a. Level of concern about various aspects of college

Over half of the respondents were "very concerned" about finding employment after graduation, their ability to do well, what their future career will be, and financing costs. Across all groups the aspect of finding employment after graduation was the issue of greatest concern. There was also high concern about their ability to do well; however, those with previous PSE were less concerned about this aspect than the others. Students applying directly from high school were relatively more concerned about what their future career would be than the other applicants, and delayed entry applicants were more concerned about financing. Applicants with previous PSE were more concerned about the availability of bursaries and student loans and finding co-op jobs or field placements. In relative terms, those directly from high school were much more concerned about finding friends on campus than others, indicating the importance of college as a social network.

Table 3. Percentage very concerned with various aspects of attending college.

Concerns	Direct from HS	Delayed entry	Previous PSE	Group average
Finding employment upon graduation	63%	62%	63%	63%
My ability to do well in college courses	58%	56%	47%	55%
What my future career will be	58%	49%	52%	55%
Financing the costs of my education	51%	57%	51%	52%
Access to professors for help	38%	35%	32%	36%
Availability of bursaries and students loans	31%	37%	39%	34%
Finding co-op jobs or field placements	29%	34%	37%	32%
Finding part time employment during the school year	31%	29%	21%	28%
Burnout and/ or pressure to succeed	30%	27%	22%	27%
Commuting to and from college	25%	25%	20%	24%
Making friends on campus	27%	18%	13%	22%
Availability of scholarships	19%	17%	23%	20%
Finding on-campus housing	22%	14%	9%	17%
Finding off-campus housing	15%	19%	16%	16%

b. Influence of individuals in deciding colleges of interest

i. Those Applying Directly from High School

For those applying directly from high school, parents exert the most influence in deciding on colleges of interest, with 42% of applicants saying they were very influenced by their parents and only 8% saying parents did not have any influence at all. Similar results were seen in the Double Cohort study (King et al, 2004)⁶, in which 48% of grade 12 students and 43% of grade 13 students thought their parents' influence was "very important" in their decision to attend college. An important distinction between the survey question in the Double Cohort (DC) study and that in the CAS was that in the DC study it asked who had influenced them to go to college in general, rather than who had influenced their decisions on specific colleges of interest. This distinction becomes evident in the responses for the degree of influence of guidance counselors. In the CAS, the guidance counselor scored higher in their degree of influence, with 25% thinking guidance counsellors had very much influenced them, compared to only 15 % in the DC study. Teachers and guidance counselors were rated similarly in their degree of influence in the DC study; however, in the CAS guidance counselors were much more important when students were actually choosing a college. Friends and family members are also strong influencers, as expected. Of particular interest is that 50% thought the college representative had some or very much influence on deciding their college of interest, indicating the important role that individuals from colleges can have on student decision making.

Table 4. Degree of influence of individuals on college selection for direct entrants from high school

Direct Entry	None	Very Little	Some	Very Much
Parents	8%	13%	37%	42%
Guidance Counsellor	24%	19%	32%	25%
Friends	15%	22%	39%	24%
College Representative	31%	19%	30%	20%
Other family	25%	24%	31%	20%
High school Teacher	30%	24%	32%	15%
Employer	60%	21%	13%	6%

ii. Delayed entrants.

Parents exert the most influence in deciding on the colleges of interest for delayed entrants, although this was not as significant as it was for the direct entry applicants. Friends are much more important to this group, as well as other family members (which may include spouses). As delayed entrants are more removed from the high school environment, school staff (including guidance counselors and teachers) exert less influence. What may be of potential interest to college recruiters is the limited impact of college representatives for this group.

22

⁶ King, A. Double Cohort Study, Phase 3 Report, January 2004. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/phase3/

Table 5. Degree of influence of individuals on college selection for delayed entrants.

Delayed entry					
	None	Very Little	Some	Very Much	
Parents	22%	10%	31%	36%	
Friends	15%	15%	35%	34%	
Other Family	29%	19%	28%	25%	
Guidance Counsellor	47%	17%	20%	15%	
High School Teacher	49%	18%	21%	13%	
College Representative	48%	18%	22%	12%	
Employer	57%	19%	17%	7%	

iii. Previous PSE

In general, applicants with previous PSE are more likely to rate the influence of individuals much lower than the other groups. Parental impact is reduced, with friends rating a relatively stronger degree of influence. Overall, parents, friends, and family are the primary influencers, and again as with the delayed entrants, the college representative has minimal influence, indicating that perhaps more outreach into the general community is required by college recruiting staff.

Table 6. Degree of influence of individuals on college selection for those with previous PSE.

Previous PSE					
	None	Very Little	Some	Very Much	
Friends	31%	13%	35%	21%	
Parents	37%	16%	28%	19%	
Other Family	43%	18%	22%	18%	
College Representative	63%	12%	17%	7%	
Guidance Counsellor	72%	13%	9%	6%	
Employer	71%	11%	11%	6%	
High School Teacher	77%	11%	8%	4%	

Table 7. Of the individuals listed, which one individual influenced your college selection the most?

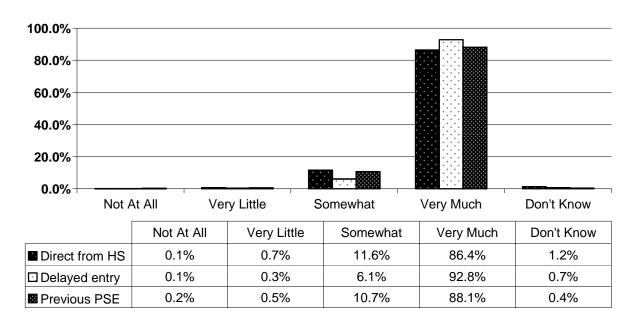
	Direct from HS	Delayed entry	Previous PSE	Group Average
Parents	40%	32%	25%	35%
Friends	14%	25%	29%	20%
Guidance Counsellor	16%	8%	4%	12%
College Representative	12%	8%	8%	10%
Other Family Members	6%	10%	16%	9%
High School Teacher	6%	7%	2%	5%
Employer	3%	5%	6%	4%
Employment counsellor	1%	2%	3%	1%
Other	3%	4%	8%	4%

c. Confidence

Despite their high levels of concern with many aspects of attending college, applicants appear quite confident that they will succeed in their college program and that it will improve their career opportunities. Those with previous PSE, in keeping with their lower level of concern with their ability to do well, have relatively more confidence that they will succeed in their program, compared with those directly from high school (91% vs 85% were very confident). The delayed entry applicants were the most confident that a college program would improve their career opportunities.

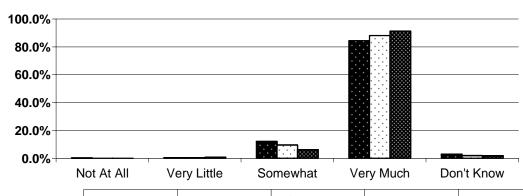
Figure 21

How confident are you that completing a college program will improve your career opportunities?



How confident are you that you will succeed in completing your program of interest?

Figure 22



	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Much	Don't Know
■ Direct from HS	0.2%	0.4%	12.0%	84.5%	2.9%
☐ Delayed entry	0.0%	0.4%	9.5%	88.2%	1.9%
■ Previous PSE	0.0%	0.6%	6.2%	91.4%	1.8%

5. Directions for Future Research

- Perform trend analyses with the CAS application surveys from 2003 through to 2005.
- Connect survey respondents' data with OCAS registrant data to determine the characteristics of those who enrolled in college (approximately 50% of applicants register) versus those who did not.
- Follow up on those in the CAS who applied but did not go to college (eg. Why not? What are they doing instead?).
- Analyze factors that cause those with a previous credential to return to school (immigration status, poor labour outcomes, career change?).

Appendix 1.

Comparison of OCAS secondary and non secondary statistics and CAS survey profile

		2004 Fall applic	2004 Fall applicants and registrants				
		CAS profile (March 2004)	Interim applicant profile (as of March, 2004)	Applicant profile- final	Registrants		
Delayed (includes previous PSE)	Female	29%	31%	33%	30%		
	Male	15%	23%	27%	27%		
Direct	Female	33%	24%	21%	22%		
	Male	23%	21%	19%	21%		

Appendix 2.

2004 College Applicant Survey Questionnaire



Les bourses College Applicant Survey 2004

Dear College Applicant:	
Starting college can be one of the most exciting and important chapter randomly selected from over 120,000 college applicants to participat understand college applicants.	
To say thank you for participating in this important study, the names of <u>SIX</u> great prizes. Two winners will each receive a Dell Inspiron Lagorganized with one of four PALM™ Zire™ handhelds with cases,	
The Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontabehalf of the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Every colledistributed by the Ontario College Application Services to ensure the	ege in Ontario will receive a copy of the results. Surveys are being
Your participation is voluntary - your answers will not affect admissi your OCAS application number to identify you - this number will not	
Please enter your OCAS application number here: 04	
We also invite you to participate in future research opportunities. No You are free to decline participation when contacted. If you are intesignature. Yes, you may use my application number to access contact (e.g. name, address & phone number) contained in the OC.	rested in further research, please check the box and provide your t information
SIGNATURE	APPLICING TO TECHNOLOGIC OF LOTHING
Please complete the survey and return in the postage-paid envelope by APRI	L 2, 2004.
Directions: Please answer the questions on all four pages. Please mark INSIDE the appropriate boxes or write in the spaces provided. All of your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence	CORRECT CORRECT INCORRECT
	At what age did you decide that you wanted to apply to college?
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	< 9 years 10-14 years 15-19 years 20-24 years 25 and older
I) Are you Female Male	
) Are you renale	Please indicate the <u>HIGHEST</u> level of education you have received so far. Below grade 12 graduation Partial college / CEGEP studies
2) How old are you? 17 or less 18 19 20-24 25-29 30+	Below grade 12 graduation Partial college / CEGEP studies Grade 12 graduation Partial university studies
N. Mileses de consequente livro	Partial grade 13 graduation (1-5 QAC) College / CEGEP diploma
8) Where do you currently live? City of City of City of Rural Town/Village 10,000 50,000 100,000 City of	Grade 13 graduation (6 OAC) University degree (B.A., B.Sc., etc.)
Community <10,000 49,999 -99,999 -500,000 >500,000	
	10) What was your main activity during the 12 month period before you applied
What are the first 4 characters of your Postal Code?	to attend college? Attending high school full time Working full time (over 29 hrs. per week)
	Attending college full time Working part time (less than 30 hrs)
i) What is your marital status? Single Married Common Law	Attending university full time Both working and studying part-time
a) How many dependent children do you have?	A full time homemaker Unemployed and seeking work
None One Two Three or more	11) Why are you now applying to college? (check the most important reason)
THE DIE	Upgrade skills for career advancement To prepare for university studies
(b) Are you responsible for any adult dependents (that is, an adult who requires your	Was laid off from latest job Couldn't find a good job
financial aid or support and who resides with you)? No Yes	To prepare for my future occupation Other
(a) In high pohool grades 14 and 12 what time of sources did you take the	
/a) In high school grades 11 and 12, what type of courses did you take the GREATEST number? (choose ONE answer below)	12a) Assuming you attend your first choice college, which of the following will be
Advanced program General program Basic program	your primary means of transportation to and from school?
University (U) - New Ort. Curriculum College (C) - New Ort. Curriculum Workplace courses	Public Transit Private Automobile Walk/Cycle
University / College (U/C) - New Ont. Curriculum Did not attend high school in Ontario	12b)What credential do you intend to attain at college?
7b) What was your approximate overall average in your last year of high school?	Certificate Applied Degree
< than 60% 60-64% 65-69% 70-74% 75-79% 80-84% 85-89% 90+	Diploma Joint College-University Degree
	Diploma Sunt Conlege Oniversity Degree
	Post Diploma /Graduate Certificate Not Applicable

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@2004 Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation

13) Are you an Aboriginal person?	
No Yes Status Indian Non-Status Indian Métis Inuit	COLLEGE PERCEPTIONS
	COLLEGE PERCEPTIONS
(Check ane group)	20a) How much INFLUENCE did each of the following college characteristics
14) Are you a person with a disability? Persons with "disabilities" means persons who have	have when you were deciding on your colleges of interest.
a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment.	Don't None Very Little Some Very Much Know
Ves (Check appropriate group(s))	A) Admission standards
Learning Mobility Sensory Psychiatric Medical	B) Small class size
(e.g. Dyslexia) (e.g. Paraplégia) (e.g. Blindness) (e.g. Schizophrenia) (e.g. Diabetes, Crohn's)	G Social and extracumicular activities on campus
	D) Afhletic activities available on campus
Other	E) College size
	F) Housing apportunities
15) Are you a member of a visible minority group?	G) Diversestudent population
No (Go to 16) Members of visible minority groups are persons, other than Aboriginal	H) Reputation of the college
peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour, regardless of birthplace. If you are of mixed race, please indicate the	I) Reputation of the program
main non-Caucasian group or non-white group that best identifies you	J) Quality of teachers/professors
Yes (Check one group) interms of visible minority status.	K) Diverse number of programs available
South Asian (e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sri Lankan)	D Friends/family attend or have attended the college
Arab/West Asian (e.g. Armenian, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Moroccan)	M) College Key Performance Indicator (KPI) results
	Ni Language of instruction (English vs. French)
South East Asian (e.g. Cambodian, Indonesian, Laotian, Vietnamese)	O) Length of program
Black (e.g. African, Haifian, Jamaican, Somali) Korean	
Chinese Filipino Japanese Other	P) College offers paid co-op programs
	Availability of university transfer agreements
16) What is the HIGHEST level of education attained by your parents?	R) Safe environment and/or campus
Father Mother	S) College is close tohome
Less than dementary school completion	T) College is away from home
Completed elementary school	U) College offers services and programs to facilitate a successful college transition
Some high school	V) Lower tuition fees
Completed high school	W) Entrance bursary/scholarship opportunities
Some trade/vocational training	X) On-campus part-time job opportunities
Completed college or CÉGEP	
Someuniversity	Y) College offered program I want
Completed Bachelor's degree	20b)Of the 'college characteristics' listed above, which ONE influenced your
Completed professional degree (e.g. lawyer, M.D)	
Completed advanced degree (e.g. M.A., Ph. D.)	college selection the most? (Use letter key to make only one selection)
Completed advanced degree (e.g. M.A., Ph. D.)	
Completed advanced degree (e.g. M.A., Ph. D.) 17) As with all responses to this survey, estimates of household income are kept	college selection the most? (Use letter key to make only one selection) A
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22b) Of the 'individuals' listed above, which ONE influenced your college selection the most? (Use letter key to make only one selection)	30) Please rate how much each of the following contributed to making your first choice college a BETTER choice, than your second or third choice:
A B C D E F G H I	Don't None Very Little Some Very Much Know
23) In addition to having applied to one of Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and	
Technology, did you apply to any of the following for the 2004/2005 academic	Graduates get good jobs
school year? (check all that apply)	Asafe environment
University in Ontario Canadian College outside Ontario	Small dasses
Canadian University outside Ontario Private College (e.g. CDI, Toronto School of Business, DeVry)	Size of college
	Housing opportunities
College or University in the USA Officer Did not apply to any other type (Go to 27)	College atmosphere
24) If you applied to a university, is your preference (select only one answer)	Quality of teachers/professors
	Language of instruction
To attend college (Go to 26)	Reputation of college
To attend university (Go to 25)	
Did not apply to university (Go to 27)	Reputation of program
To attend college if university application is unsuccessful (Go to 27)	Offered desired program
	College is close to home
25) If your preference is to attend university for the 2004-05 academic school year, please indicate how much influence the following factors had on	Admission standards
this profesonce?	Social and extracurricular activities and facilities
NOTAL All Very blue Somewhat Very Much Know	Use of computers and Internet for classes
University is closer to home Based on program and/or career choice	Availability of paid co-op workterms
Based on a recommendation	
Emphasis on theory	Recruitiment efforts (liaison/visits/tours etc.)
Graduates get high quality jobs	24) 18/1
University degree credential preferable	31) When considering post secondary options, which of the following best describes your process of decision making:
Graduates get high paying jobs	
Entrancescholarships/bursaries	My program of interest led me to consider only those colleges that offered the program.
Education expectations of family	My program of interest is widely available across the Ontario college system so I explored the colleges that appealed to me.
	Idid not have a specific program of interests o Lexplored what programs were offered by the colleges that
26) If your preference is to attend college for the 2004-05 academic school	appealed to me.
year, please indicate how much influence the following factors had on this preference?	
Not at all Very Little Somewhat Very Much Know	32) About how much time have you spent exploring what you would actually be
College is closer to home	doing in the type of job to which you feel your first-choice program will lead?
Based on a recommendation	1 hour or less More than 1 but less than 4 hours 4 or more, but less than 8 hours
Concerns about my high school average	Between 8 and 10 hours Morethan 10 hours
Emphasis on application of learning	
Availability of co-op programs	33) How confident are you that you will succeed in completing your program of
Lower costs	interest?
Smallercampus	Not At All Very Little Somewhat Very Much Don't Know
Smaller class size	
Graduates get high quality jobs	20 How confident are you that completing a college program will improve your
Availability of entrance scholarships/bursaries	34) How confident are you that completing a college program will improve your career opportunities?
College diploma credential preferable	Not At All Very Little Somewhat Very Much Don't Know
	Not At All Very bille Somewhat Very Milds Don trillow
Graduates get high paying jobs	
27) Your first choice college program belongs to which of the following	35) Do you plan to attend your first choice college, as indicated in question
categories:	#29, in 2004-05? (select only one answer)
Applied Arts/Media Information Technology	Yes No, I wasn't accepted so have selected another college.
Applied Technology Liberal Arts & Sciences	No, I have changed my mind and chosen another college.
Health Sciences Social & Community Services	No, I am postponing my postsecondary education. (Go to 37)
Business Hospitality/Recreation /Tourism	No, I will be attending university. (Go to 37)
Saution State of the State of t	No,14411 be alterioling drinerary. (CO to 37)
28) What is the duration of your first choice program?	36) Indicate how concerned you are with the following aspects of attending
1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years Other	college.
	Not Slightly Somewhat Very Don't Concerned Concerned Concerned Concerned Know
 Of all COLLEGES listed below, please indicate your FIRST, SECOND, and THIRD college choices (prior to the receipt of any offers of admission). 	Availability of scholarships
First / Second / Third Choice First / Second / Third Choice	Availability of burs aries and student loans
Algonquin Humber	Finding on-campus housing
Le Colège Boréal La Cité colégiale	Finding off-campus housing
Cambrian Lambton	Access to professors for help
Canadore Loyalist D	My ability to do well in college courses
	Making friends on campus
	Finding part-time employment during the school year
Confederation Northern Northern	Finding co-op jobs or field placements
	What my future career will be
Durham St. Clair St. Clair	
Fanshawe St Lawrence	Finding employment upon graduation
Fleming Sault Sault	Commuting to and from college
George Brown Seneca Seneca	Burnout and/or pressure to succeed
Georgian Sheridan Sheridan	Financing the costs of my education
	um Scholarship Foundation

	43a) While you are at college do you plan to live at home with your parent(s) or	
UNDERSTANDING YOUR COSTS	legal guardian? Yes No Not Applicable	
37) As a prospective student, to what extent would you prefer to get cost and funding information in the following ways?	(Go to 44a) (Go to 44a)	
Not At All Very Little Somewhat Very Much Know	43b) To what extent have finances determined this decision to live at home?	
Communication by mail	Not At All Very Little Somewhat Very Much Don't Know	
Student financial aid/counselling office	43c) Was this decision largely: Voluntary (to save money and/or to reduce debt)?	
Telephone call centre service	Involuntary (cannot afford to attend otherwise)?	
Interactive website	44a) Has money been saved for your college education? Yes No(Go to 45a)	
,	44b)In total, how much money has been saved (including savings from you, your	
38) Indicate how important the following features are when looking for information or services about student loans on the Internet. Don't	parents, grandparents, or others)	
Not At All Very Little Somewhat Very Much Know	45a) Have you planned the financing of college with your parent(s) or legal	
Loanrepayment planner or calculator Checking the status of your student loan	guardian(s)? Yes No Not Applicable	
Making payments on your loan	(Go to 46a) (Go to 46a)	
On-line application for loan repayment assistance programs	45b) What grade were you in when these discussions first began?	
Interactive tools to learn about student loans	K-6 7 8 9 10 11 12 OAC After H.S.	
Real-time on-fine customer service		
39) To what extent would you like to have received more	46a) Have your PARENTS/GUARDIANS put aside any savings for your college education? Yes No Don't Know Not Applicable	
information regarding: Not At All Very Little Somewhat Very Much Know	(Goto47a) (Goto47a) (Go to 47a)	
Cost of education Sources of money for your education	46b) How many years have your parents/guardian been saving?	
Budgeting for college	<1	
Applying for scholarships and bursaries	47a) Have YOU put aside any savings for college? Yes No (Go to 48)	
Loan repayment options/respons billifies	47b)How many years have you been saving for college?	
40) Have be availed as a black as the fallowing student financial aid	<1	
40) How knowledgeable are you about the following student financial aid programs? Not At All Very Little Somewhat Very Much Know	48) We are interested in how applicants are planning to cover the costs of their	
Federal government student loans programs	first year of college.	
Provincial government student loans programs Canada Study Grants	a) Estimate your total cost (tuition, living expenses, transportation, books) of your FIRST YEAR of college?	
Provincial bursaries (i.e. Ordano Student Opportunity Grant)		
Provincial scholarships (e.g. Queen Elizabethi i)	 To cover costs of your first year of college, please estimate how much money will come from each of the following sources. Mark '0' if the source will not 	
Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation Bursaries Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation	be contributing. Private Sources Parental/family contribution \$	
College bursaites and/or scholarships	Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) \$	
41) Following are sources of information regarding the costs for college. For	Trust Fund \$	
only those services you have used please indicated how helpful they were.		
Service Used Not At All Little Somewhat Very Don't No Yes → Helpful Helpful Hebful Know	Personals avings (pre-cdlege) \$	
High school guidance counsellors College liaison Officer	Earnings from part-time and summer employment \$	
College publications	Total private sources \$	
College website	Loan Sources Bankloan S.	
Books or magazines	Government Student Loans (prox or federal) \$	
Discussions with friends	Totalioan sources \$	
CanLeam Interactive (www.canleam.ca) Http://osap.gov.on.ca	Other Sources Scholarships@ursaries \$	
Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation	Aboriginal Scholarships/Bursaries/Fellowships \$	
website www.studentawards.com	Other Government Grants \$	
42) To what extent are you concerned about :	Total other sources \$	
Not At All Slighly Somewhat Very Much Don't	Total amount from sources (Total of shaded boxes) \$	
Concerned Concerned Concerned Concerned Know Having sufficient funding to complete your college	49) How many years do you estimate it will take to pay off your debts	
The amount of debt you estimate you will incur by the	(as described above) from your intended program of study?	
Your ability to repay your student debt within a reasonable	None-zerodebt 1-3 years 4-7 years 8-11 years	
fmeframe?	More than 11 years Don't Know	
Mail your survey now in the postage paid SURVEY RETURN ENVELOPE		
Number: Nam your survey now in the postage paid SORVET RETORN ERVELOTE: research		
Surveys must be postmarked no	later than April 2, 2004. Acumen Research Group Inc. 1-866-9-ACUMEN	
Thank you for	participating! Las@acumenresearch.com	
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