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Humanities is a good start

The job market survey for Leiden University’s Humanities alumni who graduated between 2016 and 2020 shows that our graduates have done well over the past years.

On average, 70% of our master’s alumni found a job within two months, of which 83% at academic or Dutch HBO level* (which was 74% in 2016). They usually found their first job (50%) via their network of family, friends and lecturers. But also through social media and by building work experience during their studies via an internship or part-time job. For more than half of those alumni (59%), their first job fit their expectations.

Good preparation pays off
You acquire many relevant skills during your studies in addition to subject knowledge, such as the ability to work independently, to communicate verbally and in writing, being able to motivate yourself, and to solve problems. Building experience through an internship, part-time job and extra-curricular activities, also contributes to finding a job. Alumni with relevant work experience are able to find a job more quickly directly after graduating (60% as opposed to 46%). Moreover, they find a job at Dutch HBO or academic level more often (85%) than alumni without this experience (61%).

Even more alumni completed an internship during their studies (44%), had a relevant part-time job (64%) or were a board member (59%).

What contributes to your career the most?

1. University degree
2. Internship(s) in the Netherlands during your master’s
3. Academic skills
4. Internship(s) abroad during your master’s
5. Relevant work experience during your study programme
6. Internship(s) in the Netherlands during your bachelor’s

Finding out what you want
An internship creates a better understanding of what your qualities are and what you like to do. In total, 20% of the alumni found their first job directly after their internship: 13% of all alumni were able to stay at their internship organization, and 7% found a job directly via the network they built during their internship.

Skills that distinguish our alumni

1. Subject knowledge and skills
2. Analytical skills
3. Interpersonal skills
4. Creativity (both thinking and doing)
5. Farming an opinion
6. Research skills
7. Ability to select and process complex information
8. Written communication
9. Forming an opinion
10. Challenging an idea
11. Open-minded
12. Initiative
13. Creativity (both thinking and doing)
14. Research skills
15. Ability to select and process complex information
16. Written communication

Great choice
Most students are (very) satisfied with their chosen study programme. Almost three quarters of the alumni with a bachelor’s and/or master’s degree (72%) would choose the same study programme at the same university again.

* HBO institutions are universities of applied sciences
At work

You’ve graduated! So where do you end up working?

Most of the bachelor’s alumni don’t enter the labour market yet. 68% enrol in a master’s programme first. When you’ve completed your master’s degree, chances are that you will find work at the government or in the semi-public sector, education, research or marketing and communication.

Sector: your first job

- Education: 17%
- Government: 15%
- Communication and marketing: 8%
- Research: 8%
- Culture, sports and recreation: 6%
- Consultancy: 5%
- Media and journalism: 4%
- Business services: 4%
- Financial services: 4%
- Non-profit (for example a charity/humanitarian organization): 4%
- Wholesale and retail: 4%
- Information management: 2%
- Publishing / book sector: 2%
- Other, advising and industry: 13%

41% of the master alumni work in the profit sector, 55% in the non-profit sector and 4% have their own company or work as a freelancer.

The numbers differ for bachelor’s alumni: 72% work in the profit sector, 21% in the non-profit sector. Also 4% of the bachelor’s alumni have their own company or are self-employed.

Income security

For more than half the alumni (59%) their first job was the job they were looking for. If not, then income security was the most important reason to take the job anyway. Alumni who started a job below their desired entry level, often experienced interesting and challenging tasks in this position.

Striving for more

Do you want to continue studying after your bachelor’s? It pays off. Alumni with a master’s degree are able to secure a higher-levelled position more often than alumni with a bachelor’s degree. The first job of 72% of the bachelor’s alumni is at academic or Dutch hbo level, as opposed to 83% of the master’s alumni.

After your first job

Master’s alumni also find it easier to move up to a job at a higher level than bachelor’s alumni. After two years of work experience 88% of the master’s alumni has a job at Dutch hbo or academic level.

How job levels improve for BA and MA graduates (first and current job)

Bachelor

- Below hbo level or no specific level: 28%
- Hbo level: 29%
- Hbo/academic level: 16%
- Academic level: 16%

Master

- Below hbo level or no specific level: 12%
- Hbo level: 9%
- Hbo/academic level: 34%
- Academic level: 39%

On average master’s alumni have 23 months of work experience in their current job and bachelor’s alumni 20 months.

‘Put yourself in someone else’s shoes’

‘Don’t consider things to be black-and-white, but look for the grey area and put yourself in someone else’s shoes. This helps to get to the core of the issue. I learned this during my studies and I now use it for my job at the municipality of Rotterdam. My job and I are a good match.’

Jaino Mohammedamin

Degree: Bachelor’s in History, Master’s in Theology and Religious Studies
Job title: Project manager and advisor undermining, Tactical Centre for Enforcement at the municipality of Rotterdam.
Main task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Research and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Policy development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Administration/accountancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Marketing/advertising/PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Processing documents for information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Interpreting/translation</td>
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<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Production/logistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Human resources/training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Purchase/acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Other, like HRM and purchasing and acquisition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Going international

Many international students study at Leiden’s Faculty of Humanities. Their job prospects differ slightly from Dutch alumni. It takes them a bit longer to find a job. Regardless, 58% find a job within two months and almost at the same level as Dutch alumni (70%).

International alumni are more likely to find a job in the non-profit sector and to have a permanent contract than Dutch alumni. On average they earn the same. They say they stand out especially because of their intercultural skills and ability to form an opinion.

My internship helped me take my next step

‘My internship in Tanzania taught me more about the culture, language and the political situation in a foreign country. It made me understand what it’s really like to work abroad. This helped me take my next step: I went to Egypt. When I started working for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) it was easier to get used to the work environment.’

Alba Medina Bermejo
Degree: Bachelor’s in International Studies
Internship: Centre for Women, Children and Youth Development in Tanzania
Job Title: Staff member at the Policy, Governance and Liaison Unit of the International Organization for Migration in Cairo.

How much do Humanities graduates earn?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years work experience</th>
<th>Average gross salary per month based on full-time employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st year</td>
<td>€3,000 (middle income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd year</td>
<td>€3,300 (middle income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd year</td>
<td>€3,749 (middle income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th year</td>
<td>€4,000 (middle income)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Working abroad

11% of the Dutch alumni packed their bags to go work abroad after graduating (6% work in Europe, 3% in Asia, 1% in North America and 2% in South America). Whereas 28% of the international alumni stay to work in the Netherlands. Alumni often have jobs in which they are in contact with international business relations (45%).

The job market survey

In spring of 2020 we conducted the job market survey for Leiden University’s Humanities alumni who graduated between 2016 and 2020. The survey consisted of an online questionnaire for desktop and mobile. We approached 4,843 alumni of which 1,222 completed the questionnaire (25.2%). A non-response analysis was also conducted.

Colophon

This brochure was published by the Career Service of the Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University.

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Your path to a dream job

Would you like advice on how to find a job? Do you have questions about arranging an internship? Don’t hesitate to contact the Humanities Career Service. We’re here to help.

Our services include:

- Individual advice on internships and career
- Information on internships
- Help with the Faculty’s internship procedure
- Workshops and webinars career skills
- Personal career tests
- Employer and alumni contacts
- Job market information
- Vacancies (jobs and internships)
- CV, cover letter and LinkedIn profile check

Contact

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🌐 universiteitleiden.nl/humanitiescareerservice

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