

# EARLY TALENT INSIGHTS

Home to over 12,000 students, the Ted Rogers School of Management at Toronto Metropolitan University is Canada's leading diverse, entrepreneurial business school centered in an urban learning environment.

Each month, we survey students at the Ted Rogers School to deliver timely and relevant insights to Canadian organizations. Our goal is to help you better understand the early talent workforce, enabling you to refine your recruitment and retention strategies accordingly.

In this edition of *Early Talent Insights*, we examine what students expect to earn after graduation. This student poll was conducted in May 2025.

February 2026

## Salary Expectations Upon Graduation

### STUDENT POLL

Upon graduation, what starting salary do you expect?



1,796

No. Responses\*



12

No. Bachelor of Commerce Programs  
(representing 5 Schools)

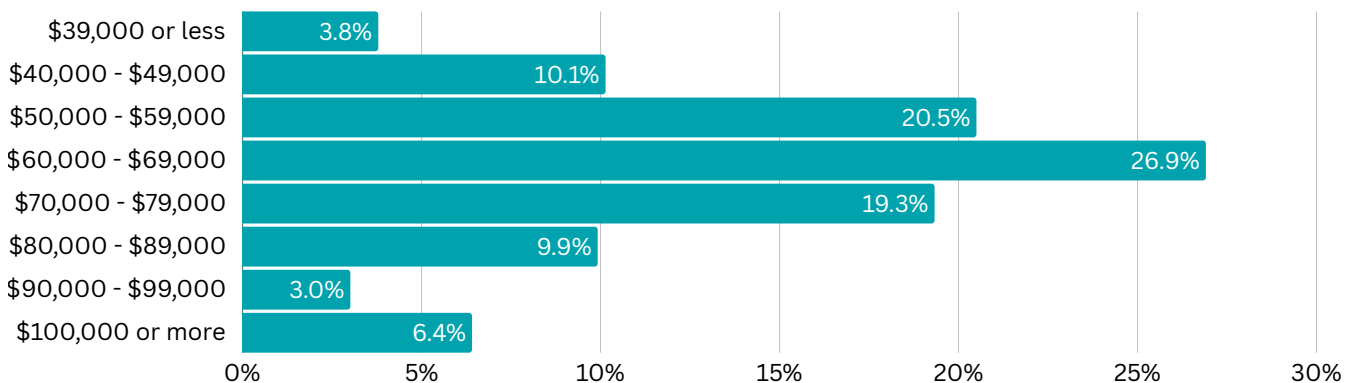


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Years of Study

### Summary of Student Responses

We analyzed 1,796 student responses to assess their salary expectations upon graduation. Their overall responses are highlighted below.



### Student Responses by Year of Study

We then broke down the student responses by year of study.

### Salary Expectations by Year of Study

Salary Range	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
\$39,000 or less	5.25%	4.36%	3.95%	2.39%
\$40,000 - \$49,000	8.52%	11.07%	10.17%	10.09%
\$50,000 - \$59,000	19.02%	18.69%	21.47%	22.39%
\$60,000 - \$69,000	26.56%	23.96%	26.84%	29.91%
\$70,000 - \$79,000	16.07%	20.69%	18.36%	20.34%
\$80,000 - \$89,000	13.44%	10.16%	9.32%	8.21%
\$90,000 - \$99,000	3.93%	2.36%	4.24%	2.39%
\$100,000 or more	7.21%	8.71%	5.65%	4.27%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Findings

- First-year students were **more likely** than students in other years to report salaries in the \$80–89k salary range.
- Second-year students report **significantly more** in the \$100k+ salary range than other years.
- Fourth-year students report **significantly fewer** in the lowest ( $\leq$ \$39k) and highest (\$100k+) ranges, and **significantly more** in the \$60–69k range compared with other years.
- Other salary ranges show similar distributions across years.

A possible explanation is that students' salary expectations adjust as they progress through their studies. Early-year students may have limited knowledge of the job market, while later-year students draw on internships, co-op experiences, and career guidance to form more realistic expectations.

### Student Responses by Academic Program

When broken down by Academic Program, the responses highlighted differing expectations.

#### Salary Expectations by Academic Program

Salary Range	Accounting & Finance	Business Management	Business Technology Management	Hospitality & Tourism Management	Retail Management
\$39,000 or less	3.28%	4.09%	2.91%	7.50%	10.00%
\$40,000 - \$49,000	8.52%	10.84%	9.30%	20.00%	6.67%
\$50,000 - \$59,000	19.34%	24.45%	14.34%	17.50%	23.33%
\$60,000 - \$69,000	34.75%	26.11%	23.64%	30.00%	23.33%
\$70,000 - \$79,000	17.05%	17.70%	24.22%	10.00%	20.00%
\$80,000 - \$89,000	9.51%	6.97%	15.50%	5.00%	13.33%
\$90,000 - \$99,000	2.62%	2.88%	3.88%	0.00%	0.00%
\$100,000 or more	4.92%	6.97%	6.20%	10.00%	3.33%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Findings

- Business Management students report **significantly more** in the \$50–59k salary range and **significantly fewer** in the \$80–89k range compared with other programs.
- Business Technology Management (BTM) students report **significantly more** in the \$70–89k range and **significantly fewer** in the \$50–59k range.
- Accounting & Finance students report **significantly more** in the \$60–69k range.
- Hospitality & Tourism Management (HTM) students report **slightly more** in the \$40–49k range.

A possible explanation is that salary expectations reflect program-specific career paths and market realities. For example, BTM and Accounting students may have more exposure to higher-paying roles through internships or co-op programs, while HTM students may anticipate more entry-level positions.

## Salary Expectations by Co-op Participation

*Salary Expectations by Co-op Participation*

Salary Ranges	Non-Co-op	Co-op
\$39,000 or less	4.86%	2.48%
\$40,000 - \$49,000	11.04%	9.03%
\$50,000 - \$59,000	20.57%	20.42%
\$60,000 - \$69,000	24.42%	29.95%
\$70,000 - \$79,000	16.72%	22.52%
\$80,000 - \$89,000	10.74%	8.91%
\$90,000 - \$99,000	3.34%	2.60%
\$100,000 or more	8.31%	4.08%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

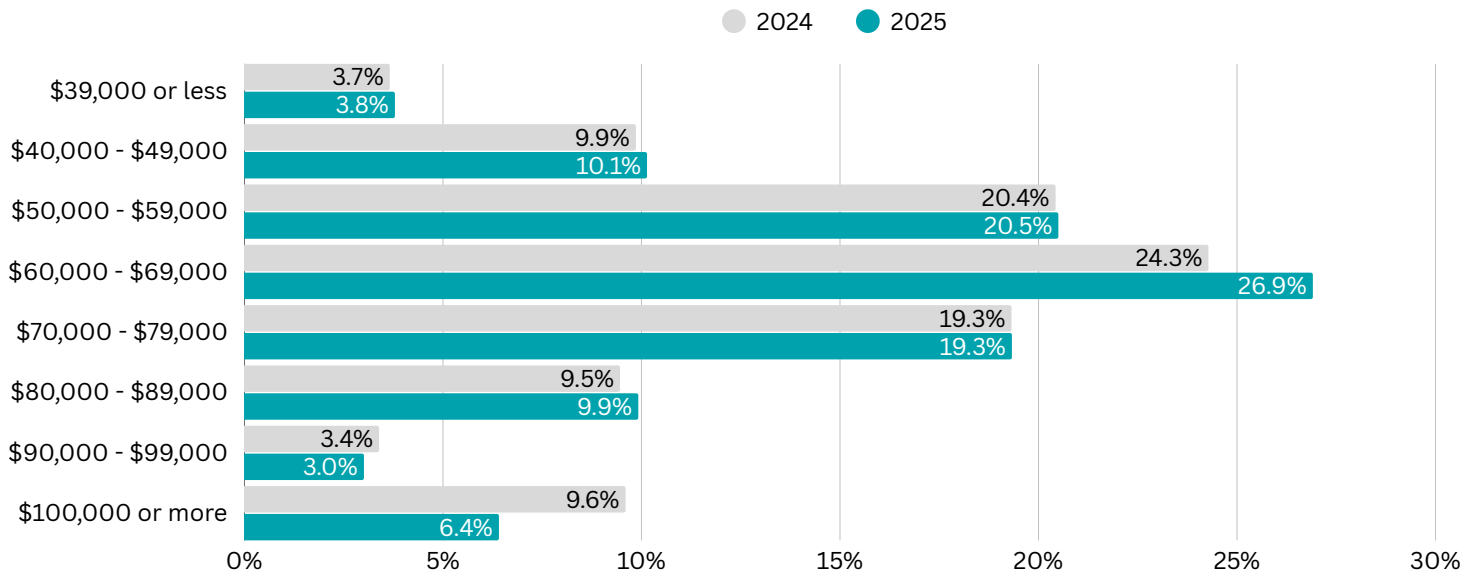
## Findings

- Students in the co-op program report **significantly more** in the middle-range salaries (\$60–79k).
- Students not in the co-op program report **significantly more** in the lowest ( $\leq$ \$39k) and highest (\$100k+) salary ranges.

A possible explanation is that co-op students gain hands-on work experience, which helps them form realistic expectations for starting salaries. Students without co-op experience may have less exposure to the job market, leading to a wider range of expectations.

## Salary Expectations - Comparison of 2024 vs. 2025

Salary Expectations - Comparison of 2024 vs. 2025



### Findings

- Students graduating in 2024 report **significantly more** in the \$100k+ salary range, while 2025 students report fewer in this range.
- Other salary ranges show similar distributions across both years.

Salary expectations are generally consistent across both years, with only the highest salaries slightly concentrated in the 2024 cohort.

*Note:* In this analysis, "significantly more" reflects patterns identified through chi-square statistical analysis, meaning these differences are unlikely to happen by chance.

### Question to Consider



Are your new graduate offers in line with student expectations, giving consideration to their program of study?

### Contact Us

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