

# 2013 ACT year 12 graduates and school leavers: Where were they in 2014?

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A summary of the 2013 School Leaver Survey results.

## Key Findings

- Ninety-two percent of year 12 graduates in 2013 were employed and/or studying in 2014, compared with 74 percent of school leavers in the survey.
- Fifty-nine percent of year 12 graduates in 2013 were studying in 2014 and a further 33 percent intended to start some study in the next two years.
- Forty-six percent of school leavers in 2013 were studying in 2014 and a further 35 percent intended to start some study in the next two years.
- Seventy-three percent of year 12 graduates in 2013 were employed in 2014, compared with 55 percent of school leavers .
- The unemployment rate for year 12 graduates in 2013 was 17 percent, compared with 26 percent for school leavers.
- Twenty-two percent of year 12 graduates in 2013 were travelling at the time of the survey in 2014, compared with 15 percent of school leavers.
- Overall, 95 percent of year 12 graduates in 2013 and 76 percent of year 12 school leavers found years 11 and 12 worthwhile.

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## Background

Australia is in a period of significant education and training reform. The current national reform agenda is impacting on all sectors of education, training and skills development. The ACT is proactive in looking to the future of education and training in our region, building on the strengths of current collaborations, relationships and partnerships within the sector, and promoting opportunities for change.

In the ACT, the *Education Act 2004* requires that all young people participate in schooling until they complete year 10; and then, either continue in full-time education, training and/or employment until age 17; or complete year 12 or equivalent.

The ACT is committed to providing learning pathways for students which result in an educated and skilled workforce to meet the present and future needs of the ACT and region. Priorities focus on ensuring young people's needs are met, providing flexible and responsive training options, engaging with industry and employers and improving retention rates. Together these strategies empower students to shape their own learning pathways while meeting industry needs.

The School Leaver Survey results provide important information which informs the ongoing planning, development and provision of appropriate education and training options for the young people of the ACT and region.

In this publication students who completed an ACT Year 12 Certificate are described as year 12 graduates and year 9 to 12 students who left school prior to completing an ACT Year 12 Certificate are described as school leavers.

# Destination of year 12 graduates

## Key outcomes

Ninety-two percent of year 12 graduates in 2013 reported that they were employed and/or studying in 2014. Seventy-three percent of graduates were employed in full-time or part-time paid work and 59 percent of all year 12 graduates were studying in 2014.

**Table 1** provides an overview of three key outcome indicators covering employment, study and those who were either employed and/or studying in the year following graduation. Data are presented for surveys conducted with 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 year 12 graduates.

Male and female students who graduated in 2010 showed similar results in terms of employment and study outcomes, however female students who graduated in 2011, 2012 and 2013 were more likely to be employed and employed and/or studying than male graduates.

**Table 1: Proportion of year 12 graduates employed and/or studying, by selected demographics (%)**

Year of graduation	Employed				Currently studying				Employed and/or studying			
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2010	2011	2012	2013	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>Sex</b>												
Female	79.0	80.3	77.2	75.2	55.8	55.8	60.4	61.8	94.3	95.5	94.7	93.7
Male	78.7	75.7	71.4	70.8	54.1	59.0	59.3	56.7	93.4	93.0	92.1	90.1
<b>LBOTE</b>												
No	81.5	81.6	78.2	75.9	51.2	53.8	55.9	55.8	93.9	94.3	93.2	91.7
Yes	63.9	58.5	55.1	57.0	76.8	77.2	79.4	78.0	94.0	94.5	94.5	93.0
<b>Participated in a VET course at school</b>												
No	78.0	74.9	74.4	71.5	56.6	60.5	57.6	57.5	94.3	94.3	93.5	91.1
Yes	80.3	84.1	74.0	77.3	52.1	51.4	65.7	64.2	93.2	94.4	93.1	94.1
<b>ATAR Group</b>												
No ATAR	84.7	85.1	78.8	75.6	42.0	43.9	48.5	49.1	90.9	92.3	88.3	86.7
1 - 65	76.8	78.9	75.9	75.3	55.5	57.4	55.5	57.4	94.8	93.5	93.0	92.8
66 - 75	81.2	81.7	74.6	79.9	58.6	58.6	65.0	62.9	97.2	94.4	95.7	96.5
76 - 85	79.8	76.8	73.1	74.8	58.6	64.3	66.8	64.4	94.3	96.8	97.7	93.8
86 - 95	73.2	70.9	70.9	67.0	67.2	67.6	70.9	67.3	95.0	95.8	97.4	95.1
96 - 100	62.8	59.6	59.6	52.5	69.5	75.6	73.3	74.7	95.3	96.2	95.9	94.9
<b>Received career counselling at school</b>												
No	78.4	78.2	74.6	72.5	56.1	56.5	59.1	60.9	94.5	94.7	92.7	92.0
Yes	79.8	79.0	74.6	73.8	54.9	58.2	61.3	58.2	93.9	94.5	94.2	92.1
Don't know	69.0	63.2	62.5	63.5	38.6	49.7	42.8	52.7	82.2	82.6	89.1	85.5
<b>Participated in work experience at school</b>												
No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	72.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	59.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	92.4
Yes	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	73.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	59.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	91.5
<b>Received a government pension, allowance or benefit in 2014</b>												
No	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	75.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	57.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	92.6
Yes	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	46.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	73.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	85.4
<b>All graduates</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>73.0</b>	<b>54.9</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>93.9</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>91.9</b>

Note: n.a. indicates that results are not available.

## Study

Table 2 shows the proportions of year 12 graduates in 2013 studying in 2014 by selected demographic factors. Fifty-nine percent of all graduates indicated that they were undertaking some study in 2014, with 49 percent studying full-time. The most common subjects of study related to:

- society and culture (21%). This included fields such as political science, psychology, law, economics, sport and literature
- management and commerce (13%). This included fields such as accounting, business management, marketing and finance
- health (13%). This included fields such as medical, dental and veterinary studies, nursing, pharmacy, optical and rehabilitation therapies.

Graduates achieving a higher ATAR had a greater tendency to undertake further study. Seventy-five percent of the graduates with an ATAR between 96 and 100 were undertaking study in 2014, compared with 63 percent of the graduates with an ATAR between 66 and 75.

Of the nine percent of year 12 graduates who were receiving a government pension, allowance or benefit in May 2014, 74 percent were studying in 2014, compared with 58 percent of those who were not receiving a government pension, allowance or benefit.

**Table 2: Proportion of year 12 graduates studying in 2014, by selected demographics (%)**

	Studying			Not studying
	Part-time	Full-time	All	
<b>Sex</b>				
Females	9.4	52.0	61.8	38.2
Males	9.4	46.9	56.7	43.3
<b>LBOTE</b>				
No	9.7	45.8	55.8	44.2
Yes	7.6	69.6	78.0	22.0
<b>Participated in a vocational education and training course at school</b>				
No	8.5	48.6	57.5	42.5
Yes	12.0	51.9	64.2	35.8
<b>ATAR Group</b>				
No ATAR	16.2	32.0	49.1	50.9
1 - 65	11.8	45.2	57.4	42.6
66 - 75	5.5	57.5	62.9	37.1
76 - 85	4.2	60.2	64.4	35.6
86 - 95	4.2	63.0	67.3	32.7
96 - 100	1.8	73.0	74.7	25.3
<b>Received career counselling at school</b>				
No	9.4	51.2	60.9	39.1
Yes	9.3	48.5	58.2	41.8
<b>Participated in work experience at school</b>				
No	10.4	48.5	59.2	40.8
Yes	8.3	50.5	59.2	40.8
<b>Receiving a government pension, allowance or benefit in 2014</b>				
No	9.3	48.0	57.7	42.3
Yes	9.9	63.9	73.9	26.1
<b>All graduates</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>40.8</b>

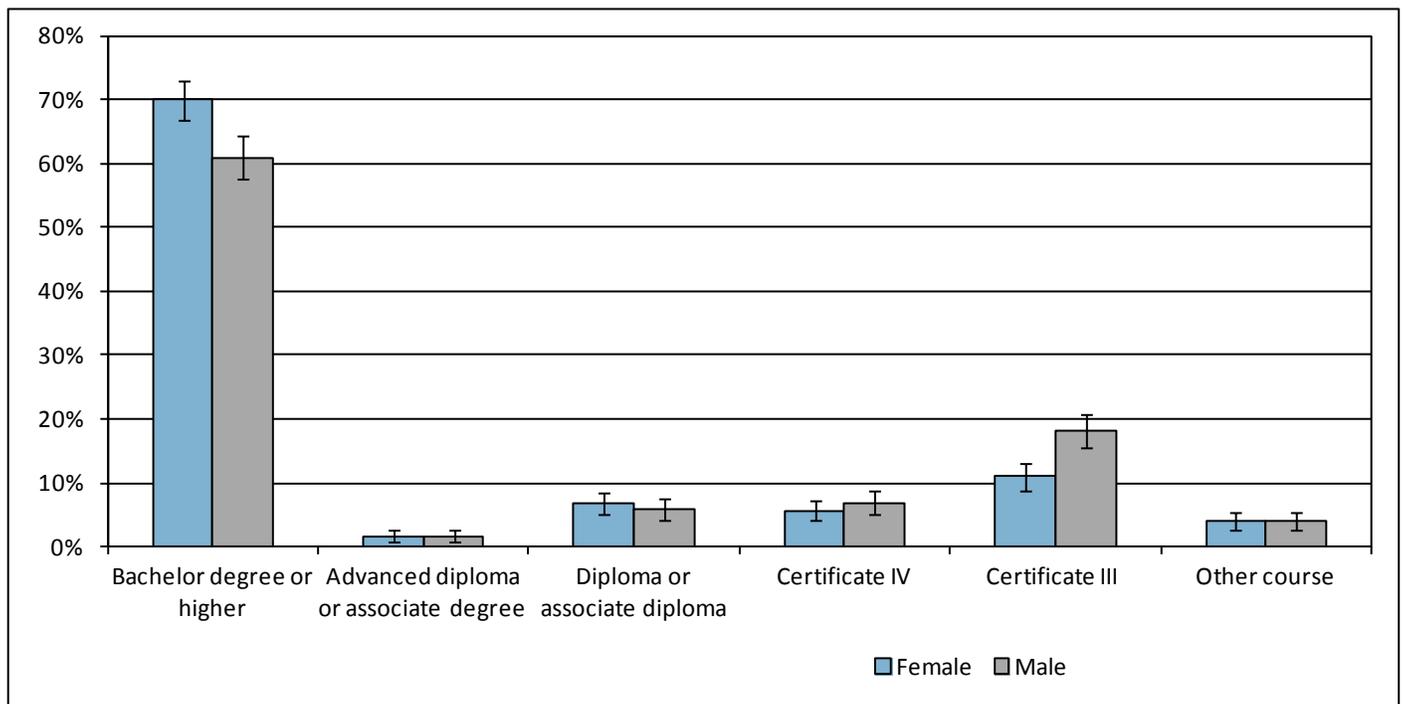
Note: The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of 'don't know' responses.

Sixty-one percent of graduates applied for a university place and 98 percent of these graduates were successful in gaining a place. However, only 68 percent of successful applicants accepted the place and enrolled in 2014. Thirty percent of graduates deferred and two percent rejected the offer. Graduates who do not speak a language other than English at home and graduates who received career counselling at school were more likely to defer their university studies.

Sixty-six percent of graduates studying in 2014 reported that they were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher. Fourteen percent of graduates studying in 2014 were studying at Certificate III level.

A greater proportion of females were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher – 70 percent of females compared with 61 percent of males. The proportion of males studying at Certificate III level was more than the proportion of females studying at that level – 18 percent of males compared with 11 percent of females ([Figure 1](#)).

**Figure 1: Year 12 graduates studying in 2014, by level of study and sex (%)**



Note: The error bars reflect the 95 percent confidence intervals and no overlap indicates there is a statistical difference between the results.

[Table 3](#) shows the main reason why 2013 year 12 graduates chose their course in 2014. Overall, 50 percent reported that they chose their course because “it’s a course that interests me” and 35 percent said “to get/start/help in a job/business”.

Forty-six percent of graduates who were studying in 2014 and did not gain an ATAR reported that they chose their course “to get/start/help in a job/business”, 36 percent said “it’s a course that interests me” and six percent said it was “to help get into another course”.

**Table 3: Year 12 graduates studying in 2014, by main reason for choosing their course and selected demographics (%)**

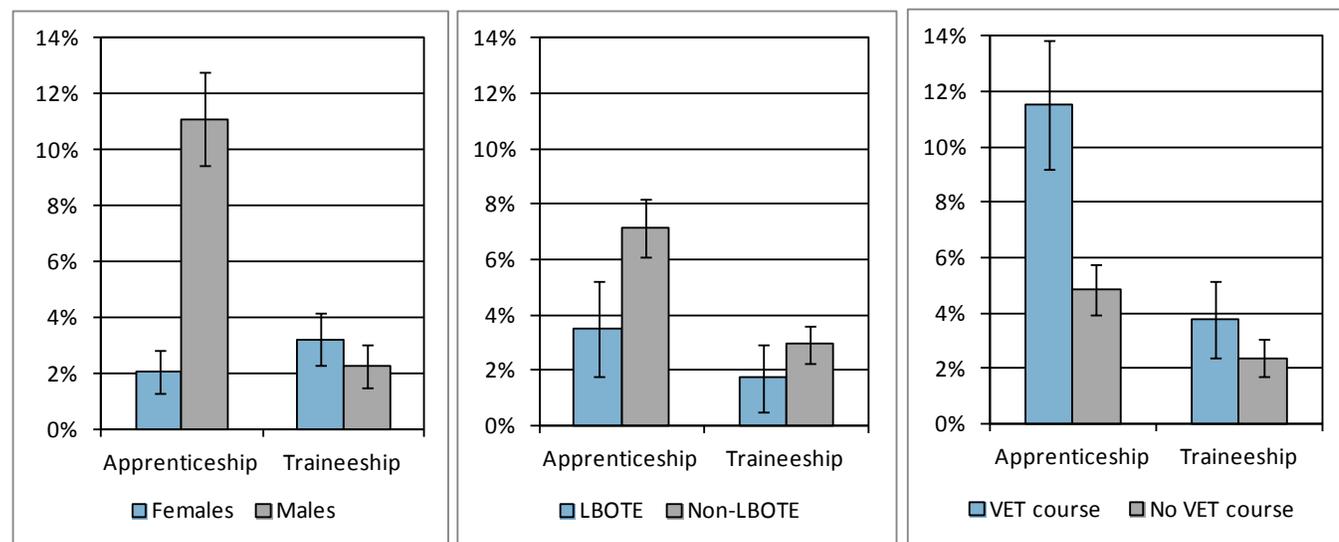
	It's a course that interests me	To get/start/help in a job/business	To help get into another course	To improve my education	Other
<b>Sex</b>					
Females	51.0	34.1	4.4	3.6	5.9
Males	48.7	36.7	3.5	3.6	6.1
<b>Participated in a vocational education and training course at school</b>					
No	51.7	33.5	3.5	3.9	6.0
Yes	45.2	39.9	5.3	2.7	6.1
<b>ATAR Group</b>					
No ATAR	36.3	46.0	6.5	3.1	8.0
1 - 65	48.0	36.3	5.4	3.6	5.9
66 - 75	50.8	34.8	2.9	3.2	6.5
76 - 85	59.7	28.1	2.3	4.4	4.8
86 - 95	55.9	31.7	1.7	3.5	5.3
96 - 100	63.6	22.4	3.0	4.3	3.0
<b>All graduates</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>6.0</b>

Note: The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of 'don't know' responses.

Overall, seven percent of year 12 graduates were undertaking an apprenticeship in 2014 and three percent were doing a traineeship. The percentage of graduates undertaking an apprenticeship varied significantly for selected demographics ([Figure 2](#)):

- male graduates were much more likely to be undertaking an apprenticeship than females
- graduates who participated in a vocational education and training course at school were more likely to be undertaking an apprenticeship than graduates who did not participate in a vocational education and training course at school.

**Figure 2: Proportion of year 12 graduates undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in 2014, by selected demographics (%)**



Note: The error bars reflect the 95 percent confidence intervals and no overlap indicates there is a statistical difference between the results.

Thirty-five percent of year 12 graduates who were not studying in 2014 reported their main reason for not studying was to “take a gap year”, 12 percent were “not ready for study”, 12 percent indicated that they had “got a job” and 11 percent were “travelling” ([Table 4](#)).

Twenty percent of graduates who were not studying and did not get an ATAR reported their main reason for not studying was because they “got a job”, 17 percent indicated they were “taking a gap year” and 12 percent said they “didn’t feel ready for study at the moment”.

**Table 4: Year 12 graduates not studying in 2014, by main reason for not studying and selected demographics (%)**

	Taking a gap year	Travelling	Not ready for study	Got a job	Intend to start some study later	Other
<b>Sex</b>						
Females	39.4	12.6	12.4	8.3	4.8	22.6
Males	30.4	8.8	11.0	14.5	6.1	28.5
<b>Participated in a vocational education and training course at school</b>						
No	35.2	11.0	12.1	10.2	6.1	25.0
Yes	32.4	9.3	10.3	16.3	3.3	28.4
<b>ATAR Group</b>						
No ATAR	16.8	4.4	11.8	19.8	7.1	39.7
1 - 65	41.6	6.9	15.5	9.5	5.9	20.5
66 - 75	41.9	16.0	12.9	6.0	2.8	20.4
76 - 85	45.8	21.1	7.6	4.6	7.1	12.8
86 - 95	58.3	14.0	11.7	3.7	2.7	9.5
96 - 100	55.8	27.6	4.2	0.0	0.0	12.5
<b>All graduates</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>25.7</b>

Note: The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of ‘don’t know’ responses.

Of the 41 percent of graduates who were not studying in 2014 (Table 2), 80 percent intended to start some study in the next two years. As ATAR increased, so did intention to start some study in the next two years. Ninety-five percent of graduates who obtained an ATAR of 76 or above and were not currently studying were intending to start some study in the next two years. The most common subjects of intended study related to society and culture (23%), health (12%), management and commerce (12%) and creative arts (11%).

### Labour force status

Table 5 details the 2014 labour force status of year 12 graduates in 2013. Seventy-three percent of graduates reported having a paid job. Fourteen percent of graduates reported not currently having a paid job and actively looking for work with the majority looking for part-time work.

**Table 5: Number and proportion of year 12 graduates, by labour force status in 2014**

	Number	Proportion
<b>Employed</b>	<b>3,049</b>	<b>73.0</b>
Full-time	800	19.1
Part-time	2,169	51.9
Don't know/Refused	80	1.9
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>14.5</b>
Looking for full-time work	101	2.4
Looking for part-time work	400	9.6
Looking for full or part-time work	99	2.4
Don't know	4	0.1
<b>Total in labour force</b>	<b>3,654</b>	<b>87.5</b>
<b>Not in labour force</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>12.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,178</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Unemployment rate</b>		<b>16.5</b>

The percentage of year 12 graduates in 2013 who were receiving a government pension, allowance or benefit in May 2014 varied depending on their labour force status. Nineteen percent of graduates who were unemployed and 18 percent of those not in the labour force were receiving a government pension, allowance or benefit in May 2014, compared with six percent of employed graduates.

The most common occupations were community and personal service workers (36%), sales workers (31%), labourers (10%) and technical and trade workers (9%).

Table 6 provides details of the labour force status of year 12 graduates studying and not studying in 2014. Eighty-one percent of graduates studying part-time were employed, with 47 percent employed full-time. Sixty-six percent of graduates studying full-time were employed, with the majority employed part-time. Eighty percent of graduates who were not studying were employed and 13 percent were unemployed.

**Table 6: Year 12 graduates in the labour force in 2014, by study status in 2014 (%)**

	Studying			Not studying	All graduates
	Part-time	Full-time	Total		
<b>Employed</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>68.1</b>	<b>80.1</b>	<b>73.0</b>
Full-time	30.5	9.6	13.1	28.0	19.1
Part-time	46.6	54.9	53.5	49.7	51.9
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>14.5</b>
Looking for full-time work	1.0	0.9	1.0	4.5	2.4
Looking for part-time work	9.7	14.6	13.8	3.5	9.6
Looking for full or part-time work	1.1	1.0	1.0	4.4	2.4
<b>Total in labour force</b>	<b>92.6</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>83.9</b>	<b>92.6</b>	<b>87.5</b>
<b>Not in labour force</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>12.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of 'don't know' responses.

### Participation in other post-school activities

Table 7 shows the percentage of year 12 graduates who participated in various activities in the year following leaving school. More than one in five (22%) graduates were travelling at the time of the survey in May/June 2014, 13 percent were undertaking volunteer work, 11 percent were pursuing elite sporting interests and 10 percent were caring for family members.

**Table 7: Proportion of year 12 graduates in 2013 participating in various post school activities (%)**

	Proportion
Undertaking volunteer work	13.4
Caring for family members	10.1
Pursuing elite sporting interests	11.0
Travelling	21.7

## Destination of school leavers

Table 8 details the percentage of school leavers employed and/or studying in 2014. Data are presented for surveys conducted with 2011, 2012 and 2013 school leavers. Seventy-four percent of school leavers reported they were employed and/or studying in 2014. This was similar to 2012 school leavers, but lower than for 2011.

**Table 8: Proportion of school leavers employed and/or studying, by selected demographics (%)**

Year left school	Employed			Currently studying			Employed and/or studying		
	2011	2012	2013	2011	2012	2013	2011	2012	2013
<b>Sex</b>									
Females	61.0	58.7	57.6	34.3	42.9	38.5	81.4	75.2	72.3
Males	74.6	60.6	54.2	40.8	44.7	49.5	87.8	75.9	75.1
<b>Year level</b>									
Year 9 to 11	69.0	59.5	58.1	42.9	38.1	45.6	84.2	68.8	72.7
Year 12	70.8	60.8	52.4	31.9	50.8	46.0	87.5	84.2	75.7
<b>LBOTE</b>									
No	70.1	60.3	55.3	38.3	44.4	45.2	82.3	75.7	73.5
Yes	63.4	56.6	54.6	42.3	42.2	51.5	90.2	74.4	81.9
<b>Received career counselling at school</b>									
No	66.3	58.8	46.0	29.0	38.5	42.8	83.0	70.7	65.6
Yes	77.9	61.2	62.1	32.6	50.9	49.2	91.8	81.0	81.5
<b>Participated in work experience at school<sup>1</sup></b>									
No	n.a.	n.a.	50.3	n.a.	n.a.	46.8	n.a.	n.a.	73.1
Yes	n.a.	n.a.	63.7	n.a.	n.a.	47.5	n.a.	n.a.	79.4
<b>Receiving a government pension, allowance or benefit in 2014<sup>1</sup></b>									
No	n.a.	n.a.	61.2	n.a.	n.a.	46.3	n.a.	n.a.	78.5
Yes	n.a.	n.a.	12.7	n.a.	n.a.	42.5	n.a.	n.a.	42.5
<b>All school leavers</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>55.3</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>44.1</b>	<b>45.8</b>	<b>85.3</b>	<b>75.6</b>	<b>74.1</b>

Note: n.a. indicates that results are not available. <sup>1</sup> Students who attended specialist schools not included in this item.

Forty-six percent of school leavers indicated that they were undertaking some study in 2014, with 31 percent of school leavers studying full-time.

For school leavers, the most common subjects of study related to:

- architecture and building (18%). This included fields such as landscape architecture, interior design, regional planning, bricklaying, carpentry and plumbing
- food, hospitality and personal services (15%). This included fields such as hospitality, food hygiene, cookery, beauty therapy and hairdressing.

Nineteen percent of school leavers reported undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in 2014. Of the school leavers who were undertaking an apprenticeship most were technicians or trade workers studying architecture and building, food, hospitality and personal services or engineering and related technologies.

Sixty-five percent of the school leavers who were not studying in 2014 intended to start some study in the next two years.

Fifty-five percent of school leavers reported having a paid job. Nineteen percent of school leavers said they did not have a paid job but were actively looking for work. One quarter (25%) of school leavers were not in the labour force. The unemployment rate was 26 percent for school leavers. Of the school leavers who had a paid job in 2014, the most common occupations were community and personal service workers (25%), labourers (25%) technicians and trade workers (22%) and sales workers (19%).

At the time of the survey, some school leavers were participating in other post-school activities, either instead of or as well as study and/or employment. Fifteen percent were travelling, 13 percent were caring for family members and nine percent were undertaking volunteer work.

## Characteristics of students who left school in 2013

Table 9 details the characteristics of year 12 graduates and school leavers in 2013. An equal proportion of males and females who graduated in 2013 completed the survey; however for school leavers the majority (66%) percent were male. About half of the school leavers who completed the survey were in year 12 when they left school. Sixteen percent of graduates spoke a language other than English at home, whilst seven percent of school leavers spoke a language other than English at home. School leavers were more likely to have participated in engagement programs at school and to receive a pension in 2014 than year 12 graduates.

**Table 9: Proportion of school leavers and year 12 graduates, by selected demographics (%)**

	School leavers	Year 12 graduates
Females	33.8	50.0
Males	66.2	50.0
Year 9 to 11	52.1	0.0
Year 12	47.9	100.0
LBOTE	7.1	15.5
Received career counselling at school	46.6	54.3
Participated in work experience at school	51.9 <sup>1</sup>	52.5
Receiving a government pension, allowance or benefit in 2014	12.1 <sup>1</sup>	9.5
Participated in support programs for students with a disability at school	5.5 <sup>1</sup>	5.5
Participated in vocational learning at school	16.3 <sup>1</sup>	15.3
Participated in enrichment programs at school	6.3 <sup>1</sup>	6.7
Participated in engagement programs at school	11.2 <sup>1</sup>	4.1

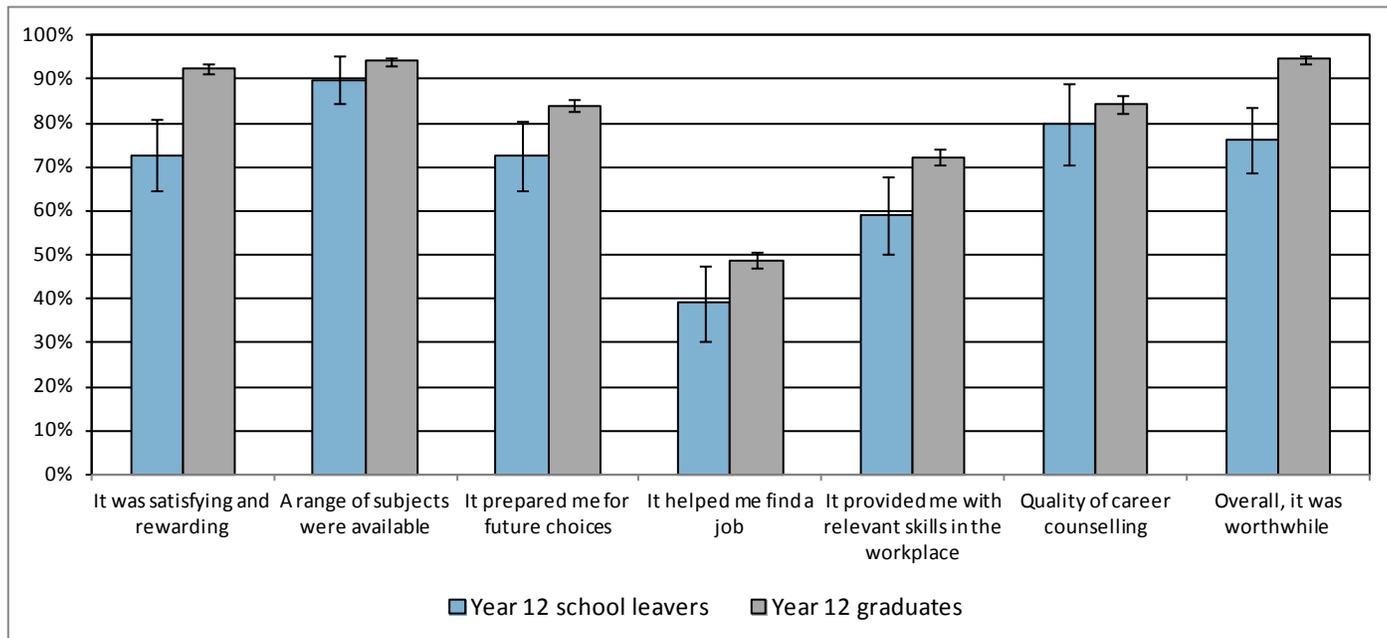
<sup>1</sup> Students who attended specialist schools not included in this item.

## Satisfaction with school

Parents of years 9 to 11 school leavers were asked about their level of satisfaction with the school the student most recently attended. Sixty-two percent of parents were satisfied with the school. In contrast, the 2013 School Satisfaction Survey showed that overall 83% of parents were satisfied with the school their child attended.

Year 12 school leavers and year 12 graduates were asked about their level of agreement with seven statements regarding their experience in years 11 and 12 in the ACT (Figure 3). Responses of strongly agree or agree were classified as “satisfied”, responses of strongly disagree or disagree as “not satisfied” and responses of neither agree nor disagree as “neutral”. Overall 76 percent of year 12 school leavers and 95 percent of year 12 graduates found year 11 and 12 worthwhile. Year 12 graduates were generally more satisfied than year 12 school leavers.

**Figure 3: Proportion of year 12 graduates and year 12 school leavers in 2013 satisfied with various aspects of their year 11 and 12 experience (%)**



Note: The error bars reflect the 95 percent confidence intervals and no overlap indicates there is a statistical difference between the results.

## Reasons for leaving school

Parents of years 9 to 11 students who left school in 2013 were asked the reasons why their child decided to leave school (Table 10). The most common responses were the child was not doing very well at school (57%), the child wanted to get a job (54%) and the child wanted to earn their own money (52%).

**Table 10: Most common responses parents gave regarding why their child (who was in year 9, 10 or 11 in 2013) left school**

Response Categories	Proportion
Not doing very well at school	57.3
Wanted to get a job	53.5
Wanted to earn his/her own money	52.3
Had a job to go to	37.2
Didn't get on with the teachers and/or students at school	34.9
Wanted to do study or training that wasn't available at school	31.0
Had an illness, disability or caring responsibilities	28.5

Note: The percentages in this table do not add to 100 percent, as respondents could provide more than one response.

## Scope and methodology

The School Leaver Survey is an annual survey of students in years 9 to 12 who left the ACT school system or were awarded an ACT Year 12 Certificate in the preceding year. This publication includes a summary of the results of the fourth annual survey, conducted in 2014.

The survey frame was drawn from administrative records held within the Directorate, non-government schools and the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS). Year 12 graduates included those that were awarded an ACT Year 12 Certificate from an ACT college, school or the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) in 2013. School leavers included year 9 to 12 ACT students who were listed as attending an ACT school in the 2013 February school census but not in the 2014 census (and did not obtain an ACT Year 12 Certificate). The survey excluded full fee paying students whose usual residence was overseas, school leavers who experienced a traumatic event, returned to school prior to May 2014 or moved interstate or overseas and school leavers from a small number of ACT non-government schools who chose not to participate in the survey.

Prior to the School Leaver Survey being undertaken a primary approach letter was sent to year 12 graduates and year 12 school leavers and parents of years 9 to 11 school leavers. This provided information about its purpose and importance: the broad content of the survey, the amount of time the interview would take and confidentiality provisions. The survey was undertaken by telephone from 5 May 2014 to 6 June 2014. Of the 4,014 graduates sent a primary approach letter, 2,897 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 72 percent. Of the 672 school leavers sent a primary approach letter, 401 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 60 percent.

## Glossary

**Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)** is a percentile ranking used by universities to assist in the selection of school leavers for entry into undergraduate courses. It is used as an indication of a student's suitability for study at university level, and to allow universities to select appropriate numbers of students for each course.

**Career counselling** in schools may include one on one or group discussion between students and career advisors, industry experts and representatives from universities and CIT about various aspects of student pathways planning, such as course choices, work experience and developing a resume.

**Currently studying** refers to respondents who were actively undertaking some study in the year following graduation, including those attending university, technical and further education (TAFE), undertaking an Australian apprenticeship or repeating year 12.

**Engagement programs** are school based programs, such as Big Picture, Connect 10 and Canberra College Cares.

**Enrichment programs** are programs such as ANU Extension and the year 10 SMART program at Gungahlin College.

**Labour force status** provides data on whether a graduate was employed (full or part-time), unemployed (looking for full or part-time work) or not in the labour force at the time of the survey. Labour force status was derived from responses to a number of questions in the survey.

**LBOTE** is used in this publication to describe graduates who speak a language other than English at home. Please note, this is slightly different from Language Background other than English (also known as LBOTE) which is used when a language other than English is spoken at home by the individual and/or one or both of their parents.

**Government pensions, allowances and benefits** include Austudy or ABSTUDY, Carer Allowance or Carer Payment, Disability Support Pension, Newstart Allowance, Parenting Payment, Sickness Allowance, Special Benefit and Youth Allowance.

**Vocational Education and Training** courses in schools are accredited vocational courses which are designed around Training Packages endorsed by specific industry areas and successful completion may lead to the award of a Vocational Certificate or Statement of Attainment.

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**Published by Education and Training Directorate | ACT Government**

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