



**ACT**  
Government

Education and Training

# 2011 ACT year 12 graduates: Where are they now?

A summary of a survey of graduates awarded an ACT Year 12 Certificate in 2011.

## Key findings

Ninety-four percent of 2011 year 12 graduates were employed and/or studying in 2012

Fifty-seven percent of 2011 year 12 graduates were studying in 2012, with 48 percent studying full-time and nine percent studying part-time

Sixty-three percent of the 2011 year 12 graduates applied for a university place and 97 percent of these graduates were successful in gaining a place

Sixty-eight percent of 2011 year 12 graduates studying in 2012 reported that they were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher

Seven percent of graduates were undertaking an apprenticeship in 2012 and 10 percent were doing a traineeship

Of the graduates who were studying full-time, 69 percent were employed with the majority employed part-time

Of the 43 percent who were not currently studying, 76 percent intended to start some study in the next two years

Seventy-eight percent of 2011 year 12 graduates were employed, with 29 percent employed full-time and 48 percent employed part-time

10 percent of 2011 year 12 graduates were unemployed in 2012

Overall, 97 percent of 2011 year 12 graduates found year 11 and 12 worthwhile

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## Context

Australia is currently in a period of significant national education and training reform. The national agenda is impacting on all sectors of education, training and skills development. The ACT is being 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.

As of 1 January 2010, the *Education Act 2004* was amended to require 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 Education and Training Directorate 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 whilst meeting industry needs.

The work of the Tertiary Taskforce throughout 2010 culminated in the launch of the Taskforce report *Learning Capital* in February 2011. This report provided the ACT and region with further direction for the reform of tertiary education including vocational education and training and higher education.

Understanding the destination of students after year 12 contributes to the ongoing planning, development and provision of appropriate education and training options for the young people of the ACT and region.



# Key Outcomes

Table 1 provides an overview of three key outcome indicators covering employment, study and those who were either employed or studying in the year following graduation. Data are presented for surveys conducted with 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 year 12 graduates.

Ninety-four percent of 2011 year 12 graduates reported that they were employed and/or studying in 2012. Seventy-eight percent of graduates were employed in full or part-time paid work. Fifty-seven percent of all graduates were studying in 2012 with 48 percent studying full-time and nine percent studying part-time.

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

Year of graduation	Employed				Currently Studying				Employed and/or Studying			
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2008	2009	2010	2011	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Sex</b>												
Females	78.6	76.3	79.0	80.3	52.9	52.4	55.8	55.8	91.4	89.7	94.3	95.5
Males	77.3	73.6	78.7	75.7	52.0	54.1	54.1	59.0	90.9	90.5	93.4	93.0
<b>LBOTE</b>												
No	80.6	78.2	81.5	81.6	48.6	50.1	51.2	53.8	90.8	90.0	93.9	94.3
Yes	60.9	54.8	63.9	58.5	78.3	72.5	76.8	77.2	93.3	90.2	94.0	94.5
<b>Participated in a VET course at school</b>												
No	76.5	72.6	78.0	74.9	52.1	53.6	56.6	60.5	90.5	88.9	94.3	94.3
Yes	80.6	79.3	80.3	84.1	53.1	52.6	52.1	51.4	92.2	92.3	93.2	94.4
<b>ATAR or UAI group</b>												
No ATAR	82.1	80.9	84.7	85.1	44.4	44.9	42.0	43.9	89.5	90.3	90.9	92.3
1 - 65	81.6	78.8	76.8	78.9	51.9	49.2	55.5	57.4	94.0	91.3	94.8	93.5
66 - 75	83.4	78.5	81.2	81.7	53.8	56.5	58.6	58.6	94.8	91.8	97.2	94.4
76 - 85	76.8	73.7	79.8	76.8	58.2	57.6	58.6	64.3	91.6	90.2	94.3	96.8
86 - 95	72.3	64.3	73.2	70.9	56.3	61.7	67.2	67.6	88.9	88.8	95.0	95.8
96 - 100	55.6	59.2	62.8	59.6	68.7	65.7	69.5	75.6	89.4	85.4	95.3	96.2
<b>Received career counselling at school</b>												
No	78.2	75.6	78.4	78.2	56.8	56.1	56.1	56.5	93.3	92.9	94.5	94.7
Yes	78.8	75.9	79.8	79.0	50.1	52.6	54.9	58.2	90.5	89.6	93.9	94.5
Don't know	65.0	58.9	69.0	63.2	36.9	34.6	38.6	49.7	77.2	69.6	82.2	82.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>74.9</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>54.9</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>91.1</b>	<b>90.1</b>	<b>93.9</b>	<b>94.3</b>

1. In 2009 ATAR replaced UAI.



# Study

Table 2 shows the proportions of 2011 year 12 graduates studying in 2012 by selected demographic factors. Fifty-seven percent of all graduates indicated that they were undertaking some study in 2012, with 48 percent studying full-time. The most common subjects of study related to society and culture (17%), management and commerce (16%), natural and physical sciences (14%), health (10%) and creative arts (9%).

Graduates achieving a higher ATAR had a greater tendency to undertake further study. Seventy-six percent of the graduates with an ATAR between 96 and 100 were undertaking study in 2012, compared with 59 percent of the graduates with an ATAR between 66 and 75.

**Table 2: Proportion of 2011 year 12 graduates studying in 2012 by selected demographics (%)**

	Studying			Not studying
	Part-time	Full-time	All	
<b>Sex</b>				
Females	7.3	48.2	55.8	44.2
Males	11.3	47.5	59.0	41.0
<b>LBOTE</b>				
No	9.1	44.5	53.8	46.1
Yes	9.4	67.5	77.2	22.8
<b>Participated in a VET course at school</b>				
No	6.7	53.6	60.5	39.5
Yes	13.4	37.8	51.4	48.6
<b>ATAR group</b>				
No ATAR	18.2	25.4	43.9	56.0
1 - 65	10.9	46.5	57.4	42.6
66 - 75	4.0	54.6	58.6	41.4
76 - 85	3.7	60.1	64.3	35.7
86 - 95	2.6	64.8	67.6	32.4
96 - 100	0.0	75.2	75.6	24.4
<b>All graduates</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>47.9</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>42.8</b>

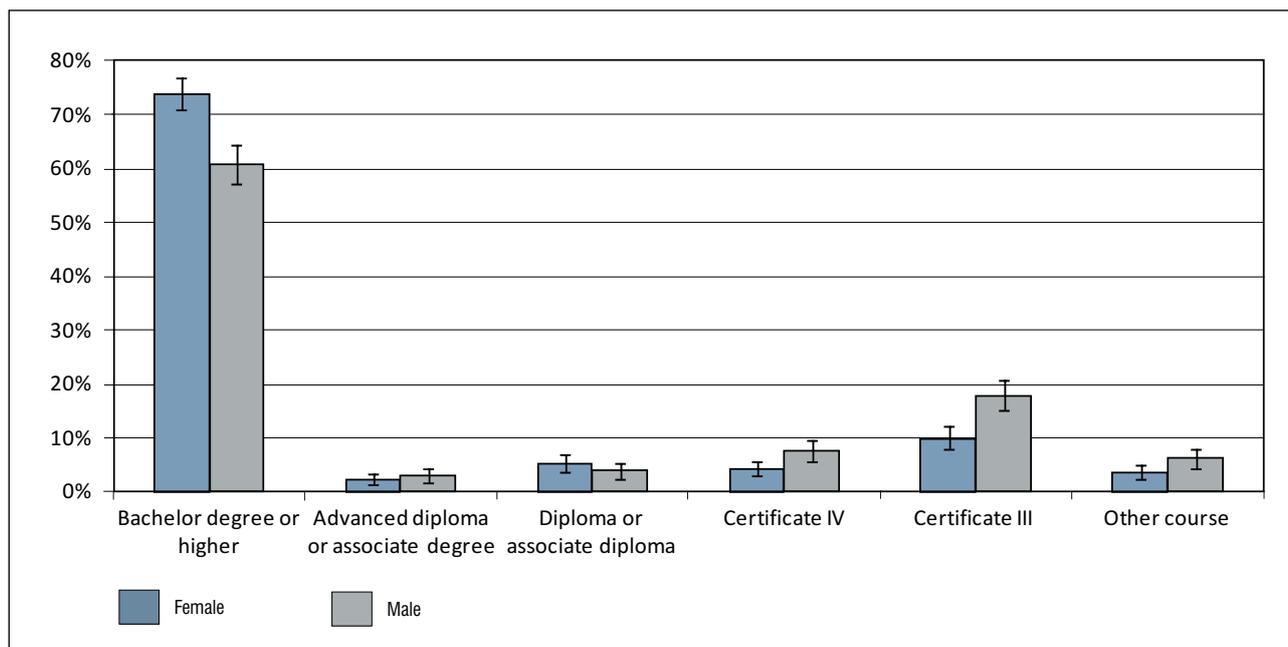
1. The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of 'don't know' responses.

Sixty-three percent of graduates applied for a university place and 97 percent of these graduates were successful in gaining a place. However, only 67 percent of successful applicants accepted the place and enrolled in 2012. Thirty percent of graduates who were offered a place deferred and two percent rejected the offer or cancelled their enrolment. Female graduates, graduates who were not LBOTE and graduates who received career counselling at school were all more likely to defer their university studies.

Sixty-eight percent of graduates studying in 2012 reported that they were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher. Fourteen percent of graduates studying in 2012 were studying at Certificate III level.

A greater proportion of females were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher – 74 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 10 percent of females (Figure 1). The difference between the percentage of males and females studying a certificate III level was less than in previous years.

**Figure 1: Proportion of 2011 year 12 graduates studying in 2012 by level and sex (%)**



1. The error bars reflect the 95 percent confidence intervals and where they overlap indicates there is no statistical difference between the results.

Table 3 shows the main reason why 2011 year 12 graduates chose their course in 2012. Overall, 50 percent reported that they chose their course because “it’s a course that interests me” and 29 percent said “to get/start/help in a job/business”.

A higher percentage of males (8%) compared with females (2%) said their main reason for choosing their course was because it was “part of an apprenticeship/traineeship”.

Thirty-five percent of graduates who were studying in 2012 and did not gain an ATAR reported that they chose their course because “it’s a course that interests me”, 31 percent said “to get/start/help in a job/business” and 14 percent said it was “part of an apprenticeship/traineeship”.

**Table 3: Proportion of 2011 year 12 graduates by main reason for choosing their course in 2012 and selected demographics (%)**

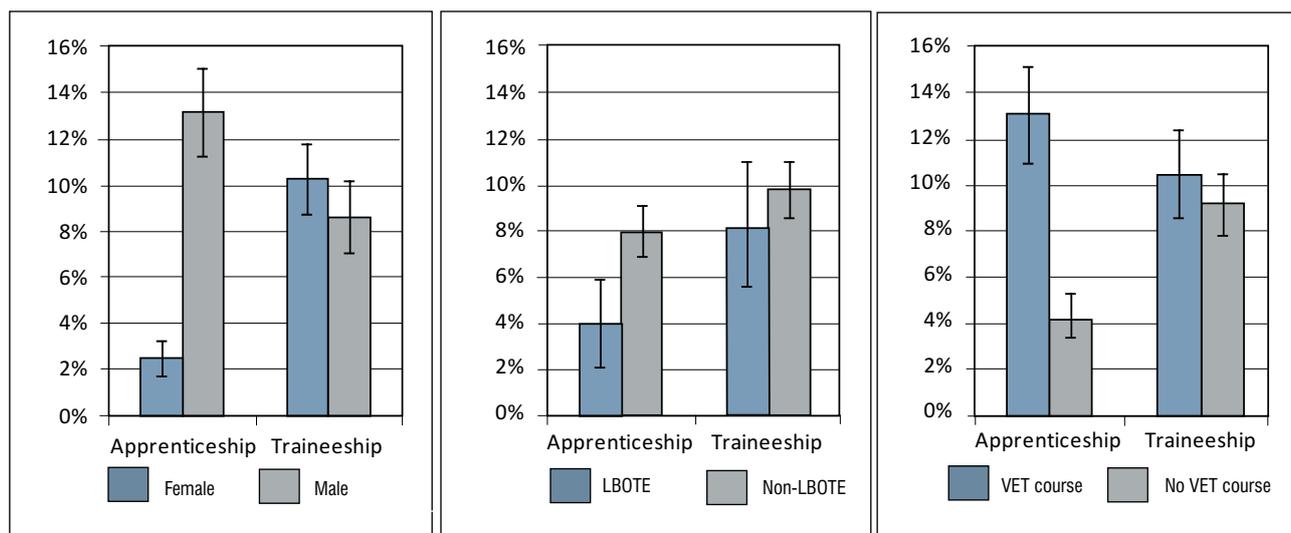
	It’s a course that interests me	To get/start/help in a job/business	To improve my education	Part of an apprenticeship/traineeship	Other
<b>Sex</b>					
Females	50.6	30.3	10.6	2.3	5.4
Males	49.7	28.2	8.0	7.7	6.0
<b>Participated in a VET course at school</b>					
No	52.8	28.8	9.3	2.3	5.9
Yes	44.6	30.5	9.5	9.9	5.2
<b>ATAR group</b>					
No ATAR	34.6	31.3	11.0	14.0	8.7
1 - 65	48.7	27.1	14.6	2.4	6.3
66 - 75	53.6	33.8	6.4	3.6	1.4
76 - 85	57.3	27.6	9.3	1.0	4.4
86 - 95	59.5	28.2	6.4	0.6	4.9
96 - 100	56.7	26.4	7.1	1.3	6.6
<b>All graduates</b>	<b>50.2</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>5.7</b>

1. 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 graduates were undertaking an apprenticeship in 2012 and 10 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 were not LBOTE were more likely to be undertaking an apprenticeship than graduates who were LBOTE
- graduates who undertook a VET course at school were much more likely to be undertaking an apprenticeship than graduates who did not undertake a VET course at school.

**Figure 2: Percentage of 2011 year 12 graduates undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in 2012 by selected demographics**



1. The error bars reflect the 95 percent confidence intervals and where they overlap indicates there is no statistical difference between the results.

Table 4 details the proportions of 2011 year 12 graduates in the labour force in 2012 by study status in 2012. Eighty-eight percent of graduates studying part-time were employed, with 48 percent employed full-time. Sixty-nine percent of graduates studying full-time were employed, with the majority employed part-time. Eighty-seven percent of graduates who were not studying were employed and eight percent were unemployed.

**Table 4: Proportion of 2011 year 12 graduates in the labour force in 2012 by study status in 2012 (%)**

	Studying			Not studying	All graduates
	Part-time	Full-time	Total		
<b>Employed</b>	<b>87.8</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>71.9</b>	<b>86.7</b>	<b>78.2</b>
Full-time	47.7	8.1	14.6	47.4	28.6
Part-time	38.2	60.1	56.5	37.4	48.3
Don't know/Refused	1.9	0.7	0.9	1.9	1.3
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>10.2</b>
Looking for full-time work	0.4	0.1	0.2	3.4	1.6
Looking for part-time work	5.9	12.7	11.6	2.7	7.8
Looking for full or part-time work	1.0	0.4	0.5	1.4	0.9
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total in labour force</b>	<b>95.1</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>84.1</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>88.5</b>
<b>Not in labour force</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>11.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

1. The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding

Thirty-nine percent of graduates who were not studying in 2012 reported their main reason for not studying was to “take a gap year”, 20 percent indicated that they had “got a job”, 12 percent were “travelling”, 9 percent were “not ready for study” and 4 percent “never planned/intended to study” (Table 5).

Thirty-six 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”, nineteen percent indicated they were “taking a gap year”, 10 percent said they “didn’t feel ready for study at the moment” and 8 percent “never planned/intended to study”.

**Table 5: Proportion of 2011 year 12 graduates by main reason for not studying in 2012 and selected demographics (%)**

	Taking a gap year	Got a job	Travelling	Not ready for study	Never planned/intended to study	Other
<b>Sex</b>						
Females	40.7	16.8	14.3	8.0	3.0	16.7
Males	37.0	23.6	8.3	9.7	6.0	15.3
<b>Participated in a VET course at school</b>						
No	45.3	14.2	14.0	9.0	2.9	14.5
Yes	30.1	27.8	8.3	8.4	6.3	18.4
<b>ATAR group</b>						
No ATAR	19.4	36.1	4.4	9.7	8.0	22.0
1 - 65	50.4	11.2	9.6	11.3	3.2	14.3
66 - 75	51.1	10.6	16.7	7.5	1.2	12.2
76 - 85	51.4	4.9	21.7	8.8	0.0	12.6
86 - 95	57.9	4.5	21.7	5.8	1.9	8.2
96 - 100	70.3	1.6	18.0	2.1	0.0	8.0
<b>All graduates</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>16.1</b>

1. 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 43 percent of graduates who were not studying in 2012 (Table 2), 76 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-six 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.



# Labour Force Status

Table 6 details the 2012 labour force status of 2011 year 12 graduates. Seventy-eight percent of graduates reported having a paid job. Ten percent of graduates reported not currently having a paid job and actively looking for work with the majority looking for part-time work.

**Table 6: Number and Proportion of 2011 year 12 graduates by labour force status in 2012**

	Number	Proportion (%)
<b>Employed</b>	<b>3,197</b>	<b>78.2</b>
Full-time	1,169	28.6
Part-time	1,974	48.3
Don't know/Refused	55	1.3
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>10.2</b>
Looking for full-time work	63	1.6
Looking for part-time work	318	7.7
Looking for full or part-time work	37	0.9
Don't know	0	0.0
<b>Total in labour force</b>	<b>3,615</b>	<b>88.5</b>
<b>Not in labour force</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>11.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,086</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Unemployment rate</b>		<b>11.6</b>

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

The most common occupations were community and personal service workers (35%), sales workers (28%), clerical and administration workers (11%) and technical and trade workers (9%).



# Satisfaction

Figure 3 summarises the responses of 2011 year 12 graduates to seven satisfaction questions regarding their experience in years 11 and 12 in the ACT. Responses of strongly agree or agree were classified as “positive”, responses of strongly disagree or disagree as a “negative” and responses of neither agree nor disagree as “neutral”.

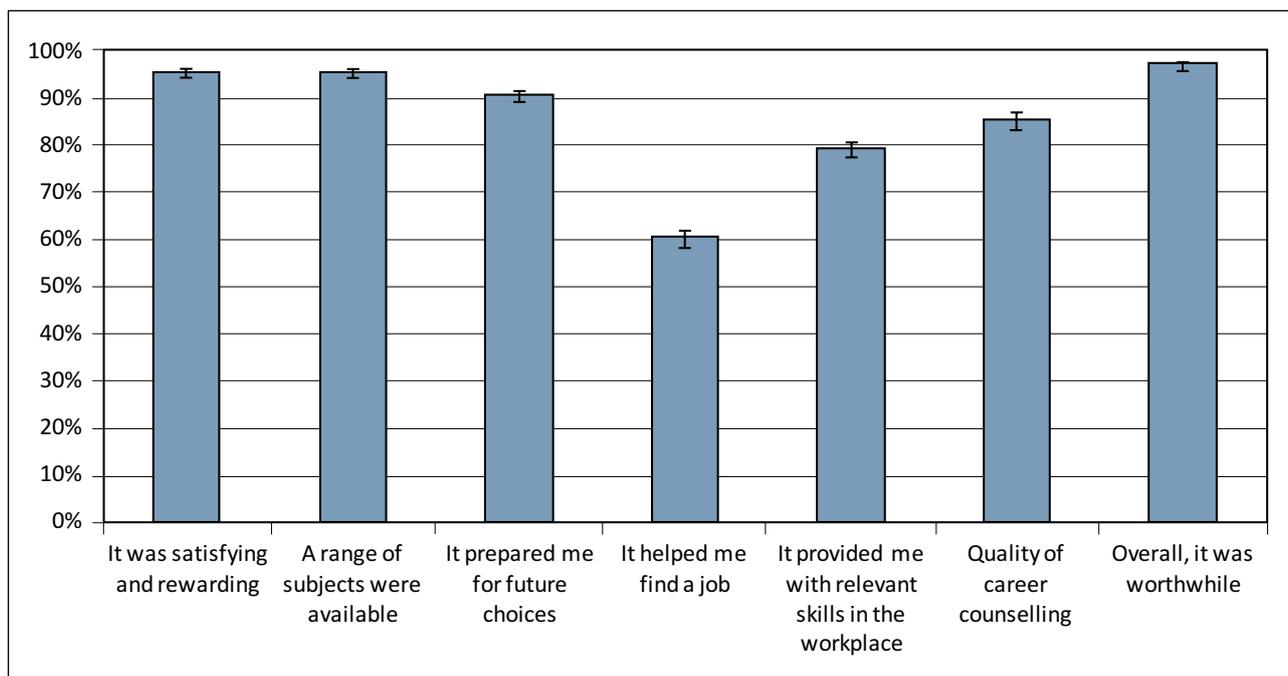
More than nine in 10 graduates gave a positive response to the following statements about their year 11 and 12 experience:

- it prepared me for future choices (90%)
- it was satisfying and rewarding (95%)
- a range of subjects were available (95%)
- overall, it was worthwhile (97%).

Eighty-five percent were satisfied with the “quality of career counselling” and seventy-nine percent of graduates gave a positive response to the statement that their year 11 and 12 experience “provided them with relevant skills in the workplace”.

Thirty-one percent of graduates gave a negative response to the statement that their year 11 and 12 experience “helped them find a job”.

**Figure 3: Proportion of 2011 year 12 graduates satisfied with various aspects of their year 11 and 12 experience (%)**



1. The error bars reflect the 95 percent confidence intervals and where they overlap indicates there is no statistical difference between the results.

These patterns of satisfaction were consistent with the previous survey results reported for 2008, 2009 and 2010 graduates.

## Scope and Methodology

In May and June 2012 the Education and Training Directorate conducted a survey of 2011 ACT school leavers from year 9 to year 12. The results for students who left school in 2011 prior to completing an ACT Year 12 Certificate will be included in a separate publication.

This publication, *2011 ACT year 12 graduates: Where are they now?* presents the survey results for the students who successfully completed an ACT Year 12 Certificate in 2011.

The survey findings will help to ensure that ACT senior school education remains relevant and is of the highest quality. Major stakeholders include the ACT Education and Training Directorate, the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (OBSSS), universities, vocational education and training providers and schools.

The survey frame was drawn from the OBSSS administrative records and the population of interest was defined as those graduates who were awarded a Year 12 Certificate from an ACT college, school or the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) in 2011. The population excluded graduates who were full fee paying students whose usual residence was overseas.

Prior to the survey being undertaken a primary approach letter was sent to all potential respondents. This provided information about the purpose and importance of the survey, the broad content of the survey, the amount of time the interview would take and confidentiality provisions. The survey was undertaken by telephone from 7 May 2012 to 4 June 2012 and where possible the information was obtained directly from the graduate. In some cases a parent or guardian supplied the information where the graduate could not be contacted directly. A total of 4,086 graduates were identified as being in-scope for the survey. Of the 3,628 graduates who were sent a primary approach letter, 2,811 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 77 percent.



## Explanatory Notes

**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. Prior to 2009 the rank used for university selection was called the Universities Admission Index (UAI). The ATAR is similar (but not identical) to the UAI (see [www.uac.edu.au](http://www.uac.edu.au) for more information).

**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 apprenticeship or repeating year 12.

**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 on the survey form.

**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.

**Vocational education and training (VET) 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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220 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City ACT 2602 | GPO Box 158, CANBERRA ACT 2601

**Phone:** (02) 6205 9358 **Web:** <http://www.det.act.gov.au>