

2012 ACT year 12 graduates: Where are they now?

A summary of a survey of graduates from public and non-government schools awarded an ACT Year 12 Certificate in 2012.

Key Findings

- Ninety-three percent of 2012 year 12 graduates were employed and/or studying in 2013
- Sixty percent of 2012 year 12 graduates were studying in 2013, with 51 percent studying full-time and nine percent studying part-time
- Sixty-two percent of the 2012 year 12 graduates applied for a university place and 98 percent of these graduates were successful in gaining a place
- Sixty-seven percent of 2012 year 12 graduates studying in 2013 reported that they were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher
- Six percent of graduates were undertaking an apprenticeship in 2013 and three percent were doing a traineeship
- Of the graduates who were studying full-time, 65 percent were employed with the majority employed part-time
- Of the 40 percent who were not currently studying, 77 percent intended to start some study in the next two years
- Seventy-four percent of 2012 year 12 graduates were employed in 2013, with 24 percent employed full-time and 49 percent employed part-time
- Fourteen percent of 2012 year 12 graduates were unemployed in 2013
- Overall, 96 percent of 2012 year 12 graduates found years 11 and 12 worthwhile

Contents

Context.....	2
Key Outcomes	3
Study	4
Labour Force Status	9
Satisfaction	10
Scope and Methodology.....	11
Explanatory Notes.....	12

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 while meeting industry needs.

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 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 year 12 graduates.

Ninety-three percent of 2012 year 12 graduates reported that they were employed and/or studying in 2013. Seventy-four percent of graduates were employed in full or part-time paid work and sixty percent of all graduates were studying in 2013.

The following interesting features were identified:

- 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 and 2012 were more likely to be employed and employed and/or studying than male graduates
- graduates who speak a language other than English at home (LBOTE) were more likely to be studying while graduates who are not LBOTE were more likely to be employed
- graduates who did not obtain an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) were more likely to be employed and less likely to be studying.

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

Year of graduation	Employed				Currently Studying				Employed and/or Studying			
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2009	2010	2011	2012	2009	2010	2011	2012
Sex												
Female	76.3	79.0	80.3	77.2	52.4	55.8	55.8	60.4	89.7	94.3	95.5	94.7
Male	73.6	78.7	75.7	71.4	54.1	54.1	59.0	59.3	90.5	93.4	93.0	92.1
LBOTE												
No	78.2	81.5	81.6	78.2	50.1	51.2	53.8	55.9	90.0	93.9	94.3	93.2
Yes	54.8	63.9	58.5	55.1	72.5	76.8	77.2	79.4	90.2	94.0	94.5	94.5
Participated in a VET course at school												
No	72.6	78.0	74.9	74.4	53.6	56.6	60.5	57.6	88.9	94.3	94.3	93.5
Yes	79.3	80.3	84.1	74.0	52.6	52.1	51.4	65.7	92.3	93.2	94.4	93.1
ATAR Group												
No ATAR	80.9	84.7	85.1	78.8	44.9	42.0	43.9	48.5	90.3	90.9	92.3	88.3
1 - 65	78.8	76.8	78.9	75.9	49.2	55.5	57.4	55.5	91.3	94.8	93.5	93.0
66 - 75	78.5	81.2	81.7	74.6	56.5	58.6	58.6	65.0	91.8	97.2	94.4	95.7
76 - 85	73.7	79.8	76.8	73.1	57.6	58.6	64.3	66.8	90.2	94.3	96.8	97.7
86 - 95	64.3	73.2	70.9	70.9	61.7	67.2	67.6	70.9	88.8	95.0	95.8	97.4
96 - 100	59.2	62.8	59.6	59.6	65.7	69.5	75.6	73.3	85.4	95.3	96.2	95.9
Received Career counselling at school												
No	75.6	78.4	78.2	74.6	56.1	56.1	56.5	59.1	92.9	94.5	94.7	92.7
Yes	75.9	79.8	79.0	74.6	52.6	54.9	58.2	61.3	89.6	93.9	94.5	94.2
Don't Know	58.9	69.0	63.2	62.5	34.6	38.6	49.7	42.8	69.6	82.2	82.6	89.1
Total	74.9	78.8	78.2	74.3	53.2	54.9	57.2	59.8	90.1	93.9	94.3	93.4

Study

Table 2 shows the proportions of 2012 year 12 graduates studying in 2013 by selected demographic factors. Sixty percent of all graduates indicated that they were undertaking some study in 2013, with 51 percent studying full-time. The most common subjects of study related to society and culture (14%), management and commerce (13%), health (13%), natural and physical sciences (11%), engineering and related technologies (11%) and creative arts (10%).

Graduates achieving a higher ATAR had a greater tendency to undertake further study. Seventy-three percent of the graduates with an ATAR between 96 and 100 were undertaking study in 2013, compared with 65 percent of the graduates with an ATAR between 66 and 75.

Table 2: Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates studying in 2013 by selected demographics (%)

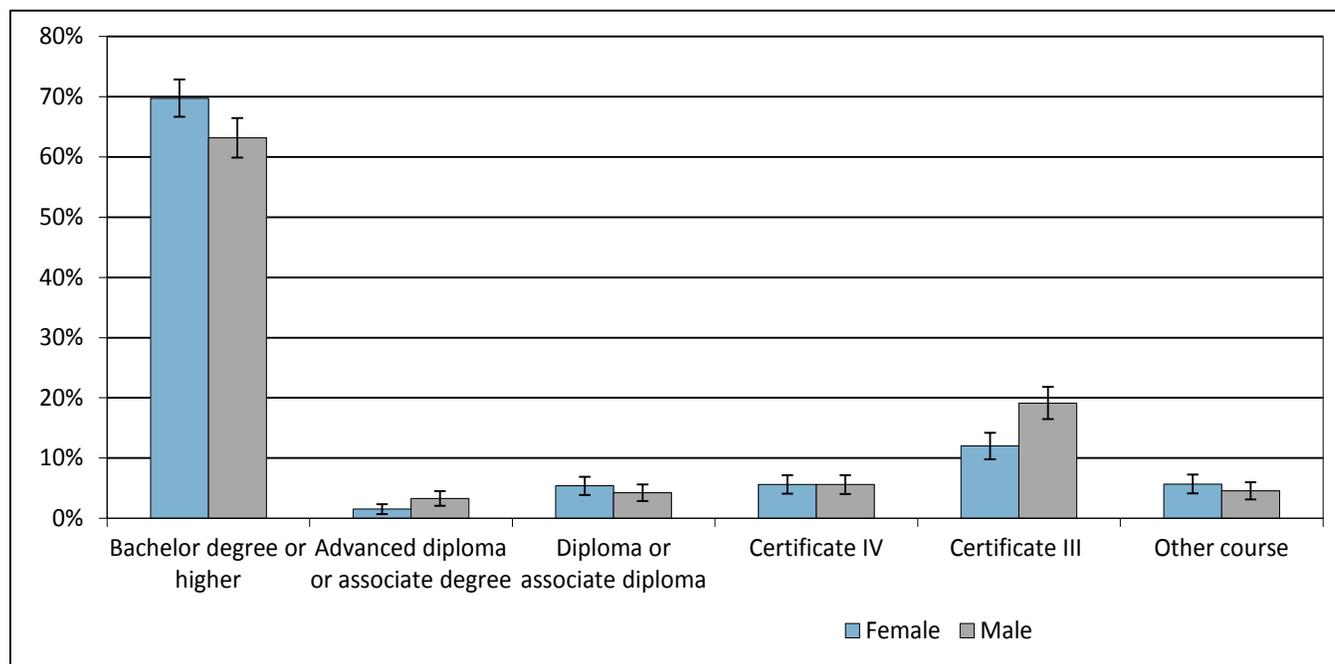
	Studying			Not studying
	Part-time	Full-time	All	
Sex				
Females	9.1	51.1	60.4	39.6
Males	8.6	50.3	59.3	40.7
LBOTE				
No	9.5	46.0	55.9	44.1
Yes	5.4	73.8	79.4	20.6
Participated in a VET course at school				
No	8.0	49.3	57.6	42.4
Yes	10.9	54.3	65.7	34.3
ATAR Group				
No ATAR	17.0	31.0	48.5	51.5
1 - 65	7.5	47.8	55.5	44.5
66 - 75	5.2	59.6	65.0	35.0
76 - 85	3.7	62.8	66.8	33.2
86 - 95	3.8	67.0	70.9	29.1
96 - 100	2.2	70.7	73.3	26.7
All graduates	8.8	50.7	59.8	40.2

Sixty-two percent of graduates applied for a university place and 98 percent of these graduates were successful in gaining a place. However, only 70 percent of successful applicants accepted the place and enrolled in 2013. Twenty-eight percent of graduates who were offered a place deferred and two percent rejected the offer. Female graduates, graduates who do not speak a language other than English at home (LBOTE) and graduates who received career counselling at school were all more likely to defer their university studies.

Sixty-seven percent of graduates studying in 2013 reported that they were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher. Sixteen percent of graduates studying in 2013 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 63 percent of males. The proportion of males studying at Certificate III level was more than the proportion of females studying at that level – 19 percent of males compared with 12 percent of females (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates studying in 2013 by level 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 2012 year 12 graduates chose their course in 2013. Overall, 52 percent reported that they chose their course because “it’s a course that interests me” and 36 percent said “to get/start/help in a job/business”.

Forty-eight percent of graduates who were studying in 2013 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: Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates by main reason for choosing their course in 2013 and selected demographics (%)

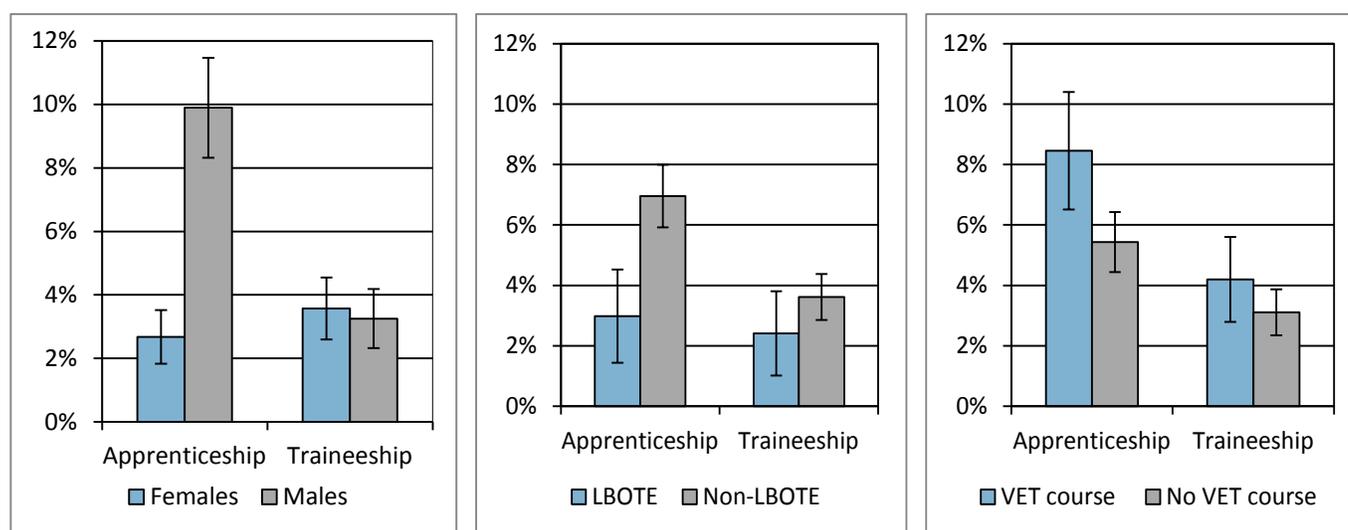
	It's a course that interests me	To get/start/help in a job/business	To help get into another course	To improve my education	Other
Sex					
Females	51.4	35.7	6.1	2.9	2.7
Males	52.5	35.3	2.9	4.0	3.5
Participated in a VET course at school					
No	51.3	36.3	4.6	3.5	2.7
Yes	53.5	33.6	4.2	3.3	4.1
ATAR Group					
No ATAR	36.4	47.7	6.0	5.1	4.1
1 - 65	56.2	28.6	9.2	1.5	2.1
66 - 75	57.1	35.4	0.7	1.8	2.6
76 - 85	55.2	32.7	4.6	3.0	3.4
86 - 95	60.7	28.8	1.2	4.7	2.9
96 - 100	59.6	28.5	5.2	2.3	2.5
All graduates	52.0	35.5	4.5	3.4	3.1

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, six percent of graduates were undertaking an apprenticeship in 2013 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 were non-LBOTE were more likely to be undertaking an apprenticeship than graduates who were LBOTE.

Figure 2: Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in 2013 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.

Table 4 details the proportions of 2012 year 12 graduates in the labour force in 2013 by study status in 2013. Eighty-four percent of graduates studying part-time were employed, with 41 percent employed full-time. Sixty-five percent of graduates studying full-time were employed, with the majority employed part-time. Eighty-four percent of graduates who were not studying were employed and 12 percent were unemployed.

Table 4: Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates in the labour force in 2013 by study status in 2013 (%)

	Studying			Not studying	All graduates
	Part-time	Full-time	Total		
Employed	83.9	65.3	68.1	83.6	74.3
Full-time	41.5	9.2	14.2	38.1	23.8
Part-time	39.9	55.1	52.7	43.8	49.1
Don't know/Refused	2.5	1.0	1.2	1.6	1.3
Unemployed	9.7	15.6	14.8	12.2	13.7
Looking for full-time work	1.9	0.6	0.8	5.0	2.5
Looking for part-time work	6.5	14.6	13.4	4.1	9.6
Looking for full or part-time work	1.3	0.4	0.6	3.2	1.6
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total in labour force	93.6	80.9	82.8	95.8	88.0
Not in labour force	6.4	19.1	17.2	4.2	12.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding

Thirty-three percent of graduates who were not studying in 2013 reported their main reason for not studying was to “take a gap year”, 13 percent were “travelling”, 12 percent were “not ready for study”, 11 percent indicated that they had “got a job”, and 10 percent said they “dislike school/study” (Table 5).

Nineteen 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”, 18 percent indicated they were “taking a gap year”, 15 percent said they “didn’t feel ready for study at the moment”, 11 percent said they “dislike school/study” and 10 percent “never planned/intended to study”.

Table 5: Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates by main reason for not studying in 2013 and selected demographics (%)

	Taking a gap year	Travelling	Not ready for study	Got a job	Dislike school/study	Never planned/intended to study	Other
Sex							
Females	32.2	16.9	10.7	10.1	9.7	3.8	15.8
Males	33.0	8.5	13.1	11.1	11.1	7.6	15.0
Participated in a VET course at school							
No	34.2	13.5	11.7	10.1	9.2	5.3	15.3
Yes	27.7	10.0	12.6	12.3	14.4	7.1	15.6
ATAR Group							
No ATAR	17.6	4.7	14.6	19.0	11.3	10.5	20.9
1 - 65	39.0	12.4	14.1	7.0	13.9	3.5	10.1
66 - 75	45.4	16.0	8.8	7.6	9.6	3.0	9.7
76 - 85	43.3	19.7	10.9	2.8	7.8	2.7	12.8
86 - 95	51.3	24.8	5.3	0.7	9.4	0.0	8.5
96 - 100	39.9	29.7	6.7	0.0	1.9	0.0	21.7
All graduates	32.6	12.7	11.9	10.6	10.4	5.7	15.4

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 40 percent of graduates who were not studying in 2013 (Table 2), 77 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-four 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 (18%), creative arts (14%), health (14%), management and commerce (13%), and natural and physical sciences (10%).

Labour Force Status

Table 6 details the 2013 labour force status of 2012 year 12 graduates. Seventy-four 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 6: Number and Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates by labour force status in 2013

	Number	Percentage
Employed	3149	74.3
Full-time	1009	23.8
Part-time	2082	49.1
Don't know/Refused	58	1.4
Unemployed	583	13.7
Looking for full-time work	105	2.5
Looking for part-time work	409	9.6
Looking for full or part-time work	69	1.6
Don't know	0	0.0
Total in labour force	3732	88.0
Not in labour force	507	12.0
Total	4239	100
Unemployment rate		15.6

The most common occupations were community and personal service workers (37%), sales workers (29%), labourers (10%), technical and trade workers (9%) and clerical and administration workers (9%).

Satisfaction

Figure 3 summarises the responses of 2012 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”.

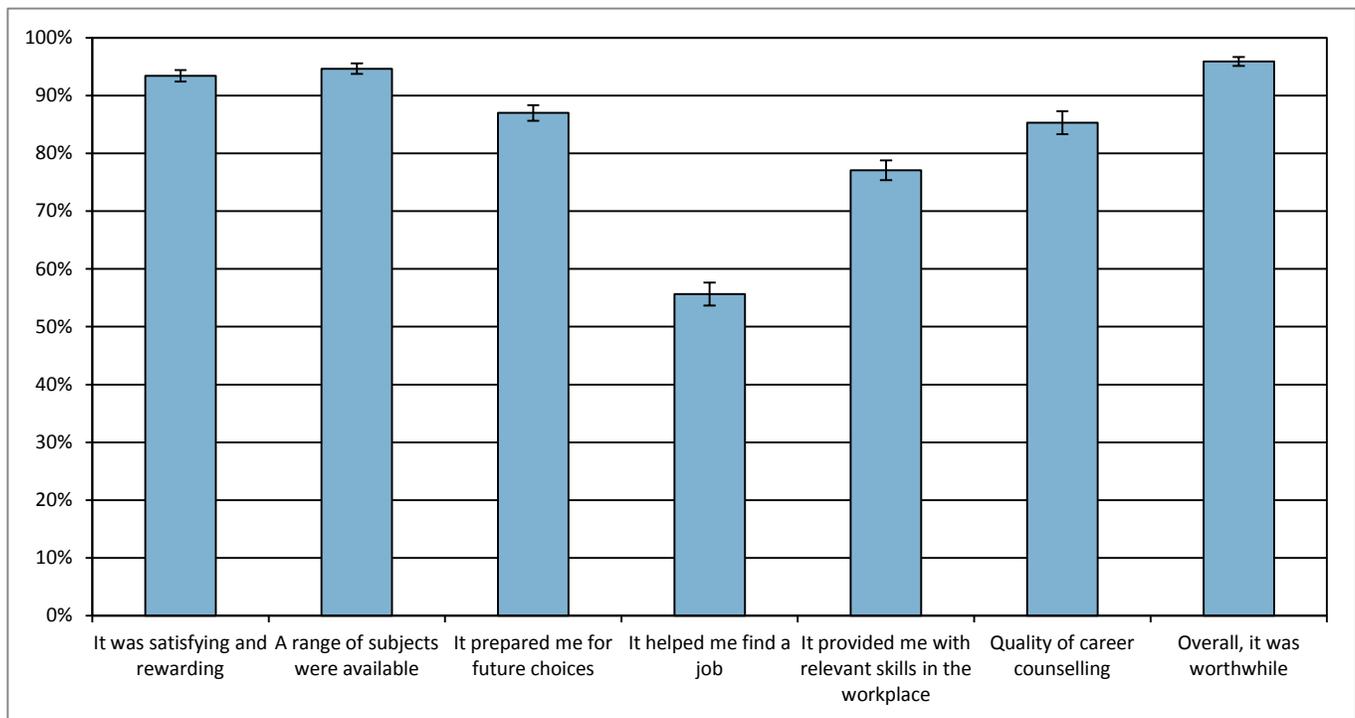
More than nine in 10 graduates gave a positive response to the following statements about their year 11 and 12 experience:

- it was satisfying and rewarding (93%)
- a range of subjects were available (95%)
- overall, it was worthwhile (96%).

Eighty-seven percent agreed with the statement, “it prepared me for future choices” and 85 percent were satisfied with the “quality of career counselling”. Seventy-seven percent of graduates gave a positive response to the statement that their years 11 and 12 experience “provided them with relevant skills in the workplace”.

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

Figure 3: Proportion of 2012 year 12 graduates satisfied with various aspects of their years 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.

These patterns of satisfaction were consistent with the previous survey results reported for 2009, 2010 and 2011 graduates.

Scope and Methodology

In May and June 2013 the Education and Training Directorate conducted a survey of 2012 ACT school leavers from year 9 to year 12. The results for students who left school in 2012 prior to completing an ACT Year 12 Certificate will be included in a separate publication.

This publication, *2012 ACT year 12 graduates: Where are they now?* presents the survey results for the students who successfully completed an ACT Year 12 Certificate in 2012.

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 (BSSS), universities, vocational education and training providers and schools.

The survey frame was drawn from the BSSS 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 2012. 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 2013 to 2 June 2013 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 4,239 graduates were identified as being in-scope for the survey. Of the 3,786 graduates who were sent a primary approach letter, 2,898 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.

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.

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.

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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