

The *On Track* Survey 2011 Longitudinal Report The 2007 Cohort 4 Years On



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|---|
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ACER | Australian Council for Educational Research |
| DEECD | Department of Education and Early Childhood Development |
| GAT | General Achievement Test |
| IB | International Baccalaureate |
| NILFET | Not in labour force, education or training |
| SES | socioeconomic status |
| SRC | Social Research Centre |
| TAFE | Technical and Further Education |
| VCAA | Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority |
| VCAL | Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning |
| VCE | Victorian Certificate of Education |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |

Executive Summary

This report examines the pathways of young people who left a Victorian government school in 2007. The participants in this *On Track* longitudinal survey comprised 2346 Year 12 or equivalent completers and 1130 early school leavers. These young people were first contacted in 2008 as part of the annual *On Track* survey and were interviewed in each subsequent year until 2011.

Pathways through education and training after leaving school

- In the first year after leaving school, 70% of Year 12 or equivalent completers were participating in education and training, comprising 39% at university, 20% studying for a certificate and 11% in an apprenticeship or traineeship. By the fourth year of the study, 93% of Year 12 or equivalent completers had participated in some form of education and training, including 56% who had attended university for at least one year.
- Among early school leavers, 78% had participated in education in the four years. In the first year after leaving school, 56% were in education and training Apprenticeship was the most common form of education and training among early school leavers.
- Year 12 or equivalent completers who had attended schools in non-metropolitan areas had participated in post-school education and training at a much lower rate than completers from metropolitan areas in the first year after leaving school, mainly because they had deferred tertiary study at much higher rates. In subsequent years, their participation rate was only marginally lower.
- There was little difference between metropolitan and non-metropolitan early school leavers in their overall participation in post-school education and training. Early leavers from metropolitan schools were more frequently in campus-based tertiary study, while those from non-metropolitan schools were more frequently in an apprenticeship or traineeship.
- Among Year 12 or equivalent completers, participation in post-school education and training was highest among those from the highest SES quarter, at 97%, and lowest among those from the lowest SES quarter, at 91%. Early school leavers participated at lower rates, with 76% of early leavers from the lowest SES quarter and 85% from the highest SES quarter participating.

Completion of post-secondary education and training

- By 2011, 29% of Year 12 or equivalent completers and 15% of early school leavers had completed some form of post-school education and training.
- Nearly one-quarter of Year 12 or equivalent completers who were at university in 2008 had completed their course and nearly one-half were still enrolled in the same course.
- Year 12 or equivalent completers who had attended non-metropolitan schools had completed some form of post-school study by 2011 more frequently than did completers from metropolitan schools, but there were differences in the type of study completed.
- There were only small differences in completion rates of post-school education and training by SES, although there were differences by the type of study.

Non-participation in post-secondary education and training

- Among the small percentage of Year 12 or equivalent completers who did not participate in any education or training after leaving school, more than one-half were working full-time in each year. By 2011, 88% were working, with the majority working full-time.

- Of the 22% of early school leavers who had done no post-school education or training, less than one-half were employed full-time in each of the four post-school years.
- There was no difference by geographic location in non-participation in post-school education and training among both Year 12 completers and early leavers, and little difference related to SES. Year 12 completers from the lowest GAT quarter less frequently participated in post-school education and training than did completers from other GAT quarters.

Benefits of post-school education and training

- In 2011, there was little difference between Year 12 or equivalent completers who entered the labour force directly after school and those who went into education and training in the proportions of completers in full-time work. It is probable that this lack of difference would change in 2012, after completers who were still in education and training in 2011 entered the work force after completing their studies.
- Early school leavers who participated in education and training after leaving school were more frequently in full-time employment in 2011 than were those who did no further study. The rate of participation in full-time employment was equivalent to the rate for all Year 12 or equivalent completers in full-time employment.

Labour market entry and participation

- By 2011, 21% of all Year 12 or equivalent completers were in full-time employment. In each year from 2009 to 2011, around 40% had

been in full-time employment in the previous year, and the majority of those entering full-time employment had been in education and training the previous year.

- Among the early school leavers, 30% were employed full-time in 2011. As noted for Year 12 completers, those in full-time work in any year tended to be in full-time work or education and training in the previous year. In 2009, however, there were fewer early leavers who had moved into full-time work from some other activity, suggesting that the global financial situation affected early school leavers and their entry into the labour market more than it affected Year 12 completers.
- A small proportion of both Year 12 or equivalent completers and early school leavers were NILFET in all four study years. Most were young women, but they differed in other characteristics. Among the completers, all were female, from metropolitan regions and from the middle SES quarters. Among the early leavers, 75% were female, more than 50% were from metropolitan regions and more than 50% were from the lowest SES quarter.

Wellbeing

- Participants in the *On Track* longitudinal survey were overwhelmingly happy about their work, career opportunities and life overall, with Year 12 or equivalent completers slightly happier than early school leavers. Nearly all of those in an apprenticeship in 2011 were positive about their career opportunities, both Year 12 completers and early leavers.

- By 2011, 71% of completers and 70% of early leavers were still living with their parents. There were differences by socioeconomic status in both groups, with those from the lowest SES quarter most likely to have left home and those from the highest SES quarter least likely.

The results of this *On Track* longitudinal study are similar to those of the previous *On Track* longitudinal study of 2004 school leavers, which concentrated on school leavers who had participated in vocational education and training. In particular, the apprenticeship completion rates and participation rates in post-school education and training reported here resemble those reported in the earlier longitudinal study. On a wider scale, the pathways of early school leavers in this study reflect those identified in previous research—both Victorian and Australian—especially the benefits of post-school education and training.

The availability of post-school education and training pathways has assisted the early school leavers who participated in the *On Track* longitudinal study. For this group, early school leaving is not synonymous with ‘dropping out’; it is a shift in the location and focus of further study, and is not necessarily related to socioeconomic background or geographic location. By having opportunities to continue their education at a TAFE institution or other provider, or with a qualified tradesperson, early school leavers, regardless of their background, can engage in full-time work at rates equivalent to those enjoyed by Year 12 or equivalent completers.

Introduction

Aims of *On Track*

On Track is a continuing program of annual surveys of school leavers designed to provide a broad picture of the outcomes of schooling in Victoria. It does so by documenting the range of academic and vocational pathways that young people enter during the first year after leaving school.

On Track seeks to:

- Offer a consistent and comprehensive approach to monitoring the transitions of school leavers following their exit from schooling or its equivalent.
- Report results of the survey to schools, TAFE colleges and other education providers, organisations concerned with assisting young people, policymakers, and the wider public, including parents and students.
- Provide a detailed analysis of the destinations of school leavers in order to address issues for particular subgroups in relation to their success in specific pathways.
- Provide a referral service for school leavers who appear to be experiencing difficulties in the transition process.
- Enable education providers to use the data and analyses as part of the process of monitoring and improving their programs.

The annual *On Track* program comprises two separate surveys: one for completers of Year 12 or its equivalent, and one for early school leavers. Year 12 or equivalent completers are defined as those who completed a Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), International Baccalaureate (IB) or Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL, Senior or Intermediate). The sample includes those who completed such qualifications in schools (the large majority), TAFE colleges, or adult and community learning organisations.

Early school leavers are defined as those students in Years 10, 11 and 12 who had registered their details with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) by enrolling in a VCE or VCAL unit, and who left school before receiving any of the following certificates: VCE, IB, VCAL Senior or VCAL Intermediate. A young person who was awarded the VCAL Intermediate certificate in Year 11 would be considered a Year 12 or equivalent completer; another who was enrolled in a VCE program and left school during Year 12 would be considered an early school leaver.

The *On Track* longitudinal survey

One component of the *On Track* program is the longitudinal survey, which follows a group of respondents to the *On Track* surveys in selected years. The first longitudinal surveys followed a sample of young people who left school during 2003 and were interviewed annually from 2004 until 2007. A second longitudinal cohort was selected from those who left school in 2004 and were interviewed from 2005 to 2008. Reports on these cohorts (DET, 2006; DoE, 2007; DEECD, 2007, 2009) are available on the Internet at (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/ontrack/data.htm>). The composition of each longitudinal cohort is intended to provide information that supports evidence-based policy decisions regarding the transition from school into post-secondary education and training, and into work.

This report presents the final results for the most recent *On Track* longitudinal cohort. These young people left school in 2007 and were first interviewed in 2008 as part of the annual *On Track* surveys. At that time, they were asked if they would like to be contacted again as part of the longitudinal study. The results reported here are based on interviews conducted in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Survey design

The focus of the 2007 *On Track* longitudinal group has been those young people who are most at risk of experiencing poorer transitions and who can best be influenced by Government policy. A total of 28,390 Year 12 or equivalent completers and 3850 early school leavers agreed to participate in the longitudinal study, representing 85% of completers and 81% of early leavers interviewed in 2008. When determining the samples for the longitudinal study a number of decisions were taken:

- An initial combined sample size of approximately 6400 would allow a final sample size of approximately 3700.
- The longitudinal samples would comprise only those young people whose last enrolment was at a Government school.
- There would be two longitudinal samples: one comprising all early school leavers who agreed to participate in the longitudinal study and one representative sample of consenting Year 12 or equivalent completers.

- By oversampling Year 12 completers who had attended schools in non-metropolitan locations, young people who deferred university study in 2008 could be followed to determine if they enrolled in the following year, and if they remained at university in subsequent years.
- The longitudinal samples would include all consenting Indigenous Australians in both the Year 12 completer and early leaver groups.

In 2008, interviews were conducted with ‘proxies’—parents or other close relatives—for 6% of completer interviews and 8% of early leaver interviews. These cases were not eligible for the longitudinal sample, as proxies were not able to provide the required consent.

Table 1 presents the major characteristics of the samples, as originally selected for the *On Track* longitudinal survey. For each sample—completers and early leavers—the numbers of interviews conducted and the designed samples are shown. The numbers of interviews include proxies and non-consenters, who were not eligible for participation in the longitudinal study. All reporting on the sample includes appropriate weights to ensure that those groups that were oversampled do not overly influence the statistics.

Survey administration

The final *On Track* longitudinal interviews were conducted during May-June 2011 by the Social Research Centre (SRC) in collaboration with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). Contact was attempted with all of those who had responded to the longitudinal interviews in 2010: 2792 Year 12 or equivalent completers and 1507 early school leavers. A total of 3476 interviews were completed in 2011 (81% of 2010 respondents).

One questionnaire was used for both Year 12 or equivalent completers and early school leavers, with individual item variations where appropriate. The 2011 questionnaire is included in Appendix 1. Questionnaires used in earlier years are available as appendices in each year’s longitudinal report (DEECD, 2009a, 2010, 2011). Data collected by SRC were analysed by the research team at ACER, who prepared this report for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).

Table 1 Main characteristics of designed samples

| | Year 12 or equivalent completers | | | | Early school leavers | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------|--|-------|---|-------|--|-------|
| | 2008 annual interview (including proxies) | | Designed longitudinal sample (excluding proxies) | | 2008 annual interview (including proxies) | | Designed longitudinal sample (excluding proxies) | |
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Total | 17953 | 100.0 | 3879 | 100.0 | 3436 | 100.0 | 2582 | 100.0 |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 9747 | 54.3 | 2122 | 54.7 | 1269 | 36.9 | 969 | 37.5 |
| Male | 8206 | 45.7 | 1757 | 45.3 | 2167 | 63.1 | 1613 | 62.5 |
| Geographic location | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 12412 | 69.1 | 2722 | 70.2 | 1976 | 57.5 | 1486 | 57.6 |
| Non-metropolitan | 5541 | 30.9 | 1157 | 29.8 | 1460 | 42.5 | 1096 | 42.4 |
| Indigenous status | | | | | | | | |
| Non-Indigenous | 16666 | 98.7 | 3828 | 98.7 | 3059 | 96.6 | 2493 | 96.6 |
| Indigenous | 221 | 1.3 | 51 | 1.3 | 107 | 3.4 | 89 | 3.4 |
| Highest certificate received | | | | | | | | |
| VCE | 16975 | 94.6 | 3675 | 94.7 | | | | |
| VCAL Senior | 600 | 3.3 | 126 | 3.3 | | | | |
| VCAL Intermediate | 378 | 2.1 | 78 | 2.0 | | | | |
| VCAL Foundation | | | | | 61 | 1.8 | 47 | 1.8 |
| No certificate | | | | | 3375 | 98.2 | 2535 | 98.2 |
| Year level when left school | | | | | | | | |
| 10 or below | | | | | 752 | 21.9 | 597 | 23.1 |
| 11 | | | | | 1698 | 49.4 | 1268 | 49.1 |
| 12 | | | | | 986 | 28.7 | 717 | 27.8 |

Notes: All counts are for school leavers who had attended Government schools in 2007. Counts of 2008 annual interview respondents are for all who were interviewed in 2008, including non-consenters and proxies; non-consenters and proxies are not included in the designed samples. Indigenous status was not asked in proxy interviews. The designed sample of Year 12 completers is based on weighted data. The designed sample of early school leavers is based on unweighted data, as all consenters were selected.

Table 1. shows the distributions of the 2008 designed and 2011 achieved samples on selected characteristics. Two variables were used to draw the samples: geographic location and Indigenous status. For geographic location, there is little difference in the distributions of either the Year 12 or equivalent completers or the early leavers sample. There are decreases in the percentages of Indigenous young people—from both the Year 12 completer and early school leaver groups—but the designed oversampling should ensure that the remaining Indigenous young people are representative of the original samples.

Among the other variables shown in Table 2., there were shifts in the gender balance, with increases in the percentage males of among both the Year 12 or equivalent completers cohort and the early school leavers cohort. In the sample achieved for 2011, there was a slight increase in the percentage of early school leavers who had left in Year 12 and slight decreases in the percentage who had left in other years, relative to the designed (2008) sample. There were also decreases in the percentage of the samples who were from the lowest SES and GAT quartiles, groups that are more likely to have difficulty in the transition from school. The achieved samples across all years of the longitudinal cohort are presented in Table 3. Across time there has been stability in the design variables after weighting, and small differences in non-design variables.

Table 2 Designed and achieved samples for the longitudinal study, 2011

| | Year 12 or equivalent completers | | | | Early school leavers | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| | Designed sample 2008 | | Achieved sample 2011 | | Designed sample 2008 | | Achieved sample 2011 | |
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Total | 3879 | 100.0 | 2346 | 100.0 | 2582 | 100.0 | 1130 | 100.0 |
| Design variables | | | | | | | | |
| Geographic location | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 2722 | 70.2 | 1640 | 69.9 | 1486 | 57.6 | 660 | 58.4 |
| Non-metropolitan | 1157 | 29.8 | 706 | 30.1 | 1096 | 42.4 | 470 | 41.6 |
| Indigenous status | | | | | | | | |
| Non-Indigenous | 3828 | 98.7 | 2322 | 99.0 | 2493 | 96.6 | 1095 | 96.9 |
| Indigenous | 51 | 1.3 | 24 | 1.0 | 89 | 3.4 | 35 | 3.1 |
| Non-design variables | | | | | | | | |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 2122 | 54.7 | 1244 | 53.0 | 969 | 37.5 | 383 | 33.9 |
| Male | 1757 | 45.3 | 1102 | 47.0 | 1613 | 62.5 | 747 | 66.1 |
| Highest certificate received | | | | | | | | |
| VCE | 3675 | 94.7 | 2223 | 94.8 | | | | |
| VCAL Senior | 126 | 3.3 | 81 | 3.4 | | | | |
| VCAL Intermediate | 78 | 2.0 | 42 | 1.8 | | | | |
| VCAL Foundation | | | | | 47 | 1.8 | 26 | 2.3 |
| No certificate | | | | | 2535 | 98.2 | 1104 | 97.7 |
| Year level when left school | | | | | | | | |
| 10 or below | | | | | 597 | 23.1 | 254 | 22.5 |
| 11 | | | | | 1268 | 49.1 | 546 | 48.3 |
| 12 | | | | | 717 | 27.8 | 330 | 29.2 |
| SES quarter | | | | | | | | |
| Lowest | 896 | 23.4 | 500 | 21.6 | 886 | 36.9 | 350 | 33.3 |
| Lower-middle | 968 | 25.3 | 581 | 25.1 | 739 | 30.8 | 327 | 31.2 |
| Upper-middle | 1026 | 26.8 | 633 | 27.4 | 515 | 21.5 | 244 | 23.2 |
| Highest | 938 | 24.5 | 601 | 26.0 | 259 | 10.8 | 129 | 12.3 |
| GAT quarter | | | | | | | | |
| Lowest | 1092 | 30.0 | 577 | 26.1 | | | | |
| Lower-middle | 985 | 27.1 | 607 | 27.4 | | | | |
| Upper-middle | 858 | 23.6 | 562 | 25.4 | | | | |
| Highest | 699 | 19.2 | 466 | 21.1 | | | | |
| VET in Schools | | | | | | | | |
| Completed | 804 | 20.7 | 497 | 22.4 | 239 | 9.3 | 124 | 12.0 |
| Did not complete | 3075 | 79.3 | 1725 | 77.6 | 2343 | 90.7 | 903 | 88.0 |

Notes: All counts are for school leavers who had attended Government schools. Designed sample (2008) based on consenters only. SES and GAT data not available for all leavers. GAT data not available for early school leavers. Some percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding. Year 12 completer designed sample (2008) and achieved sample (2011), and early school leaver achieved sample (2011) based on weighted data; early school leaver designed sample (2008) based on unweighted data, as all consenters were selected.

Table 3 Annual achieved samples for the longitudinal study, 2008–2011

| | Year 12 or equivalent completers | | | | Early school leavers | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------|------|------|----------------------|------|------|------|
| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| Number of persons | 3879 | 3302 | 2792 | 2346 | 2582 | 1982 | 1507 | 1130 |
| Design variables | | | | | | | | |
| Geographic location | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 70.2 | 70.0 | 69.8 | 69.9 | 57.6 | 58.0 | 58.7 | 58.4 |
| Non-metropolitan | 29.8 | 30.0 | 30.2 | 30.1 | 42.4 | 42.0 | 41.3 | 41.6 |
| Indigenous status | | | | | | | | |
| Non-Indigenous | 98.7 | 98.8 | 98.9 | 99.0 | 96.6 | 96.8 | 96.8 | 96.9 |
| Indigenous status | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.1 |
| Non-design variables | | | | | | | | |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 54.7 | 54.5 | 53.9 | 53.0 | 37.5 | 37.1 | 34.4 | 33.9 |
| Male | 45.3 | 45.5 | 46.1 | 47.0 | 62.5 | 62.9 | 65.6 | 66.1 |
| Highest certificate | | | | | | | | |
| VCE | 94.7 | 94.8 | 94.8 | 94.8 | | | | |
| VCAL Senior | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.4 | | | | |
| VCAL Intermediate | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.8 | | | | |
| VCAL Foundation | | | | | 1.8 | 1.8 | 2.1 | 2.3 |
| No certificate | | | | | 98.2 | 98.2 | 97.9 | 97.7 |
| Year level when left | | | | | | | | |
| 10 or below | | | | | 23.1 | 23.4 | 24.0 | 22.5 |
| 11 | | | | | 49.1 | 48.9 | 48.1 | 48.3 |
| 12 | | | | | 27.8 | 27.7 | 27.9 | 29.2 |
| SES quarter | | | | | | | | |
| Lowest | 23.1 | 22.5 | 21.8 | 21.3 | 34.3 | 33.3 | 31.5 | 31.0 |
| Lower middle | 25.0 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 24.7 | 28.6 | 29.6 | 29.4 | 29.0 |
| Upper middle | 26.5 | 26.7 | 26.9 | 27.0 | 19.9 | 20.1 | 21.1 | 21.6 |
| Highest | 24.2 | 24.7 | 25.2 | 25.6 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 11.0 | 11.4 |
| GAT quarter | | | | | | | | |
| Lowest | 28.1 | 27.5 | 25.7 | 24.6 | | | | |
| Lower middle | 25.4 | 25.7 | 25.6 | 25.9 | | | | |
| Upper middle | 22.1 | 22.3 | 23.2 | 24.0 | | | | |
| Highest | 18.0 | 18.5 | 19.7 | 19.9 | | | | |
| VET in Schools | | | | | | | | |
| Completed | 20.7 | 20.8 | 20.3 | 21.2 | 9.3 | 9.1 | 10.1 | 10.9 |
| Did not complete | 79.3 | 79.2 | 79.7 | 78.8 | 90.7 | 90.9 | 89.9 | 89.1 |

Notes: Designed sample (2008) based on consenters only. SES and GAT quarters not available for all leavers, so these two variables do not sum to 100%. Some percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

This report presents results for the longitudinal cohort in two sections. Results for the Year 12 or equivalent completers sample are discussed first, followed by results for the early leavers sample. Because the Year 12 completers and early leavers were sampled differently from two distinct populations, it would be inappropriate to make direct comparisons between the two groups.

Development of post-stratification weights

Nearly all longitudinal studies suffer from attrition, or the loss of participants across time. The *On Track* longitudinal survey is no exception. The annual achieved samples, shown in Table 3, indicate attrition rates of 15% in 2009 and 2010, and 16% in 2011 among the Year 12 or equivalent completers, and 23% in 2009, 24% in 2010 and 25% in 2011 among the early school leavers. To ensure that the survey participants who remain in the sample are representative of the original population—in this case, school leavers from Government schools in 2007 in Victoria—post-stratification weights are constructed. These weights give more prominence to responses of participants from groups with higher attrition rates and less prominence to responses of participants from groups with lower attrition rates.

The development of post-stratification weights is not perfect. In the first instance, those variables that were used in the selection of the original sample should be used. For the *On Track* longitudinal survey, there was interest in ensuring that all Indigenous school leavers were included and that leavers from schools in non-metropolitan locations were well-represented. Indigenous persons have higher attrition rates from longitudinal studies; young people from non-metropolitan areas are more likely to leave home in the immediate post-school years, resulting in greater difficulty for follow-up contact. In other words, the attrition that is seen in longitudinal studies is not random: some personal characteristics are related to attrition and some are not. The development of weights requires knowledge of the characteristics of the population, the annual samples and the differential attrition that occurs.

After each annual interview, weights are calculated for that year to ensure that the achieved samples represent the designed samples. Weights for the Year 12 or equivalent completers are done separately from the weights for the early school leavers. The calculations are based on the design variables, but other variables—such as gender or highest certificate awarded—may be used to adjust the weights further. The inclusion of other variables may result in a better distribution of the

annual sample. In the case of *On Track*, however, additional variables did not improve the weights developed. The inclusion of other variables did improve the distribution of participants on each particular characteristic, but also increased the difference on other variables. As a result, the decision was taken to retain only Indigenous status and geographic location as the variables for the development of post-stratification weights for both the completer sample and the early leaver sample. The distributions of the sample, based on the annual weights, are shown in Table 3.

Applying the weights

When working with weights, it is important to select the most appropriate for the purpose. The weights developed after the 2011 interviews are based on those participants who responded in 2011; they responded in 2010, 2009 and 2008 as well. All analyses in this report use only those school leavers—Year 12 completers and early leavers—who responded in all four years of the study. The weights have been applied to ensure they are representative of the sample each year. Where activity for 2008, 2009 or 2010 is provided in this report, the distribution may differ slightly from what has been reported in the 2008 statewide report (DEECD, 2009a) and the 2009 and 2010 longitudinal reports, as the weights differ slightly each year.

Destinations of Year 12 or equivalent completers

Overview

The attainment of Year 12 or an equivalent level is regarded as a key factor in the formal development of an individual's skills and knowledge (ABS, 2011). Studies into the post-school destinations of young people have shown that those who complete Year 12 tend to have more successful transitions from education to work than those who do not complete (McMillan & Marks, 2003). Those who complete Year 12 tend to experience better employment and wage outcomes and less unemployment (Ryan, 2011). Year 12 or equivalent attainment is recognised not just as an important stepping stone, but increasingly as a pre-requisite for further education and full-time employment in the workforce.

Annual activities of Year 12 or equivalent completers

There is a diverse range of activities and pathways that young people take in their first four post-school years. Of the longitudinal cohort who completed Year 12 or its equivalent in 2007, 64% were in education and training in 2011. This is lower than the percentage in each of the previous years, when at least 70% were in education and training. The majority of those in education and training were at university. In their first post-school year (2008), 39% of Year 12 or equivalent completers had commenced study at university. In 2009, 46% were at university, after those who had deferred study took up their places.¹ By 2010, 48% of the cohort were at university. In 2011, as university students began completing their degrees, the percentage at university decreased to 43% (see Table 4).

Table 4 Main activity of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2008–2011

| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| In education and training | | | | |
| University (bachelor and above) | 39 | 46 | 48 | 43 |
| Certificate IV and above | 17 | 14 | 8 | 6 |
| Certificate I-III | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Apprenticeship | 7 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| Traineeship | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Sub-total | 70 | 77 | 72 | 64 |
| Not in education or training | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 16 | 10 | 15 | 21 |
| Employed part-time | 10 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Looking for work | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Not in the labour force, education or training (NILFET) | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 30 | 23 | 28 | 36 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Sub-totals in education and training in 2009 and 2010 include respondents studying at secondary school. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

¹In 2008, 10% of Year 12 or equivalent completers had officially deferred their post-school study. Deferrers are discussed separately in this chapter.

In 2008, 17% of Year 12 completers were enrolled in courses leading to a Certificate IV, diploma, advanced diploma or associate degree. Over the course of their first four post-school years, the proportion of all Year 12 completers undertaking a Certificate IV or above decreased to 6% by 2011. This change reflects the large numbers of young people who completed their studies and entered employment or other study.

The next most common activity in 2008 was full-time employment, with 16% of Year 12 or equivalent completers. By 2009, the proportion in full-time work had dropped to 10% as those who had deferred further study in 2008 had taken up their study places.

Since 2009, however, the proportion in full-time employment has more than doubled to 21% as young people completed their post-school education and training and entered the labour force.

Table 5 presents an overview of the pathways taken by Year 12 or equivalent completers in each of the main activities in 2008. For example, 10% of the cohort were employed part-time in 2008. In 2009, 27% of these young people were still employed part-time, 23% had entered university study and 14% had moved into full-time work. More information about the pathways from main activities in 2008 is provided later in this chapter.

Post-school pathways of Indigenous Year 12 or equivalent completers

The sample design of the longitudinal survey included all 51 Year 12 or equivalent completers who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander during the annual *On Track* survey in 2008 and agreed to be recontacted for the longitudinal component of *On Track*. An attrition rate of 51% has resulted in just 24 Indigenous Year 12 completers being tracked across all four years of the study.² Of this group, 14 were undertaking some form of education and training (6 were at university) and 10 were in the labour force.

²The overall attrition rate was 39% among non-Indigenous participants.

Table 5 Main activity of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2009–2011, by main activity in 2008

| Main activity in 2008 | % in 2008 | Year | In education and training (%) | | | | | Not in education or training (%) | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------|
| | | | University (bachelor and above) | Certificate IV+ | Certificate I-III | Apprenticeship | Traineeship | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work | NILFET |
| University | 39 | 2009 | 92 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| | | 2010 | 89 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | | 2011 | 72 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 14 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| Certificate IV and above | 17 | 2009 | 11 | 61 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 11 | 4 | 1 |
| | | 2010 | 22 | 21 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 18 | 21 | 5 | 1 |
| | | 2011 | 26 | 12 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 27 | 19 | 4 | 2 |
| Certificate I-III | 4 | 2009 | 12 | 0 | 29 | 11 | 4 | 16 | 21 | 7 | 0 |
| | | 2010 | 19 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 0 | 28 | 14 | 7 | 1 |
| | | 2011 | 23 | 8 | 8 | 13 | 4 | 24 | 17 | 2 | 2 |
| Apprenticeship | 7 | 2009 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 82 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | | 2010 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 77 | 1 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| | | 2011 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 62 | 2 | 22 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Traineeship | 5 | 2009 | 19 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 36 | 17 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| | | 2010 | 24 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 31 | 13 | 4 | 1 |
| | | 2011 | 25 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 30 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| Employed full-time | 16 | 2009 | 28 | 10 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 28 | 10 | 3 | 1 |
| | | 2010 | 30 | 7 | 4 | 12 | 6 | 30 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| | | 2011 | 32 | 5 | 3 | 13 | 5 | 32 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| Employed part-time | 10 | 2009 | 24 | 10 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 12 | 27 | 5 | 1 |
| | | 2010 | 24 | 13 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 22 | 3 | 2 |
| | | 2011 | 29 | 12 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 18 | 19 | 4 | 2 |
| Looking for work | 4 | 2009 | 14 | 10 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 17 | 17 | 2 |
| | | 2010 | 16 | 10 | 6 | 13 | 8 | 19 | 13 | 12 | 3 |
| | | 2011 | 22 | 8 | 6 | 13 | 4 | 24 | 11 | 9 | 3 |
| NILFET | 0 | 2009 | 33 | 12 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 29 | 0 |
| | | 2010 | 42 | 24 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 2011 | 42 | 12 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Notes: Each row sums to 100%. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

There were differences by gender in the annual activities of Year 12 or equivalent completers (see Table 6). These differences are associated with the initial post-school activities of males and females, particularly in relation

to education and training. Female completers more frequently than male completers were enrolled in bachelor degree programs at university, which are three or four years long. Males were more frequently in apprenticeships,

which are also three or four years long. Although a greater proportion of males were employed full-time in the first three years after leaving school, there was no difference between males and females in the proportion in full-time work in 2011.

Table 6 Main activity of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2008–2011, by gender

| | Female | | | | Male | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | |
| University (bachelor and above) | 42 | 51 | 53 | 48 | 35 | 41 | 43 | 38 |
| Certificate IV and above | 18 | 16 | 9 | 8 | 15 | 12 | 7 | 5 |
| Certificate I-III | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Apprenticeship | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 12 | 17 | 19 | 19 |
| Traineeship | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Sub-total | 71 | 79 | 71 | 62 | 70 | 76 | 73 | 67 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 14 | 9 | 14 | 21 | 17 | 12 | 16 | 21 |
| Employed part-time | 12 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 9 |
| Looking for work | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| NILFET | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 29 | 21 | 29 | 38 | 30 | 24 | 27 | 33 |
| Total | 100 |

Notes: 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

Year 12 or equivalent completers who had attended schools in metropolitan areas were more frequently studying at university in 2008, compared to those from non-metropolitan areas, who had higher deferral rates. Non-metropolitan

completers were more frequently in employment in 2008—either full-time or part-time; many of these young people had deferred tertiary study and were working to be able to support their study in subsequent years. Table 7 shows

that the proportion of non-metropolitan completers in full-time employment dropped from 23% in 2008 to 11% in 2009, while the proportion at university increased from 28% to 45%.

Table 7 Main activity of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2008–2011, by geographic location

| | Metropolitan | | | | Non-metropolitan | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | |
| University (bachelor and above) | 44 | 47 | 50 | 45 | 28 | 45 | 44 | 39 |
| Certificate IV and above | 20 | 16 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 6 |
| Certificate I-III | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Apprenticeship | 6 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 11 |
| Traineeship | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 5 |
| Sub-total | 76 | 78 | 72 | 65 | 58 | 75 | 70 | 63 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 12 | 10 | 14 | 21 | 23 | 11 | 17 | 22 |
| Employed part-time | 8 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 13 | 10 | 9 | 11 |
| Looking for work | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| NILFET | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 24 | 22 | 28 | 35 | 42 | 25 | 30 | 37 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

Table 8 Main activity of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2008–2011, by SES quarter

| | Lowest | | | | Lower-middle | | | | Upper-middle | | | | Highest | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| University (bachelor and above) | 28 | 36 | 36 | 34 | 37 | 44 | 46 | 41 | 39 | 48 | 50 | 44 | 50 | 56 | 59 | 52 |
| Certificate IV and above | 21 | 16 | 9 | 8 | 17 | 14 | 8 | 6 | 13 | 12 | 7 | 6 | 17 | 14 | 8 | 6 |
| Certificate I-III | 7 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Apprenticeship | 7 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| Traineeship | 6 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 68 | 72 | 63 | 59 | 67 | 76 | 71 | 62 | 68 | 76 | 72 | 65 | 78 | 84 | 79 | 70 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 15 | 11 | 19 | 25 | 16 | 10 | 16 | 22 | 18 | 12 | 15 | 20 | 13 | 7 | 9 | 18 |
| Employed part-time | 12 | 11 | 13 | 10 | 12 | 10 | 9 | 12 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 9 |
| Looking for work | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| NILFET | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 32 | 28 | 37 | 41 | 33 | 24 | 29 | 38 | 32 | 24 | 28 | 35 | 22 | 16 | 21 | 30 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

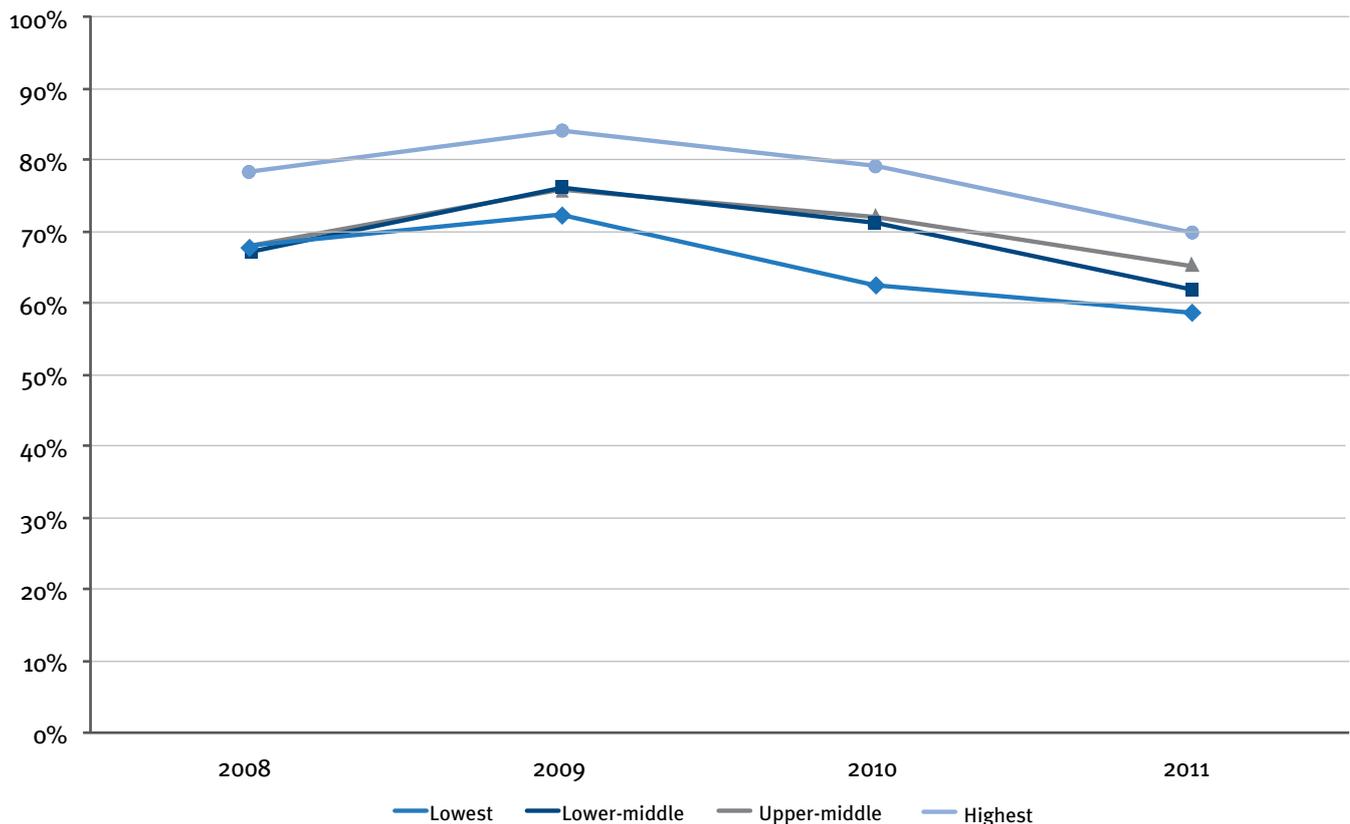
Notes: SES quarter refers to location of the completer's home address in 2007. o indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

In 2008, one-half of Year 12 or equivalent completers from the highest SES quarter had commenced study at university (see Table 8). In each subsequent year, the proportion at university remained above 50%. Among completers from other SES quarters, however, university enrolment rates were lower. The proportion of

Year 12 or equivalent completers in all forms of education and training was highest among those from the highest SES quarter. In 2008, 78% of completers from this group were in some form of study compared to 67–68% of completers from the other SES quarters. By 2011, however, there were differences in the

proportions in education and training: the highest SES quarter had the highest rate of participation in study and the lowest SES quarter had the lowest rate (see Figure 1). From 2009 to 2011, completers from the lowest SES quarter had the lowest rates of participation in education and training.

Figure 1 Proportion of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in education and training, 2008–2011, by SES quarter



Note: SES quarter refers to location of the completer’s home address in 2007.

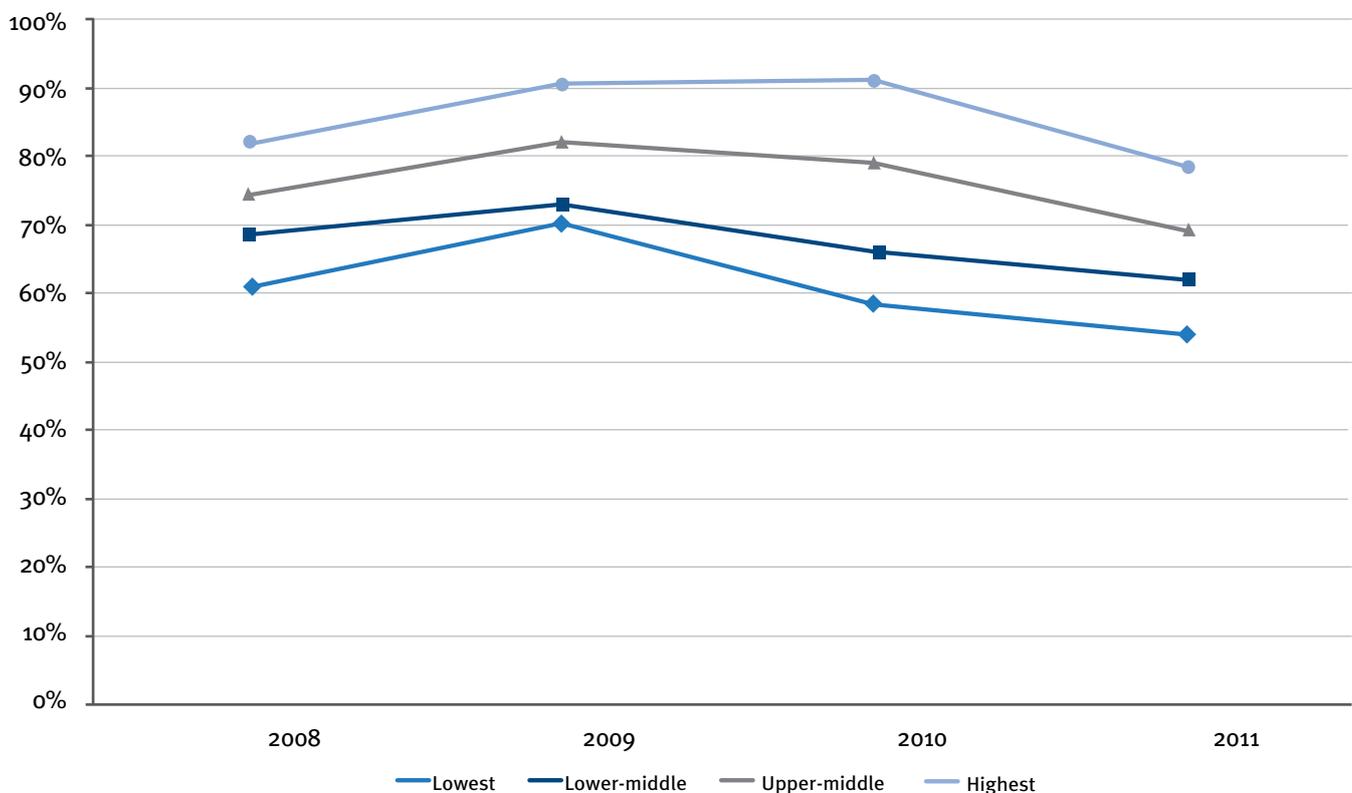
The General Achievement Test (GAT) is administered to Year 12 students attempting the VCE. It is used to moderate school-based assessments so that they can be compared across the state.

Achievement on the GAT is a good predictor of achievement on other assessments. If students have done well on the GAT, then their achievements are likely to be high in their school assessments and examinations. (VCAA, 2012)

That relationship between GAT results and assessment results also relates to tertiary admissions ranks, the outcome of which can be seen in Figure 2. The proportion of 2007 Year 12 completers who entered university in 2008 increased as the GAT quarter increased. In 2008, 13% of completers from the lowest GAT quarter were studying for a bachelor degree, as were 32% from the lower-middle quarter, 49% from the upper-middle quarter and 77% from the highest

GAT quarter. These differences extended to all post-school education and training, but the differences were not as great. In each year after the completion of Year 12, completers in the lowest quarter of combined GAT scores participated least frequently in post-school education and training, and completers in each progressively higher quarter of combined GAT scores participated progressively more frequently (see Table 9).

Figure 2 Proportion of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in education and training, 2008–2011, by GAT quarter



Note: GAT quarter refers to the completer's score on the General Achievement Test (GAT).

Students who intend to attempt both VCE and VCAL sit the GAT, so a small number of VCAL completers (25% of VCAL Senior completers and 16% of VCAL Intermediate

completers) have a GAT result, limiting subsequent discussion of outcomes based on GAT results.

Table 9 Main activity of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2008–2011, by GAT quarter

| | Lowest | | | | Lower-middle | | | | Upper-middle | | | | Highest | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| University (bachelor and above) | 13 | 19 | 22 | 22 | 32 | 40 | 41 | 39 | 49 | 59 | 62 | 54 | 77 | 86 | 85 | 72 |
| Certificate IV and above | 28 | 24 | 12 | 8 | 21 | 18 | 10 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Certificate I-III | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Apprenticeship | 10 | 13 | 15 | 15 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Traineeship | 6 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 61 | 70 | 59 | 54 | 69 | 73 | 66 | 62 | 74 | 82 | 79 | 69 | 82 | 90 | 91 | 78 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 20 | 15 | 23 | 29 | 17 | 11 | 16 | 22 | 13 | 7 | 12 | 18 | 11 | 4 | 5 | 13 |
| Employed part-time | 13 | 10 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 12 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| Looking for work | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| NILFET | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | -- | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | -- | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Sub-total | 39 | 30 | 41 | 46 | 31 | 27 | 34 | 38 | 26 | 18 | 21 | 31 | 18 | 10 | 9 | 22 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: GAT quarter refers to the completer's combined raw score on the three components of the General Achievement Test (GAT). o indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

Pathways through university

Estimates of university course completion in Australia vary between 70% and 85% (Marks 2007). This range of completion rates varies because some students may defer a course for one or two years and resume in the same course, some withdraw completely and resume studies at another university or in another course, and some take time off and return to

study at a later date. Nevertheless, between 70% and 85% of commencing university students complete their studies within four years (Marks, 2007; McMillan, 2005; Polesel, 2009).

Among the 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers at Government schools who were first interviewed in for *On Track* in 2008, 39% had entered university in that year. Figure 3 shows the status of these university entrants in each subsequent

year. Each row shows the status, based on those who were continuing in the previous year. In 2009, 84% of university entrants were continuing their study, 8% had changed to another course, 4% had taken some time off by deferring their studies and 3% had withdrawn. Of those who had continued university study in 2009, 90% continued their study in 2010, 1% had completed their course, 5% had changed course, 4% deferred study and 1% had withdrawn.

Figure 3 Pathways of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers through first course at university

| Year | Completed | Continuing | Changed | Deferred | Withdrawn |
|---------|---------------------------------------|------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| 2008 | University students in 2008 (n = 907) | | | | |
| 2009 | 0% | 84% | 8% | 4% | 3% |
| 2010 | 1% | 90% | 5% | 4% | 1% |
| 2011 | 32% | 65% | 1% | 2% | 1% |
| Overall | 24% | 49% | 13% | 9% | 4% |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Overall, by 2011, 24% of Year 12 or equivalent completers who had entered university study directly after school had completed the course they had begun in 2008, and 49% were in the same course. These two groups are highlighted by the thicker lines in Figure 3. The combined completion/continuation rate of 73% in the fourth year is similar to the rate found by McMillan (2005) in her analysis of a national sample of young people who had completed Year 12 in 1998.

Marks (2007) extended McMillan’s study and found that by the end of 2004, six years after leaving school, 66% of the young people who enrolled in their first course at a university between 1998 and 2001 had completed that course, 16% had withdrawn, 11% had changed course and 8% were continuing (Marks 2007).

An array of potential factors—some beyond the control of the student—can compel a young person to change, withdraw or defer their university studies. The common responses identified by Year 12 or equivalent completers for withdrawing from

university study were the cost of continuing the course and the career options available from that course. ‘Push’ and ‘pull’ factors—such as the increasing cost of continuing the course and prospective labour market opportunities, respectively—have been highly rated among young people in both annual and longitudinal *On Track* surveys. The number of hours in employment is related to persistence in university study. For example, McMillan (2005) found that university students employed for more than 10 hours per week were more likely than other students to withdraw from their studies.

University pathways, by student characteristics

In 2008, 42% of female and 35% of male Year 12 or equivalent completers were at university. By 2011, 26% of females and 21% of males had completed the university course they had commenced in 2008. Male university commencers were more frequently continuing their course, and female university commencers had more frequently changed course.

There was little difference by gender in withdrawal or deferral (see Table 10).

Year 12 or equivalent completers who had attended schools in metropolitan regions more frequently were enrolled at university in 2008 than were those who had attended non-metropolitan schools. In 2008, 44% of metropolitan based completers were at university compared to 28% of non-metropolitan based completers. Much of this difference was because of the much higher rate of deferral among non-metropolitan completers. Four years after the completion of Year 12, of those who had commenced university study directly after leaving school, a greater proportion of non-metropolitan completers had completed their university studies (30%) than metropolitan Year 12 completers (21%) (see Table 11). There was little difference between these groups in regard to course withdrawal, course change and deferral. This aligns with previous studies that have found no clear relationship between region and completion status (eg, Marks, et al, 2000).

Table 10 Outcome of university study among Year 12 or equivalent completers who commenced in 2008, by gender

| Gender | Completed | Continuing | Changed | Deferred | Withdrawn | Total |
|--------|-----------|------------|---------|----------|-----------|-------|
| Female | 26 | 45 | 15 | 10 | 4 | 100 |
| Male | 21 | 54 | 11 | 9 | 5 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 11 Outcome of university study among Year 12 or equivalent completers who commenced in 2008, by geographic location

| School location in Year 12 | Completed | Continuing | Changed | Deferred | Withdrawn | Total |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|---------|----------|-----------|-------|
| Metropolitan | 22 | 51 | 13 | 9 | 4 | 100 |
| Non-metropolitan | 30 | 42 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 100 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Four years after completing Year 12, 73% of university entrants from the both the lowest and highest SES quarters had either completed their studies or were still enrolled in the same course. Of university entrants from the upper-middle SES quarter, only 22% had withdrawn, changed course or deferred (see Table 12).

Table 12 Outcome of university study among Year 12 or equivalent completers who commenced in 2008, by SES quarter

| SES quarter | Completed first course by 2011 | Continuing first course in 2011 | Withdrawn, changed or deferred by 2011 |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Lowest | 27 | 46 | 27 |
| Lower-middle | 25 | 44 | 30 |
| Upper-middle | 25 | 52 | 23 |
| Highest | 21 | 52 | 27 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

By 2011, close to one-third of students from the two lower GAT quarters had withdrawn, changed course or deferred their university studies. By comparison, only 22% of those who had achieved at the highest levels on the GAT had discontinued their first university course during the first four years after completing Year 12 (see Table 13). Those from the third quarter—the upper-middle quarter—had most frequently completed their university study by 2011 (27%).

Table 13 Outcome of university study among Year 12 or equivalent completers who commenced in 2008, by GAT quarter

| GAT quarter | Completed first course by 2011 | Continuing first course in 2011 | Withdrawn, changed or deferred by 2011 |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Lowest | 19 | 51 | 31 |
| Lower-middle | 23 | 41 | 36 |
| Upper-middle | 27 | 47 | 26 |
| Highest | 23 | 55 | 22 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Deferral from tertiary study

In their first post-school year, 10% of Year 12 or equivalent completers deferred entry into tertiary study. In the following year, 63% of 2008 deferrers were studying at university, 11% were doing a campus-based certificate-level course, 5% were doing an apprenticeship or traineeship and 20% were not in education or training (see Table 14). Of those who took up study at university in 2009, 79% were enrolled in the course

they had deferred the previous year. By 2010, 60% of 2008 deferrers were at university, with 92% of them in the same course as in the previous year. In 2011, 65% of the 2008 deferrers were studying at university, an increase over the previous year. By 2011, many who had deferred in 2008 had completed other study or had been working, and chose to enrol at university.

The location of the school was an important factor in deferral: 17% of those who had attended school in a

non-metropolitan area deferred study in 2008 compared to 7% of those from a metropolitan area school. Among those from non-metropolitan areas, financial considerations are often cited as reasons for not continuing study directly after secondary school (DEECD 2009a; Polesel 2009). By 2011, Year 12 completers from non-metropolitan areas who had deferred their study in 2008 were more frequently continuing at university (73% compared to those from metropolitan areas (55%).

Table 14 Main activity of 2008 deferrers, 2008–2011

| Main activity | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| University | -- | 63 | 60 | 65 |
| Certificate IV and above | -- | 10 | 9 | 6 |
| Certificate I-III | -- | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Apprenticeship | -- | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Traineeship | -- | 3 | 3 | 14 |
| Employed full-time | 61 | 10 | 12 | 5 |
| Employed part-time | 29 | 8 | 6 | 1 |
| Looking for work | 9 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| NILFET | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: 0 indicates less than 0.5%. -- indicates no respondents. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

When all Year 12 or equivalent completers from Government schools were interviewed in 2008, the overall deferral rate was 10% (DEECD, 2009a). The deferral rate in non-metropolitan locations was more than double the deferral rate in metropolitan locations. Although most deferrers stated

they were taking a 'gap year' before continuing study, many of the deferrers from non-metropolitan locations cited the need to move away from home – and the financial implications of that move, including the costs of study – as an important factor in their decision to defer further study. As shown in Table

15, deferrers who had attended schools in non-metropolitan locations were more frequently at university in 2011 than those who had attended schools in metropolitan locations (73% compared to 55%).

Table 15 Main activity of 2008 deferrers in 2011, by geographic location

| Main activity | Metropolitan (%) | Non-metropolitan (%) |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| University | 55 | 73 |
| Certificate IV+ | 9 | 3 |
| Certificate I-III | 0 | 0 |
| Apprenticeship | 6 | 3 |
| Traineeship | 4 | 2 |
| Employed full-time | 19 | 11 |
| Employed part-time | 5 | 7 |
| Looking for work | 2 | 1 |
| NILFET | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

A small proportion of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers who had entered tertiary study in 2008 elected to defer in subsequent years. In 2009, 4% of those in campus-based tertiary study had deferred their studies for the year. Of those who deferred from university study for 2009, 37% returned to university in 2010, 27% took up some other study and 30% were employed. The majority of those who returned to study in 2010 were still at university in 2011 (85%); the others had taken another deferral in 2011. Only 13% of those who deferred from certificate-level study in 2009 returned to that study in 2010.

Pathways through vocational education and training

Young people who participate in apprenticeship and traineeship programs generally experience more positive

outcomes in comparison to those who do not participate in any post-school study (Curtis, 2008; Marks, 2008). Even those who do not complete their apprenticeship have had better outcomes than those who did no post-school education or training (Marks, 2008). For those who participate in campus-based certificate-level study but do not complete the course, however, outcomes are on a par with those who do not post-school study (Curtis, 2008). In 2008, 32% of Year 12 or equivalent completers who participated in the *On Track* longitudinal survey were in some form of vocational education and training. The majority were in campus-based study at either Certificate IV, diploma, advanced diploma or associated degree level (17%) or Certificate I, II or III level (4%). The others were undertaking a contract of training through either an apprenticeship (7%) or a traineeship (5%).

Campus-based certificate study

The majority of certificate-level courses are of 1-2 years duration, and by 2011, 64% of Year 12 or equivalent completers in the *On Track* longitudinal cohort had completed their course, 18% had withdrawn and 10% had changed. By 2009, after their first year of certificate study, 24% had completed their course and 29% were no longer in the same course (see Figure 4). In 2010, 74% of those who had continued their certificate course into a second year had completed. Overall, 64% completed their certificate-level course, 18% had withdrawn, 10% had changed to another course. The 2% of all certificate-level students who were continuing their study in 2011 were enrolled for a Certificate IV, diploma or advanced diploma.

Figure 4 Pathways of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers through initial campus-based certificate-level study



Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Year 12 or equivalent completers who had entered a campus-based certificate course in 2008 entered a variety of pathways after their course. Of those who were studying for Certificates I-IV+ in 2008, 26% were studying at university in 2011, 27% were employed full-time and 19% were employed part-time. More than

one-half of young women were employed, either full-time (31%) or part-time (23%), and 61% of young men were studying, either at university (27%) or in another form of vocational education and training, including certificate courses at a higher level than the level already completed (34%) (see Table 16). One-half of former

certificate-level students from schools in metropolitan areas were engaged in further education and training in 2011, as were 41% of those from non-metropolitan areas (see Table 17). More than one-half of 2008 certificate-level course participants from non-metropolitan areas were employed in 2011.

Table 16 Main activity in 2011 of Year 12 or equivalent completers in their first campus-based certificate-level study in 2008, by gender

| | University | Other education and training | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Other activity | Total |
|--------|------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| Female | 24 | 15 | 31 | 23 | 7 | 100 |
| Male | 27 | 34 | 21 | 15 | 3 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 17 Main activity in 2011 of Year 12 or equivalent completers in campus-based certificate-level study in 2008, by geographic location

| | University | Other education and training | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Other activity | Total |
|------------------|------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| Metropolitan | 27 | 23 | 26 | 19 | 5 | 100 |
| Non-metropolitan | 20 | 21 | 32 | 21 | 6 | 100 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Apprenticeships and traineeships

Completion rates for Year 12 or equivalent completers who undertook apprenticeships and traineeships are presented in Table 18. Between 2008

and 2011, around one-quarter of those who commenced an apprenticeship had completed (23%) while a similar proportion had withdrawn or cancelled the apprenticeship (21%). Of those Year

12 completers undertaking traineeships in 2008, 75% had completed this training by 2011 and 16% had withdrawn.

Table 18 Outcome of apprenticeship or traineeship among Year 12 or equivalent completers who commenced in 2008

| | Completed | Continuing | Withdrawn | Total |
|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------|
| Apprenticeship | 23 | 55 | 21 | 100 |
| Traineeship | 75 | 9 | 16 | 100 |

In 2008, 7% of Year 12 or equivalent completers had entered an apprenticeship. By 2009, 6% had completed their apprenticeship, 80% were continuing in an apprenticeship

and 13% had withdrawn (see Figure 5). Those who had discontinued their apprenticeship cited a lack of career options and an inability to 'get on with the boss or others at the workplace' as

reasons for stopping. Curtis (2008) found that apprentices often leave because of conflict with supervisors and peers, and because they find they do not like the type of work.

Figure 5 Pathways of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers through apprenticeship and traineeship



Notes: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. The number of trainees in the sample continuing in a traineeship after 2010 is too small to report.

The overall persistence rate in apprenticeship—comprising completions and continuations—for this *On Track* cohort is 79%. This is slightly lower than the rate of 87% found by Curtis (2008) using data from the LSAY Y95 cohort, but higher than the rate of 57% for apprentices in the trade occupations, regardless of the apprentice’s age (Karmel, 2011). The *On Track* cohort comprises young people who entered their training directly after completing VCE or VCAL, and includes all occupation groups.

Among those who were in a traineeship in 2008, 60% had completed in their first year and 75% by the end of the second post-school year. This is to be expected as the majority of traineeships are of 1-2 years duration. Figure 5 shows that 15% of trainees had withdrawn in the first year of the traineeship. The most commonly cited reason for stopping was the opportunity to take up a job. Curtis (2008) found that trainees often leave for health and personal reasons or because they find better work or are dissatisfied with their off-the-job training.

In terms of outcomes, among those who commenced a contract of training in 2008 55% of apprentices were still in their apprenticeship in 2011, while 75% of trainees have completed and entered other activities. Of those who completed their traineeship by 2010, 30% were in full-time employment and 25% were in university study in 2011. Table 19 shows the main activity in 2011 of former trainees by gender, for those who completed their traineeship by 2010. Table 20 shows the same by geographic location.

Table 19 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in traineeships in 2008, by gender

| | University | Other education and training | Employed Full-time | Employed Part-time | Other activity | Total |
|--------|------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| Female | 32 | 23 | 26 | 9 | 9 | 100 |
| Male | 15 | 43 | 35 | 7 | 0 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 20 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in traineeships in 2008, by geographic location

| | University | Other education and training | Employed Full-time | Employed Part-time | Other activity | Total |
|--------|------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| Female | 25 | 6 | 26 | 38 | 6 | 100 |
| Male | 34 | 10 | 24 | 26 | 5 | 100 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Of those Year 12 or equivalent completers who were apprentices in 2008 and were continuing in their apprenticeship each year to 2011, most received increases in their pay, the skills they were developing

and their work responsibilities. For example, in 2011, 81% were earning more, 77% were doing more skilled work and 87% had more responsibility at work than they did in the previous year (see

Table 21). Across the three years, all apprentices were earning more, 92% were doing more skilled work and 96% had more responsibility at work than when they had started.

Table 21 Career advancement indicators among 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in apprenticeships

| | Change in earnings | | | Change in skilled work | | | Change in responsibility | | |
|------|--------------------|------|------|------------------------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|
| | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More |
| 2009 | 15 | 14 | 72 | 1 | 21 | 78 | 6 | 11 | 83 |
| 2010 | 8 | 10 | 82 | 1 | 20 | 79 | 1 | 21 | 79 |
| 2011 | 8 | 11 | 81 | -- | 23 | 77 | 1 | 12 | 87 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Rows within each type of change may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

³ For *On Track*, persons are allocated to a single main activity under an agreed hierarchy.

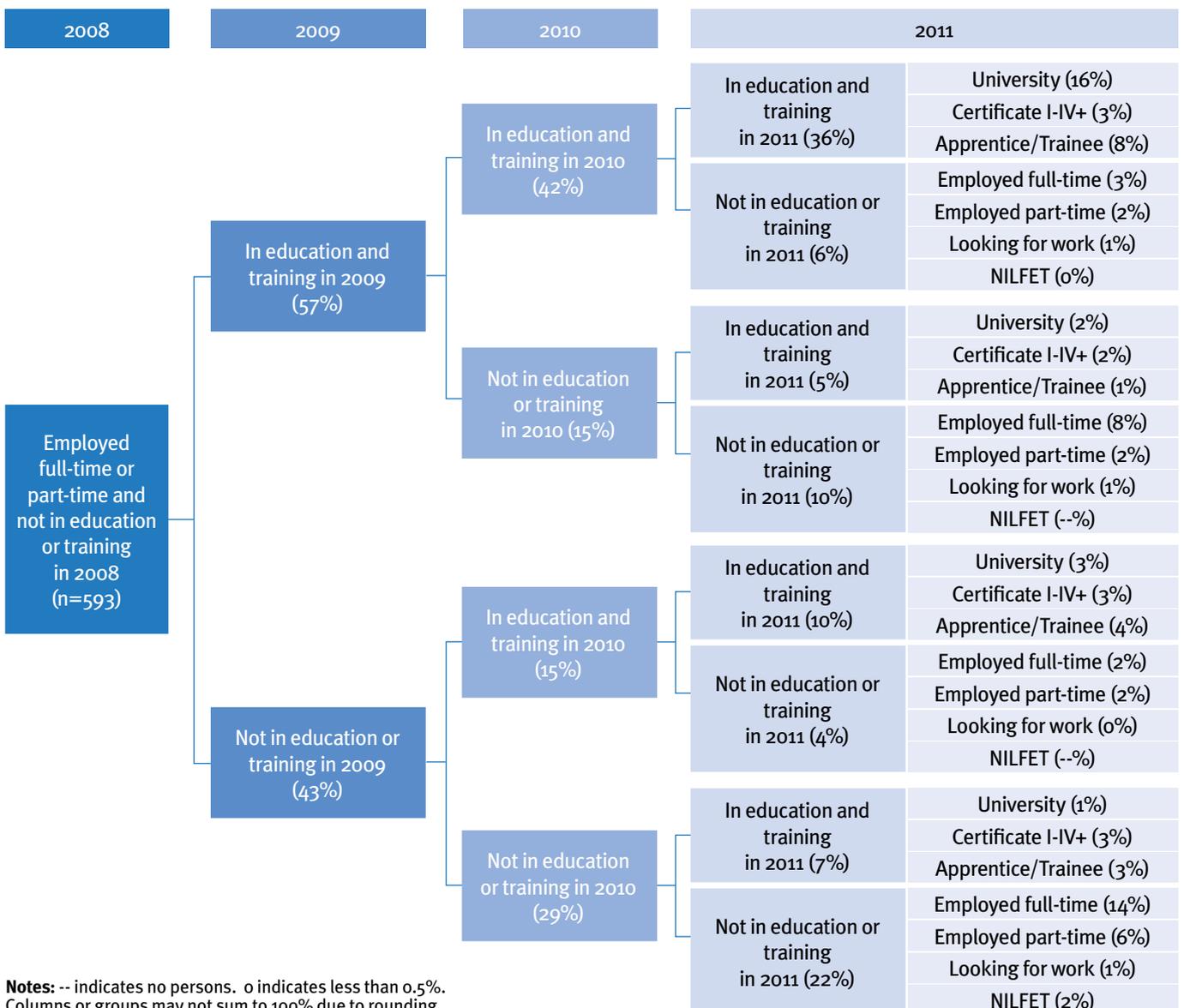
Pathways in the labour force

In 2008, 29% of Year 12 or equivalent completers were not in education or training.³ More than one-half of those in the labour force were working full-time; the remainder were either working part-time or looking for work. A very small

group of Year 12 completers were not in the labour force, education or training (NILFET). Of those completers who were employed—either full-time or part-time—in their first post-school year, more than one-half (57%) had entered some form of education and training in 2009 (see Figure 6). This includes those who

had deferred entry to their courses for 2008, who accounted for 36% of all those employed and not in education or training in 2008. By 2011, 58% of all those who were employed in 2008 were in education and training, 38% were employed and 4% were either looking for work or NILFET.

Figure 6 Pathways of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers who were employed and not in education or training in 2008



Notes: -- indicates no persons. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Columns or groups may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

In full-time employment in 2008

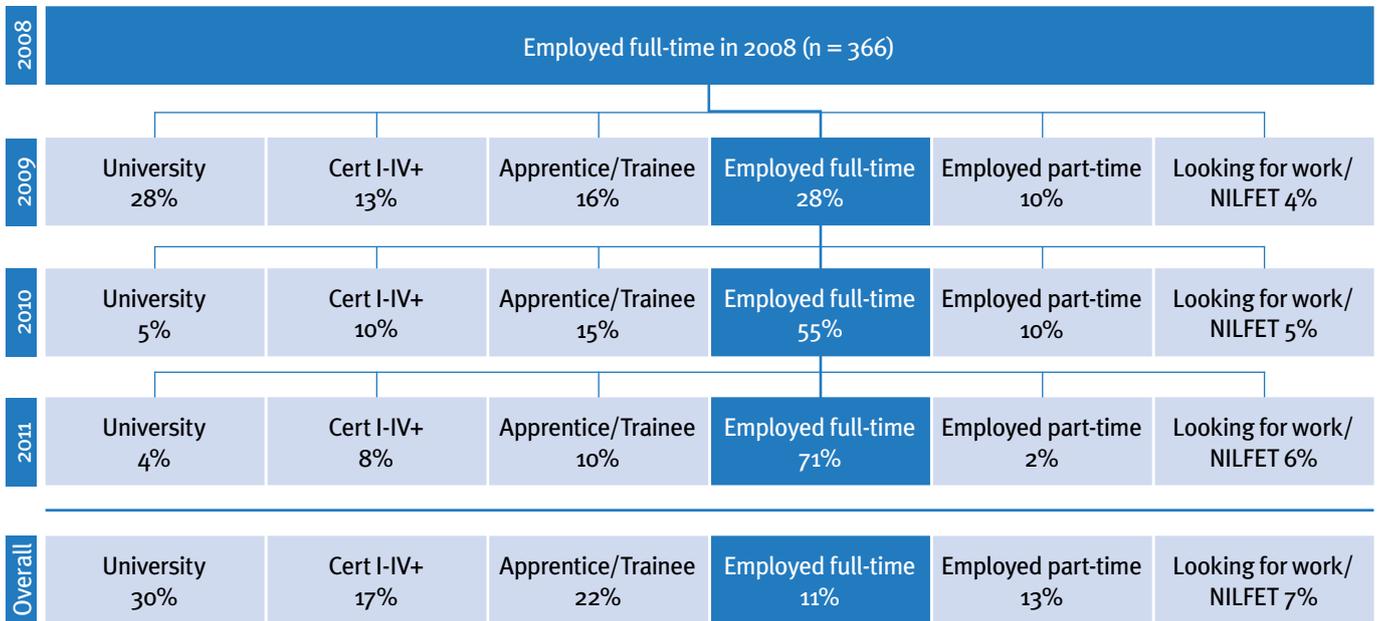
Of those Year 12 or equivalent completers who were in the labour force and not in education or training in 2008, 62% were in full-time employment. Over the subsequent years, many had left full-time work, most frequently to undertake further education and training. Figure 7 shows the pathways of those who had been in full-time employment in 2008, and what changes occurred for those in this group who were in full-time employment in each subsequent year.

For example, of the 366 completers who had been working full-time in 2008, 28% remained in full-time employment in 2009; of these 28%, 5% went into university study in 2010 and 55% remained in full-time work. Of the 55% who remained in full-time work in 2010, 71% were in full-time work again in 2011.

As a result of the annual shifts out of full-time work each year to 2011, only 11% of those who had been employed full-time in 2008 remained in full-time employment in each of the three

subsequent years; 30% had entered university study at some time, 17% had entered certificate-level study and 22% had entered a contract of training in either an apprenticeship or a traineeship. Overall, 69% of those who had left full-time employment had entered some form of further education or training. At some time during the three-year period, 13% had moved to part-time work and 7% had been looking for work at the time of their annual interview.

Figure 7 Pathways of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers from full-time employment in 2008



Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Many of those who had moved out of full-time work did return to full-time work after completing some form of study. Similarly, many of those who had moved out of full-time work after 2008 had returned to full-time work in 2011. As a result of these changes of status, 32% of those who were in full-time work in 2008 were also in full-time work in 2011, compared to the 11% of those in full-time

work in 2008 were in full-time work in all of the subsequent three years.

Pathways from full-time employment, by gender

Of those who were employed full-time in 2008, activities in the following years differed by gender (see Table 22). The greatest difference related to education and training: female completers were

more frequently in campus-based study, either at university or in certificate study, and male completers were more frequently in an apprenticeship or traineeship. In 2009, a greater proportion of males than females had shifted to part-time employment, but in 2010 and 2011 a greater proportion of females were working part-time.

Table 22 Main activity in 2009, 2010 and 2011 of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in full-time employment in 2008, by gender

| Main activity | Female (n=174) | | | Male (n=192) | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|------|------|--------------|------|------|
| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| University | 32 | 35 | 37 | 26 | 25 | 28 |
| Certificate study | 19 | 12 | 12 | 7 | 9 | 3 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | 11 | 8 | 7 | 21 | 26 | 28 |
| Employed full-time | 27 | 32 | 32 | 30 | 30 | 32 |
| Employed part-time | 7 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 6 | 6 |
| Looking for work/NILFET | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 3 |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Pathways from full-time employment, by geographic location

There were also differences after full-time employment by geographic location (see Table 23). The greatest difference relates to those who were in university study in subsequent years: 41% of those

Year 12 completers who had attended schools in non-metropolitan areas were at university, compared to 18% of those from metropolitan schools in 2009, increasing to 25% in 2011. This difference is related to reasons for deferring study in 2008. The deferral rate for metropolitan

completers was one-half the rate for non-metropolitan completers, who more frequently cited financial reasons for deferring study (DEECD, 2009a). There was little difference by location for movement into other forms of education and training.

Table 23 Main activity in 2009, 2010 and 2011 of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in full-time employment in 2008, by geographic location

| Main activity | Metropolitan (n=201) | | | Non-metropolitan (n=165) | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|
| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| University | 18 | 21 | 25 | 41 | 41 | 41 |
| Certificate study | 13 | 12 | 8 | 13 | 9 | 8 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | 17 | 18 | 18 | 15 | 17 | 17 |
| Employed full-time | 36 | 34 | 39 | 20 | 26 | 24 |
| Employed part-time | 12 | 10 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 8 |
| Looking for work/NILFET | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Pathways from full-time employment, by socioeconomic background

Of the 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers who were employed full-time in 2008, there were also differences by socioeconomic background. Among

those from the highest SES quarter, 66% were in education or training, most commonly at university; among those from the remaining SES quarters, 56–57% were in education or training (see Table 24).

Table 24 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers in full-time employment in 2008, by SES quarter

| Main activity | Lowest (n=74) | Lower-middle (n=94) | Upper-middle (n=116) | Highest (n=76) |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| University | 27 | 34 | 27 | 45 |
| Certificate study | 9 | 8 | 10 | 3 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | 20 | 14 | 20 | 18 |
| Employed full-time | 36 | 33 | 33 | 24 |
| Employed part-time | 6 | 7 | 6 | 8 |
| Looking for work/NILFET | 1 | 4 | 4 | 2 |

Notes: SES quarter refers to location of the young person's home address in 2007. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

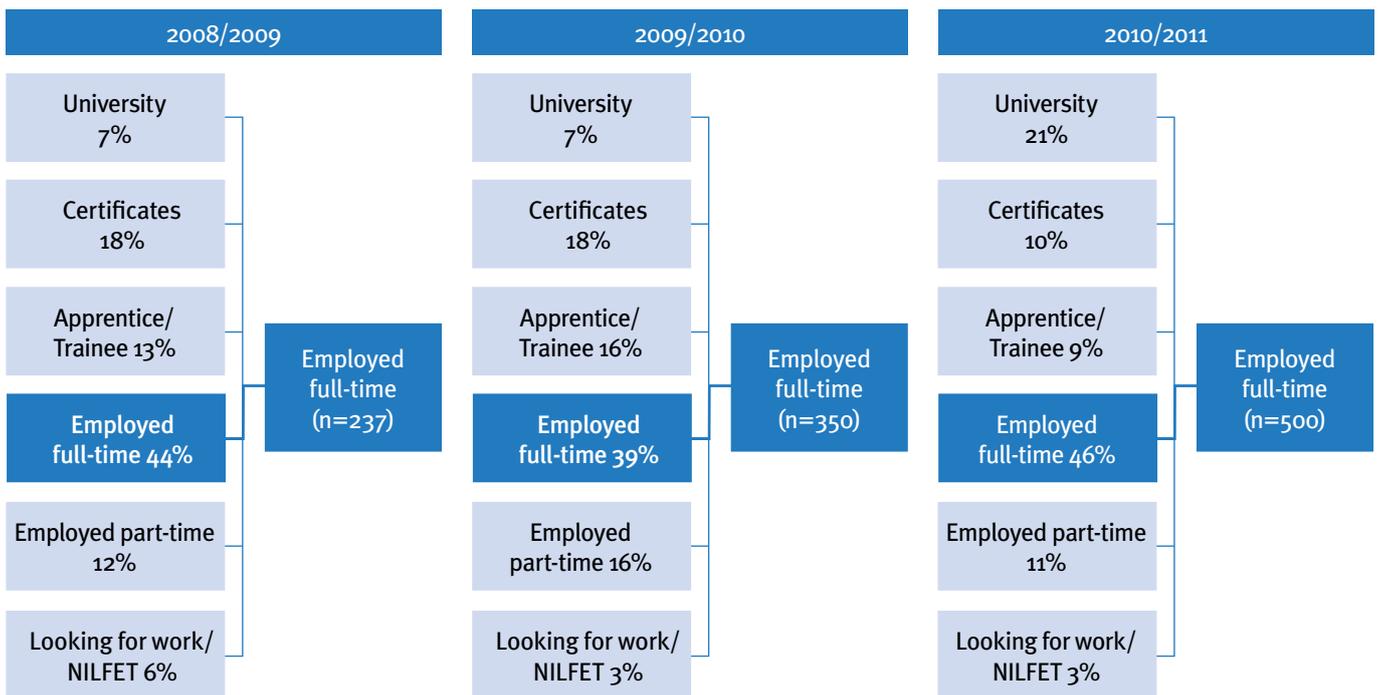
Moving into full-time employment

In 2008, 16% of Year 12 or equivalent completers were in full-time employment, but in the following year, that proportion dropped to 10% (see Table 4 above) as those who had deferred tertiary study took up that study. In each subsequent year the proportion increased, so that by 2011, 21% of Year 12 or equivalent

completers were working full-time. In each year, from 2009 to 2011, the majority of those in full-time employment had been in full-time employment in the previous year. In both 2009 and 2010, 7% of those in full-time employment had been studying at university in the previous year, and 18% of had been studying for a certificate (see Figure 8).

In 2011, when university participants started completing their degrees, 21% of those in full-time employment had been at university in the previous year.

Figure 8 Pathways of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers into full-time employment in 2009, 2010 and 2011



Of those Year 12 or equivalent completers who entered full-time employment for the first time in 2009—rather than in 2008—23% remained in full-time employment in each subsequent year. In 2008, 15% of this group had been looking for work or NILFET, 17% had been working part-time, 32% had been in an apprenticeship or traineeship, and 37% had been in campus-based study.

Career advancement

Of those who were employed between 2008 and 2011, a large proportion received increases in the pay they received, the skills they were developing and the responsibilities they had in their work (see Table 25). For example, in 2011 60% were earning more, 51% were doing more skilled work and 64% had more responsibility at work than they did in the

previous year. In their third post-school year, 65% reported an increase in pay levels per hour, compared to 60% in their fourth post-school year. Over the same time period, 48% reported an increase in skill levels in their third year, compared to 51% in their fourth year.

Table 25 Career advancement indicators among 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers employed full-time in all four years (2008–2011)

| | Change in earnings | | | Change in skilled work | | | Change in responsibility | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------|-----------|------------------------|------|-----------|--------------------------|------|-----------|
| | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More |
| 2008–2009 | 2 | 40 | 58 | 2 | 22 | 75 | 2 | 28 | 69 |
| 2009–2010 | 7 | 38 | 54 | -- | 36 | 64 | 3 | 31 | 66 |
| 2010–2011 | 2 | 31 | 67 | 3 | 40 | 57 | 8 | 28 | 64 |
| Any increase across all years | | | 90 | | | 92 | | | 87 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Rows within each type of change may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Career advice while at school

In 2011, when reflecting on the career advice they had had at school, 16% of Year 12 completers said it was

‘very useful’ and 41% said it was ‘fairly useful’ (see Table 26). Those studying at university (61%) or doing an apprenticeship (64%) in 2011 were more positive than those studying for a certificate (50-51%) or employed full-

time (55%) or part-time (51%). More than one-quarter of Year 12 completers (28%) said the career advice they received at school was ‘not very useful’ and 13% said it was ‘not at all useful’.

Table 26 Usefulness of school-based career advice among 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, by main activity in 2011

| Main activity 2011 | Very useful | Fairly useful | Sub-total | Not very useful | Not at all useful | Sub-total | Don't know/Refused | Total |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| University | 16 | 45 | 61 | 26 | 12 | 38 | 1 | 100 |
| Certificate IV+ | 16 | 34 | 50 | 34 | 15 | 49 | 1 | 100 |
| Certificate I-III | 16 | 35 | 51 | 29 | 20 | 49 | 0 | 100 |
| Apprenticeship | 20 | 44 | 64 | 25 | 10 | 35 | 0 | 100 |
| Traineeship | 16 | 37 | 53 | 26 | 18 | 44 | 3 | 100 |
| Employed full-time | 17 | 38 | 55 | 30 | 14 | 44 | 1 | 100 |
| Employed part-time | 13 | 38 | 51 | 37 | 11 | 48 | 0 | 100 |
| Looking for work | 12 | 39 | 51 | 29 | 17 | 46 | 3 | 100 |
| NILFET | 15 | 30 | 45 | 30 | 26 | 56 | 0 | 100 |
| Total | 16 | 41 | 57 | 28 | 13 | 41 | 1 | 100 |

Notes: 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Current job or career job?

In their fourth post-school year 40% of Year 12 or equivalent completers equated their current main job with the type they would like as their career. There is marked variation by main activity, however, with 91% of apprentices and 60% of those working full-time stating

that their current job is the job they would like as a career, compared to 15% of university students and 27% of those working part-time (see Table 27). University and certificate students are generally working to support their studies, and were not as likely to say they were working in career jobs.

Table 27 Proportion of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers who see their current job as their career job, by main activity in 2011

| Main activity | Yes (%) | No (%) | Not sure (%) | Total (%) |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| University (Bachelor degree) | 15 | 83 | 1 | 100 |
| Certificate IV+ | 38 | 59 | 4 | 100 |
| Certificate I-III | 50 | 50 | 0 | 100 |
| Apprenticeship | 91 | 8 | 2 | 100 |
| Traineeship | 75 | 22 | 3 | 100 |
| Employed full-time | 59 | 38 | 3 | 100 |
| Employed part-time | 27 | 70 | 3 | 100 |
| Total 2011 | 40 | 57 | 2 | 100 |
| Total 2010 | 35 | 63 | 3 | 100 |
| Total 2009 | 29 | 67 | 4 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

When reflecting on the extent to which their university course prepared them for their intended career, 83% of course completers—including university graduates, certificate recipients and those who completed an apprenticeship or traineeship—said that it prepared them very well (32%) or fairly well (51%). Only 14% stated they were either not very well prepared (11%) or not at all prepared (3%), and 4% were unsure.

Wellbeing

The wellbeing of young people is an important concern, particularly as they make the transition from school. As shown in Table 28, around 96% of Year 12 or equivalent completers are ‘happy’ (61%) or ‘very happy’ (35%) with the work they do in their studies, at home or at work, and 98% are ‘happy’ (47%) or ‘very happy’ (51%) with their life as

a whole. Still overwhelmingly positive, with 92% saying they are ‘happy’ (47%) or ‘very happy’ (45%), Year 12 or equivalent completers are slightly less happy about their career opportunities than on other measures of wellbeing. On each wellbeing measure, the proportions of Year 12 completers have not changed between 2009 and 2011.

Table 28 Wellbeing indicators for 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2009–2011

| Happiness with... | Year | Very happy | Happy | Sub-total | Unhappy | Very unhappy | Sub-total | Can't say/refused | Total |
|--------------------------------------|------|------------|-------|-----------|---------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| Work (at study, at home or in a job) | 2009 | 34 | 61 | 95 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 100 |
| | 2010 | 31 | 64 | 95 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 100 |
| | 2011 | 35 | 61 | 96 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 100 |
| Career opportunities | 2009 | 41 | 50 | 91 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 100 |
| | 2010 | 37 | 54 | 91 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 100 |
| | 2011 | 45 | 47 | 92 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 100 |
| Life as a whole | 2009 | 49 | 48 | 97 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 100 |
| | 2010 | 48 | 50 | 98 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 100 |
| | 2011 | 51 | 47 | 98 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 100 |

Notes: 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

As is the case with many of these measures, there is variation related to the main activity in which the Year 12 or equivalent completer was engaged (see Table 29). For example, 98% of

apprentices stated they were 'happy' or 'very happy' with their current career opportunities compared to 82% of those who were employed part-time in 2011 and 64% of those looking for work.

Surprisingly, 78% of those who were NILFET said they were happy with their career prospects, including 38% who said they were 'very happy'.

Table 29 Happiness with career opportunities among 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, by main activity in 2011

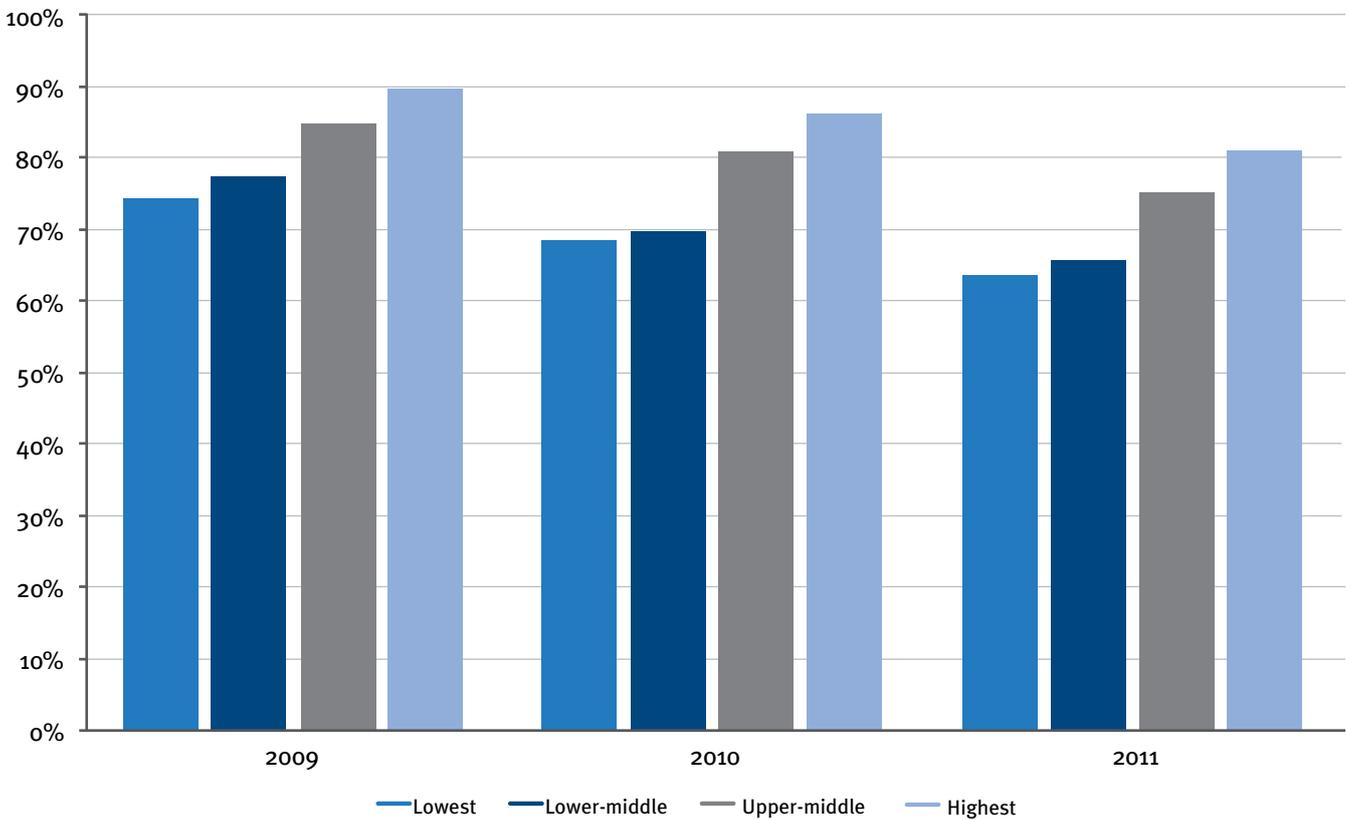
| Main activity | Very happy | Happy | Sub-total | Unhappy | Very unhappy | Sub-total | Can't say/refused | Total |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| University (Bachelor) | 46 | 46 | 93 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 100 |
| Certificate IV+ | 45 | 50 | 95 | 5 | 0 | 5 | -- | 100 |
| Certificate I-III | 51 | 40 | 91 | 9 | 0 | 9 | -- | 100 |
| Apprenticeship | 58 | 39 | 98 | 2 | 1 | 2 | -- | 100 |
| Traineeship | 58 | 36 | 93 | 6 | 1 | 7 | -- | 100 |
| Employed full-time | 44 | 49 | 93 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 100 |
| Employed part-time | 21 | 60 | 82 | 16 | 2 | 18 | 0 | 100 |
| Looking for work | 10 | 54 | 64 | 32 | 4 | 36 | -- | 100 |
| NILFET | 38 | 40 | 78 | 14 | 4 | 18 | 4 | 100 |
| Total | 44 | 48 | 91 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

An additional measure of wellbeing is the extent to which young people have left home and are living independently from parents and/or guardians. Figure 9 shows that there is a relationship

between SES quartile and whether a Year 12 or equivalent completer is living at home. Each year fewer young people were living home.

Figure 9 Proportion of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers living at home in 2011, by SES quarter



Note: SES quarter refers to location of the young person's home address in 2007.

Returning to study

An increasingly important concern is the availability of pathways that enable re-entry to the education and training system. As noted earlier in the chapter, approximately one-third of Year 12

completers were not in education or training in 2011, including those who had already completed a university degree, a certificate or a contract of training. Overall, 64% of those not studying in their fourth post-school year said it was 'extremely likely' (29%) or somewhat

likely (35%) that they would return to study in the next two years. Among those working full-time, 57% said it was 'extremely likely' or 'somewhat likely' they would take up study within the next two years compared to 73% of those working part-time (see Table 30).

Table 30 Likelihood of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers returning to study in next two years, by current main activity

| Main activity | Extremely likely | Somewhat likely | Sub-total | Not very likely | Not at all likely | Sub-total | Can't say/ refused | Total |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| Employed full-time | 28 | 29 | 57 | 26 | 17 | 43 | 0 | 100 |
| Employed part-time | 30 | 43 | 73 | 16 | 9 | 25 | 2 | 100 |
| Looking for work | 39 | 47 | 86 | 13 | 2 | 15 | 0 | 100 |
| NILFET | 21 | 45 | 66 | 17 | 17 | 34 | 0 | 100 |
| Total | 29 | 35 | 64 | 22 | 13 | 35 | 0 | 100 |

Notes: 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

There were also differences according to whether the young person had already undertaken some form of post-school education or training. Interestingly, those who had enrolled at university at

some time most frequently said they would return to study in the next two years, including 78% of those who had withdrawn, changed or deferred from their course and 72% of those who had

already completed a bachelor degree (see Table 31). Those who had done no post-school study at all were least likely to return to study (56%).

Table 31 Likelihood of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers returning to study in next two years, by previous post-school study

| Post-school study | Extremely likely | Somewhat likely | Sub-total | Not very likely | Not at all likely | Sub-total | Can't say/ refused | Total |
|--|------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| Completed university | 40 | 33 | 72 | 15 | 13 | 28 | -- | 100 |
| Withdrawn, changed or deferred from university | 45 | 33 | 78 | 14 | 7 | 20 | 2 | 100 |
| Did some non-university study | 27 | 36 | 63 | 22 | 15 | 36 | 0 | 100 |
| No post-school study | 19 | 36 | 56 | 31 | 13 | 44 | 1 | 100 |
| Total | 29 | 35 | 64 | 22 | 13 | 35 | 0 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

Among Year 12 or equivalent completers who stated they intended to return to study, their reasons for doing so suggest that earnings and employment rate higher than career development,

course provision and eligibility for income support. Overall, 84% of those who were planning to return to study in the next two years would do so to earn more money, compared to 72% who

were interested in a better job and 39% who were dissatisfied with their career prospects (see Table 32).

Table 32 Reasons for returning to study among 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers, 2011

| Reason | Employed full-time (% agree) | Employed part-time (% agree) | Looking for work (% agree) | Total agree (%) |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| To start earning more money | 85 | 86 | 76 | 84 |
| To get a better job | 68 | 78 | 75 | 72 |
| Is dissatisfied with current career prospects | 34 | 43 | 51 | 39 |
| The course of interest is now available locally | 25 | 32 | 41 | 29 |
| Now qualifies for Youth Allowance to support study | 8 | 19 | 35 | 14 |

LLEN referrals

In 2008, respondents to the *On Track* survey were offered a referral to their Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) as part of the *On Track* program. Of the Year 12 or equivalent completers

who took up this referral, 57% were engaged in education and training in 2011, 37% were employed, 5% were looking for work and 1% were NILFET (see Table 33). When asked about the helpfulness of the LLEN referral, 44% said it was helpful with information on

work or study or both, 17% said it was not helpful and 14% said they were not contacted (see Table 34). One in four Year 12 or equivalent completers were not able to say how helpful the LLEN referral was to them.

Table 33 Main activity of 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers who were referred to a LLEN in 2008 after the *On Track* interview, 2008–2011

| Main activity | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| University | -- | 20 | 23 | 26 |
| Certificate I-IV and above | -- | 19 | 18 | 14 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | -- | 16 | 17 | 17 |
| Employed full-time | -- | 11 | 20 | 22 |
| Employed part-time | 69 | 22 | 15 | 15 |
| Looking for work | 31 | 10 | 6 | 5 |
| NILFET | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 34 Helpfulness of LLEN referral among 2007 Year 12 or equivalent completers

| Helpfulness of LLEN referral | Response in 2011 (%) |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Yes, with study options | 12 |
| Yes, with work options | 9 |
| Yes, with both study and work options | 23 |
| Sub-total | 44 |
| No, not helpful | 17 |
| I wasn't contacted | 14 |
| Can't say/refused | 25 |
| Total | 100 |

Note: Column may not sum to sub-total or 100% due to rounding.

Destinations of early school leavers

Overview

Early school leavers in the longitudinal cohort of *On Track* are young people who left school during 2007 and were not awarded any of the following certificates: VCE, IB, VCAL Senior or VCAL Intermediate. In Victoria, the school leaving age is 16 years (recently raised from 15) and ranges from 15 to 17 in other Australian states. In Australia, around 10% of students leave school before completing Year 10 and a disproportionate number of these are male, from an Indigenous background or from a low socioeconomic family (Fullarton, 2002). Those who remain at school a little longer but leave before completing Year 12 have similar characteristics (Curtis & McMillan, 2008; Penman, 2004).

Early school leavers have more difficult labour market transitions than do school completers. Previous research conducted on cohorts of young people has identified a range of individual and school factors that are associated with school non-completion. More specifically, factors such as socio-economic background, parents' education, gender, achievement, location and attitudes to school have been identified as predictors of non-completion (Lamb, 1996; Marks & Fleming, 1999; McMillan & Marks, 2003; Winefield et al., 2005).

The post-school destinations of early school leavers more commonly comprise employment, on a full- or part-time basis; further study—usually through a TAFE institution at Certificate I or II, or an apprenticeship; unemployment; or being out of the labour force (Curtis & McMillan, 2008). Marks (2006) showed that early leavers who are in full-time employment on leaving school tend to have successful longer term labour market experiences; however, early leavers have greater difficulty than Year 12 completers in securing an initial position.

Annual activities of early school leavers

Like those school leavers who completed Year 12 or its equivalent in 2007, early school leavers have engaged with a diverse range of activities and pathways in their first four post-school years, although their participation in education and training was much lower than among the Year 12 or equivalent completers. As shown in Table 35, more than one-half of early school leavers were engaged in education and training in 2008, 2009 and 2010. By 2011, when many had completed their initial post-school study, 45% were in education and training.

Across all years of the longitudinal survey, apprenticeship was the most common activity for early school leavers, between 36% and 37% up to 2010, and dropping to 30% in 2011 as apprentices started to complete their training contracts. By 2011, 30% of all 2007 early school leavers were in full-time employment—up from 20% in the previous year—with much of that increase directly attributable to former apprentices entering the labour force.

While the proportion of 2007 early school leavers in full-time employment was increasing, the proportion in part-time employment remained fairly constant, at between 11% and 12%. The proportion looking for work was at its highest level of 15% in 2009, as the global financial crisis was affecting many in Australia. In that same year, the proportion of 2007 early school leavers in full-time employment was lower than in other years. By 2010, however, the proportion of 2007 early school leavers working full-time had increased to 20% and the proportion looking for work dropped back to 12%.

Table 35 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers, 2008-2011

| Main activity | 2008 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2012 (%) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| In education and training | | | | |
| University (bachelor degree) | -- | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Certificate IV and above | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Certificate I-III | 10 | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| Apprenticeship | 36 | 37 | 37 | 30 |
| Traineeship | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| Secondary school | -- | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Sub-total | 56 | 54 | 53 | 45 |
| Not in education or training | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 18 | 15 | 20 | 30 |
| Employed part-time | 11 | 12 | 11 | 11 |
| Looking for work | 12 | 15 | 12 | 9 |
| NILFET | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Sub-total | 44 | 46 | 47 | 55 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| n | 1130 | | | |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. o indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

The overview of the pathways taken by the 2007 early school leavers (see Table 36) shows that of those who were in an apprenticeship in 2008, 60% were still in an apprenticeship in 2011 and 28% had moved to full-time employment. Further, those who were apprentices in 2008 continued in the same activity in subsequent years at much higher rates than did early school leavers in other activities in 2008.

Post-school pathways of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early school leavers

Despite national and Victorian trends indicating improvements in the past decade, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians historically have not attained Year 12 at the same levels as their non-Indigenous peers. In Victoria, Aboriginal people are over-represented in the VET sector relative to the size of the Victorian Aboriginal population (SCRGSP, 2011).

The sample design of the longitudinal survey included all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander early school leavers who were interviewed in 2008 in the annual *On Track* survey. An attrition rate of 60% has resulted in 36 respondents being tracked across all four years of the study. Of this group, 14 were undertaking some form of education and training (7 were in an apprenticeship) and 22 were in the labour force.

Table 36 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers, 2009-2011, by main activity in 2008

| Main activity in 2008 | % in 2008 | Year | In education and training (%) | | | | | Not in education or training (%) | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------|
| | | | University | Certificate IV+ | Certificate I-III | Apprenticeship | Traineeship | Secondary school | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work | NILFET |
| Certificate IV and above | 3 | 2009 | -- | 38 | 3 | -- | -- | 5 | 14 | 22 | 14 | 5 |
| | | 2010 | 3 | 22 | 5 | 5 | -- | -- | 11 | 30 | 19 | 5 |
| | | 2011 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 22 | 24 | 19 | 8 |
| Certificate I-III | 10 | 2009 | 2 | -- | 30 | 14 | 2 | 3 | 11 | 15 | 21 | 2 |
| | | 2010 | 1 | 6 | 21 | 15 | 3 | -- | 17 | 17 | 17 | 3 |
| | | 2011 | 3 | 7 | 13 | 19 | 3 | 1 | 25 | 12 | 12 | 5 |
| Apprenticeship | 36 | 2009 | -- | 0 | 1 | 88 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| | | 2010 | -- | 1 | 1 | 83 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| | | 2011 | -- | 2 | 2 | 60 | 1 | 0 | 28 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| Traineeship | 7 | 2009 | 1 | 8 | 1 | -- | 36 | -- | 21 | 21 | 11 | 1 |
| | | 2010 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 17 | -- | 39 | 12 | 11 | 4 |
| | | 2011 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 11 | -- | 44 | 18 | 3 | 2 |
| Employed full-time | 18 | 2009 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 8 | 1 | 42 | 15 | 13 | 2 |
| | | 2010 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 18 | 6 | 1 | 36 | 12 | 12 | 2 |
| | | 2011 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 19 | 4 | -- | 40 | 11 | 11 | 4 |
| Employed part-time | 11 | 2009 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 6 | -- | 17 | 27 | 21 | 6 |
| | | 2010 | -- | 4 | 8 | 12 | 5 | -- | 25 | 25 | 16 | 4 |
| | | 2011 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 13 | 7 | -- | 29 | 18 | 14 | 5 |
| Looking for work | 12 | 2009 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 14 | 36 | 8 |
| | | 2010 | -- | 5 | 8 | 10 | 7 | 3 | 22 | 15 | 24 | 7 |
| | | 2011 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 27 | 18 | 17 | 10 |
| NILFET | 3 | 2009 | 3 | 3 | 3 | -- | -- | 3 | 10 | 10 | 33 | 33 |
| | | 2010 | 3 | -- | 3 | 13 | 3 | -- | 17 | 13 | 13 | 33 |
| | | 2011 | 3 | -- | -- | 10 | 7 | -- | 13 | 17 | 13 | 37 |

Notes: Each row sums to 100%. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. -- indicates no persons. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Annual activities of early school leavers, by gender

Gender differences in the annual activities of the 2007 early school leavers are related to the much higher take-up of apprenticeship by males than by females (see Table 37). Nearly one-half of male early leavers (46%) were in an apprenticeship in the first year after leaving school, and that proportion rose

to 50% by 2010. As a result, in all four post-school years, more than one-half of male early leavers were in some form of education and training at around 60% between 2008 and 2010, dropping to 53% in 2011. Among female early school leavers, 44% were in education and training in the first post-school year (2008), dropping to 28% by 2011. Females were more frequently than males engaged

in campus-based tertiary study at all levels: Certificate I-III, Certificate IV and above, and university (from 2009 onward).

There were small differences in the proportion of male and female early school leavers who were employed full-time in each year, but higher proportions of females who were employed part-time, looking for work and NILFET.

Table 37 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers, 2008-2011, by gender

| Main activity | Female (n = 383) | | | | Male (n = 747) | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | |
| University (Bachelor) | -- | 1 | 2 | 2 | -- | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Certificate IV and above | 5 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Certificate I-III | 14 | 9 | 11 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Apprenticeship | 15 | 14 | 13 | 5 | 46 | 48 | 50 | 43 |
| Traineeship | 11 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Secondary school | -- | 2 | 1 | -- | -- | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 44 | 41 | 39 | 28 | 62 | 61 | 60 | 53 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 18 | 16 | 23 | 33 | 17 | 14 | 19 | 29 |
| Employed part-time | 17 | 20 | 15 | 16 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| Looking for work | 16 | 16 | 14 | 11 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 8 |
| NILFET | 5 | 7 | 8 | 13 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 56 | 59 | 61 | 72 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 47 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

Annual activities of early school leavers, by geographic location

Early leavers who had attended schools in non-metropolitan areas had more frequently entered an apprenticeship or traineeship in 2008 than did those who had attended schools in metropolitan

areas, although the differences in the proportions decreased each subsequent year (see Table 38). Between 2008 and 2010, a greater proportion of early school leavers from non-metropolitan areas were in all forms of education and training than were early leavers from metropolitan

areas; by 2011, that difference had reversed. There were minor differences in the labour force across the first three years; by 2011, higher proportions of non-metropolitan leavers were employed and lower proportions were looking for work.

Table 38 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers, 2008-2011, by geographic location

| Main activity | Metropolitan (n = 660) | | | | Non-metropolitan (n = 470) | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | |
| University (Bachelor) | -- | 1 | 1 | 1 | -- | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Certificate IV and above | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Certificate I-III | 12 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| Apprenticeship | 33 | 35 | 36 | 31 | 39 | 40 | 39 | 29 |
| Traineeship | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| Secondary school | -- | 2 | 1 | 1 | -- | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Sub-total | 54 | 53 | 52 | 47 | 59 | 57 | 54 | 42 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 18 | 15 | 20 | 29 | 17 | 15 | 21 | 32 |
| Employed part-time | 11 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 13 | 11 | 14 |
| Looking for work | 13 | 16 | 13 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 10 | 8 |
| NILFET | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Sub-total | 46 | 47 | 48 | 53 | 41 | 43 | 46 | 58 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. -- indicates no persons. o indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

Annual activities of early school leavers, by socioeconomic background

There were differences in the initial activities of 2007 early school leavers related to socioeconomic background (see Table 39). Leavers from the lowest SES quarter were less frequently in an apprenticeship and more frequently in a traineeship than were leavers from the other SES quarters; and leavers from the highest SES quarter were less frequently employed part-time or looking for work than were leavers from the other SES quarters.

Annual activities of early school leavers, by year level

Early school leavers who were last enrolled in Year 12 before leaving were less frequently engaged in education and training in 2008 than were those who had left from lower year levels (see Table 40). Of those who left in Year 12, 25% were in full-time employment in 2008 and 23% had taken up an apprenticeship. By contrast 13% of those who left in Year 10 or below and 15% of those who left in Year 11 were working full-time in 2008 and 40–41% were in an apprenticeship.

Further, 14% of those who left in Year 10 or below had enrolled in study at Certificate I, II or III in 2008, compared to 10% of Year 11 leavers and 7% of Year 12 leavers. The earliest school leavers— from Year 10 or below—were least frequently in a traineeship between 2008 and 2011.

Table 39 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers, 2008–2011, by SES quarter

| Main activity | Lowest (n = 350) | | | | Lower-middle (n = 327) | | | | Upper-middle (n = 244) | | | | Highest (n = 129) | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| University (Bachelor) | -- | 1 | 1 | 1 | -- | 0 | 1 | 2 | -- | 1 | 1 | 1 | -- | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Certificate IV and above | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 4 |
| Certificate I-III | 10 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Apprenticeship | 31 | 32 | 33 | 25 | 38 | 38 | 40 | 33 | 36 | 38 | 36 | 32 | 38 | 41 | 44 | 35 |
| Traineeship | 9 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Secondary school | -- | 2 | 0 | 0 | -- | 3 | 1 | 0 | -- | 1 | 2 | 1 | -- | 2 | 1 | -- |
| Sub-total | 52 | 53 | 50 | 41 | 55 | 53 | 51 | 45 | 55 | 54 | 53 | 47 | 63 | 59 | 61 | 48 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 17 | 14 | 20 | 30 | 17 | 15 | 19 | 30 | 19 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 18 | 15 | 21 | 32 |
| Employed part-time | 12 | 13 | 9 | 12 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 15 | 14 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 6 |
| Looking for work | 15 | 18 | 15 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 15 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 13 | 8 | 8 |
| NILFET | 5 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 6 |
| Sub-total | 48 | 47 | 50 | 59 | 45 | 47 | 49 | 55 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 53 | 37 | 41 | 39 | 52 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: SES quarter refers to location of the completer's home address in 2007. -- indicates no persons. o indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

Table 40 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers, 2008–2011, by year level when left school

| | Year 10 or below (n = 254) | | | | | Year 11 (n = 546) | | | | | Year 12 (n = 330) | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| University (Bachelor) | -- | 0 | -- | -- | -- | 0 | 0 | 0 | -- | 2 | 3 | 4 | -- | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Certificate IV+ | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| Certificate I-III | 14 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| Apprenticeship | 41 | 44 | 47 | 41 | 40 | 41 | 41 | 32 | 23 | 23 | 25 | 19 | 23 | 23 | 25 | 19 |
| Traineeship | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Secondary school | -- | 2 | 1 | -- | -- | 2 | 1 | 1 | -- | 2 | -- | 0 | -- | 2 | -- | 0 |
| Sub-total | 61 | 60 | 61 | 53 | 61 | 59 | 58 | 46 | 43 | 42 | 40 | 36 | 43 | 42 | 40 | 36 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 13 | 9 | 15 | 22 | 15 | 12 | 20 | 32 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 33 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 33 |
| Employed part-time | 6 | 7 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 9 | 10 | 17 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 16 | 15 |
| Looking for work | 14 | 20 | 12 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 10 | 8 | 13 | 13 | 14 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 14 | 10 |
| NILFET | 5 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 6 |
| Sub-total | 39 | 40 | 39 | 47 | 39 | 41 | 42 | 54 | 57 | 58 | 60 | 64 | 57 | 58 | 60 | 64 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

School programs that prepare early school leavers for participation in post-school life—such as the labour market—are important to ease the transition from school. Most secondary schools in Victoria offer VET in Schools, in which students undertake nationally recognised

training from either accredited state curriculum or national training packages (VCAA, 2009). Among the 2007 early school leavers in the *On Track* longitudinal study, 41% did at least one VET in Schools subject before leaving. Of those who did VET in Schools, 40%

took up an apprenticeship in their first post-school year compared to 32% of those who did no VET in Schools (see Table 41). There were only small differences in other activities of early school leavers.

Table 41 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers, 2008-2011, by participation in VET in Schools

| Main activity | Did VET in Schools (n = 458) | | | | No VET in Schools (n = 672) | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
| In education and training | | | | | | | | |
| University (Bachelor) | -- | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Certificate IV and above | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Certificate I-III | 9 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 7 | 7 | 5 |
| Apprenticeship | 40 | 42 | 42 | 35 | 32 | 33 | 35 | 27 |
| Traineeship | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Secondary school | -- | 1 | 0 | 0 | -- | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Sub-total | 58 | 56 | 55 | 48 | 54 | 53 | 52 | 42 |
| Not in education or training | | | | | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 19 | 15 | 22 | 29 | 17 | 15 | 19 | 31 |
| Employed part-time | 10 | 13 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 12 |
| Looking for work | 11 | 12 | 12 | 8 | 13 | 17 | 11 | 9 |
| NILFET | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Sub-total | 42 | 44 | 45 | 52 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 58 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. o indicates less than 0.5%. Columns may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

Pathways through post-school vocational education and training

VET participation is an important component of young people’s transitions between compulsory education and work. For some groups, especially males, post-school VET qualifications ameliorate their lower school completion rates; for others, post-school VET does not provide this compensation (Curtis & McMillan, 2008). While participation in most types of VET programs is associated with more favourable outcomes than those experienced by those who do no post-school study, completion of

those programs does appear to confer additional labour force advantages (Curtis, 2008).

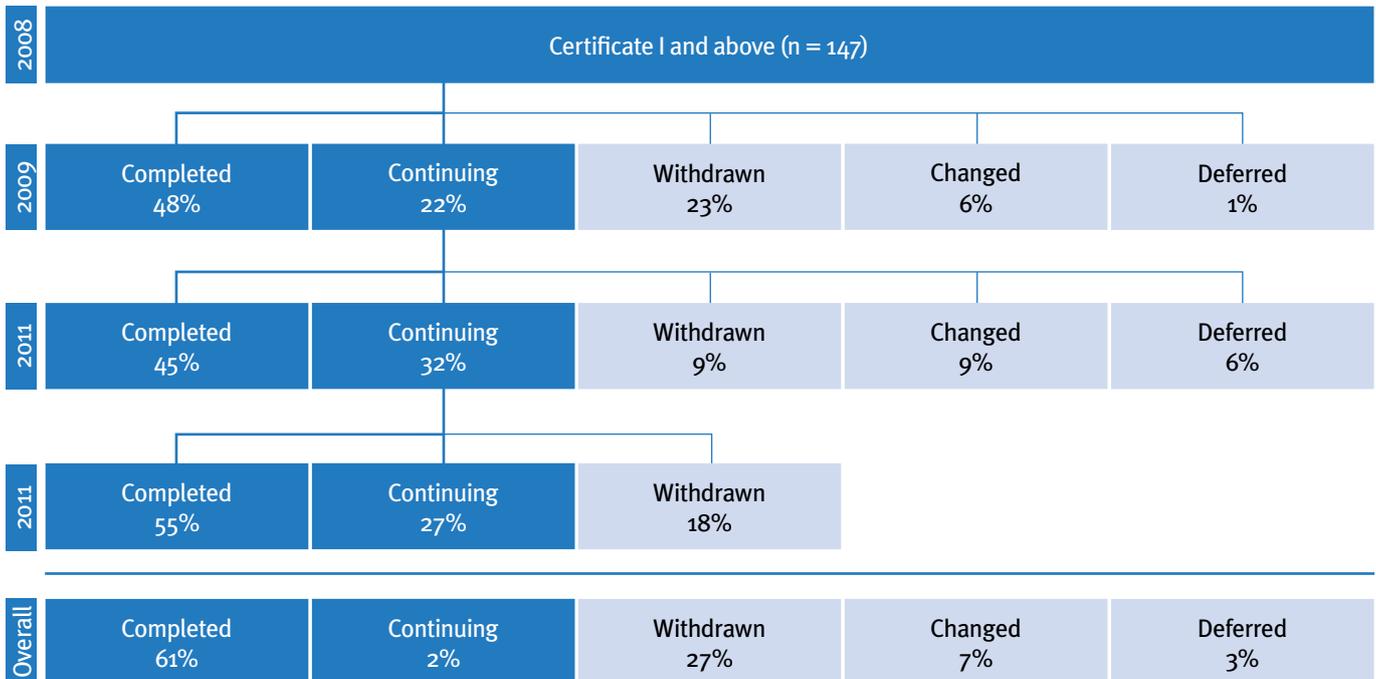
Studies that have used LSAY data to examine the outcomes achieved by early school leavers who complete VET qualifications have found that males who complete apprenticeships obtain the greatest benefit in terms of subsequent employment outcomes; for others, completion of a VET program has only small positive effects (see, for example, Lamb, Long & Malley 1998; Long, McKenzie & Sturman, 1996; Marks & Fleming, 1998a, 1998b). In addition, there is little difference in outcomes for those who participate in, but do

not complete, non-apprenticeship VET courses and those with no post-school education or training (Curtis, 2008).

Campus-based certificate-level study

By 2011, 61% of the 2007 early school leavers who had entered certificate-level study in 2008 had completed that study (see Figure 10). This includes the 48% who had completed their study by 2009—mostly those enrolled in courses of shorter duration at lower certificate levels. Of concern, however, are the 27% of early school leavers who had entered study and withdrew before completing their study, most often after the first year of study.

Figure 10 Pathways of 2007 early school leavers through initial campus-based certificate-level study



Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Even though 61% of early school leavers who had entered a campus-based certificate-level course in 2008 had completed that course by 2011 and only 2% were continuing in the same course, in 23% were studying at Certificate I or

higher in 2011, including 3% who were enrolled in a bachelor degree program. Within this group there were differences by gender: 29% of females were engaged in campus-based tertiary study compared to 16% of males; 33% of males were in an

apprenticeship or traineeship compared to 5% of females; and greater proportions of females than males were employed part-time, looking for work or NILFET (see Table 42).

Table 42 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in campus-based certificate-level study in 2008, by gender

| Gender | Certificate I-IV and above | Apprenticeship/ Traineeship | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work/NILFET | Total |
|--------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Female | 29 | 5 | 22 | 21 | 22 | 100 |
| Male | 16 | 33 | 26 | 9 | 16 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Early school leavers from metropolitan areas who had entered a campus-based certificate-level course in 2008 were more frequently engaged in further education and training in 2011 than were

those from non-metropolitan areas. Conversely, those from non-metropolitan areas were more frequently employed—both full-time and part-time—than were those from metropolitan areas. There

was no difference by location in the proportion looking for work or NILFET (see Table 43).

Table 43 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in campus-based certificate-level study in 2008, by geographic location

| Geographic location | Certificate I-IV and above | Apprenticeship/ Traineeship | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work/NILFET | Total |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Metropolitan | 26 | 21 | 22 | 12 | 19 | 100 |
| Non-metropolitan | 14 | 16 | 29 | 22 | 19 | 100 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

There were some interesting differences in the activities in 2011 of the 2007 early school leavers when differentiated by the year level when they left school (see Table 44). Those who were in Year 12 when they left were more frequently

engaged in campus-based tertiary study than were others, and were much less frequently in an apprenticeship or traineeship. Further, those who were in Year 12 when they left school were more frequently looking for work or NILFET

in 2011 than were those who had left in lower year levels. Of those who had left in Year 10 or below, 77% were either in study or full-time employment, compared to 66% of those who had left in Year 11 and 54% of those who had left in Year 12.

Table 44 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in campus-based certificate-level study in 2008, by year level when left school

| Year level | Certificate I-IV and above | Apprenticeship/ Traineeship | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work/NILFET | Total |
|------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Years 7-10 | 18 | 36 | 23 | 9 | 14 | 100 |
| Year 11 | 20 | 17 | 29 | 16 | 18 | 100 |
| Year 12 | 34 | 5 | 15 | 18 | 28 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Apprenticeships and traineeships

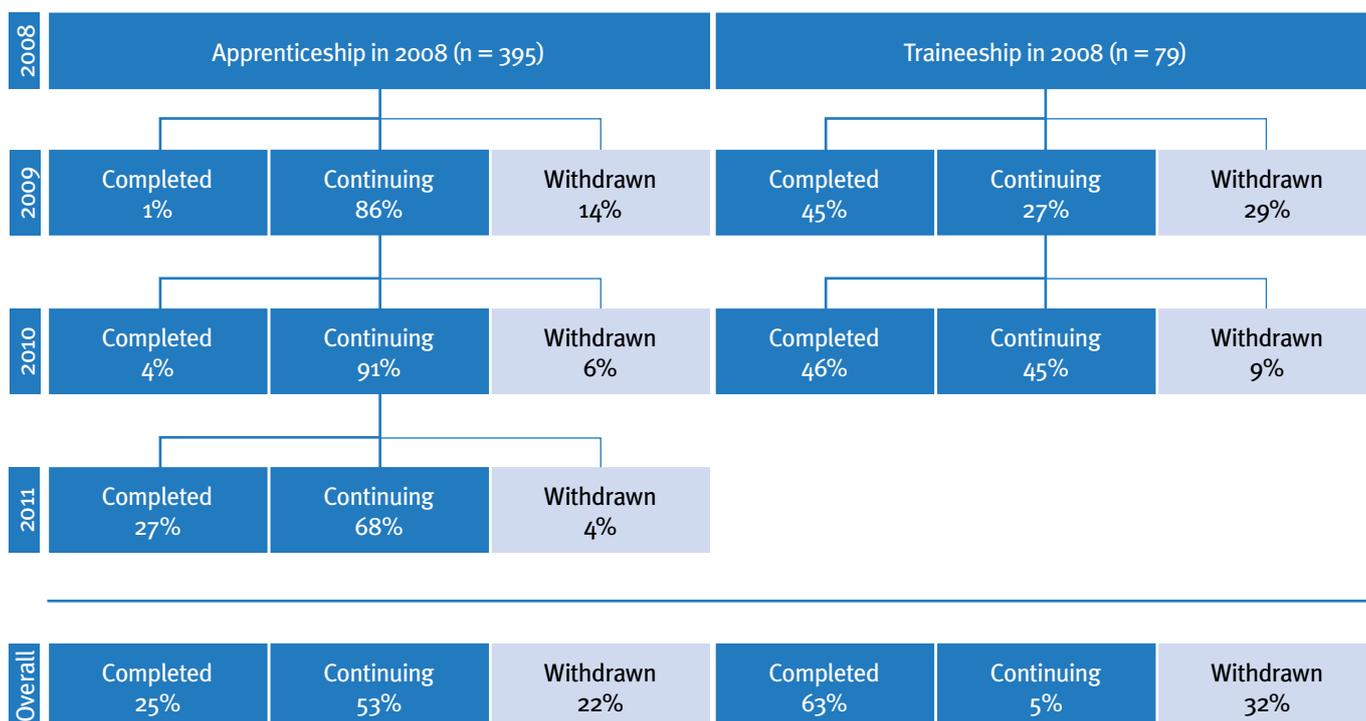
Apprenticeship completion rates have received considerable attention in recent years and there is considerable debate around how completion is measured. Official VET statistics are often based on an apprenticeship, which may be cancelled because the employer is no longer able to support an apprentice or because the apprentice leaves to take up another apprenticeship or full-time work. Longitudinal studies allow the reporting on apprentices and whether they complete an apprenticeship regardless of how many employers they work with. In an analysis of individual apprentice completion

rates, Karmel (2011) found that around one-quarter of trade apprentices swap employers during their apprenticeship, indicating a high level employer ‘churn’.

By 2011, 25% of 2007 early school leavers who began an apprenticeship in 2008 had completed that contract of training, 53% were continuing in the same apprenticeship, and 22% had withdrawn (see Figure 11). Similar to findings of other studies, 14% had withdrawn in the first year of the apprenticeship. Curtis (2008) found that apprentices often leave because of conflict with supervisors and peers, and because they find they do not like the type of work.

Of those who had undertaken a traineeship in 2008, 45% had completed it by 2009. This is to be expected as the majority of traineeships are of 1-2 years duration. By 2009, 29% of trainees had withdrawn in the first year of the traineeship (Figure 11). The main reason for withdrawing was to move into a job. Curtis (2008) found that trainees often leave for health and personal reasons, because they find better work or because they are dissatisfied with their off-the-job training.

Figure 11 Pathways of 2007 early school leavers through apprenticeship and traineeship



Notes: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. The number of trainees in the sample continuing in a traineeship after 2010 is too small to report.

Of those early school leavers who had entered a traineeship after leaving school, 43% were employed full-time, 18% were employed part-time and 33% were in education and training in 2011. A greater proportion of males than females

entered full-time employment or were in an apprenticeship or traineeship, and a greater proportion of females than males entered campus-based tertiary study or part-time employment (see Table 45). A greater proportion of early leavers who

had attended metropolitan schools entered other forms of education and training than did their non-metropolitan peers (see Table 46).

Table 45 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in traineeships in 2008, by gender

| Gender | Certificate I-IV and above | Apprenticeship/ Traineeship | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work/NILFET | Total |
|--------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Female | 24 | 6 | 37 | 24 | 9 | 100 |
| Male | 2 | 33 | 51 | 12 | 2 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 46 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in traineeships in 2008, by geographic location

| Geographic location | Certificate I-IV and above | Apprenticeship/ Traineeship | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work/NILFET | Total |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Metropolitan | 15 | 28 | 40 | 12 | 5 | 100 |
| Non-metropolitan | 12 | 15 | 47 | 21 | 6 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Of those early school leavers who were apprentices from 2008 to 2011, a large proportion received increases in the pay they received, the skills they were developing and the responsibilities

they had in their work. For example, in 2011, 89% were earning more than in the previous year, 72% were doing more skilled work and 87% had more responsibility at work than they

did in the previous year (see Table 47). All apprentices reported at least one increase in earnings, skills and responsibilities across the three years.

Table 47 Career advancement indicators among 2007 early school leavers in apprenticeships, 2008–2011

| Years | Change in earnings | | | Change in skilled work | | | Change in responsibility | | |
|-----------|--------------------|------|------|------------------------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|
| | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More |
| 2008–2009 | 6 | 11 | 83 | 1 | 21 | 79 | 1 | 12 | 87 |
| 2009–2010 | 6 | 11 | 83 | 1 | 21 | 78 | 1 | 11 | 88 |
| 2010–2011 | 5 | 9 | 86 | 2 | 22 | 76 | 3 | 9 | 88 |

Note: Rows within each type of change may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

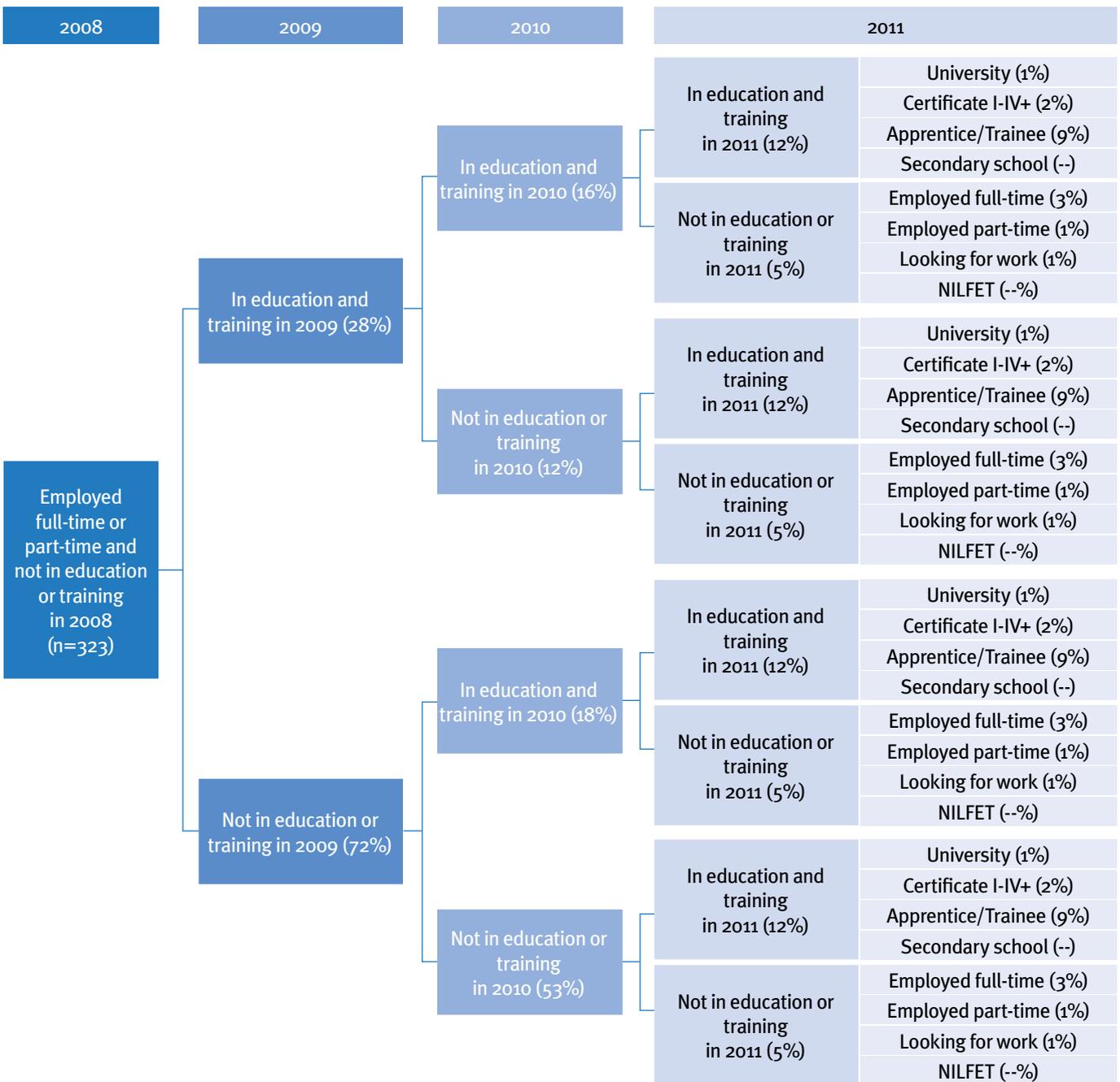
Pathways in the labour force

Among young people in the 2007 early school leaver sample, 29% were in full-time or part-time employment as their main activity in 2008. In 2009, only 28% of those working in 2008 entered education and training; in subsequent years, less than 25% of those in employment moved into some form of study, and more than one-half of those in education and training in any year remained in education and training in the following year (see Figure 12).

According to Marks (2006), early school leavers who enter full-time employment immediately after leaving school experience better labour market outcomes than do other early school leavers. Among the early school leavers in the *On Track* longitudinal sample, 18% were in full-time employment in 2008. In 2009, 42% remained in full-time employment, 28% moved into education and training, and 30% moved to part-time employment, were looking for work or were NILFET (see Figure 13). The proportion remaining in full-time employment is higher than the proportion of Year 12 or equivalent

completers who continued in full-time work in 2009, but that group also included those who had deferred tertiary study for one year and were enrolling in their study. The proportions remaining in full-time work from 2009 to 2010 and from 2010 to 2011 among early school leavers were extremely similar to the proportions of Year 12 or equivalent completers remaining in full-time work. Approximately one in six early school leavers who were in full-time employment in 2008 remained in full-time employment for all three subsequent years.

Figure 12 Pathways of 2007 early school leavers who were employed and not in education or training in 2008



Notes: -- indicates no persons. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Columns or groups may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Figure 13 Pathways of 2007 early school leavers from full-time employment in 2008

| Year | Certificate IV+ | Certificate I-III | Apprentice/Trainee | Employed full-time | Employed part-time | Looking for work/ NILFET |
|---------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2008 | Employed full-time in 2008 (n = 199) | | | | | |
| 2009 | 4% | 4% | 19% | 42% | 15% | 15% |
| 2010 | 9% | 1% | 16% | 56% | 6% | 11% |
| 2011 | 2% | -- | 10% | 72% | 11% | 9% |
| Overall | 9% | 5% | 27% | 17% | 20% | 22% |

Notes: - - indicates no persons. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Persons moving into secondary school are included with Cert I-III. Persons moving into university are included with Cert IV+.

Pathways from full-time employment, by gender

Of those early school leavers who were employed full-time in 2008, activities in the following years differed by gender (see Table 48). The greatest difference related to the conditions under which the

young men and women were working: females were more frequently in full-time employment by 2011, and males were more frequently in an apprenticeship, in which they were working full-time. The other area of difference in 2011 was campus-based education and training,

with 17% of young women in 2010 and 14% in 2011 studying for Certificate IV or above, compared to 2% of young men in 2010 and 5% in 2011.

Table 48 Main activity in 2009, 2010 and 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in full-time employment in 2008, by gender

| Main activity | Female (n = 69) | | | Male (n = 130) | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------|------|----------------|------|------|
| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| Certificate IV and above | 9 | 17 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Certificate I-III | 4 | 10 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 3 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | 11 | 11 | 6 | 23 | 31 | 32 |
| Employed full-time | 41 | 37 | 50 | 42 | 35 | 35 |
| Employed part-time | 20 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 13 | 11 |
| Looking for work/NILFET | 14 | 16 | 17 | 15 | 14 | 14 |

Notes: Persons moving into secondary school are included with Certificate I-III. Persons moving into university are included with Certificate IV and above. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Pathways from full-time employment, by geographic location

There were few differences in activities after full-time employment by geographic location, particularly regarding

apprenticeship and full-time work (see Table 49). In 2010 and 2011, a greater proportion of early school leavers from metropolitan areas than from non-metropolitan areas were engaged in

campus-based study after having been in full-time employment in 2008. Non-metropolitan leavers had higher rates of part-time employment, particularly in 2009 and 2011.

Table 49 Main activity in 2009, 2010 and 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in full-time employment in 2008, by geographic location

| Main activity | Metropolitan (n = 119) | | | Non-metropolitan (n = 80) | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------|------|---------------------------|------|------|
| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| Certificate IV and above | 4 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Certificate I-III | 6 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | 23 | 27 | 23 | 13 | 21 | 23 |
| Employed full-time | 42 | 33 | 41 | 43 | 40 | 38 |
| Employed part-time | 11 | 11 | 7 | 21 | 12 | 16 |
| Looking for work/NILFET | 14 | 12 | 15 | 16 | 19 | 15 |

Notes: Geographic location refers to location of the school attended in 2007, based on the DEECD administrative region. Persons moving into secondary school are included with Certificate I-III. Persons moving into university are included with Certificate IV and above. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Pathways from full-time employment, by socioeconomic background

Of the 2007 early school leavers who were employed full-time in 2008, there were also differences by socioeconomic background in their activities in subsequent years. Among those from

the two highest SES quarters, 15–17% were in campus-based study; 9–10% of leavers from the two lowest SES quarters were studying. Additionally, greater proportions of those from the higher SES quarters were working full-time, compared to those from the lower SES

quarters. Early leavers from the two lower SES quarters were more frequently working part-time, looking for work or NILFET than were those from the higher SES quarters (see Table 50).

Table 50 Main activity in 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in full-time employment in 2008, by SES quarter

| Main activity | Lowest (n = 59) | Lower-middle (n = 55) | Upper-middle (n = 46) | Highest (n = 24) |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Certificate IV and above | 5 | 7 | 13 | 13 |
| Certificate I-III | 5 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | 25 | 20 | 26 | 17 |
| Employed full-time | 30 | 41 | 45 | 50 |
| Employed part-time | 17 | 12 | 4 | 4 |
| Looking for work/NILFET | 18 | 19 | 11 | 13 |

Notes: SES quarter refers to location of the young person's home address in 2007. Excludes leavers whose home addresses in 2007 could not be coded. Persons moving into secondary school are included with Certificate I-III. Persons moving into university are included with Certificate IV and above. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Pathways from full-time employment, by year level when left school

Of the 2007 early school leavers who were employed full-time in 2008, those who had been in Year 10 or below when they left school were more frequently

than others to be employed part-time, looking for work or NILFET in 2011. These earliest leavers were also least frequently enrolled in campus-based study at Certificate IV or above, more frequently enrolled at Certificate I-III, and

more frequently in an apprenticeship or traineeship. Year 12 early leavers were more frequently in full-time employment in each subsequent year, 2009 to 2011 (see Table 51).

Table 51 Main activity in 2009, 2010 and 2011 of 2007 early school leavers in full-time employment in 2008, by year level when left school

| Main activity | Year 10 or below (n = 33) | | | Year 11 (n = 83) | | | Year 12 (n = 82) | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|------|------|------------------|------|------|------------------|------|------|
| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| Certificate IV and above | -- | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 12 | 14 |
| Certificate I-III | 12 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | 27 | 35 | 35 | 24 | 29 | 25 | 11 | 15 | 16 |
| Employed full-time | 38 | 28 | 24 | 36 | 36 | 41 | 50 | 39 | 45 |
| Employed part-time | 9 | 15 | 13 | 18 | 7 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 10 |
| Looking for work/NILFET | 15 | 10 | 19 | 15 | 17 | 16 | 14 | 14 | 13 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Persons in secondary school are included with Certificate I-III. Persons in university are included with Certificate IV and above. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

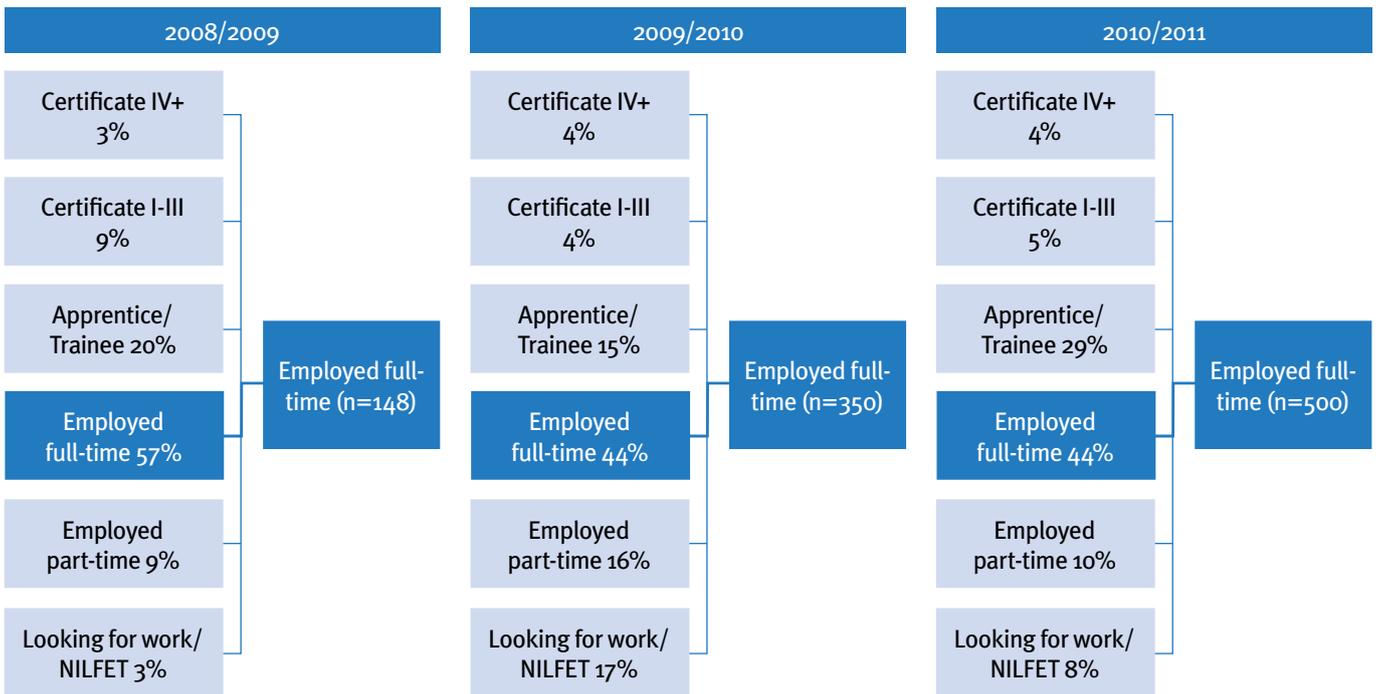
Moving into full-time employment

In their first year after having left school, 18% of 2007 early school leavers were employed full-time. That proportion dropped in 2009 to 15%, then increased in 2010 and 2011, so that by the end of the *On Track* longitudinal study 30% of early school leavers were working full-time (see Table 35 above). As shown in Figure 13 above, 30% of those working

full-time in 2008 had moved to part-time work, were looking for work or were NILFET in 2009, and 19% had taken up an apprenticeship or traineeship. While some of the early school leavers were moving out of full-time employment, some were moving in. In 2009, for example, 57% of those in full-time work had been in full-time work in the prior year, 32% had been in study, 9% had been working part-time and 3% had

been looking for work or were NILFET (see Figure 14). In 2010, 33% of those entering full-time employment had been in part-time employment, were looking for work or were NILFET in the previous year. Nevertheless, in each year, the greatest proportion of those in full-time work had been in full-time work in the previous year.

Figure 14 Pathways of 2007 early school leavers into full-time employment in 2009, 2010 and 2011



Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Of those early school leavers who entered full-time work for the first time in 2009, 44% were in full-time work in both 2010 and 2011. In 2008, 30% of these leavers had been working part-time, 28% had been in a traineeship and 21% had been looking for work or were NILFET.

Career advancement

Of those who were employed between 2008 and 2011, a large proportion received increases in the pay they received, the skills they were developing and the responsibilities they had in their work. For example, in 2011 73% were earning more, 72% were doing

more skilled work and 67% had more responsibility at work than they did in the previous year (see Table 52). All early school leavers in full-time work across the four years reported that they had received at least one increase in pay, an increase in skilled work and an increase in responsibilities.

Table 52 Career advancement indicators among 2007 early school leavers employed full-time in all four years (2008–2011)

| | Change in earnings | | | Change in skilled work | | | Change in responsibility | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------|------------|------------------------|------|------------|--------------------------|------|------------|
| | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More | Less | Same | More |
| 2008–2009 | -- | 24 | 76 | -- | 16 | 84 | -- | 24 | 76 |
| 2009–2010 | -- | 27 | 73 | 6 | 41 | 53 | 3 | 45 | 52 |
| 2010–2011 | 3 | 24 | 73 | 9 | 19 | 72 | 6 | 27 | 67 |
| Any increase across all years | | | 100 | | | 100 | | | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Rows within each type of change may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Career advice while at school

In 2011, the final year of the *On Track* longitudinal survey of 2007 school leavers, 14% of early leavers said that the career advice they had received at school was ‘very useful’ and 38% said it was ‘fairly useful’ (see Table 53). Apprentices were most positive about

that advice, with 65% agreeing it was useful. Early school leavers’ perceptions of the usefulness of school-based career advice four years after leaving school was slightly less positive than the perceptions of Year 12 or equivalent completers (see Table 26 above): 57% of completers said the advice they had received was useful, compared to 53% of early leavers. Early school leavers, however, were more

negative, with 20% saying that career advice was ‘not at all useful’, compared to 13% of Year 12 or equivalent completers. Among those who said that the career advice was not at all useful, the most common reason was that the advice did not prepare students for the workforce or the ‘real world’; this perception was most common among those who were working full-time in 2011.

Table 53 Usefulness of school-based career advice among 2007 early school leavers, by main activity in 2011

| Main activity in 2011 | Very useful | Fairly useful | Sub-total | Not very useful | Not at all useful | Sub-total | Don’t know/Refused | Total |
|---|-------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| Apprenticeship (n=342) | 19 | 46 | 65 | 22 | 12 | 34 | 1 | 100 |
| Other education and training (n=162) | 17 | 34 | 51 | 24 | 23 | 47 | 1 | 100 |
| Employed full-time (n=340) | 11 | 37 | 48 | 27 | 25 | 52 | -- | 100 |
| Part-time/Looking for work/NILFET (n=286) | 10 | 35 | 44 | 34 | 20 | 54 | 1 | 100 |
| Total | 14 | 38 | 53 | 27 | 20 | 47 | 1 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

Current job or career job?

In their fourth post-school year 71% of early school leavers who were working—including students who are also working—said that their main job was the type they would like as their career job, but there is marked difference

by main activity. Apprentices most frequently said they were in their career job (93%), similar to the 91% of Year 12 or equivalent completers in apprenticeships. More than 60% of trainees and those working full-time also said that they were in the type of job they would like as a career. Among Year 12 or equivalent

completers, 40% said they were working in the job they would like as a career, but 43% of the completers were studying at university in 2011 (see Table 27 above). Among those working full-time, 59% of Year 12 completers and 63% of early leavers agreed that they were working in a job that they would like as a career.

Table 54 Proportion of 2007 early school leavers who see their current job as their career job, by main activity in 2011

| Main activity | Yes (%) | No (%) | Not sure (%) | Total (%) |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| Certificate IV and above | 48 | 49 | 3 | 100 |
| Certificate I-III | 58 | 42 | -- | 100 |
| Apprenticeship | 93 | 5 | 2 | 100 |
| Traineeship | 69 | 17 | 14 | 100 |
| Employed full-time | 63 | 33 | 5 | 100 |
| Employed part-time | 44 | 53 | 3 | 100 |
| Total 2011 | 71 | 26 | 4 | 100 |
| Total 2010 | 71 | 25 | 4 | 100 |
| Total 2009 | 68 | 27 | 5 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Among those early school leavers who were in a certificate course, apprenticeship or traineeship during 2010 and had completed it before 2011, 91% said that the course prepared them well for their intended career.

Wellbeing

Early school leavers in the *On Track* longitudinal survey have been overwhelmingly positive about their work, career opportunities and lives between 2009 and 2011 (see Table

55). There have been only marginal differences between early school leavers and Year 12 or equivalent completers on these measures of wellbeing across the three years, generally 2 or 3 percentage points in favour of the completers, and little difference across time.

Table 55 Wellbeing indicators for 2007 early school leavers, 2009–2011

| Happiness with... | Year | Very happy | Happy | Sub-total | Unhappy | Very unhappy | Sub-total | Can't say/refused | Total |
|--------------------------------------|------|------------|-------|-----------|---------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| Work (at study, at home or in a job) | 2009 | 36 | 56 | 92 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 100 |
| | 2010 | 31 | 60 | 91 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 100 |
| | 2011 | 37 | 57 | 94 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 100 |
| Career opportunities | 2009 | 39 | 50 | 88 | 9 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 100 |
| | 2010 | 36 | 51 | 88 | 9 | 2 | 11 | 1 | 100 |
| | 2011 | 42 | 47 | 89 | 9 | 2 | 10 | 0 | 100 |
| Life as a whole | 2009 | 48 | 47 | 95 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 100 |
| | 2010 | 47 | 48 | 95 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 100 |
| | 2011 | 50 | 45 | 95 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 100 |

Notes: 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

As is the case with many of these measures, there are differences related to the main activity in which the early school leaver was engaged. For example, 97% of apprentices were 'happy' or 'very happy' with their current career opportunities in 2011 compared to 86% of those who were employed part-time or 65% of those looking for work.

Table 56 Happiness with career opportunities among 2007 early school leavers, by main activity in 2011

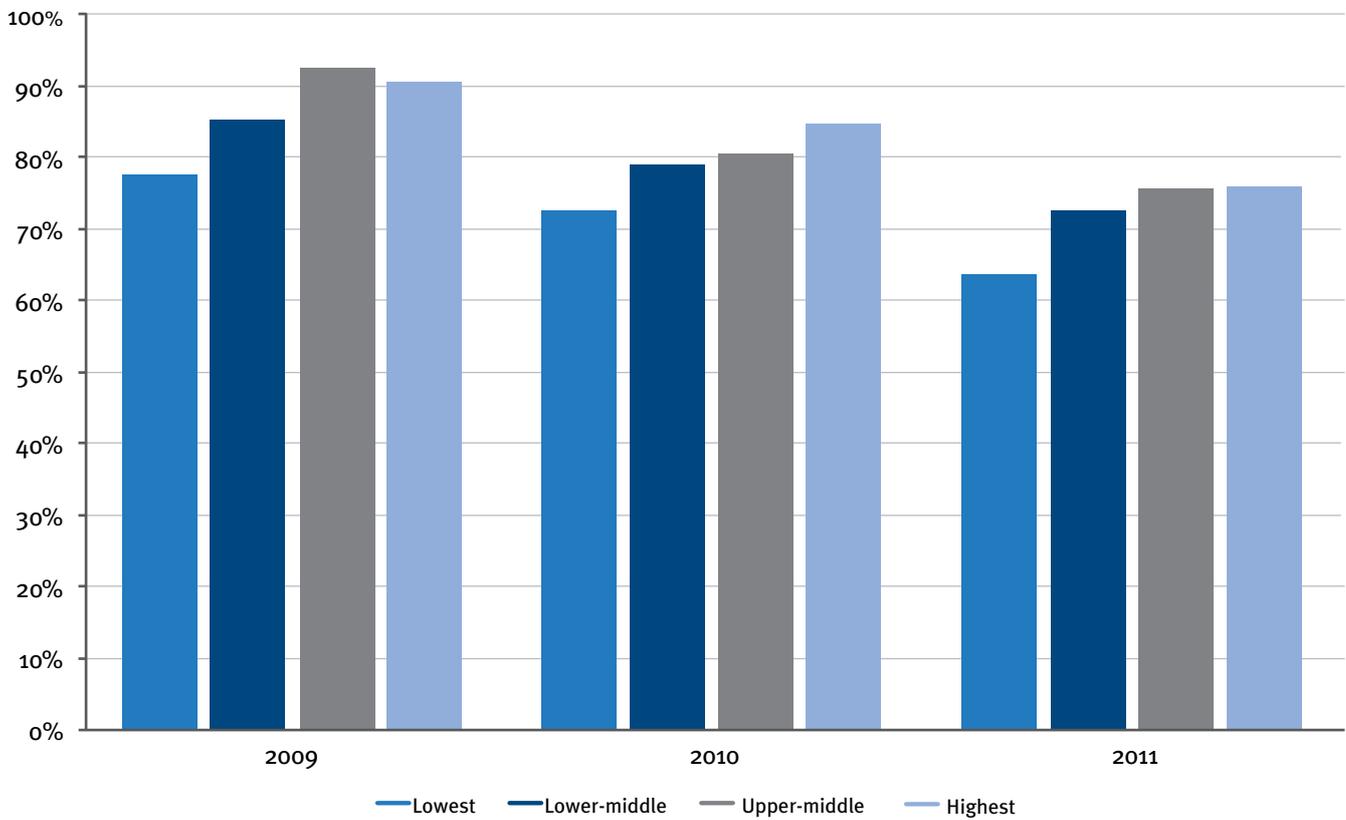
| Main activity | Very happy | Happy | Sub-total | Unhappy | Very unhappy | Sub-total | Can't say/refused | Total |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| Certificate IV+ | 50 | 42 | 92 | 7 | -- | 7 | 1 | 100 |
| Certificate I-III | 43 | 44 | 86 | 9 | 3 | 12 | 2 | 100 |
| Apprentice/Trainee | 54 | 43 | 97 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 100 |
| Employed full-time | 41 | 49 | 90 | 9 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 100 |
| Employed part-time | 30 | 56 | 86 | 11 | 3 | 14 | -- | 100 |
| Looking for work | 18 | 46 | 65 | 28 | 7 | 35 | -- | 100 |
| NILFET | 26 | 56 | 82 | 14 | 2 | 16 | 2 | 100 |
| Total | 42 | 47 | 89 | 9 | 2 | 10 | 0 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. 0 indicates less than 0.5%. Persons in secondary school are included with Certificate I-III. Persons in university are included with Certificate IV+. Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

One measure of well-being is the extent to which the early leaver has left home and is living independently from parents and/or guardians. Figure 15 shows that

a there is a strong relationship between SES quarter and whether an early school leaver, with the proportion living at home increasing as SES quarter increases.

Figure 15 Proportion of 2007 early school leavers living at home in 2009, 2010 and 2011, by SES quarter



Returning to study

It is important to maintain pathways that enable re-entry to the education and training system, especially for those who left school before completing a recognised certificate. As noted earlier in the chapter, more than one-half of

all early leavers were not studying at university, TAFE or as part of a training contract in 2011. Overall, 58% of those not studying in their fourth post-school year said it was ‘extremely likely’ (24%) or ‘somewhat likely’ (34%) that they would return to study in the next two years. Among those working full-time,

51% said it was ‘extremely likely’ or ‘somewhat likely’ they would take up study within the next two years compared to 73% of those working part-time (see Table 57).

Table 57 Likelihood of 2008 early school leavers returning to study in next two years, by 2011 main activity

| Main activity | Extremely likely | Somewhat likely | Sub-total | Not very likely | Not at all likely | Sub-total | Can't say/refused | Total |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| Employed full-time | 21 | 30 | 51 | 26 | 22 | 48 | 1 | 100 |
| Employed part-time | 22 | 39 | 61 | 21 | 15 | 36 | 3 | 100 |
| Looking for work | 31 | 42 | 73 | 11 | 13 | 24 | 2 | 100 |
| NILFET | 34 | 36 | 70 | 14 | 16 | 30 | -- | 100 |
| Total | 24 | 34 | 58 | 22 | 19 | 41 | 1 | 100 |

Note: Rows may not sum to sub-totals or 100% due to rounding.

As with Year 12 or equivalent completers, the reasons for early school leavers returning to study suggest that earnings and employment rate higher than career development, course provision and eligibility for income support. Overall, 86% of those who plan to return to study

in the next two years said they want to start earning more money, compared to 70% who want a better job and 42% who are dissatisfied with their current career prospects (see Table 58). The proportion of early leavers who agreed with each reason for returning to study

is generally similar to the proportion of Year 12 completers who agreed. Early leavers, however, more frequently identified the recent availability of the course as a reason than did Year 12 completers.

Table 58 Reasons for returning to study among 2007 early school leavers, 2011

| Reason | Employed full-time (% agree) | Employed part-time (% agree) | Looking for work (% agree) | Total agree (%) |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| To start earning more money | 83 | 85 | 97 | 86 |
| To get a better job | 59 | 78 | 85 | 70 |
| Are dissatisfied with current career prospects | 34 | 52 | 49 | 42 |
| The course of interest is now available locally | 35 | 41 | 54 | 40 |
| Now qualifies for Youth Allowance to support study | 9 | 16 | 48 | 20 |

LLEN referrals

In 2008, respondents to the *On Track* survey who were not in education, training or full-time employment were offered a referral to their Local Learning

and Employment Network (LLEN). Of the early school leavers who took up this referral, 35% were engaged in education and training in 2011 and 27% were employed full-time. The proportion of early leavers who were referred to a

LLEN and were looking for work dropped from 53% in 2008 to 15% in 2011, and the proportion who were NILFET, from 13% to 8% (see Table 59).

Table 59 Main activity of 2007 early school leavers who were referred to a LLEN in 2008 after the *On Track* interview, 2008–2011

| Main activity | 2008 (%) | 2009 (%) | 2010 (%) | 2011 (%) |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Certificate I-IV and above | -- | 16 | 13 | 16 |
| Apprenticeship/Traineeship | -- | 16 | 18 | 19 |
| Employed full-time | -- | 14 | 24 | 27 |
| Employed part-time | 34 | 17 | 23 | 15 |
| Looking for work | 53 | 28 | 15 | 15 |
| NILFET | 13 | 9 | 7 | 8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Notes: -- indicates no persons. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

When asked about the helpfulness of the LLEN referral, 40% of early leavers who were referred said it was helpful with either work and/or study options, 22% said it was not helpful and 21% said they

had not been contacted (see Table 60). The proportion of early school leavers stating that the LLEN referral was helpful was slightly lower than the proportion of Year 12 or equivalent completers who

stated it was helpful. A higher proportion of early leavers than completers said that they had not been contacted by their LLEN.

Table 60 Helpfulness of LLEN referral among 2007 early school leavers

| Helpfulness of LLEN referral | Response in 2011 (%) |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Yes, with study options | 9 |
| Yes, with work options | 10 |
| Yes, with both study and work options | 21 |
| Sub-total | 40 |
| No, not helpful | 22 |
| I wasn't contacted | 21 |
| Can't say/refused | 18 |
| Total | 100 |

Note: Column may not sum to sub-total or 100% due to rounding.

Summary and Conclusions

This report has examined the pathways of the 2007 cohort of Victorian school leavers from government schools. The participants in the *On Track* longitudinal survey comprised 2346 Year 12 or equivalent completers and 1130 early school leavers. These young people were first contacted in 2008, the first year after they left school, and were interviewed in each subsequent year until 2011. All participants had attended government schools in Victoria, and consented to participate in the initial interview and in each follow-up interview.

Pathways through education and training after leaving school

Post-secondary education and training is recognised as an important step in the transition from school to later life. That education and training may take the form of study toward a certificate, diploma or degree, or it may have a vocational focus, through a contract of training as part of an apprenticeship or traineeship, which also leads to the award of a certificate. Across the four years of the *On Track* longitudinal study, 93% of Year 12 or equivalent completers and 78% of early school leavers participated in some form of education and training after leaving school. More than one-half of Year 12 or equivalent completers (56%) had at least one year of study at university by 2011, as did 2% of early school leavers. Apprenticeship was a more common education and training pathway for early school leavers, with 47% having undertaken an apprenticeship at some time in the four years, compared to 13% of Year 12 or equivalent completers (see Table 61).

Table 61 Participation in any post-school education and training, by type of study and school-leaving status

| Type of study | Year 12 or equivalent completer (%) | Early school leaver (%) |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Any education and training | 93 | 78 |
| University (bachelor degree) | 56 | 2 |
| Certificate IV and above | 26 | 11 |
| Certificate I-III | 8 | 18 |
| Apprenticeship | 13 | 47 |
| Traineeship | 11 | 13 |

Notes: A person may have undertaken education and training in more than one type of study, so the columns sum to more than 'any education and training' and may sum to more than 100%.

Among those who completed Year 12 or its equivalent, campus-based tertiary study was more common than among those who left school before completing a Year 12 certificate, and it was more common than a contract of training (apprenticeship or traineeship). Early school leavers were more frequently undertaking a contract of training. Early school leavers were more frequently enrolled at the lower certificate levels (Certificate I, II and III) than were Year 12 or equivalent completers. Lim and Karmel (2011) have suggested that Certificate III should be considered the equivalent of Year 12 completion. Completion of courses at Certificate III level by early school leavers would result in increases in the rate of attainment of Year 12 or its vocational equivalent by Victorian young people by age 20.

Year 12 or equivalent completers from non-metropolitan areas participated in education and training at a much lower rate than did their metropolitan counterparts in the first post-school year—mainly because completers from non-metropolitan areas deferred further study at much higher rates—but from 2009 onward their participation in post-school education and training was only two to three percentage points lower. Within education and training, non-metropolitan completers were less frequently studying at university or for Certificate IV or above than were metropolitan completers, and in a contract of training more frequently. Early school leavers from non-metropolitan areas were also less frequently involved in campus-based study than were early leavers from metropolitan areas, and were also more frequently engaged in an apprenticeship

or traineeship, but overall there was little difference in the percentages in post-school education and training across the four years of the longitudinal study.

In the first post-school year, Year 12 completers from the lowest SES quarter were in education and training at rates the same as those from the lower-middle and upper-middle quarters; those from the highest SES quarter were studying at higher rates. In subsequent years, however, those from the lowest SES quarter were less frequently studying, particularly as they completed certificate courses or traineeships and moved into the labour force. Overall, 91% of low-SES Year 12 completers participated in education and training as did 94% of those from the lower-middle SES quarter, 92% from the upper-middle quarter and 97% from the highest SES quarter. Among early school leavers, lower proportions of leavers participated in post-school education and training across all SES quarters: 76% from the lowest SES quarter, 75% from the lower-middle quarter, 80% from the upper-middle quarter and 85% from the highest quarter.

In 2008, 10% of all Year 12 or equivalent completers had deferred a tertiary place, with 90% of deferrers working (61% full-time and 29% part-time). In the following year, 63% of deferrers had entered university and 11% certificate study. Of those who entered university, 74% took up the place they had deferred in 2008. Once enrolled in the course they had deferred, 88% were in the same course in 2010, and 81% in 2011. This is a slightly higher persistence rate into the third year than seen for those who had entered university in 2008 (76%).

Completion of post-secondary education and training

The last year of data collection for the *On Track* longitudinal survey was 2011, the fourth post-school year for survey participants. For those school leavers who participated in post-secondary education and training, four years would allow for many to complete their studies; others, such as those in four-year university degrees or many apprenticeships, would be in the final year of their study. Of the Year 12 or equivalent completers who had entered a university course in 2008, 24% had completed that course by 2011 and 49% were still enrolled in the initial course. Additionally, a small number of Year 12 or equivalent completers had entered a diploma or associate degree course in 2008, transferred to a university (bachelor degree) course in 2009 and completed university by 2011. None of those who had deferred a university place in 2008 and had taken up that place in 2009 had completed a degree by 2011.

Certificate level courses tend to be of shorter duration than university courses. By 2011, 64% of Year 12 or equivalent completers and 61% of early school leavers who had entered a certificate-level course in 2008 had completed that course. Early leavers were more frequently in lower level certificate courses (Certificate I-III), which are shorter than courses at the higher levels (Certificate IV, diploma, advanced diploma and associate degree). In the second post-school year, 48% of early leavers had completed their certificate course, compared to 24% of Year 12 completers. Early school leavers, however, more frequently withdrew from their post-school study, especially

during the first year. By 2011, 29% of Year 12 or equivalent completers had completed some form of post-school education and training, as had 15% of early school leavers.

Greater proportions of Year 12 or equivalent completers who had attended secondary schools in non-metropolitan areas had completed their post-school education and training by 2011, compared to those who attended metropolitan secondary schools. Even though they deferred university places at higher rates, non-metropolitan completers had more frequently completed university study, as well as completing a certificate-level course or apprenticeship than did metropolitan Year 12 completers. There was no difference by geographic location in the completion of a traineeship. There were only small differences in the completion of post-school education and training by SES quarter.

Contracts of training were the most common form of post-school education and training for early school leavers, with 36% in an apprenticeship and 7% in a traineeship in 2008. In the first year after leaving school, 7% of Year 12 or equivalent completers were in an apprenticeship and 5% in a traineeship. There was little difference between early leavers and completers in movement through apprenticeship. By 2011, 78% had either completed or were continuing in an apprenticeship. Traineeships, however, offered different results. By 2011, 75% of completers had completed their traineeship and 9% were continuing; among early leavers, 63% had completed the traineeship and 5% were continuing. The proportions who stopped their traineeship were 16% for early leavers and 32% for Year 12 completers.

Among early school leavers, there were only minor differences in the completion of post-school education and training by geographic location or by SES quarter.

Non-participation in post-school education and training

Among the Year 12 or equivalent completers, 7% did not participate in education or training in the four years after leaving school; among this small group, more than one-half were working full-time in each year. By 2011, 88% were working—63% full-time and 25% part-time. Of the 22% of early school leavers who had done no post-school education or training, less than one-half were employed full-time in each of the four post-school years.

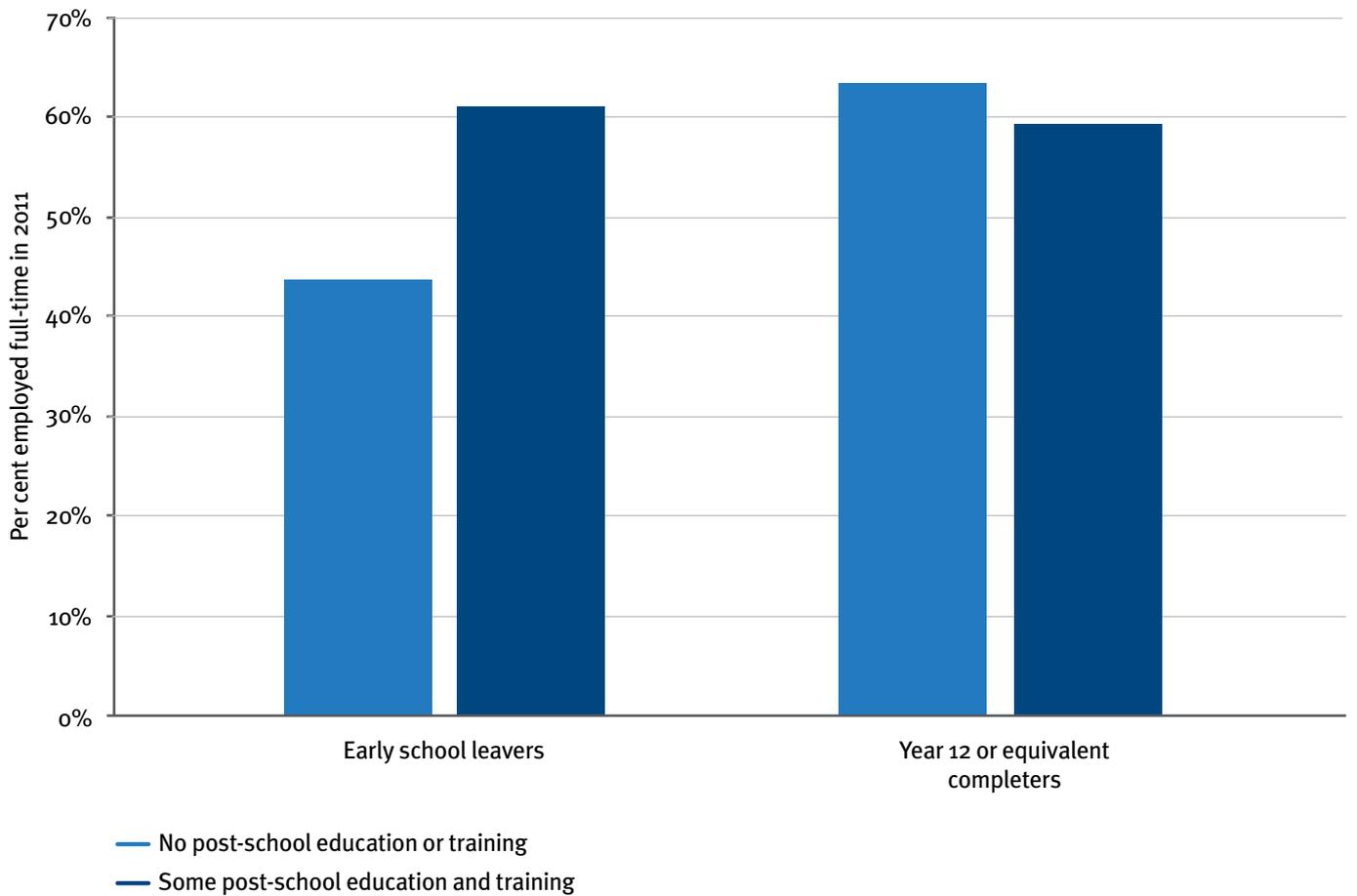
There was no difference by geographic location in non-participation in post-school education and training among both Year 12 completers and early leavers. Year 12 completers and early leavers from the highest SES quarter had more frequently participated in some form of post-school education and training than did those from other SES quarters, but there was little difference among those from the other quarters. Year 12 completers from the lowest GAT quarter less frequently participated in post-school education and training than did completers from other GAT quarters. Nevertheless, only 10% of completers from the lowest GAT quarter did not participate in post-school study, compared to 3% from the highest GAT quarter.

Benefits of participation in post-school education and training

Year 12 or equivalent completers who entered the labour force directly from school and did no further study had only a slight labour market advantage over those completers who entered the labour force after doing some form of post-school study. Of those who had done no study in their four post-school years, 63% were employed full-time in 2011, compared to 59% of those who had done some study. In 2011, however, 43% of Year 12 completers were at university, most completing a four-year degree. Many of these current students and others—another 21% in other study—would be entering the labour force in 2012 upon completion of their courses.

Unlike the Year 12 completers, early school leavers who entered the labour force directly from school and did no further study were at a distinct disadvantage in the labour force by 2011. Among those who had done no study, 44% were working full-time, compared to 61% of those who had done some study. For early school leavers, post-school education and training assists in obtaining full-time employment to a level similar to that experienced by Year 12 or equivalent completers (see Figure 16). This is particularly the case for those who had entered an apprenticeship or traineeship upon leaving school.

Figure 16 Proportion of 2007 school leavers employed full-time in 2011, by school-leaving status and participation in post-school education and training



Labour market entry and participation

In 2008, 16% of all Year 12 or equivalent completers were in full-time employment—including 61% of those who had deferred entry to tertiary study. The proportion working full-time dropped to 10% in 2009, as those who had deferred took up their study. Since then it has risen so that by 2011, 21% of all Year 12 or equivalent completers were employed full-time. Across the four years of the *On Track* longitudinal study, 16% of those who were in full-time employment in 2008 (and had not deferred) remained in full-time employment throughout the four years. In each year from 2009 to 2011, the greatest proportion of those in full-time employment had been in full-time employment in the previous year, between 39% and 46%; around 40% had been in education and training in the previous year.

Among early school leavers, 18% had been in full-time employment in 2008. In 2009, this proportion dropped to 15%, with a drop in the proportion in education and training, from 56% to 54%. After the drop in full-time employment in 2009, the proportion of early leavers working full-time increased to 20% in 2010 and 30% in 2011. Across the four years of the *On Track* longitudinal study, 16% of those who were in full-time employment in 2008 remained in full-time employment throughout the four years, similar to the proportion of Year 12 or equivalent completers. Movement into full-time work for early leavers in 2010 and 2011 was similar to the pattern seen for Year 12 completers, with 44% having been in full-time work in the previous year. In 2009, however, 57% of those in full-time work had been in full-time work the previous

year, indicating that in that year, those who had been in other activities in 2008 found it difficult to make the move into full-time employment.

Less than 1% of Year 12 or equivalent completers were looking for work or NILFET in all four years of the *On Track* longitudinal survey, as were 3% of early school leavers. Among the Year 12 completers in this group, all were female, were from metropolitan regions and were from the two middle SES quarters; among early leavers, three-quarters were female, more than one-half were from non-metropolitan regions and more than one-half were from the lowest SES quarter.

Wellbeing

On the three indicators used in *On Track* to measure wellbeing, Year 12 or equivalent completers were slightly more positive than were early school leavers. When asked about happiness with work, career opportunities and life overall, completers responded positively at a rate 3 percentage points higher on each topic across three years (2009, 2010 and 2011). The lowest rate of agreement was among early school leavers in 2009 and 2010 regarding career opportunities. That rate was 88% who were happy about their career opportunities. There were differences by main activity among both completers and early leavers: only 64% of completers and 65% of early leavers who were looking for work in 2011 were happy or very happy with their prospects. Similarly, apprentices were most positive about their opportunities: 98% of Year 12 completers and 97% of early leavers.

There was also little difference between Year 12 or equivalent completers and early school leavers in the proportion

who were still living with their parents. By 2011, 71% of completers and 70% of early leavers were still at home. There were differences by socioeconomic status in both groups, with those from the lowest SES quarter most likely to have left home and those from the highest SES quarter least likely.

Summary

The *On Track* longitudinal survey of 2007 school leavers—recruited from the 2008 *On Track* annual surveys of Year 12 or equivalent completers and early school leavers—collected data from 3476 young people across four years. All participants had attended government schools in Victoria, and agreed to participate in the surveys.

Over the four years of the study, Year 12 or equivalent completers participated in post-school education and training more frequently than did early school leavers. Among Year 12 completers, university participation was the dominant pathway, with 39% entering in 2008 and 48% in university study in 2010. Higher-level certificates (including diplomas and associate degrees) were the second most common pathway in the first two post-school years for Year 12 completers. For early school leavers, apprenticeship was the dominant pathway and the most common activity in all four post-school years.

Both Year 12 or equivalent completers and early school leavers who participated in post-school education and training completed their courses at rates slightly lower than those reported for the previous *On Track* longitudinal cohort (DEECD, 2009b). The combined completion and continuation rate for

apprenticeship in the present study was 78%, compared to 84% in the 2004 longitudinal sample. This difference may be accounted for in the 2004 cohort, with participants selected on their initial post-school activities. Selection criteria were VET based—participants had already entered an apprenticeship, traineeship or Certificate I-III course, or were VCAL completers. Compared to the present longitudinal cohort of 2007 school leavers, who had no such limitations on selection, completion of a VET program would have been more likely.

As of 2011, participation in post-school education and training had benefitted early school leavers in the labour market. A greater proportion of those who had undertaken some education and training were in full-time employment in 2011 than were those who had not done any post-school study. For Year 12 or equivalent completers there was little benefit in terms of full-time employment that could

be attributed to post-school study, but in 2011 64% of completers were still in education and training, including 43% of completers in university study.

The results of this *On Track* longitudinal study are similar to those of the previous study, based on selected samples of 2004 school leavers (DEECD, 2009b). In particular, the apprenticeship completion rates and participation rates in post-school education and training presented here resemble those presented in the earlier longitudinal study, albeit slightly lower. On a wider scale, the pathways of early school leavers reflect those identified by Curtis and McMillan (2008), based on a national sample of 15 year-olds in 2003; and the benefits of post-school education and training—particularly for early school leavers—reflect those identified by Marks (2008) for a cohort of young people who had been in Year 9 in 1995.

The availability of post-school education and training pathways has assisted the early school leavers who participated in the *On Track* longitudinal study. For this group, early school leaving is not synonymous with 'dropping out'; it is a shift in the location and focus of further study. Early school leavers from the lowest SES quarter had least frequently taken this route, but differences by SES quarter are minimal. By having opportunities to continue their education at a TAFE institution or other provider, or with a tradesperson, early school leavers, regardless of their background, can engage in full-time work at rates similar to those enjoyed by Year 12 or equivalent completers.

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Appendix: 2011 Questionnaire

*(PHONE ANSWERER)

Intro1 Hello, my name is (.....) calling about *On Track* on behalf of the Department of Education from The Social Research Centre. May I please speak to (FNAME, SNAME from list)?

1. Continue (already speaking with named person) (GO TO Intro2 Intro A)
2. Reintroduce to named person (GO TO Intro2 Intro B)
3. Make appointment
4. Language difficulty (GO TO LOTE)
5. Named person away duration
6. Refused (GO TO RR1)
7. Named respondent deceased (GO TO TERMINATION SCRIPT 3)

LOTE RECORD PREFERRED LANGUAGE

1. Arabic
2. Chinese – Cantonese
3. Chinese - Mandarin
4. Greek
5. Italian
6. Macedonian
7. Serbian
8. Spanish
9. Turkish
10. Vietnamese
11. (Other_____)
12. Language not established

*(NAMED PERSON FROM LIST WAS PHONE ANSWERER)

Intro2 Intro A. The reason I'm calling today is to conduct your follow up interview as part of the *On Track* Survey. When we last interviewed you this time last year you said it would be OK if we called you back to do this follow up interview.

In this interview, I'd like to find out about your study and work situation since we last spoke. It should only take about 5 minutes. Is now a good time for us to talk?

IF NECESSARY *On Track* is looking to find out how school leavers are going since they left school, so that the Victorian government can improve its services to young people.

*(NAMED PERSON FROM LIST WAS NOT PHONE ANSWERER)

Intro B. Hello, my name is (.....) calling on behalf of the Department of Education from The Social Research Centre regarding the *On Track* project.

The reason I'm calling today is to conduct your follow up interview as part of the *On Track* Survey. When we last interviewed you this time last year you said it would be OK if we called you back to do this follow up interview.

In this interview, I'd like to find out about your study and work situation since we last spoke. It should only take about 5 minutes. Is now a good time for us to talk?

IF NECESSARY *On Track* is looking to find out how school leavers are going since they left school, so that the Victorian government can improve its services to young people.

*(CONFIDENTIALITY SPIEL)

Intro3 All the data collected is anonymous and confidential. If there are any questions you don't want to answer, just tell me so I can skip over them. Participation is voluntary and you are free to terminate the interview at any time.

IF NECESSARY If you have any concerns, you may contact the Australian Council for Educational Research on 9277-5471.

1. Continue
2. Refused (GO TO RR1)

*(MONITORING SPIEL)

Intro5 Before we get started, just to let you know that this interview may be monitored by my supervisor for quality purposes – just to check I am doing my job properly. Is that ok with you?

1. Monitoring allowed
2. Monitoring not permitted

PREVIOUS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PRE A1 IF STUDY08=1 TO 4 (UNIVERSITY, TAFE, APPRENTICESHIP OR TRAINEESHIP IN 2008) CONTINUE ELSE (DEFERRED STUDY OR NOT STUDYING IN 2008) GO TO B1.

*(STUDYING LAST YEAR)

A1 At your last interview we recorded that you were doing a [STUDY08]. Are you still doing the same [STUDY08] you were doing when we last spoke?

APPRENTICESHIP/TRAINEESHIP IN 2008 WAS RECORDED AS: [DISPLAY FROM SAMPLE]

1. Yes, an apprenticeship (GO TO B7) (DISPLAY IF STUDY08=3)
2. Yes, a traineeship (GO TO B7) (DISPLAY IF STUDY08=4)
3. Yes, a university course (GO TO B6) (DISPLAY IF STUDY08=1)
4. Yes, a TAFE course (GO TO B6) (DISPLAY IN STUDY08=2)
5. No longer doing that study/training
6. No, not correct (was not doing that study/training in 2008) (GO TO B1)

PREA2 IF STUDY08=APPRENTICESHIP/TRAINEESHIP GO TO A3, ELSE CONTINUE

*(NO LONGER DOING 2008 STUDY, 2008 STUDY WAS UNIVERSITY/TAFE/OTHER) (A1=6, STUDY08=3,4 OR 5)

A2 Did you complete this [STUDY08=UNI/TAFE/STUDY], withdraw from it, defer your studies or change to another course?

1. Completed (GO TO A4)
2. Withdrew
3. Deferred (GO TO A2b)
4. Changed to another course (GO TO B1)

*(WITHDREW FROM UNI, TAFE OR OTHER) (A2=2)

A2a1 I'm going to read out some reasons, and can you let me know if you think they were reasons you decided to WITHDRAW from that [STUDY08] course.

(STATEMENTS)

- a. Getting or being offered a job
- b. The cost of continuing the course
- c. The difficulty of the course

- d. The amount of study involved
- e. The career options available from that course

(RESPONSE FRAME)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Can't say

PREA2a1 IF MORE THAN ONE REASON CHOSE TO WITHDRAW (QA2a=1), CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO B1

*(WITHDREW FROM UNI, TAFE OR OTHER) (A2=2)

A2a1 And which of these would you say was the main reason you decided to WITHDRAW from that course?

1. Getting or being offered a job [DISPLAY IF A2AA=1]
2. The cost of continuing the course [DISPLAY IF A2AB=1]
3. The difficulty of the course [DISPLAY IF A2AC=1]
4. The amount of study involved [DISPLAY IF A2AD=1]
5. The career options available from that course [DISPLAY IF A2AE=1]
6. (Can't say)

GO TO B1

*(DEFERRED FROM UNI/TAFE) (A2=3)

A2b1 I'm going to read out some reasons, and can you let me know if you think they were reasons you decided to DEFER from that [STUDY08] course.

(STATEMENTS)

- a. Offered a place in another course
- b. Wanting a break from study
- c. Wanting to travel

- d. The difficulty of the course
- e. The amount of study involved
- f. The career options available from that course

(RESPONSE FRAME)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Can't say

PREA2b1 IF MORE THAN ONE REASON CHOSE TO DEFER (QA2B=1), CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO B1

*(DEFERRED FROM UNI/TAFE) (A2=3)

A2b1 And which of these would you say was the main reason you decided to DEFER from that course?

- 1. Offered a place in another course [DISPLAY IF A2BA=1]
- 2. Wanting a break from study [DISPLAY IF A2BB=1]
- 3. Wanting to travel [DISPLAY IF A2BC=1]
- 4. The difficulty of the course [DISPLAY IF A2BD=1]
- 5. The amount of study involved [DISPLAY IF A2BE=1]
- 6. The career options available from that course [DISPLAY IF A2BF=1]
- 7. (Can't say)

GO TO B1

*(NO LONGER DOING 2008 APPRENTICESHIP/TRINEESHIP) (A1=6, STUDYo8=1 OR 2)

A3 Did you complete the [STUDYo8=APPRENTICESHIP/TRINEESHIP] you were doing when we last spoke to you?

*PROGRAMMER: DISPLAY

APPRENTICESHIP/TRINEESHIP FROM 2008

- 1. Yes, completed (GO TO A4)
- 2. No, stopped/withdrew

*(STOPPED/WITHDREW FROM APPRENTICESHIP OR TRINEESHIP) (A3=2)

A3a I'm going to read out some reasons, and can you let me know if you think they were reasons you decided to STOP that [APPRENTICESHIP/TRINEESHIP]?

(STATEMENTS)

- a. Getting or being offered a job
- b. The cost of continuing the course
- c. Not getting on with your boss or others at the workplace
- d. Being asked to leave/sacked
- e. The business not doing well
- f. The career options available from that apprenticeship/traineeship

(RESPONSE FRAME)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Can't say

PREA3A1 IF MORE THAN ONE REASON CHOSE TO STOP (QA3A=1), CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO B1

*(STOPPED/WITHDREW FROM APPRENTICESHIP OR TRINEESHIP) (A3=2)

A3a1 And which of these would you say was the main reason you decided to STOP that [APPRENTICESHIP/TRINEESHIP]?

- 1. Getting or being offered a job [DISPLAY IF A3AA=1]
- 2. The cost of continuing the course [DISPLAY IF A3AB=1]

- 3. Not getting on with your boss or others at the workplace [DISPLAY IF A3AC=1]
- 4. Being asked to leave/sacked [DISPLAY IF A3AD=1]
- 5. The business not doing well [DISPLAY IF A3AE=1]
- 6. The career options available from that apprenticeship/traineeship [DISPLAY IF A3AF=1]
- 7. (Can't say)

GO TO B1

*(COMPLETED COURSE/ APPRENTICESHIP/TRINEESHIP FROM 2008) (A2=1, A3=1)

A4 How well did your [STUDYo8] prepare you for your intended career? Would you say Very well, fairly well, not very well or not at all?

- 1. Very well
- 2. Fairly well
- 3. Not very well
- 4. Not at all
- 5. (Unsure/can't say) (AVOID)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING – CURRENT ACTIVITY

*(NOT STUDYING IN 2008, INCLUDING DEFERRED OR STUDYING IN 2008 AND COMPLETED, WITHDREW OR DEFERRED)

B1 Are you currently doing an apprenticeship, traineeship or some other type of study?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: If enrolled and waiting to start apprenticeship (i.e. has signed a training contract) record as 'Yes'.

- 1. Yes, an apprenticeship (GO TO B3)
- 2. Yes, a traineeship (GO TO B3)

3. Yes, some other study or training
4. No (GO TO B8)

*(NOW DOING SOME OTHER TYPE OF STUDY) (B1=3)

B2 Is this a university course, a TAFE course, or some other form of study?

1. University
2. TAFE
3. Secondary school (GO TO B3)
4. Some other study or training (GO TO B3)

PREB2A IF DEFER=1 (DEFERRED STUDY IN 2008) CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO B3

*(DEFERRED IN 2008 AND CURRENTLY STUDYING AT UNI OR TAFE) (DEFER=1, B2=1 OR 2)

B2a Is this the course you deferred from in 2008?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Didn't defer from course in 2008

*(NOW STUDYING OR DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP / TRAINEESHIP) (B1=1, 2 OR 3)

B3 What level of qualification will you receive at the end of this (course/ apprenticeship/ traineeship)? READ OUT IF NECESSARY

INTERVIEWER NOTE: Apprentice's qualification likely to be "Certificate 3" or Certificate 4" (DISPLAY IF B1=1).

INTERVIEWER NOTE: Trainee's qualification likely to be "Certificate 1" or Certificate 2" (DISPLAY IF B1=2)

1. Bachelor degree (including Honours)
2. Associate degree

3. Advanced diploma

4. Diploma

5. Certificate 4

6. Certificate 3

7. Certificate 2

8. Certificate 1

9. Certificate (level unspecified/ unknown)

10. VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education)

11. VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning)

12. IB (International Baccalaureate)

13. Other school certificate (eg, NSW HSC)

14. Other (Specify_____)

PREB4 IF B1=1 OR 2 (NEW APPRENTICES/ TRAINEES) GO TO B5A, ELSE CONTINUE

*(NOW STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY/TAFE OR DOING OTHER STUDY INCLUDING VCE/VCAL) (B1=3)

B4 What is the name of the institution where you are studying?

1. University name given (GO TO B4u)
2. TAFE name given (GO TO B4t)
3. Secondary school name given (Specify_____) (GO TO B5)
4. Other Private Training College or Adult & Community Education Provider (Specify_____) (GO TO B5)

*(NOW STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY) (B2=1)

B4uRECORD UNIVERSITY NAME

1. Melbourne (GO TO B5)
2. Monash (GO TO B5)

3. Deakin (GO TO B5)

4. La Trobe (GO TO B5)

5. RMIT (GO TO B5)

6. Swinburne (GO TO B5)

7. Ballarat (GO TO B5)

8. Victoria University (GO TO B5)

9. Australian Catholic University (GO TO B5)

10. Charles Sturt University (GO TO B5)

11. Other NSW University (GO TO B5)

12. Other QLD University (GO TO B5)

13. Other SA University (GO TO B5)

14. Other TAS University (GO TO B5)

15. Other WA University (GO TO B5)

16. Other ACT University (GO TO B5)

17. Other NT University (GO TO B5)

18. Other University (Specify_____) (GO TO B5)

*(NOW STUDYING AT TAFE) (B2=2)

B4t RECORD TAFE NAME

1. Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE
2. Box Hill Institute of TAFE
3. Central Gippsland TAFE
4. Chisholm Institute of TAFE
5. East Gippsland Institute
6. Gordon Institute
7. Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE
8. Holmesglen Institute
9. Kangan Batman Institute of TAFE
10. Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT)
11. RMIT (TAFE Division)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 12. South West Institute of TAFE | TRAINEESHIP) (B1=1, 2 OR 3, EXCLUDES B3=10-13) | 1. Extremely likely |
| 13. Swinburne (TAFE Division) | | 2. Somewhat likely |
| 14. Sunraysia Institute of TAFE | B5 What are you studying? | 3. Not very likely |
| 15. University of Ballarat (TAFE Division) | INTERVIEWER NOTE: Multiples accepted for double degrees | 4. Not at all likely |
| 16. University of Melbourne (TAFE Division / ILFR) | (MULTIPLES ACCEPTED) | 5. (Can't say) |
| 17. Victoria University (TAFE Division) | CODE TO ASCED (LOOK UP LIST ON CATI) | 6. (Refused) |
| 18. William Angliss Institute of TAFE | PREB6 IF B1=1 OR 2 (NEW APPRENTICES/ TRAINEES) GO TO B7 | CURRENT JOB |
| 19. Wodonga Institute of TAFE | * (CURRENTLY STUDYING UNIVERSITY/ TAFE COURSE OR OTHER STUDY) (A1=3 OR 4, B2=1, 2 3 OR 4) | *(ALL) |
| 20. Other TAFE (Specify_____) | B6 Are you currently studying full or part-time | C1 Do you currently have a paid job? |
| *(NOW STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY/TAFE OR DOING OTHER STUDY INCLUDING VCE/VCAL) (B1=3) | 1. Full time (GO TO C1) | INTERVIEWER NOTE: INCLUDES APPRENTICES, TRAINEES, SELF EMPLOYED, FAMILY BUSINESS OR FARM) |
| B5 On which campus are MOST of your classes located? | 2. Part time (GO TO C1) | 1. Yes |
| *PROGRAMMER NOTE: REFER ATTACHED LIST OF CAMPUS NAME BY UNIVERSITY / TAFE. ONLY DISPLAY RELEVANT CAMPUS NAMES FOR RESPONSE AT Q4u / Q4t, PLUS "OTHER SPECIFY", "DON'T KNOW" AND "REFUSED" OPTIONS | * (CURRENT APPRENTICES OR TRAINEES) (A1=1 OR 2, B1=1 OR 2) | 2. No (GO TO D2) |
| 1. (First campus name from attached list) (158 listed names) | B7 Who provides the classes or off-the-job training for your apprenticeship/ traineeship? | 3. Waiting to start job (GO TO C3) |
| 158. (Last campus name from attached list) | 1. TAFE Institute (GO TO C1) | *(CURRENTLY WORKING) (C1=1) |
| 159. Campus name given (Specify_____) | 2. Private training college (GO TO C1) | C2 Do you have more than one job? |
| 160. (Can't say) | 3. Adult and Community Education (ACE) provider (GO TO C1) | 1. Yes |
| 161. (Refused) | 4. Your employer (GO TO C1) | 2. No |
| PREB5A IF B3=10 THRU TO 13 (CURRENTLY COMPLETING VCE, VCAL, IB OR OTHER SECONDARY STUDY) GO TO B6, ELSE CONTINUE | 5. A group training organisation (GO TO C1) | *PROGRAMMER NOTE: IF C2=1 (HAS MORE THAN ONE JOB), DISPLAY TEXT IN BRACKETS IN C3, C6A, C7, C8. |
| *(NOW STUDYING UNIVERSITY OR TAFE COURSE OR OTHER STUDY (NOT SCHOOL) OR DOING APPRENTICESHIP/ | 6. Someone else (Please Specify_____) (GO TO C1) | *(CURRENTLY HAS PAID JOB) (C1=1 OR 3) |
| | *(NOT CURRENTLY STUDYING) (B1=4) | C3 (I have some questions about the MAIN JOB you are working in, that is the job in which you work the most hours.) What is your (main) job? |
| | B8 How likely is that you will start some study or training in the next two years that would lead to a qualification? Would you say this is extremely likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, not at all likely? | INTERVIEWER NOTE: PROBE FOR JOB TITLE AND MAIN DUTIES PERFORMED |
| | | 1. Record job title and main duties performed (specify) |
| | | 2. Refused/can't say |
| | | (CODE TO ANZSCO – 4 digits) |
| | | *(CURRENTLY HAS PAID JOB) (C1=1 OR 3) |

C4 Do you work for a business, the government, a family business or are you self-employed?

1. A private company or business
2. A government department or organisation
3. A not-for-profit company or organisation
4. Self-employed
5. Family business/farm
6. Other (Specify_____)

PREC₅ IF C₁=3 (WAITING TO START JOB) GO TO C8, ELSE CONTINUE

*(CURRENTLY WORKING) (C₁=1)

C5 About how many hours per week do you work on average in this job?

1. Hours per week given (Specify_____)
(RANGE 0.5 TO 99)
2. Can't say (AVOID)

*(CURRENTLY WORKING) (C₁=1)

C6a How much do you earn (from your main job) before tax and other deductions?

INT NOTES: - THIS IS GROSS PAY BEFORE TAX & OTHER DEDUCTIONS

- FOR SELF-EMPLOYED APPROXIMATE GROSS EARNINGS BEFORE TAX

- IF EARNINGS VARY SUBSTANTIALLY ASK FOR HOURLY RATE

- IF DIFFICULT TO SAY, PROBE FOR APPROXIMATION OF EARNINGS

1. Record annual gross salary (specify)
2. Record monthly gross pay (specify)

3. Record fortnightly gross pay (specify)
4. Record weekly gross pay (specify)
5. Record hourly (gross) pay rate (specify) ALLOW DECIMALS
6. Other (specify time period and amount)
7. Can't say (AVOID)

PREC₇: IF C₄=4 OR 5 (SELF EMPLOYED/FAMILY BUSINESS OR FARM) GO TO C8, ELSE CONTINUE

*(WORKING FOR PRIVATE COMPANIES, GOVERNMENT, NFP OR OTHER) (C₄=1,2,3 or 6)

C7 Does your (main) job entitle you to any form of paid annual leave or sick leave, apart from public holidays?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

*(CURRENTLY HAS PAID JOB) (C₁=1 OR 3)

C8 Is your (main) job the type of job you would like as a career?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

WORK HISTORY

PREC₁ IF C₁=3 (WAITING TO START JOB) GO TO D₂, ELSE CONTINUE

*(CURRENTLY WORKING) (C₁=1)

D1 Were you working in this job this time last year?

IF ASKED: RELATES TO WORKING WITH THE SAME EMPLOYER

1. Yes (GO TO D₄)
2. No

*(NOT IN CURRENT JOB 12 MONTHS AGO OR NOT CURRENTLY WORKING) (D₁=2, C₁=2)

D2 Were you working for pay this time last year?

1. Yes
2. No (GO TO PRED₇)

*(WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO AND CURRENTLY NOT WORKING/NOT IN SAME JOB) (D₁=2, D₂=1)

D3a What was the reason you left your previous job? Did you resign, were you laid off, asked to leave, or some other reason?

1. Quit/resigned
2. Laid off/retrenched (GO TO PRED₄)
3. Was asked to leave/sacked (GO TO PRED₄)
4. It was only a holiday job (GO TO PRED₄)
5. It was a temporary/seasonal job (GO TO PRED₄)
6. Wasn't asked to do more causal work (GO TO PRED₄)
7. Other (Specify) (GO TO PRED₄)

*(QUIT PREVIOUS JOB) (D_{3A}=1)

D3b What was the main reason you quit?

1. Not satisfied with the job
2. Went to live somewhere else
3. Reasons to do with study
4. Offered/Wanted a better job
5. Hours not suitable
6. Not paid enough
7. Health reasons
8. Can't say/Refused
9. Other (Specify)

PRED₄ IF C₁=2 (NOT CURRENTLY WORKING) GO TO PRED₇, ELSE CONTINUE

*(WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO AND CURRENTLY WORKING) (C₁=1 AND D₁=1 OR D₂=1)

D₄ Compared to your job this time last year, do you now earn more, less, or about the same per hour as you did 12 months ago?

1. More per hour
2. Less per hour
3. About the same

*(WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO AND CURRENTLY WORKING) (C₁=1 AND D₁=1 OR D₂=1)

D₅ Compared to your job this time last year, is the type of work you do more-skilled, less-skilled or is it about the same?

1. More skilled
2. Less skilled
3. About the same

*(WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO AND CURRENTLY WORKING) (C₁=1 AND D₁=1 OR D₂=1)

D₆ Compared to your job this time last year, would you say you have more or less responsibility, or is it about the same?

1. More responsibility
2. Less responsibility
3. About the same

PRED₇ IF C₁=2 (NOT CURRENTLY WORKING) AND D₂=2 (NOT WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO) GO TO PREE₁, ELSE CONTINUE

*(CURRENTLY WORKING OR WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO) (C₁=1 or 3 OR D₂=1)

D₇ Thinking about any work you have done in the past 12 months, have you taken part in any FORMAL TRAINING organised by work (such as seminars, workshops, presentations or other kinds of training)?

1. Yes
2. No

*(CURRENTLY WORKING OR WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO) (C₁=1 or 3 OR D₂=1)

D₈ Thinking about any work you have done in the past 12 months, have you taken part in any INFORMAL TRAINING organised by work (such as being shown by others how to do parts of your job, watching others to learn how to do your job)?

1. Yes
2. No

LOOKING FOR WORK

PREE₁ IF C₁=1 or 3 (CURRENTLY HAS PAID JOB) DISPLAY TEXT IN BRACKETS *(ALL)

E₁ Are you currently looking for work(, including another job)?

1. Yes
2. No, not looking for work (GO TO PRE E₃A)

*(LOOKING FOR WORK) (E₁=1)

E₂ Have you been looking mainly for full-time work or part-time work?

1. Full-time
2. Part-time
3. Either/both

*(ALL)

E₃a Of the last 12 months, how many months, if any, have you been looking for work but not working and not in full-time study?

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: Working includes both full-time and part-time work.]

1. Record number of months (specify) (ALLOWABLE RANGE 0-12)
2. Can't say

*(LOOKING FOR WORK) (E₁=1)

E₄ Some people may have problems when looking for work. Have you personally had any of these problems when looking for work? (READ OUT)

(STATEMENTS)

- a. A health problem or disability
- b. Problems with transport
- c. Not enough or appropriate skills or training
- d. Not enough or appropriate qualifications
- e. Not enough job experience
- f. Other problems looking for work (Specify)

(RESPONSE FRAME)

1. Yes
2. No

GENERAL

PREF_{1_1} IF C₁=1 or 3 (CURRENTLY HAS PAID JOB) OR A₁=1 OR 2 OR B₁=1 OR 2 (CURRENTLY COMPLETING APPRENTICESHIP/TRAINEESHIP) GO TO F₃.

PREF_{1_2} IF A₁=3 or 4 OR B₁=3 (CURRENTLY DOING UNI/TAFE/OTHER COURSE) GO TO PREF_{3_2}, ELSE CONTINUE

*(NOT STUDYING AND NOT WORKING) (B₁=4 AND C₁=2)

F1 What would you say is your current main activity?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF SAYS 'DOING NOTHING' RECORD IN OTHER

1. Home duties
2. Looking after children
3. Travel or holiday
4. Ill/unable to work
5. Study
6. Looking for work
7. Other (specify)

*(NOT STUDYING AND NOT WORKING) (B1=4 AND C1=2)

F2 Thinking about your schooling, how well would you say it prepared you for.... (READ OUT):

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED, QUESTION REFERS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLING

(STATEMENT)

- a. Finding a job?
- b. Finding out about study and training options?

(RESPONSE FRAME)

1. Very well
2. Fairly well
3. Not very well
4. Not at all well
5. (Don't Know)

PREF_{3_1} IF D2=2 (NOT WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO) GO TO F6; ELSE (NOT CURRENTLY WORKING OR STUDYING BUT WORKING 12 MONTHS AGO) CONTINUE (GO TO F3)

PREF_{3_2} IF C1=2 (NOT CURRENTLY WORKING) AND D2=2 (NOT WORKING

12 MONTHS AGO) GO TO F4, ELSE (CURRENTLY DOING UNI/TAFE/OTHER COURSE AND ARE EITHER CURRENTLY WORKING OR HAVE WORKED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS) CONTINUE

*(CURRENTLY WORKING OR HAVE WORKED) (A1=1 OR 2, B1=1 OR 2, C1=1, D2=1)

F3 Thinking about your schooling, how well would you say it prepared you for.... (READ OUT):

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED, QUESTION REFERS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLING

(STATEMENT)

- a. what work is really like?
- b. the kind of skills you need for work?

(RESPONSE FRAME)

1. Very well
2. Fairly well
3. Not very well
4. Not at all well
5. (Don't know)

PREF₄ IF A1=3 OR 4 OR B2=1 OR 2 (CURRENT UNIVERSITY/TAFE STUDENTS) CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO PREF₅

*(CURRENT UNIVERSITY/TAFE STUDENTS) (A1=3 OR 4, B2=1 OR 2)

F4 Thinking about your schooling, how well would you say it prepared you for.... (READ OUT)

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED, QUESTION REFERS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLING

(STATEMENT)

- a. what (university/TAFE) study is really like?

b. the kind of skills you need for (university/TAFE) study?

(RESPONSE FRAME)

1. Very well
2. Fairly well
3. Not very well
4. Not at all well
5. (Don't know)

PREF₅ IF C5>34.5 (WORKING MORE THAN 34.5 HOURS IN MAIN JOB) GO TO F6, ELSE CONTINUE

*(NOT WORKING FULL-TIME) (C5<34.5)

F5 Do you currently receive the Youth Allowance?

1. Yes
2. No

*(ALL)

F6 Since leaving school, have you participated in any of the following career advice activities?

(STATEMENT)

- a. Had a one-on-one talk with a career advisor
- b. Researched career options on-line
- c. Attended a presentation by someone from a university
- d. Attended a presentation by someone from a TAFE institute
- e. Attended a presentation by an employer representative

(RESPONSE FRAME)

1. Yes
2. No

*(ALL)

- F7** Do you live with your parents?
1. Yes (GO TO F9)
 2. No (somewhere else)
- *(NOT LIVING WITH PARENTS) (F7=2)
- F8** Where do you live?
1. In a rented house or flat?
 2. A place you are buying?
 3. A place you own outright?
 4. A private house as a boarder?
 5. Rent free in a place owned by someone else?
 6. A university or TAFE residence?
 7. A hostel or boarding house?
 8. Somewhere else?
- *(ALL)
- F9** Now just to finish off. In regard to the work you do at study, at home or in a job - would you say you are... (READ OUT)
1. Very happy
 2. Happy
 3. Unhappy
 4. Very unhappy
 5. (Can't say / refused)
- *(ALL)
- F10** How happy are you with your career opportunities? Would you say... (READ OUT)
1. Very happy
 2. Happy
 3. Unhappy
 4. Very unhappy
 5. (Can't say / refused)
- *(ALL)
- F11** How happy are you with your life as a whole? Would you say... (READ OUT)
1. Very happy
 2. Happy
 3. Unhappy
 4. Very unhappy
 5. (Can't say / refused)
- *(ALL)
- F12** What kind of job do you expect to have when you are 30 years old?
- [INTERVIEWER NOTE: ASK FOR OCCUPATION (IT Professional;) rather than Industry (Computing)]
1. Record occupation (specify)
 2. Can't say
- *(ALL)
- PREX₁ Thank you. As part of this youth research project, we'd like to contact you again next year, to follow up on the information we collected today. Can I just check that the details I have for you are correct.
1. Continue
- *(ALL)
- X1** Firstly, is your name spelt ... (REFER TO SPELLING ON SCREEN)
1. Correct (continue)
 2. Not correct (amend as necessary)
- *(ALL)
- X2** What is your current postcode?
1. Record postcode (specify)
 2. Refused
- PREX₃ IF HAS LANDLINE NUMBER CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO PREX_{3A}
- *(HAVE LANDLINE NUMBER)
- X3** And is (LANDLINE PHONE NUMBER) your home phone? (IF AVAILABLE)
1. Correct (continue)
 2. Not correct (record change as necessary)
- PREX_{3A} IF ONLY HAS MOBILE PHONE NUMBER AVAILABLE CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO PREX₄
- *(ONLY HAVE MOBILE PHONE NUMBER AVAILABLE)
- X3a** Do you have a home number we might try you on?
1. Yes (RECORD NUMBER)
 2. No
- PREX₄ IF HAS ALTERNATE NUMBER AVAILABLE CONTINUE, ELSE GO TO XNEW
- X4** And is (ALT PHONE NUMBER) also a valid number for you? (IF AVAILABLE)
1. Correct (continue)
 2. Not correct (record change as necessary)
- *(ALL)
- XOTH** (DO NOT ASK) Record any other phone number given by respondent not previously recorded.
1. Record Number
 2. No other number provided (GO TO X5)
- *RECORD OTHER NUMBER)
- XOTH1** (DO NOT ASK) Record phone number type
1. Mobile
 2. Landline
 3. Other (Specify)
- *(ALL)

X5. We'll also need the details of people who would know how we could contact you, if you moved from where you are now. Who is the person most likely to know where you'll be living in 12 months time - that is, someone who doesn't live in the same house as you?

1. Record name of contact (specify)
2. Refused - No contact provided (GO TO END)

X5A. What is this persons contact number

1. Record phone number (specify)

X5B. What is this persons relationship to you?

1. Parent
2. Sibling
3. Aunt / uncle
4. Grandparent
5. Other relative
6. Housemate
7. Other (Specify)
8. Refused

X6. Can you tell me another close friend or relative, preferably someone who doesn't live with you, who is likely to know where you will be living over the next year?

1. Record name of contact (specify)
2. Refused – No second contact provided (GO TO END)

X6A. What is this persons contact number

1. Record phone number (specify)

X6B. What is this persons relationship to you?

1. Parent
2. Sibling
3. Aunt / uncle
4. Grandparent
5. Other relative
6. Housemate
7. Other (Specify)
8. Refused

*(ALL)

END This research is carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act and the information you have provided will only be used for research purposes.

IF NECESSARY: As soon as the information processing period has finished, your name and contact details will be separated from your responses to the survey. For the period that your name and contact details remain with your survey responses, which will be approximately 3 months, you will be able to contact us to request access to the information that you have provided. After this time, your contact details will not be stored with your responses, so you will not be able to be identified from your answers to this survey.

1. Continue

*(ALL)

CLOSE The On-Track report will soon be available on Department's website (www.education.vic.gov.au). That is the end of the interview. Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Just in case you missed it, my name is (.....), calling on behalf of the *On Track* project from the Social Research Centre in Melbourne.

RR1 OK, that's fine, no problem, but could you just tell me the main reason you do not want to participate, because that's important information for us?

1. No comment / just hung up
2. Too busy
3. Not interested
4. Too personal / intrusive
5. Don't like subject matter
6. Don't believe surveys are confidential / privacy concerns
7. Silent number
8. Don't trust surveys / government
9. Never do surveys
10. Survey is too long
11. Get too many calls for surveys / telemarketing
12. Unable to do survey (e.g. health reason)
13. Not a residential number (business, etc)
14. Language difficulty
15. Going away / moving house
16. Respondent unreliable / drunk
17. Asked to be taken off list
18. Other (Specify)

*(REFUSAL)

RR2 RECORD RE-CONTACT TYPE

1. Definitely don't call back
2. Possible conversion

TERMINATION SCRIPT 1

That is all the questions I have for you today. Thank you for your time and assistance. You have been speaking to (Interviewer's name) from the Social Research Centre.

TERMINATION SCRIPT 2

Thanks anyway

TERMINATION SCRIPT 3

I'm really sorry.... I will make sure we don't call again. Please accept our sincere apologies.

*(BREAKDOWN OF TERMINATIONS)

ALLTERM

1. Phone answerer refusal
2. Named respondent refusal
3. Refused at privacy spiel
4. All other
5. Named respondent deceased