next step
2012

A report on the destinations of Year 12 completers from 2011 in Queensland
Executive summary

Background
The Next Step 2012 report documents the results of the annual state-wide Next Step survey of the destinations of students who completed Year 12 in 2011 and gained a Senior Statement from government and non-government schools across Queensland. The survey results show the initial study and work destinations of young people after completing school.

The Next Step survey is conducted in order to assist:
- parents and the wider public to know the pathways of young people after completing Year 12, and to appreciate the range of options available to students
- schools to review and plan their services for students, especially in the senior years of schooling
- school system personnel to review their education policies as they affect the transition from school to further study and employment
- training bodies, universities, business and industry, local government and regional planners to plan their services.

The survey follows the destinations of students who completed Year 12 at government schools, Catholic schools, independent schools and TAFE secondary colleges.

The 2012 Next Step survey was conducted by the Department of Education, Training and Employment through the Office of the Government Statistician (OGS), in accordance with the privacy provisions of the Statistical Returns Act 1896 (Qld).

The OGS conducted the survey between April and May 2012, approximately six months after the young people left school. Responses were predominantly collected via computer-assisted telephone interviewing. All students were also offered the opportunity to complete an online survey, with 12.2 per cent of students who responded to the survey taking up this offer.

All responding Year 12 completers went into a draw for a chance to win one of several prizes offered as an incentive to encourage survey participation.

A reference group advised on the design and conduct of the survey. Its members represented the school sectors, principals associations, higher education sector and the Queensland Studies Authority.

In its eighth year, over 38 400 young people completed the survey, which represents a response rate of 81.4 per cent of the more than 47 000 young people targeted. This response rate is slightly higher than the response rate achieved in 2011 (80.8 per cent).
Summary of findings

As many young people were combining education and employment, all Year 12 completers have been categorised into their main destination, be it education or employment.

To achieve this categorisation, Year 12 completers were grouped in a structured manner, as outlined in Appendix 2 of the report. In particular:

- students were assigned to the education categories regardless of their labour force status (that is, they may also be employed or seeking work)
- apprentices and trainees are assigned to these training categories rather than any of the VET categories, but it is a given that their training involves study either in a VET location or with their employer
- those grouped in a labour market destination (employed or seeking work) were not in education or training
- there was also a small group who were not in the labour force (that is, not employed and not seeking work), education or training. This group is referred to throughout the reports tables and figures as NILFET.

Figure ES1 provides a summary of results from the 2012 Next Step survey.

Figure ES1: Summary of survey results, Queensland 2012
The summary of findings presented in Figure ES2 highlights:

- the majority of Year 12 completers (89.2 per cent) were studying or in paid employment at the time of the survey
- further study was a common destination for Year 12 completers, with 63.0 per cent continuing in some recognised form of education or training in the year after they left school
- students undertaking a university degree accounted for 38.4 per cent of all Year 12 completers
- a further 24.7 per cent of all Year 12 completers were studying vocational education and training (VET)
- campus-based VET students were more likely to be studying at Certificate IV level or higher than the lower certificate levels (7.5 per cent of all Year 12 completers)
- employment-based training accounted for 11.5 per cent of Year 12 completers, either in apprenticeships (7.9 per cent) or traineeships (3.6 per cent)
- the remaining 37.0 per cent of Year 12 completers did not enter post-school education or training, and were either employed (26.2 per cent), looking for work (8.8 per cent) or not in the labour force, education or training (1.9 per cent).

More than 2700 Year 12 completers (7.1 per cent) had deferred a tertiary offer. These Year 12 completers are shown in their actual destination in Figure ES2. Among this group, 81.6 per cent were employed, 12.9 per cent were looking for work and a further 5.6 per cent were not in the labour force, education or training.

**Figure ES2:**  Main destinations of Year 12 completers, Queensland 2012

![Figure ES2](image-url)
Figure ES3 shows a five-year time series of the main destinations of Year 12 completers from 2008 to 2012.

A comparison of the 2012 results with those from previous years reveals that the main destinations of Year 12 completers were similar over the five years. There are, however, some trends worth noting.

Six months after leaving school, Year 12 completers from 2011 were more likely to be undertaking a university degree or VET Certificate IV or higher level course than in any of the previous four years. Further, the proportion of Year 12 completers undertaking university (38.4 per cent) is the highest ever recorded over the eight year history of the Next Step survey.

There is also an apparent trend in the proportion of Year 12 completers entering employment without undertaking any further education or training, showing a decrease from 32.1 per cent in 2008 to 26.2 per cent in 2012.

**Figure ES3: Main destinations of Year 12 completers, Queensland 2008–2012**

![Bar chart showing main destinations of Year 12 completers from 2008 to 2012](chart.png)

**Education and training destinations**

Continuing in further study was a common destination for Year 12 completers, with 24,205 (63.0 per cent) continuing in some form of education or training in the year after completing Year 12. Of these, 65.1 per cent were combining their education or training with work.

Of the Year 12 completers who were undertaking further education or training, 74.7 per cent were studying full-time; this has increased from 72.8 per cent in 2011.

The most common fields of study across all study destinations were Engineering and Related Technologies, Society and Culture, Health and Management and Commerce. However, apprentices were enrolled mainly in Engineering and Related Technologies, Architecture and Building, and Food, Hospitality and Personal Services.

Of those studying, 61.7 per cent were attending a university. A further 23.9 per cent were attending an institute of technical and further education (TAFE), while 9.8 per cent were enrolled at a private training college.
Employment destinations

Most young people who completed Year 12 in 2011 were employed (25,835, or 67.3 per cent), whether or not they were undertaking further education or training.

Of these Year 12 completers, 65.8 per cent were in part-time employment, while 17.1 per cent were working full-time. A further 11.8 per cent were apprentices and 5.4 per cent were trainees.

The occupational groups of Sales Assistants and Food Handlers accounted for 45.2 per cent of all Year 12 completers in employment. These two occupational groups were also the most common occupational groups for both males and females. For males, the next most common occupational group was Building and Construction Skilled Workers. Waiters was the next most common occupational group for females.

Apprentices were concentrated in industry areas such as Construction, Other Services and Manufacturing. Conversely, trainees were more evenly distributed across a range of industry areas, the main areas being Accommodation and Food Services, Public Administration and Safety, Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail Trade.

Of all Year 12 completers in employment, 66.0 per cent were working on a casual basis.

Not studying or employed

The survey identified 8.8 per cent of Year 12 completers were not studying, but were seeking work.

A further 1.9 per cent of Year 12 completers were not in the labour force, education or training. This group could include those with a disability or health condition, and those who were travelling or waiting for their course to commence.

Those with a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA) and Indigenous Year 12 completers were over-represented in both these destinations.

Of those who were not in the labour force, education or training, the main reason given for not continuing in study was, wanting a break from study for both females and males (23.7 per cent and 16.2 per cent respectively). Other main reasons provided by both males and females were disability, and being undecided and considering options.

The most common main reason for not seeking work given by females who were not in the labour force, education or training was travel (22.6 per cent). For males in this category, the most common reason was having accepted a job that started later (18.4 per cent).

Different people, different pathways

The survey found different patterns for different groups of young people.

Sex

There were noteworthy differences in the destinations of females and males. In particular:

- females were more likely to enter a university degree course (43.5 per cent compared to 33.1 per cent of males)
- males were more likely than females to enter an apprenticeship (13.9 per cent and 2.1 per cent respectively)
- females were more likely to study in the fields of Health, Society and Culture and Management and Commerce course than their male counterparts
- males were more likely than females to enrol in Engineering and Related Technologies, Architecture and Building, and Information Technology courses
- among those working and not in education or training, females were more likely than males to be working part-time (48.7 per cent compared to 38.9 per cent of males).
The most common areas of employment for both females and males not in education or training were as Sales Assistants (41.9 per cent and 27.0 per cent respectively) and Food Handlers (10.9 per cent and 11.2 per cent respectively).

**Geographic location**

Post-school destinations varied across geographic locations. Students who completed Year 12 in a capital city were the most likely to undertake a university degree (45.4 per cent) or VET Certificate IV+ courses (9.7 per cent). However, those in remote and very remote areas were the most likely to be in employment-based training (30.7 per cent in remote areas and 21.6 per cent in very remote areas) or in full-time work (22.0 per cent in remote areas and 20.3 per cent in very remote areas).

**Overall Position/ International Baccalaureate Diploma**

Of those Year 12 completers who received an Overall Position (OP) or were awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD), 74.9 per cent entered into further education or training, with university being the main destination (60.8 per cent). Only 5.0 per cent of respondents who did not receive an OP/IBD were continuing in study at a university. A further 35.8 per cent of these young people were most likely to transition into the workforce without additional education or training.

**Queensland Certificate of Education**

Of all Year 12 completers who participated in the 2012 Next Step survey, 86.2 per cent received a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). This is an increase from the 83.2 per cent who participated in the survey in 2011. Similarly to those who received an OP/IBD, 66.3 per cent of Year 12 completers who received a QCE made a transition into further education and training. University was the main destination for these young people, accounting for 43.4 per cent of Year 12 completers who received a QCE.

Of those who did not receive a QCE, 31.7 per cent transitioned into employment with no further education or training, whilst a further 20.6 per cent were seeking work.

**Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement**

The Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA) recognises the achievements of students who undertake individual learning programs. To be eligible, students must have impairments or difficulties in learning that are not primarily due to socioeconomic, cultural or linguistic factors. Among QCIA completers, 34.2 per cent were studying, with a high proportion doing VET Certificate I-II courses (27.0 per cent). Another 17.1 per cent were employed, either in part-time jobs (15.0 per cent) or full-time jobs (2.1 per cent). A high proportion of young people who received a QCIA were not in the labour force, education or training (30.9 per cent), and a further 17.8 per cent were seeking work.

**VET in school students**

The number of Year 12 completers obtaining a VET qualification while at school continues to increase. In 2012, 61.9 per cent of young people who completed Year 12 and participated in the Next Step survey had received a VET qualification. In 2011, the corresponding proportion receiving a VET qualification was 59.1 per cent.
As the proportion of Year 12 completers receiving a VET qualification whilst at school increases, the proportion of these young people who transition to university also increases (27.7 per cent in 2012 compared to 25.0 per cent in 2011). However, those Year 12 completers who did not receive a VET qualification were more likely to transition to university (55.7 per cent).

Those with a VET qualification had higher rates of transition to employment-based training (14.7 per cent compared to 6.3 per cent). They were also more likely to enter paid employment with no further education or training (30.6 per cent compared to 19.2 per cent).

The 2012 Next Step survey found that 13.9 per cent of Year 12 completers had participated in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship. These school-based apprentices and trainees were more likely to undertake apprenticeships and traineeships after leaving school than other Year 12 completers (32.7 per cent compared to 8.1 per cent).

**Indigenous**

Indigenous Year 12 completers were more likely than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers to enrol in VET Certificate I–II/other courses, and less likely to enrol in VET Certificate IV+ courses. They were also more likely to be undertaking a traineeship than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers (7.8 per cent compared to 3.5 per cent).

Indigenous Year 12 completers were less likely than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers to enrol in a university degree (15.5 per cent compared to 39.1 per cent). Nonetheless, 181 young Indigenous people who participated in the Next Step survey commenced a university degree in 2012.

Indigenous Year 12 completers had a similar rate of transition to employment with no further education or training as non-Indigenous Year 12 completers (27.2 per cent and 26.2 per cent respectively).

Indigenous Year 12 completers were more likely to be seeking work than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers (21.1 per cent compared to 8.5 per cent).

**Language background other than English**

Year 12 completers from a Language background other than English (LBOTE) demonstrated higher rates of transition to university degree study than those from English-speaking backgrounds (57.3 per cent compared to 37.0 per cent) and to VET Certificate IV+ courses (11.1 per cent compared to 7.2 per cent). For the purposes of this publication, international visa students have been excluded from the LBOTE classification.

**International visa students**

International visa students demonstrated strong transitions to university studies (55.7 per cent) and to VET Certificate IV+ courses (13.3 per cent).

Caution must be exercised when forming conclusions about the destinations of these students owing to the small numbers involved and the low response rate achieved.

**Socioeconomic status**

Transition to post-school education and training was strongly associated with socioeconomic status (SES), increasing consistently from 54.0 per cent for the lowest SES quartile to 73.8 per cent for the highest SES quartile.

Conversely, the proportion of Year 12 completers transitioning to employment with no further education or training decreased consistently from 30.5 per cent for the lowest SES quartile to 19.6 per cent for the highest SES quartile.
Age

Of the 38,411 Year 12 completers who participated in the 2012 Next Step survey, 327 were aged 15 years or younger. These Year 12 completers were more likely than their older counterparts to commence a university degree (54.4 per cent compared to 38.3 per cent for 16 to 18 year olds and 25.9 per cent for those 19 years old or greater).

The overwhelming majority of Year 12 completers were aged 16 to 18 years of age (98.8 per cent). This group of Year 12 completers were more likely to transition to employment without further education or training than other Year 12 completers.

A small number (116) of Year 12 completers were aged 19 years or older. This group of Year 12 completers were more likely to enter campus-based VET courses than younger Year 12 completers, particularly at the Certificate IV+ level (20.7 per cent compared to 7.4 per cent of 16 to 18 year olds and 6.1 per cent of those 15 years old or younger).

Conclusions

The survey found that the vast majority of young Queenslanders who completed Year 12 in 2011 were engaged in study or work six months after completing school.

When comparing the destinations of Year 12 completers from 2011 to Year 12 completers from previous years, the findings were similar over the five-year time period. However, there was an increase in participation in university and VET Certificate IV+ courses. There was also a small decline in those transitioning to employment with no further education and training.

As would be expected, those young people who completed a VET qualification or participated in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship during school were more likely to undertake a VET course, full-time work or part-time work after completing Year 12 than young people who did not. Young people who completed an OP or IBD stream were more likely to enter a university course after completing Year 12.

Immediate status after Year 12 gives only a partial view of the experiences of young people after leaving school, as it can take several years for stable patterns to emerge as young people move between different types of education, training and work.

The Next Step Longitudinal study is currently annually tracking, through to the age of 24, large cohorts of Year 12 completers from 2005 and 2010 who participated in the 2006 and 2011 Next Step surveys. This study provides a greater understanding of the longer term outcomes for Queensland’s Year 12 completers.

More information on the Next Step survey and the Next Step Longitudinal study is available at www.education.qld.gov.au/nextstep.