A report on the destinations of Year 12 completers from 2012 in Queensland
Executive summary

Background

The 2013 Next Step report documents the results of the annual statewide Next Step survey of the destinations of students who completed Year 12 in 2012 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 2013 Next Step survey was conducted by the Department of Education, Training and Employment through the Government Statistician (GS), in accordance with the privacy provisions of the Statistical Returns Act 1896 (Qld).

The GS conducted the survey between April and June 2013, 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 25.4 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 ninth year, over 39,400 young people completed the survey, which represents a response rate of 81.9 per cent of the more than 48,000 young people targeted. This response rate is similar to the response rate achieved in 2012 (81.4 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, training 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 have also been employed or seeking work)
- apprentices and trainees were assigned to these training categories rather than any of the VET categories, but it is a given that their training involved 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 as NILFET throughout the tables and figures of this report.

Figure ES1 provides a summary of results from the 2013 Next Step survey.

Figure ES1: Summary of survey results, Queensland 2013
The summary of findings presented in Figure ES2 highlights:

- the majority of Year 12 completers (87.5 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 61.6 per cent continuing in some recognised form of education or training in the year after they left school
- students undertaking a Bachelor Degree accounted for 39.4 per cent of all Year 12 completers
- a further 22.2 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 (7.1 per cent of all Year 12 completers)
- employment-based training accounted for 10.0 per cent of Year 12 completers, either in apprenticeships (6.9 per cent) or traineeships (3.1 per cent)
- the remaining 38.4 per cent of Year 12 completers did not enter post-school education or training, and were either employed (25.9 per cent), seeking work (10.4 per cent) or not in the labour force, education or training (2.0 per cent).

There were 2778 Year 12 completers (7.0 per cent) who had deferred a tertiary offer. These Year 12 completers are shown in their actual destination in Figure ES2. Among this group, 79.4 per cent were employed, 14.9 per cent were seeking work and a further 5.1 per cent were not in the labour force.

Figure ES2: Main destination of Year 12 completers, Queensland 2013
Figure ES3 shows a five-year time series of the main destinations of Year 12 completers from 2009 to 2013.

The proportion of Year 12 completers transitioning to Bachelor Degree level programs continues to increase. The 2013 value of 39.4 per cent surpasses the previous high recorded in 2012.

The other education and training destinations of Year 12 completers remained relatively stable over the last five years. Although in 2013 the proportion of Year 12 completers undertaking employment-based training in either an apprenticeship or traineeship is lower than in any of the previous four years. Further, both of these destinations are at the lowest level ever recorded in the nine year history of the Next Step survey.

Similar trends are apparent in the proportions of young people working full-time or seeking work, which may be an indicator of the current labour force environment. In 2013, only 8.5 per cent of Year 12 completers were working full-time, the lowest ever recorded in the survey. Likewise, at 10.4 per cent, the proportion seeking work is the highest ever recorded in the history of the survey.

Figure ES3: Main destination of Year 12 completers, Queensland 2009–2013

Education and training destinations

Continuing in further study was a common destination for Year 12 completers, with 24,223 continuing in some form of education or training in the year after completing Year 12. Of these, 62.4 per cent were combining their education or training with work.

Of the Year 12 completers who were undertaking further education or training, 77.5 per cent were studying full-time; this has increased from 74.7 per cent in 2012.

The most common fields of study for campus-based students were Society and Culture, Health, and Management and Commerce.

Apprentices and trainees were enrolled mainly in Engineering and Related Technologies, Architecture and Building, and Food, Hospitality and Personal Services.

University accounted for 77.6 per cent of students in campus-based study, with a further 14.8 per cent studying at an institute of technical and further education (TAFE).

Apprentices and trainees were most likely to be undertaking their study at a TAFE institute (54.0 per cent). Private training colleges (16.4 per cent and employers (15.8 per cent) were also large providers of training to this group of Year 12 completers.
Employment destinations

Most young people who completed Year 12 in 2012 were employed (25,458, or 64.5 per cent), whether or not they were undertaking further education or training.

Of these Year 12 completers, 69.8 per cent were in part-time employment, while 14.8 per cent were working full-time. A further 10.7 per cent were apprentices and 4.7 per cent were trainees.

The most frequent occupational group for male Year 12 completers who were not in an apprenticeship or traineeship was Labourers. Common occupations within this group included Kitchenhands, Shelf Fillers and Fast Food Cooks.

For females who were not in apprenticeships or traineeships, the most frequent occupational group was Sales Workers. Sales Assistants (General), and Checkout Operators and Office Cashiers, were common occupations within this group.

Retail Trade was the industry that 36.8 per cent of Year 12 completers, who were not apprentices or trainees, were employed in. The Construction industry employed the largest proportion of Year 12 completers who were apprentices and trainees (27.0 per cent).

Excluding apprentices and trainees, 69.5 per cent of Year 12 completers in employment were working on a casual basis.

Not studying or employed

The survey identified 10.4 per cent of Year 12 completers were not studying, but were seeking work.

A further 2.0 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, ‘Disability’ for males (19.5 per cent) and ‘Wanted a break from study’ for females (23.0 per cent).

The most common main reason for not seeking work given by females who were not in the labour force, education or training was ‘Travel’ (16.5 per cent). For males in this category, the most common reason was ‘Disability’ (20.3 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 Bachelor Degree course (43.8 per cent compared to 34.7 per cent of males)
- males were more likely than females to enter an apprenticeship (12.0 per cent and 2.0 per cent respectively)
- females in campus-based study were most likely to be studying in the field of Health, closely followed by Society and Culture
- females in employment-based training were most likely to be studying in the Food, Hospitality and Personal Services, and Management and Commerce fields
- males were most likely to be enrolled in Engineering and Related Technologies courses, regardless of their type of study
- among those working and not in education or training, females were more likely than males to be working part-time (70.4 per cent compared to 63.6 per cent of males).
**Age**

Of the 39,482 Year 12 completers who participated in the 2013 Next Step survey, the vast majority (31,551 or 79.9 per cent) were 16 years of age at the start of 2012.

Year 12 completers aged 15 years or younger were more likely than older Year 12 completers to enrol in a Bachelor Degree (55.5 per cent) compared to 40.5 per cent for 16 year olds, 34.5 per cent for those 18 years or older and 33.9 per cent for 17 year olds.

Year 12 completers aged 18 years or older were more likely than younger Year 12 completers to enter campus-based VET courses (25.6 per cent) compared to 14.2 per cent for 17 year olds, 11.7 per cent for 16 year olds and 11.0 per cent for those 15 years or younger.

**Geographic location**

Post-school destinations varied across geographic locations. Students who completed Year 12 in South East Queensland were more likely to undertake Bachelor Degree study than those from Regional Queensland (44.1 per cent compared to 29.1 per cent).

However, those in remote and very remote areas were the most likely to be in employment-based training (22.4 per cent in remote areas and 20.8 per cent in very remote areas) or in full-time work (16.2 per cent in remote areas and 21.6 per cent in very remote areas).

**Indigenous**

Indigenous Year 12 completers were more likely than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers to participate in either campus or employment based VET programs (27.2 per cent compared to 22.1 per cent).

Indigenous Year 12 completers were less likely than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers to enrol in a Bachelor Degree (18.0 per cent compared to 40.1 per cent). Nonetheless, 233 young Indigenous people who participated in the Next Step survey commenced Bachelor Degree study in 2013.

Indigenous Year 12 completers had a similar rate of transition to employment with no further education or training as non-Indigenous Year 12 completers (26.7 per cent and 25.9 per cent respectively).

Indigenous Year 12 completers were more likely to be seeking work than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers (23.9 per cent compared to 9.9 per cent).

**Queensland Certificate of Education**

Of all Year 12 completers who participated in the 2013 Next Step survey, 87.8 per cent received a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). This is an increase from the 86.2 per cent who participated in the survey in 2012.

Of those Year 12 completers who received a QCE, 64.8 per cent entered into further education or training. Bachelor Degree study was the main destination for these young people, accounting for 43.8 per cent of Year 12 completers who received a QCE.

Of those who did not receive a QCE, 29.9 per cent transitioned into employment with no further education or training, whilst a further 31.6 per cent were either seeking work or not in the labour force, education or training.
**Overall Position / International Baccalaureate Diploma**

Similarly to those who received a QCE, 75.2 per cent of Year 12 completers who received an Overall Position (OP) or were awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) made a transition into further education and training.

Bachelor Degree study was the main destination of those who received an OP (62.5 per cent) or were awarded an IBD (85.3 per cent). Only 42.0 per cent of respondents who did not receive an OP/IBD were continuing in post school education or training after completing Year 12. A further 36.0 per cent of these young people transitioned into employment without additional education or training.

**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, 32.4 per cent were studying, with a high proportion doing VET Certificate I–II courses (24.4 per cent). Another 15.0 per cent were employed, either in part-time jobs (11.4 per cent) or full-time jobs (3.6 per cent).

A high proportion of young people who received a QCIA were seeking work (20.3 per cent), and a further 32.4 per cent were not in the labour force, education or training.

**VET in school students**

The number of Year 12 completers obtaining a VET qualification while at school continues to increase. In 2013, 64.0 per cent of young people who completed Year 12 and participated in the Next Step survey had received a VET qualification. In 2012, the corresponding proportion receiving a VET qualification was 61.9 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 Bachelor Degree study also increases (29.2 per cent in 2013 compared to 27.7 per cent in 2012). However, those Year 12 completers who did not receive a VET qualification remain more likely to transition to Bachelor Degree study (57.4 per cent).

Those with a VET qualification had higher rates of transition to employment-based training (12.5 per cent compared to 5.4 per cent). They were also more likely to enter paid employment with no further education or training (30.0 per cent compared to 18.8 per cent).

**School-based apprenticeships and traineeships**

The 2013 Next Step survey found that 15.1 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 (28.1 per cent compared to 6.7 per cent).

**Language background other than English**

Year 12 completers from a Language background other than English (LBOTE) demonstrated higher rates of transition to Bachelor Degree study than those from English-speaking backgrounds (58.9 per cent compared to 37.9 per cent) and to VET Certificate IV or higher courses (9.4 per cent compared to 6.9 per cent). For the purposes of this publication, international visa students have been excluded from the LBOTE classification and are analysed separately.
**International visa students**

International visa students demonstrated strong transitions to university studies (49.5 per cent) and to VET Certificate IV or higher courses (11.1 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 51.9 per cent for the lowest SES quartile to 72.7 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 30.1 per cent for the lowest SES quartile to 19.4 per cent for the highest SES quartile.

**Conclusions**

The survey found that the vast majority of young Queenslanders who completed Year 12 in 2012 were engaged in study or work six months after completing school.

When comparing the destinations of Year 12 completers from 2012 to Year 12 completers from previous years, the findings were similar over the five-year time period. However, there was an increase in the proportions in Bachelor Degree study and seeking work. There was also a small decline in those transitioning to full-time 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 Bachelor Degree study 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.

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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 respectively. 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.