



# 2008 ACT college graduates: Where are they now?



This publication provides a summary of a survey of students who were awarded a Year 12 Certificate in 2008.

## Key findings

Ninety-one percent of all students were employed or studying in 2009

Seventy-eight percent of all students were employed and 9.7 percent were unemployed in 2009

Just over half of all students were studying in 2009

Of those who were not currently studying 76.6 percent intended to start some study in the next two years

Overall 96 percent of students found year 11 and 12 worthwhile

Students who speak a language other than English (LBOTE) at home were more likely to be studying and less likely to be employed in 2009 than non-LBOTE students

Just over half of the students who were studying in 2009 were undertaking their study because “it’s a course that interests me”

The most common reason students gave for not studying in 2009 was that they were “taking a gap year”

## Key Outcomes

Table 1 provides an overview of three key outcome indicators covering employment, study and those who were either employed or studying. Data are presented for the three surveys conducted in respect of the 2006, 2007 and 2008 year 12 graduates.

After completing year 12 in the ACT in 2008, 91.1 percent of all students surveyed reported that they were employed or studying in 2009. This was not significantly different from the 92.1 percent reported for the 2007 graduate survey but was significantly different from the 93.4 percent reported for the 2006 survey. Around eight in 10 (78.0 percent) students were employed in paid work and about half (52.5 percent) of all students were currently studying (Table 1).

When comparing the 2008 graduates with 2006 and 2007 graduates the following significant differences were identified:

- 2006 female graduates were more likely to be employed (83.2 percent) compared with males (79.1 percent). However, the 2007 and 2008 graduate surveys showed no significant difference between males and females
- LBOTE students were more likely to be studying while non-LBOTE students were more likely to be employed in all three surveys
- 2006 graduates who completed a VET course at school were more likely to be employed or studying than students who did not complete a VET course. However, in both 2007 and 2008 there was no significant difference between the outcomes
- students with a Universities Admission Index (UAI) in the range 96-100 were more likely to be studying and less likely to be employed than other students in all three surveys.

**Table 1: Percentage of students employed or studying by selected demographics, 2006-2008**

	Percentage employed			Percentage currently studying			Percentage employed or studying		
	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008
<b>Sex</b>									
Females	83.2	81.4	78.6	55.7	49.7	52.9	93.5	92.5	91.4
Males	79.1	81.6	77.3	57.5	50.6	52.0	93.2	91.7	90.9
<b>LBOTE</b>									
No	83.1	84.4	80.6	53.3	47.9	48.6	93.3	92.6	90.8
Yes	71.6	64.0	60.9	78.2	64.0	78.3	95.7	88.9	93.3
<b>VET course</b>									
No	78.2	79.6	76.5	56.1	53.5	52.1	92.0	91.6	90.5
Yes	87.2	84.0	80.6	57.5	45.6	53.1	96.1	92.8	92.2
<b>UAI group</b>									
1 - 65	85.7	86.2	81.6	54.0	47.3	51.9	95.1	94.7	94.0
66 - 75	81.3	81.4	83.4	58.7	50.7	53.8	92.7	91.5	94.8
76 - 85	77.2	78.9	76.8	61.9	61.8	58.2	92.2	93.9	91.6
86 - 95	76.0	74.7	72.3	63.9	65.0	56.3	92.2	93.1	88.9
96 - 100	67.2	62.0	55.6	74.9	74.0	68.7	92.9	91.6	89.4
No UAI	87.2	85.7	82.1	46.5	38.6	44.4	94.1	90.4	89.5
<b>Career counselling</b>									
No	84.3	84.4	78.2	58.8	52.9	56.8	94.6	94.2	93.3
Yes	79.9	80.0	78.8	56.1	49.6	50.1	93.6	91.2	90.5
Don't know	64.0	68.0	65.0	37.3	27.7	36.9	77.3	79.6	77.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.3</b>	<b>81.5</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>92.1</b>	<b>91.1</b>

Note: The 2007 figures in this table exclude one independent school that chose not to take part in the survey.

## Study

Table 2 shows the percentage of students studying by selected demographic factors for 2008 year 12 graduates. About half (52.5 percent) of all students indicated that they were undertaking some study in 2009, with 42.0 percent studying full-time.

Students achieving a higher UAI had a greater tendency to undertake further study. About half of all students (53.8 percent) with a UAI between 66 and 75 were undertaking study in 2009, compared with almost seven in 10 students (68.7 percent) with a UAI between 96 and 100.

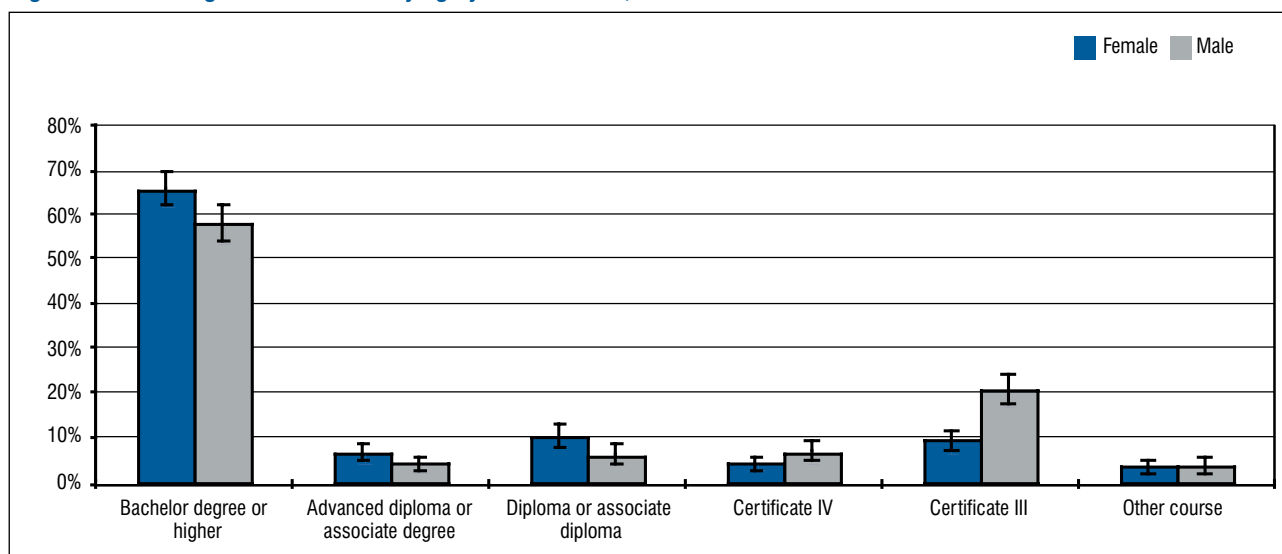
**Table 2: Percentage of students studying by selected demographics, 2008**

	Studying			Not studying	Total
	Part-time	Full-time	Total		
<b>Sex</b>					
Females	8.1	44.5	52.9	47.0	100.0
Males	12.9	39.2	52.0	48.0	100.0
<b>LBOTE</b>					
No	10.6	37.9	48.6	51.3	100.0
Yes	8.8	69.5	78.3	21.7	100.0
<b>VET course</b>					
No	7.0	45.0	52.1	47.8	100.0
Yes	16.2	36.8	53.1	46.9	100.0
<b>UAI group</b>					100.0
1 - 65	9.1	42.5	51.9	48.1	100.0
66 - 75	4.3	49.5	53.8	46.2	100.0
76 - 85	3.8	54.0	58.2	41.8	100.0
86 - 95	2.2	54.1	56.3	43.7	100.0
96 - 100	1.2	67.5	68.7	31.3	100.0
No UAI	22.4	21.9	44.4	55.5	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>42.0</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>47.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The majority (62.1 percent) of 2008 year 12 graduates who were studying in 2009 reported that they were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher, 14.6 percent at Certificate III level, 8.2 percent at Diploma or Associate Diploma level, 5.4 percent at Certificate IV level, 5.2 percent at Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree level and 3.4 percent at other levels.

A greater proportion of females were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher – 65.8 percent of females compared with 57.9 percent of males. The proportion of males studying at Certificate III level was more than twice the proportion of females studying at that level – 20.7 percent of males compared with 9.2 percent of females (Figure 1). These general patterns were consistent with the previous survey results reported for 2006 and 2007 graduates.

**Figure 1: Percentage of students studying by level and sex, 2008**



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

Table 3 shows an analysis of the main reason for studying in 2009 by selected demographic factors. Overall, just over one in two (54.4 percent) students reported that they were undertaking their study because “it’s a course that interests me”, with the next most popular reason being “to get/start/help in a job/business” (27.0 percent).

For students who did not gain a UAI only four in ten (40.0 percent) reported that they were undertaking their study because “it’s a course that interests me”. One in three students (34.0 percent) said they were undertaking study “to get/start/help in a job/business” and 15.4 percent said it was “part of an apprenticeship/traineeship”.

A higher percentage of males (9.6 percent) compared with females (3.0 percent) said their main reason for studying was because it was “part of an apprenticeship/traineeship”.

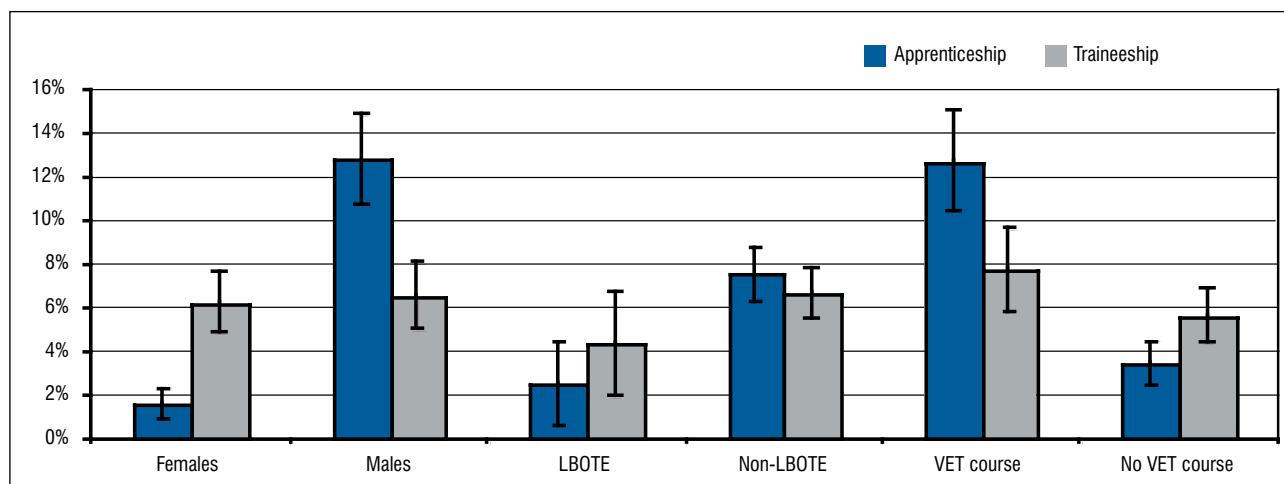
**Table 3: Percentage of students by main reason for study and selected demographics factors, 2008**

	It’s a course that interests me	To get/start/help in a job/business	Part of an apprenticeship/traineeship	To improve my education	Other	Don’t know	Total
<b>Sex</b>							
Females	54.0	28.4	3.0	6.6	7.5	0.7	100.0
Males	54.8	25.4	9.6	4.4	5.0	0.7	100.0
<b>VET course</b>							
No	58.0	24.5	4.4	5.3	7.2	0.5	100.0
Yes	48.2	31.2	8.9	5.9	4.8	1.0	100.0
<b>UAI group</b>							
1 - 65	50.0	30.4	7.0	5.3	6.8	0.5	100.0
66 - 75	54.5	28.6	1.3	5.3	10.4	0.0	100.0
76 - 85	59.3	23.5	1.6	7.8	6.7	1.0	100.0
86 - 95	68.7	18.3	1.0	6.1	6.0	0.0	100.0
96 - 100	69.2	20.0	0.9	2.9	5.9	1.0	100.0
No UAI	40.0	34.0	15.4	5.1	4.2	1.3	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Overall, seven percent of the 2008 year 12 graduates surveyed were undertaking an apprenticeship in 2009 and six percent were doing a traineeship (Figure 2). However, the percentage of students undertaking an apprenticeship varied significantly for selected demographics:

- male graduates were eight times more likely than females to be undertaking an apprenticeship
- non-LBOTE students were three times more likely to be undertaking an apprenticeship than LBOTE students
- students who undertook a VET course at school were more than three times as likely to be undertaking an apprenticeship than students who did not undertake a VET course

**Figure 2: Percentage of students currently undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship by selected demographics, 2008**



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

Table 4 details the student's labour force status by their study status in 2009. Of the students who were studying part-time, about nine in 10 (91.4 percent) were employed with the majority (58.7 percent) employed full-time. Of the students who were studying full-time, about seven in 10 (70.9 percent) were employed with the majority (64.4 percent) employed part-time. Of the students that were not studying, about eight in 10 (81.3 percent) were employed and less than one in 10 (7.7 percent) were unemployed.

**Table 4: Percentage of students in labour force by study status, 2008**

	Studying			Not studying	Total
	Part-time	Full-time	Total		
<b>Employed</b>	91.4	70.9	75.0	81.3	78.0
Full-time	58.7	5.2	15.8	47.5	30.9
Part-time	31.3	64.4	57.9	31.6	45.3
Don't know	1.5	1.3	1.3	2.2	1.7
<b>Unemployed</b>	4.6	13.4	11.6	7.7	9.7
Looking for full-time work	1.0	0.4	0.5	2.8	1.6
Looking for part-time work	2.7	12.9	10.9	2.3	6.8
Looking for full or part-time work	1.0	0.0	0.2	2.5	1.2
Don't know	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
<b>In labour force</b>	96.1	84.3	86.6	89.0	87.7
<b>Not in labour force</b>	3.9	15.7	13.4	11.0	12.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Of the 2008 year 12 graduates who were not studying in 2009, 41.5 percent reported their main reason for not studying as "taking a gap year", 21.2 percent indicated that they had "got a job", 12.9 percent were "travelling", 9.2 percent "didn't feel ready for study at the moment" and 5.1 percent "never planned/intended to study" (Table 5). About one in three (36.3 percent) students who were not studying and did not get a UAI reported their reason for not

studying was because they “got a job”. Sixteen percent indicated they were “taking a gap year”, 14.6 percent said they “didn’t feel ready for study at the moment” and 10.4 percent “never planned/intended to study”.

**Table 5: Percentage of students by main reason for not studying and selected demographics, 2008**

	Taking a gap year	Got a job	Travelling	Not ready for study	Never planned/intended to study	Other	Don't know	Total
<b>Sex</b>								
Females	46.0	17.5	14.0	9.6	3.3	9.4	0.2	100.0
Males	36.6	25.1	11.9	8.8	7.1	9.9	0.6	100.0
<b>VET course</b>								
No	47.4	16.6	15.7	6.6	3.6	9.7	0.5	100.0
Yes	31.2	29.1	8.2	13.9	7.8	9.5	0.3	100.0
<b>UAI group</b>								
1 - 65	43.2	20.9	15.8	10.3	1.8	7.9	0.0	100.0
66 - 75	57.8	16.5	9.9	4.5	4.5	6.9	0.0	100.0
76 - 85	69.2	3.1	12.9	3.9	0.7	10.2	0.0	100.0
86 - 95	59.8	6.8	20.1	5.1	1.3	6.9	0.0	100.0
96 - 100	62.1	6.3	25.2	2.0	0.0	4.4	0.0	100.0
No UAI	16.3	36.3	8.5	14.6	10.4	12.8	1.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Of the 47.5 percent of students not currently studying, 76.6 percent intended to start some study in the next two years. As UAI increased, so did intention to start some study in the next two years. Of the students who obtained a UAI of 76 or above and were not currently studying, 96.0 percent were intending to start some study in the next two years. Females, students who undertook a VET course, and students who undertook career counselling were also significantly more likely to report that they intended to undertake some study in the next two years.

## Labour Force Status

Table 6 shows a summary of the labour force status of 2008 year 12 graduates in 2009. Almost eight in 10 (78.0 percent) students reported having a paid job. About one in 10 (9.7 percent) students reported not currently having a paid job and actively looking for work. The majority (70.0 percent) of these students were looking for part-time work.

**Table 6: Percentage of students by labour force status, 2008**

	Number	Percentage
<b>Employed</b>	<b>3074</b>	<b>78.0</b>
Full-time	1219	30.9
Part-time	1786	45.3
Don't know	68	1.7
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>9.7</b>
Looking for full-time work	63	1.6
Looking for part-time work	268	6.8
Looking for full or part-time work	49	1.2
Don't know	4	0.1
<b>In labour force</b>	<b>3457</b>	<b>87.7</b>
<b>Not in labour force</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>12.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3941</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Unemployment rate</b>		<b>11.1</b>

# Satisfaction

Figure 3 summarises the responses of 2008 year 12 graduates to seven satisfaction questions regarding their experience in years 11 and 12 in the ACT. Responses of strongly agree or agree were classified as “positive”, responses of strongly disagree or disagree as a “negative” and responses of neither agree nor disagree as “neutral”.

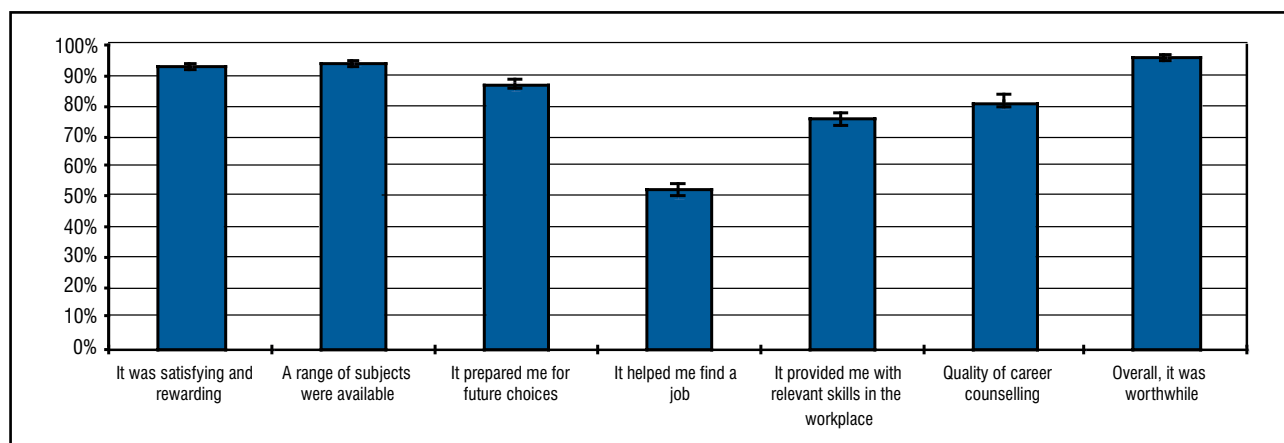
More than nine in 10 students gave a positive response to the following statements about their year 11 and 12 experience:

- it was satisfying and rewarding (93.3 percent)
- a range of subjects were available (94.3 percent)
- overall, it was worthwhile (96.4 percent).

More than four in five students gave a positive response to the statement that their year 11 and 12 experience “prepared them for future choices” (87.1 percent) and provided “quality of career counselling” (81.8 percent).

However, about a third of students gave a negative response to the statement that their year 11 and 12 experience “helped them find a job” (33.5 percent). Sixteen percent of students gave a negative response to the statement that their year 11 and year 12 experience “provided them with relevant skills in the workplace”.

**Figure 3: Percentage of students satisfied with various aspects of their year 11 and 12 experience, 2008**



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

These patterns of satisfaction were consistent with the previous survey results reported for 2006 and 2007 graduates.

## Scope and Methodology

This publication, *2008 ACT college graduates: where are they now?* is based on the 2009 survey of students who successfully completed year 12 in the Australian Capital Territory in 2008. The survey findings will help to ensure that ACT senior school education remains relevant and is of the highest quality. Major stakeholders include the ACT Department of Education and Training, the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (OBSSS), universities, vocational education and training providers and schools.

The sample was drawn from the OBSSS administrative records and the population of interest was defined as those students who were awarded a year 12 certificate from an ACT college or the Canberra Institute of Technology in 2008. The population excluded full fee paying students usually resident overseas.

Prior to the survey being undertaken a primary approach letter was sent to all potential respondents. This provided information about the purpose and importance of the study, the broad content of the survey, the amount of time the interview would take and confidentiality provisions. The survey was undertaken by telephone from 15 July to 3 August 2009 and where possible the information was obtained directly from the student. In some cases a parent or guardian supplied the information where the student could not be contacted directly.

A total 3941 students were identified as being in-scope for the survey. Of the 2914 students contacted via telephone, 2179 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 75 percent.

## Explanatory Notes

**Career counselling** in schools may include one on one or group discussion between students and career advisors, industry experts and representatives from universities and CIT about various aspects of student pathways planning, such as course choices, work experience and developing a resume.

**Currently studying** refers to respondents who were actively undertaking some study at the time of the survey, including those attending university, TAFE, undertaking an apprenticeship or those repeating Year 12.

**Labour Force Status** provides data on whether a person was employed (full or part-time), unemployed (looking for full or part-time work) or not in the labour force at the time of the survey. Labour Force Status was derived from responses to a number of questions on the survey form.

**LBOTE** is used in this publication to describe students who speak a language other than English at home. Please note, this is slightly different from Language Background other than English (also known as LBOTE) which is used when a language other than English is spoken at home by the student and/or one or both parents.

**Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses** in schools are accredited vocational courses which are designed around Training Packages endorsed by specific industry areas and successful completion may lead to the award of a Vocational Certificate or Statement of Attainment.

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