



ACT
Government

Education and Training

2010 ACT college graduates: Where are they now?

This publication provides a summary of a survey of graduates awarded an ACT Year 12 Certificate in 2010.

Key findings

Ninety-four percent of all 2010 year 12 graduates were employed or studying in 2011

Seventy-nine percent of all 2010 year 12 graduates were employed and 11 percent were unemployed in 2011

Fifty-five percent of all 2010 year 12 graduates were studying in 2011

Of those who were not currently studying, 77 percent intended to start some study in the next two years

Overall, 97 percent of 2010 year 12 graduates found year 11 and 12 worthwhile

2010 year 12 graduates who speak a language other than English (LBOTE) at home were more likely to be studying and less likely to be employed in 2011 than graduates who are not LBOTE

Just over half of the 2010 year 12 graduates who were studying in 2011 were undertaking their study because "it's a course that interests me"

The most common reason 2010 year 12 graduates gave for not studying in 2011 was that they were "taking a gap year"

Context

Australia is currently in a period of significant national education reform. There are major changes in tertiary education with higher education and training and skills development on the national agenda. The ACT is being proactive in looking to the future of tertiary education in the ACT, building on the strengths of current collaborations and relationships within the sector and promoting opportunities for change.

Following amendments to the *Education Act 2004*, since 1 January 2010 all young people have been required to participate in schooling until they complete year 10, and then either continue full-time in education, training and/or employment until age 17 or completing year 12 or equivalent.

The Education and Training Directorate is committed to providing learning pathways for students which result in an educated and skilled workforce that meets the present and future needs of the ACT and region. Priorities focus on ensuring young people's needs are met, providing flexible and responsive training options, engaging with industry and employers and improving retention rates. Together these strategies will empower students to shape their own learning pathways whilst meeting industry needs.

The work of the Tertiary Taskforce throughout 2010, culminating in the launch the Taskforce report 'Learning Capital' in February 2011 has provided the ACT and region further direction for the reform of tertiary education including vocational education and training and higher education in the context of a national reform agenda for a greater market driven system.

The destination of students after year 12 remains an important piece of information contributing to the development and provision of appropriate education and training options into the future.

Key Outcomes

Table 1 provides an overview of three key outcome indicators covering employment, study and those who were either employed or studying in the year following graduation. Data are presented for the last four surveys conducted in respect of the 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 year 12 graduates.

Of those who completed year 12 in the ACT in 2010, 93.9 percent reported that they were employed or studying in 2011. This was significantly higher than the 90.1 percent reported for the 2009 graduate survey. Almost four in five (78.8%) of the 2010 year 12 graduates were employed in paid work and just over half (54.9%) of all students were studying in 2011.

The following interesting features were identified:

- male and female students who graduated in 2007 to 2010 showed no significant difference in terms of employment and study outcomes
- graduates with LBOTE were more likely to be studying while graduates who were not LBOTE were more likely to be employed in all four surveys
- graduates with an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) or 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 four surveys.

Table 1: Percentage of year 12 graduates employed or studying by selected demographics

Year of graduation	Percentage Employed				Percentage Currently Studying				Percentage Employed or Studying			
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2007	2008	2009	2010	2007	2008	2009	2010
Sex												
Females	81.4	78.6	76.3	79.0	49.7	52.9	52.4	55.8	92.5	91.4	89.7	94.3
Males	81.6	77.3	73.6	78.7	50.6	52.0	54.1	54.1	91.7	90.9	90.5	93.4
LBOTE												
No	84.4	80.6	78.2	81.5	47.9	48.6	50.1	51.2	92.6	90.8	90.0	93.9
Yes	64.0	60.9	54.8	63.9	64.0	78.3	72.5	76.8	88.9	93.3	90.2	94.0
VET course												
No	79.6	76.5	72.6	78.0	53.5	52.1	53.6	56.6	91.6	90.5	88.9	94.3
Yes	84.0	80.6	79.3	80.3	45.6	53.1	52.6	52.1	92.8	92.2	92.3	93.2
ATAR or UAI group												
No ATAR	85.7	82.1	80.9	84.7	38.6	44.4	44.9	42.0	90.4	89.5	90.3	90.9
1 - 65	86.2	81.6	78.8	76.8	47.3	51.9	49.2	55.5	94.7	94.0	91.3	94.8
66 - 75	81.4	83.4	78.5	81.2	50.7	53.8	56.5	58.6	91.5	94.8	91.8	97.2
76 - 85	78.9	76.8	73.7	79.8	61.8	58.2	57.6	58.6	93.9	91.6	90.2	94.3
86 - 95	74.7	72.3	64.3	73.2	65.0	56.3	61.7	67.2	93.1	88.9	88.8	95.0
96 - 100	62.0	55.6	59.2	62.8	74.0	68.7	65.7	69.5	91.6	89.4	85.4	95.3
Career counselling												
No	84.4	78.2	75.6	78.4	52.9	56.8	56.1	56.1	94.2	93.3	92.9	94.5
Yes	80.0	78.8	75.9	79.8	49.6	50.1	52.6	54.9	91.2	90.5	89.6	93.9
Don't know	68.0	65.0	58.9	69.0	27.7	36.9	34.6	38.6	79.6	77.2	69.6	82.2
All graduates	81.5	78.0	74.9	78.8	50.1	52.5	53.2	54.9	92.1	91.1	90.1	93.9

1. The 2007 percentages in this table exclude one independent school that chose not to take part in the survey.

2. In 2009 ATAR replaced UAI.

Study

Table 2 shows the percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates studying in 2011 by selected demographic factors. About half (54.9%) of all graduates indicated that they were undertaking some study in 2011, with 46.2 percent of 2010 year 12 graduates studying full-time. The most common subjects of study related to society and culture (14.8%), management and commerce (14.7%), creative arts (11.3%) and natural and physical sciences (11.1%).

Graduates achieving a higher ATAR had a greater tendency to undertake further study. About six in 10 graduates (58.6%) with an ATAR between 66 and 75 were undertaking study in 2011, compared with seven in 10 graduates (69.5%) with an ATAR between 96 and 100.

Table 2: Percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates studying in 2011 by selected demographics

	Studying			Not studying
	Part-time	Full-time	All	
Sex				
Females	6.2	49.5	55.8	44.1
Males	11.0	42.9	54.1	45.8
LBOTE				
No	8.5	42.5	51.2	48.8
Yes	9.1	67.5	76.8	22.9
VET course				
No	6.6	50.0	56.6	43.4
Yes	12.0	39.8	52.1	47.7
ATAR group				
No ATAR	15.4	26.3	42.0	57.8
1 - 65	16.0	39.4	55.5	44.5
66 - 75	2.8	55.8	58.6	41.4
76 - 85	2.0	56.5	58.6	41.4
86 - 95	3.0	64.1	67.2	32.5
96 - 100	0.6	68.9	69.5	30.5
All graduates	8.6	46.2	54.9	45.0

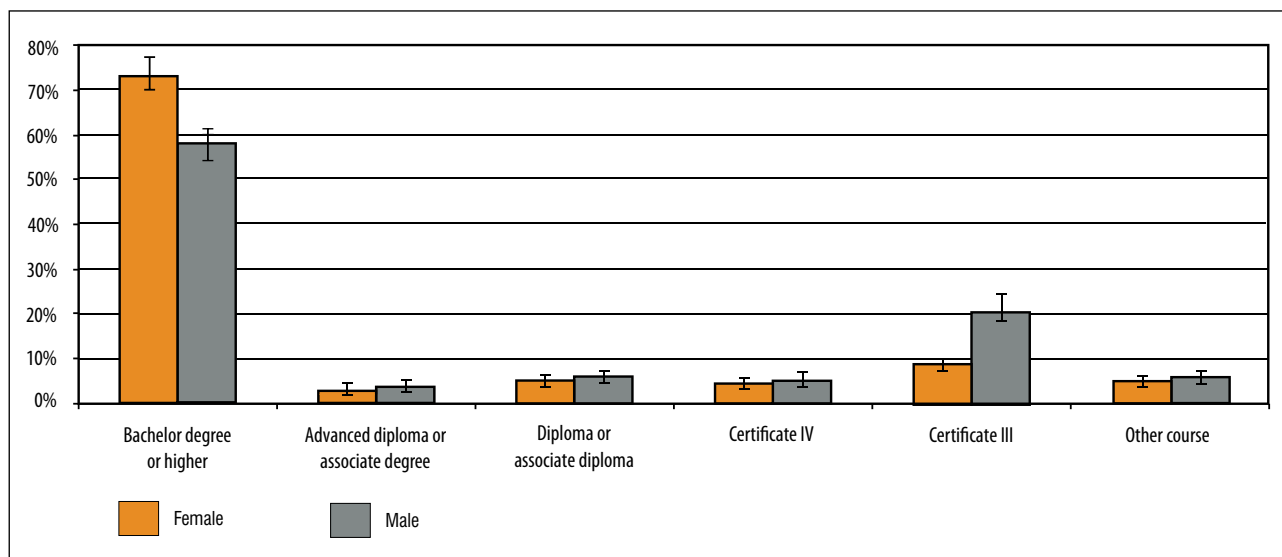
1. The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of 'don't know' responses.

Over six in 10 (61.3%) 2010 year 12 graduates applied for a university place and 96.7 percent of these graduates were successful in gaining a place. However, only 63.7 percent accepted the place and enrolled in 2011. One in three (33.8%) graduates who were offered a place deferred. Female graduates, graduates who did not complete a VET course, graduates who are not LBOTE and graduates who received career counselling were all more likely to defer their university studies.

The majority (65.9%) of 2010 year 12 graduates who were studying in 2011 reported that they were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher and a further 14.1 percent were studying at Certificate III.

A greater proportion of females were studying at a Bachelor Degree level or higher – 73.3 percent of females compared with 58.0 percent of males. The proportion of males studying at Certificate III level was more than twice the proportion of females studying at that level – 20.2 percent of males compared with 8.3 percent of females (Figure 1). These general patterns were consistent with the results reported for 2007, 2008 and 2009 graduates.

Figure 1: Percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates studying in 2011 by level and sex



1. 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 the main reason why 2010 year 12 graduates were studying in 2011. Overall, just over one in two (52.7%) graduates 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” (27.7%).

A much higher percentage of males (8.6%) compared with females (1.7%) said their main reason for studying was because it was “part of an apprenticeship/traineeship”.

Of the 2010 year 12 graduates who were studying in 2011 and did not gain an ATAR, around four in ten (41.3%) reported that they were undertaking their study because “it’s a course that interests me”, 26.9 percent said they were undertaking study “to get/start/help in a job/business” and 14.5 percent said it was “part of an apprenticeship/traineeship”.

Table 3: Percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates by main reason for studying in 2011 and selected demographics

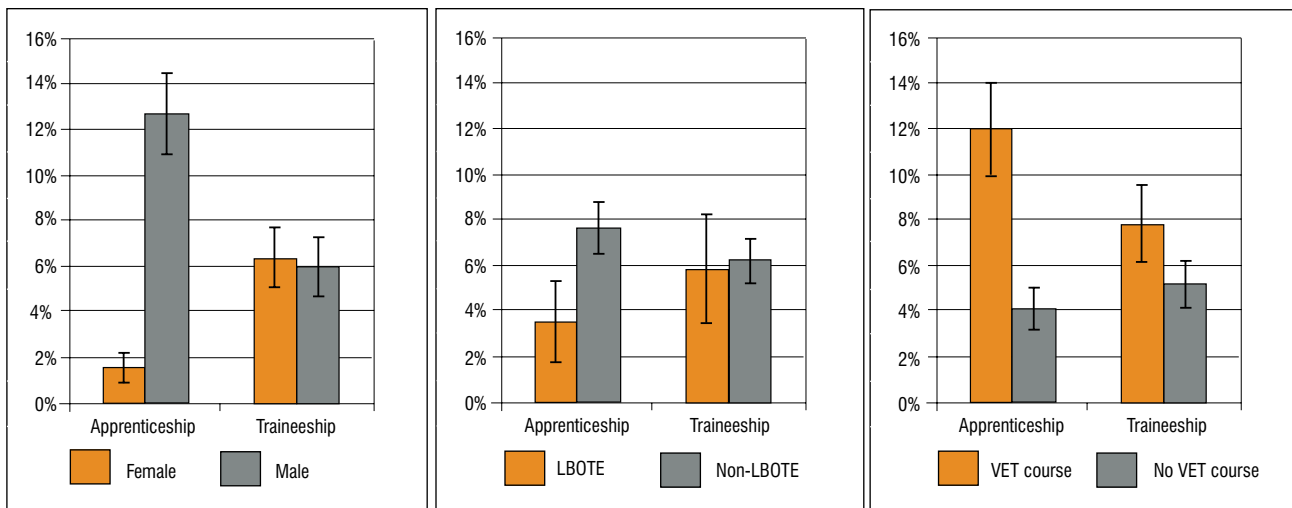
	It’s a course that interests me	To get/start/help in a job/business	Part of an apprenticeship/traineeship	To improve my education	Other
Sex					
Females	54.0	27.9	1.7	9.8	5.0
Males	51.3	27.5	8.6	9.1	2.7
VET course					
No	54.5	27.5	3.0	9.5	4.3
Yes	49.4	28.1	9.0	9.4	3.1
ATAR group					
No ATAR	41.3	26.9	14.5	11.8	4.0
1 - 65	46.9	23.8	4.1	19.1	4.6
66 - 75	57.6	28.5	1.7	5.8	5.6
76 - 85	57.4	33.2	1.5	4.6	2.8
86 - 95	60.1	27.5	1.0	7.7	2.5
96 - 100	60.8	25.4	1.6	6.3	4.5
All graduates	52.7	27.7	5.1	9.5	3.9

1. The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of ‘don’t know’ responses.

Overall, 7.1 percent of the 2010 year 12 graduates surveyed were undertaking an apprenticeship in 2011 and 6.2 percent were doing a traineeship. However, the percentage of graduates undertaking an apprenticeship varied significantly for selected demographics (Figure 2):

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

Figure 2: Percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in 2011 by selected demographics



1. 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 percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates in the labour force in 2011 by study status in 2011. Of the graduates who were studying part-time, 82.1 percent were employed with just over half (45.2%) employed full-time. Of the graduates who were studying full-time, 71.0 percent were employed with the majority (60.4%) employed part-time. Of the graduates who were not studying, almost nine in 10 (86.3%) were employed and less than one in 10 (8.3%) were unemployed.

Table 4: Percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates in the labour force in 2011 by study status in 2011

	Studying			Not studying	All graduates
	Part-time	Full-time	Total		
Employed	82.1	71.0	72.7	86.3	78.8
Full-time	45.2	10.1	15.6	48.1	30.2
Part-time	36.2	60.4	56.5	36.1	47.3
Don't know	0.8	0.5	0.5	2.2	1.3
Unemployed	11.8	12.5	12.5	8.3	10.6
Looking for full-time work	2.3	0.1	0.5	3.6	1.9
Looking for part-time work	8.6	12.1	11.6	2.7	7.6
Looking for full or part-time work	0.8	0.3	0.4	1.9	1.1
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Total in labour force	93.9	83.5	85.2	94.7	89.5
Not in labour force	6.1	16.5	14.8	5.3	10.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1. The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Of the 2010 year 12 graduates who were not studying in 2011, 38.1 percent reported their main reason for not studying as “taking a gap year”, 18.9 percent indicated that they had “got a job”, 14.1 percent were “travelling”, 9.8 percent were “not ready for study” and 5.6 percent “never planned/intended to study” (Table 5).

Three in 10 (30.1%) graduates who were not studying and did not get an ATAR reported their reason for not studying was because they “got a job”. Twenty percent indicated they were “taking a gap year”, 12.4 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 2010 year 12 graduates by main reason for not studying in 2011 and selected demographics

	Taking a gap year	Got a job	Travelling	Not ready for study	Never planned/intended to study	Other
Sex						
Females	39.3	16.0	17.9	11.7	3.2	11.1
Males	36.9	21.9	10.4	7.9	8.0	13.9
VET course						
No	43.4	15.8	14.9	8.7	4.6	12.1
Yes	29.9	23.9	13.0	11.3	7.2	13.2
ATAR group						
No ATAR	20.2	30.1	7.1	12.4	10.4	17.8
1 - 65	43.3	18.8	9.7	9.0	6.5	12.8
66 - 75	49.5	12.2	19.5	8.2	1.9	8.7
76 - 85	48.0	9.2	25.4	8.3	0.0	9.1
86 - 95	59.8	3.7	23.8	7.0	0.7	4.5
96 - 100	64.9	6.7	17.4	4.4	0.0	6.6
All graduates	38.1	18.9	14.1	9.8	5.6	12.5

1. The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of 'don't know' responses.

Of the 45.0 percent of the 2010 year 12 graduates not studying in 2011 (Table 2), 76.7 percent intended to start some study in the next two years. As ATAR increased, so did intention to start some study in the next two years. Of the students who obtained an ATAR of 76 or above and were not currently studying, 96.8 percent were intending to start some study in the next two years.

Labour Force Status

Table 6 details the 2011 labour force status of 2010 year 12 graduates. Almost eight in 10 (78.8%) graduates reported having a paid job. About one in 10 (10.6%) graduates reported not currently having a paid job and actively looking for work with the majority (7.6%) looking for part-time work.

Table 6: Number and percentage of 2010 year 12 graduates by labour force status in 2011

	Number	Percentage
Employed	3242	78.8
Full-time	1244	30.2
Part-time	1944	47.3
Don't know/Refused	54	1.3
Unemployed	437	10.6
Looking for full-time work	78	1.9
Looking for part-time work	312	7.6
Looking for full or part-time work	44	1.1
Don't know	2	0.0
Total in labour force	3679	89.5
Not in labour force	434	10.5
Total	4112	100.0
Unemployment rate		11.9

1. The percentages in this table do not all add to 100 percent due to rounding and a small percentage of 'don't know' responses.

Of the 2010 year 12 graduates who had a paid job in 2011, the most common occupations were community and personal service workers (34.0%), sales workers (29.0%), clerical and administration workers (11.6%) and technical and trade workers (10.5%).

Satisfaction

Figure 3 summarises the responses of 2010 year 12 graduates to seven satisfaction questions regarding their experience in years 11 and 12 in the ACT. Responses of strongly agree or agree were classified as “positive”, responses of strongly disagree or disagree as a “negative” and responses of neither agree nor disagree as “neutral”.

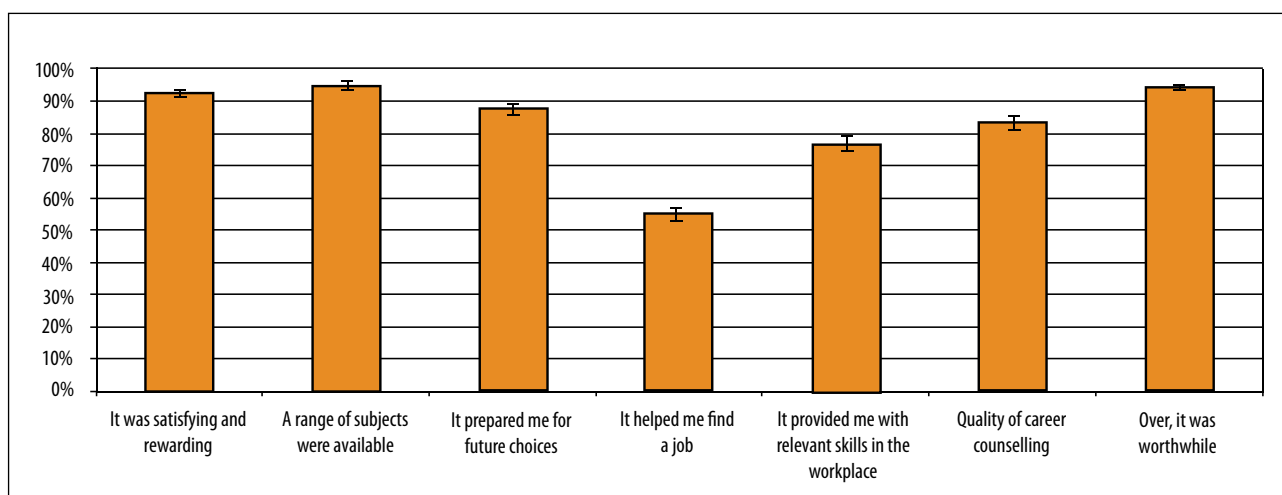
More than nine in 10 graduates gave a positive response to the following statements about their year 11 and 12 experience:

- it was satisfying and rewarding (93.4%)
- a range of subjects were available (95.0%)
- overall, it was worthwhile (96.7%).

More than four in five graduates gave a positive response to the statement that their year 11 and 12 experience “prepared them for future choices” (88.1%) and 84.1 percent were satisfied with the “quality of career counselling”.

However, about a third of graduates gave a negative response to the statement that their year 11 and 12 experience “helped them find a job” (33.7%). Sixteen percent of graduates 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 2010 year 12 graduates satisfied with various aspects of their year 11 and 12 experience



1. 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 2007, 2008 and 2009 graduates.

Scope and Methodology

In May 2011 the Education and Training Directorate conducted a survey of 2010 ACT school leavers from year 9 to year 12. The results for those students who left school in 2010 prior to completing an ACT Year 12 Certificate will be reported in a new publication.

This publication, *2010 ACT college graduates: Where are they now?* presents the survey results for the students who left school in 2010 after successfully completing an ACT Year 12 Certificate.

The survey findings will help to ensure that ACT senior school education remains relevant and is of the highest quality. Major stakeholders include the ACT Education and Training Directorate, the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (OBSSS), universities, vocational education and training providers and schools.

The survey frame was drawn from the OBSSS administrative records and the population of interest was defined as those graduates who were awarded a Year 12 Certificate from an ACT college, school or the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) in 2010. The population excluded graduates who were full fee paying students whose usual residence was overseas.

Prior to the survey being undertaken a primary approach letter was sent to all potential respondents. This provided information about the purpose and importance of the survey, the broad content of the survey, the amount of time the interview would take and confidentiality provisions. The survey was undertaken by telephone from 11 to 31 May 2011 and where possible the information was obtained directly from the graduate. In some cases a parent or guardian supplied the information where the graduate could not be contacted directly. A total of 4112 graduates were identified as being in-scope for the survey. Of the 3442 graduates contacted via telephone, 2811 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 81.7 percent.

Explanatory Notes

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is a percentile ranking used by universities to assist in the selection of school leavers for entry into undergraduate courses. It is used as an indication of a student's suitability for study at university level, and to allow universities to select appropriate numbers of students for each course. Prior to 2009 the rank used for university selection was called the Universities Admission Index (UAI). The ATAR is similar (but not identical) to the UAI (see www.uac.edu.au for more information).

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

Currently studying refers to respondents who were actively undertaking some study in the year following graduation, including those attending university, technical and further education (TAFE), undertaking an apprenticeship or repeating year 12.

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

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

Vocational education and training (VET) courses in schools are accredited vocational courses which are designed around training packages endorsed by specific industry areas and successful completion may lead to the award of a vocational certificate or statement of attainment.

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Published by Education and Training Directorate | ACT Government

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