From school to VET
How do students transition and how can we help them?

Michelle Circelli, Acting Manager, National Research, NCVER
Context

- The school to further education and work transition is a complex one
- Most (55.9%) recent school leavers go from school to some type of further education
- In August 2016 16.6% of 18 year olds and 19.6% of 19 year olds were undertaking VET
Context

• Not all students move to either further study or work
• 38.5% of those not enrolled in further study were also not working
• This group is often called ‘NEET’ – Not in Education, Employment or Training
• Extended periods of ‘NEET’ between 15 and 19 is a predictor for ‘NEET’ periods between 20 and 24
School to VET transitions

Choosing VET
How do students form aspirations to undertake VET?
How do students receive information about VET pathways?
What are the major influences for choosing a VET pathway?

VET study
What challenges do students face at enrolment and while studying?
What elements of VET study do students find particularly useful/rewarding?
What can help students to complete their studies with their desired qualification?

VET outcomes
What are students’ employment and further study outcomes?
Do students feel they have achieved their desired outcome?
Choosing VET

Key factors relating to choosing VET for young people:

• The perceived status of VET

• Peer influence

• Gender stereotyping
Choosing VET

Key factors relating to choosing VET for young people:

• Misunderstanding the qualifications needed for a particular job

• Access to study options

• Financial issues
School leavers tend to choose similar fields of education to everyone else – management and commerce and engineering and related technologies are the most popular for both
School leavers who have completed year 12 tend to pursue higher level VET qualifications than those who have completed year 11 or lower.

VET program enrolments for students aged 15 to 19 years, not attending school, by highest previous education level, 2017.
What supports participation and completion?

- Students value a supportive, caring attitude from staff, and being treated as individuals with particular needs.

- This can reassure students that they have made the right choice of provider.
What supports participation and completion?

• Strategies at use in ‘high-performing’ regions, with higher participation and completion rates among disadvantages learners included:
  – Tailoring staff time and subject delivery to learners’ needs
  – Providing specific support units for particular types of learners
  – Providing auxiliary support such as housing and transport assistance, and/or referring students to external agencies for support
For ‘early’ school leavers it can be important to:

• Enable access to transport, as these students often don’t own a car and are reliant on public transport

• Support their general learning needs, as their disengagement from the schooling system can translate into literacy and numeracy difficulties

• Provide or refer to external general wellbeing support, such as in the areas of mental health or finances
VET outcomes

- 18-19 year olds report having achieved their main reason for doing a VET qualification at similar rates to other VET graduates.

- Graduates in this age group more often report getting a job as a result of training compared with older graduates.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest previous education level</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
<th>Year 11 or below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18–19 years</td>
<td>20 years and older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Got into further study</em></td>
<td>33.4 (1.5)</td>
<td>23.1 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Advance my skills generally</em></td>
<td>72.7 (1.5)</td>
<td>68.4 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gained confidence</em></td>
<td>58.2 (1.6)</td>
<td>49.1 (0.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Satisfaction of achievement</em></td>
<td>58.2 (1.6)</td>
<td>52.4 (0.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Improved communication skills</em></td>
<td>49.3 (1.6)</td>
<td>37.7 (0.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Made new friends</em></td>
<td>48.1 (1.6)</td>
<td>33.0 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Seen as a role model for others in the community</em></td>
<td>20.3 (1.3)</td>
<td>17.3 (0.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Other</em></td>
<td>0.3 (0.1)</td>
<td>0.4 (0.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>None</em></td>
<td>4.9 (0.8)</td>
<td>6.8 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: These data are from a weighted-survey dataset. Only respondents reporting school years as their previous highest level of schooling have been included. As this was a multiple response question, the sum of responses in each column may add to greater than 100.

Where further research is needed

• How can the status of VET be raised, helping students consider VET as a positive option for post school study?

• How can schools engage girls around traditionally masculine VET occupations, presenting these as viable options?
Where further research is needed

• Specific investigation into the experiences and needs of young people in diversity groups

• This includes early school leavers, young Indigenous students, and young students with a disability

• For example, there is almost no information and research on how the needs of gender and sexuality diverse (LGBTQIA+) students are or are not being met within VET
Key messages

• Choice to undertake VET is driven by a range of personal and social factors, with attitudes often shaped during school

• School leavers find the attitudes of staff important, and want a welcoming and friendly atmosphere

• Early school leavers often need extra learning and wellbeing support
References

Brown, J 2017, In their words: student choice in training markets — Victorian examples, NCVER, Adelaide.

Dau, D & Strauss, P 2016, The Experience of Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Students at the University of Western Australia, Equity and Diversity, The University of Western Australia, Crawley.


Osborne, K & Circelli, M 2017, From school to VET: choices, experiences and outcomes, NCVER, Adelaide.


INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of recent research by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) about the transition of school students into the vocational education and training (VET) system, including their experiences during, and their outcomes after, engagement with the sector. Data is included from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), the National VET Provider Collection and the National Student Outcomes Survey (NSOS). Connections between the themes identified in the research and the data related to VET students' experiences and outcomes are highlighted.

This summary explores the following questions:

● What influences young people to undertake VET post-school?
● What factors support young people to complete VET?
● What are their outcomes following participation in VET?
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