

# **Participation in and outcomes from vocational education and training**

## **Summary**

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- The number of 20 to 24 year olds in vocational education and training increased by 19 per cent between 1992 and 1997 despite a decline of 4 per cent in the number of people in the 20-24 year age cohort over the five-year period.
- Over the period 1992 to 1997, participation rates in vocational education for 20 to 24 year olds increased from 14 per cent in 1992 to 17 per cent in 1997. Both male and female participation rates increased during this time. The 20-24 year age cohort comprised around 18 to 19 per cent of all students undertaking vocational education over the period.
- In recent years there has been a marked increase in the highest school level completed by vocational students aged 20-24 years. In 1992 about half of all students had completed year 12 compared with two-thirds of students in 1996 and 1997.
- There are an increasing number of higher education graduates enrolling in vocational education and training courses. Between 1996 and 1997 there was a 44 per cent increase in the number of higher education graduates enrolled in a VET course in total and for the 20-24 year age group.
- While there was no noticeable difference in the profile of qualifications attained by 20-24 year olds over the period 1992 to 1996 there was a marked change in the occupational profile of graduates in the year after they completed TAFE studies. A much higher percentage of 1996 graduates were employed in clerical and salespersons and personal service worker occupations in the year after graduating than was the situation in 1993.
- Changes to the funding and provision of vocational education and training over the period 1992 to 1997 have expanded the opportunities available to 20 to 24 year olds to access vocational education and training. Since 1992 there has been a major expansion in the number of 20-24 year olds engaged in a contract of training. The number of 20-24 year olds in training increased from about 6400 to 22400, or 250 per cent between 1992 and 1996, and by a further 4500 or 20 per cent during 1997.

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## Provision of vocational education and training

A number of changes to the funding and provision of vocational education and training over the period 1992 to 1997 have impacted on the ability of 20 to 24 year olds to access vocational education and training. This age group became eligible for traineeships during 1992 when traineeships were extended to all age groups. Traineeships were accepted as a mainstream training system in 1994 and were funded in the same way as apprenticeships for the off-the-job component of training. In the same year some traineeships were allowed to be all-on-the-job which encouraged the introduction of traineeships into new areas of the labour market. Changes to the curriculum and assessment for apprenticeships and traineeships were introduced in 1995 with courses converted to a competency base and recognition for prior learning allowed. The 1992 ANTA Agreement increased total funding to the sector and the proportion of funding from the Commonwealth government.

The number of 20 to 24 year olds in vocational education and training increased by 19 per cent between 1992 and 1997. The number of females increased by 25 per cent while males increased by 14 per cent. During this time the total number of students in vocational courses increased by 30 per cent between 1992 and 1996, and by a further 8 per cent between 1996 and 1997. By 1997, females accounted for 43 per cent of all students aged 20-24 compared with 41 per cent in 1992. In 1997, 48 per cent of all students in vocational education and training were female.

The growth in numbers in the 20-24 year age group in the vocational education and training sector occurred despite a decline of 4 per cent in the number of people aged 20-24 years since 1992. The decline in the number in this age cohort is forecast to continue with a further reduction of about 5 per cent forecast to 30 June 2000<sup>(1)</sup>.

Over the period 1992 to 1997, participation rates in vocational education and training for 20 to 24 year olds have increased from 14 per cent in 1992 to 17 per cent in 1997 (see Table 1). Both male and female participation rates have risen over the period.

The increase in the participation rate for vocational education and training since 1992 has occurred for all ages and for both genders within the 20-24 year age group. Between 1992 and 1996 the participation rate for males at age 20 increased from 24 per cent to 27 per cent while the female participation rate increased from 15 per cent to 18 per cent.

Within the 20-24 year age group, the profile of participation across ages remained largely unchanged for males between 1996 and 1997. Participation rates in 1997 were around 27 per cent at age 20, declining to 19 per cent at age 24. Female participation in 1997 was also highest at 20 years of age at 19 per cent, declining to 15 per cent at 24 years of age.

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<sup>1</sup> Forecast obtained using Econtech, Murphy Demographic Model

**Table 1: Participation rates of 20-24 year olds in vocational education and training**

Age	1992			1996			1997		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
20 years	23.7	14.8	19.3	27.1	18.3	22.9	26.7	18.6	22.8
21 years	17.9	12.3	15.2	21.7	15.8	18.8	21.9	16.2	19.1
22 years	14.1	10.9	12.5	17.3	14.3	15.8	18.0	14.4	16.3
23 years	12.6	10.0	11.3	14.8	13.1	14.0	15.6	13.7	14.7
24 years	11.5	9.2	10.4	13.4	12.1	12.8	14.1	12.8	13.5
20-24 years	16.1	11.5	13.9	18.6	14.6	16.7	19.1	15.1	17.2

Source: Derived from *Selected TAFE Statistics, 1992*; NCVER unpublished data and population by age and sex, ABS cat no 3201.0

The age distribution for all students undertaking vocational education and training is shown in Table 2. In 1992, the 20-24 year age cohort comprised 19 per cent of all students undertaking vocational education and training. The percentage of students in this age group remained at 19 per cent in 1996, but declined to around 18 per cent in 1997.

**Table 2: Age distribution of vocational education and training students**

	1992			1996			1997		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
15-19 years	24.6	14.5	23.1	22.5	18.1	20.5	21.9	17.6	19.9
20 years	6.4	3.1	5.5	5.5	4.0	4.8	5.2	3.8	4.6
21 years	4.9	2.6	4.4	4.5	3.6	4.1	4.3	3.4	3.9
22 years	3.6	2.2	3.4	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.1	3.4
23 years	3.1	1.9	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.1
24 years	2.8	1.7	2.7	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.0
20-24 years	20.7	11.6	19.0	20.1	17.0	18.6	19.4	16.2	17.9
25-54 years				52.6	59.2	55.6	53.6	60.4	56.8
55-64 years	{48.0	{68.1	{49.1	3.4	4.0	3.7	3.6	4.0	3.8
Other ages	6.6	5.9	8.8	1.6	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.9	1.7

Source: Derived from *Selected TAFE Statistics 1992* and NCVER unpublished data from the 1996 and 1997 National VET provider data collections

The age group accounted for 12 per cent of the working age population in 1992 but accounted for only 11 per cent in 1997. The proportion is forecast to continue to decline with 20-24 year olds accounting for only 10.25 per cent of the working age population by 2001-02<sup>2</sup>.

The age profile of students from remote and rural localities and students with disabilities undertaking vocational education and training differs from the age profile of students as-a-whole (see Table 3). In 1997, proportionately fewer students from these specific groups (14 per cent) were aged 20 to 24 years than was the case for vocational students as-a-whole (18 per cent). About

<sup>2</sup> Forecast obtained using Econtech, Murphy Demographic Model

the same proportion of Indigenous Australians and people who speak languages other than English who are engaged in vocational education and training are in the 20 to 24 year old age group (19 per cent) compared with vocational students in general.

**Table 3: Age distribution of vocational education and training students from specific groups, 1997**

	Remote and Rural	ATSI	Disabilities	NESB
Age 15-19	20.1	23.6	19.1	16.7
Age 20	3.6	4.3	3.7	5.0
Age 21	3.0	3.9	3.1	4.3
Age 22	2.6	3.7	2.8	3.8
Age 23	2.4	3.6	2.6	3.4
Age 24	2.4	3.5	2.3	3.3
Ages 20-24	14.1	19.1	14.6	19.7
Ages 25-54	59.6	52.8	58.4	58.1
Ages 55-64	4.3	2.4	5.6	3.8
Other ages	1.9	2.0	2.3	1.6

Source: NCVET unpublished data from the 1997 National VET provider data collection

Part-time study has remained the preferred mode of attendance for 20 to 24 year old vocational students over the period 1992 to 1997. The preferred mode of attendance differs across ages within the age group with proportionately fewer 20 year olds attending part-time than 24 year olds. Proportionately fewer females attend part-time than males across all ages in the 20 to 24 year old age group (see Table 4).

Within the 20-24 year age cohort the profile of course enrolments differs substantially across ages with students undertaking progressively shorter courses as they get older. A quarter of course enrolments by 20 year olds were for courses of 960 course-curriculum hours while a quarter of enrolments by 24 year olds were for courses of only 864 course-curriculum hours. Over half of course enrolments by 20 year olds were for courses of 686 course-curriculum hours. By comparison half of enrolments by 24 year olds were for courses of 360 course-curriculum hours.

**Table 4: Percentage of part-time students in vocational education and training, by age and gender**

Age	Females			Males			Persons		
	1992	1996	1997	1992	1996	1997	1992	1996	1997
20 years	75.8	77.5	79.1	83.9	84.0	84.5	80.9	81.4	82.3
21 years	81.2	83.3	83.8	86.6	87.1	87.4	84.4	85.5	85.9
22 years	83.7	85.7	86.9	87.0	88.1	89.2	85.6	87.0	88.2
23 years	86.2	87.6	88.5	88.1	89.1	89.6	87.2	88.4	89.1
24 years	87.5	89.5	89.4	89.7	90.4	90.8	88.7	90.0	90.1
20-24 years	84.5	84.3	85.2	86.5	87.3	87.9	84.7	86.0	86.7

Source: *Selected TAFE Statistics, 1992*; NCVET unpublished data

**Table 5: Course-curriculum hours, by quartiles of course enrolments, by age, 1997**

Age	25% quartile	50% quartile	75% quartile
20 years	234	686	960
21 years	200	600	960
22 years	120	460	920
23 years	79	400	866
24 years	60	360	864

Source: NCVET unpublished data from the 1997 National vet provider data collection

**Table 6: Distribution of highest school level completed, by age, 1996 and 1997, per cent**

Age	Year 9 or below		Year 10		Year 11		Year 12	
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
20 years	3.2	3.6	13.8	15.3	13.6	14.1	69.4	66.9
21 years	3.8	3.9	14.1	14.3	11.7	13.0	70.3	68.7
22 years	4.7	4.8	17.3	15.3	11.7	11.9	66.3	68.0
23 years	5.8	5.4	20.0	18.4	13.8	11.6	60.4	64.6
24 years	6.6	6.3	21.7	20.8	15.4	13.6	56.3	59.2
20-24 years	4.6	4.6	16.7	16.4	13.1	12.9	65.5	65.9

Source: Unpublished NCVET data from the 1996 and 1997 National VET provider data collections

In recent years there has been a marked increase in the highest school level completed by vocational students aged 20-24 years. In 1992 about half of all students had completed year 12 compared with two-thirds of students in 1996 and 1997. The distribution of the highest school level completed by vocational students aged between 20 and 24 in 1996 and 1997 is shown in Table 6. Students aged 23 years and 24 years on average completed less years of schooling than students aged 20 to 22 years. One in five students on average aged 24 years had completed year 10

as the highest level of schooling compared to about one in seven students aged 21 years. While the trend since 1992 has been for vocational students to complete more years of schooling, there was a decline in the highest school level completed for 20 and 21 year olds, on average, between 1996 and 1997.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of higher education graduates enrolling in vocational education and training courses. Between 1996 and 1997 there was a 44 per cent increase in the number of higher education graduates enrolled in a VET course in total and for the 20-24 year age group. Details of the number of people with a prior higher education qualification enrolled in VET in 1997 are provided in Table 7. Over 61,000 higher education graduates were enrolled in publicly funded VET in 1997, representing 5 per cent of the number of people enrolled in VET. Of these 9,300 were aged 20-24 years representing 4 per cent of all 20-24 year olds enrolled in VET. A study undertaken by NCVET in 1996 found that a similar number of people who have not completed their university studies transfer to

**Table 7: Number of students with prior educational qualifications by age, 1997**

Age	Undergraduate Diploma	Degree or Postgraduate Diploma	Net total *
15-19 years	318	387	694
Age 20	277	513	785
Age 21	348	1031	1361
Age 22	385	1649	2008
Age 23	375	2056	2398
Age 24	399	2387	2747
20-24 years	1784	7636	9299
25-54 years	11628	47353	56383
54-65 years	737	2485	3052
Other ages	177	661	804
Unknown	668	2884	3370
All ages	15312	61406	73602

\*Net total. — Since some students have more than one prior qualification the number of total prior higher education qualifications exceeds the total number of students with a prior higher education qualification.

Source: NCVET unpublished data from the 1997 National VET provider data collection

a VET provider each year<sup>(3)</sup>. VET students with prior higher education qualifications often study a module or mix of modules rather than undertake a qualification<sup>(4)</sup>. Many enrol to acquire practical skills not provided in a higher education course or to meet the requirements of a particular government regulation<sup>(5)</sup>.

The profile of courses undertaken by the 20-24 year cohort, shown in Table 8, has altered between 1992 and 1997. Proportionately less of the age group in 1997 were undertaking trade technician and higher technician courses compared with 1992. There was a move towards courses promoting 'other skills' over the period. In 1992, 12 per cent of vocational students aged 20-24 years were

<sup>3</sup> Werner, 1998

<sup>4</sup> *op cit* pg 25

<sup>5</sup> *op cit* pg65



undertaking studies in 'trade technician - supervisory' courses while an additional 16 per cent of students were engaged in 'para-professional higher technician' courses. In 1997, only 10 per cent and 14 per cent of 20-24 year old students were in each of these stream-of-study categories. Similarly, 'trades / other skills: post initial' stream-of-study had reduced from 6 per cent of students in 1992 to 4 per cent of students in 1997.

**Table 8: Stream of study by course enrolments, 20-24 year olds (per cent)**

Stream of Study	1992	1996	1997
Basic Employment Skills	10.9	11.3	10.4
Educational Preparation	7.5	6.1	6.4
Operatives: Initial	15.5	14.6	14.2
Recognised Trades: Part Exempt	0.5	1.6	1.7
Recognised Trades: Complete	14.4	14.6	13.9
Other Skills: Part Exempt	3.5	5.5	6.0
Other Skills: Complete	6.9	9.2	12.7
Trade Technician/Supervisory	12.4	9.4	9.6
Para-professional Technician	2.5	2.5	2.3
Para-prof Higher Technician	16.1	15.7	13.2
Professional	0.7	2.3	2.9
Operatives: Post Initial	1.5	2.0	1.8
Trades/Other Skills: Post Initial	6.4	4.1	4.0
Trade Tech/Super: Post Initial	0.7	0.4	0.3
Para-prof Tech: Post Initial	0.0	0.3	0.2
Para-prof High Tech: Post Initial	0.3	0.2	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: *Selected TAFE statistics, 1992*; NCVET unpublished data

'Other skills: part exempt' and 'other skills: complete' attracted 6 per cent and 13 per cent of students aged 20-24 years in 1997 compared to 3.5 per cent and 7 per cent in 1992, respectively.

The profile of courses taken by the 20-24 year age cohort differs within the age group. A higher proportion of older students in 1997 were represented in the 'basic employment skills' and 'recognised trades – complete' streams of study. Older students, on average, were undertaking the 'operatives – initial' stream of study and 'trade technician / supervisory' streams of study. Details on stream of study by age are provided in Table 9.

**Table 9: Stream of study by course enrolments, 1997 (per cent)**

	Age 20	Age 21	Age 22	Age 23	Age 24	Ages 20-24
<b>Stream of Study</b>						
Basic Employment Skills	8.1	8.9	10.7	12.0	13.7	10.4
Educational Preparation	6.6	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.6	6.4
Operatives: Initial	12.1	13.4	14.7	16.0	16.4	14.2
Recognised Trades: Part Exempt	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.7
Recognised Trades: Complete	21.6	17.4	11.9	8.2	5.7	13.9
Other Skills: Part Exempt	5.5	5.9	6.0	6.3	6.7	6.0
Other Skills: Complete	11.9	12.1	13.0	13.3	13.7	12.7
Trade Technician/Supervisory	8.4	9.4	10.3	10.3	10.1	9.6
Para-professional Technician	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.3
Para-prof Higher Technician	14.5	13.8	12.9	12.6	11.7	13.2
Professional	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.7	2.9
Operatives: Post Initial	1.3	1.5	1.9	2.3	2.4	1.8
Trades/Other Skills: Post Initial	2.7	3.6	4.4	4.9	5.2	4.0
Trade Tech/Super: Post Initial	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3
Para-prof Tech: Post Initial	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2
Para-prof High Tech: Post Initial	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: NCVER unpublished data from the 1997 National VET provider data collection

Gender and age are both factors that influence choice of field-of-study (see Table 10). In 1997, 30 per cent of female vocational students aged 20-24 years were undertaking studies in 'business administration, economics' while 30 per cent of male vocational students in this age cohort were in 'engineering, surveying'. A 'Services, hospitality, transportation' and 'TAFE multi-field education' field of study categories were common choices for both male and female students.

**Table 10: Field-of-study by age and gender, 1997**

Age	Gender	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	Total
20	Females	2.8	1.2	8.1	29.8	0.7	3.1	14.9	0.8	3.8	0.6	19.4	14.8	100.0
	Males	5.1	13.5	3.7	12.3	0.2	33.6	3.2	0.4	3.7	0.0	11.6	12.5	100.0
	Persons	4.2	8.5	5.4	19.4	0.4	21.2	7.9	0.6	3.8	0.3	14.8	13.4	100.0
21	Females	2.4	1.3	8.4	30.1	0.9	3.3	15.5	0.8	4.5	0.6	16.6	15.5	100.0
	Males	5.5	13.3	3.7	13.2	0.3	31.4	3.7	0.5	3.8	0.0	12.1	12.3	100.0
	Persons	4.2	8.3	5.7	20.3	0.6	19.6	8.6	0.6	4.1	0.3	14.0	13.7	100.0
22	Females	2.5	1.2	9.1	31.5	1.3	3.5	15.1	0.7	4.8	0.6	13.7	16.1	100.0
	Males	5.8	11.9	4.1	14.4	0.5	28.7	4.3	0.7	4.3	0.0	11.8	13.5	100.0
	Persons	4.3	7.2	6.3	21.9	0.9	17.6	9.0	0.7	4.5	0.3	12.7	14.7	100.0
23	Females	2.6	1.3	10.4	31.8	1.4	3.5	14.4	0.9	5.1	0.5	11.7	16.4	100.0
	Males	5.9	10.8	4.9	15.3	0.6	25.3	5.4	0.8	4.4	0.0	12.2	14.5	100.0
	Persons	4.4	6.4	7.4	22.8	1.0	15.3	9.5	0.8	4.7	0.3	12.0	15.4	100.0
24	Females	2.4	1.2	10.6	30.3	1.9	3.5	13.6	0.8	6.1	0.6	10.7	18.4	100.0
	Males	5.7	9.5	5.2	16.0	0.7	23.9	5.6	0.8	4.9	0.1	11.6	15.9	100.0
	Persons	4.1	5.6	7.8	22.8	1.3	14.2	9.4	0.8	5.4	0.3	11.2	17.1	100.0
Age 20-24	Females	2.5	1.2	9.2	30.6	1.2	3.3	14.8	0.8	4.8	0.6	14.8	16.1	100.0
	Males	5.5	12.1	4.2	14.0	0.4	29.3	4.2	0.6	4.1	0.0	11.9	13.5	100.0
	Persons	4.2	7.4	6.4	21.2	0.8	18.0	8.8	0.7	4.4	0.3	13.2	14.7	100.0

Field-of-study codes and descriptions: 01 *Land & marine resources, animal husbandry*; 02 *Architecture, Building*; 03 *Art, humanities & social sciences*; 04 *Business administration, economics*; 05 *Education*; 06 *Engineering, surveying*; 07 *Health, community services*; 08 *Law, legal studies*; 09 *Science*; 10 *Veterinary science, animal care*; 11 *Services, hospitality, transportation*; 12 *TAFE Multi-field education*.

Source: NCVET unpublished data from the 1997 National VET provider data collection

## Outcomes of 20-24 year olds

Module load pass rates and module load completion rates are measures that provide an indication of the likelihood of a student successfully completing a year of study. In 1997 there was less likelihood of a student aged 20 to 24 successfully passing or completing a module load in vocational education and training than other students on average. Students aged 23 had less chance on average of successfully passing or completing a module load than other students in the 20-24 year age cohort (Table 11).

**Table 11: Module Load Completion Rate and Module Load Pass Rate by Age, 1997**

	Module Load Pass Rate	Module Load Completion Rate
Ages 15-19	85.3	80.1
Age 20	84.5	79.6
Age 21	83.8	78.7
Age 22	83.4	78.0
Age 23	83.0	77.5
Age 24	83.2	77.8
Ages 20-24	83.8	79.0
Ages 25-54	85.3	80.9
Ages 55-64	84.6	82.0

Source: NCVER unpublished data from the 1997 National VET provider data collection

Teenagers (15-19 years) and students aged 20-24 years are more likely to study an assessable module compared with prime age (25-54 years) and mature age adults (55-64 years). About 13 per cent of mature age adults recorded a module outcome in the category 'completed class hours' compared with 7 per cent of prime age adults and 4 per cent of teenagers and young adults (see Table 12). As this type of outcome is more prevalent in a preparatory course this implies that students aged 20-24 years and teenagers are less likely to be doing an introductory course than an older person. Similarly, within the age group 20-24 years, older students (23 and 24 year olds) are more likely to undertake a preparatory module or withdraw from a module than younger students.

**Table 12: Module outcomes by age for vocational courses, 1997**

	Pass	Completed Class Hrs	Continuing Studies	Result With-held	Fail	With-drew	RPL*	Credit Transfer	Not Stated	Total
Ages 15-19	64.4	3.7	5.6	2.2	6.2	8.5	0.7	2.3	6.5	100.0
Age 20	63.3	3.3	4.9	1.4	6.7	8.6	1.6	4.5	5.7	100.0
Age 21	61.5	3.5	5.1	1.6	6.5	9.3	2.0	4.3	6.2	100.0
Age 22	59.9	3.9	5.0	1.6	6.0	9.8	2.4	4.6	6.9	100.0
Age 23	58.8	4.4	5.1	1.6	5.6	10.3	2.6	4.4	7.1	100.0
Age 24	58.2	4.8	5.1	1.7	5.2	10.4	2.7	4.3	7.7	100.0
Ages 20-24	60.9	3.8	5.0	1.5	6.2	9.5	2.1	4.4	6.5	100.0
Ages 25-54	56.4	6.6	4.9	1.6	4.0	9.3	3.7	4.0	9.5	100.0
Ages 55-64	48.1	12.8	4.8	2.0	3.7	7.6	2.7	2.3	16.0	100.0
All Ages	59.2	5.7	5.0	2.2	4.9	8.8	2.3	3.3	8.7	100.0

\*Recognition of prior learning

Source: NCVER unpublished data from the 1997 National VET provider data collection

## TAFE graduate outcomes

The results of the TAFE graduate destination surveys provide information on the income sources of students during their study and the employment and occupation profiles of graduates in the year

after the completion of their course. The information provided by the surveys is only collected from TAFE graduates and therefore may not be indicative of all VET students. Many people in the VET system enrol to gain specific skills that they can obtain from a set of modules and never aim to complete a qualification. Tables 14 to 17 report the results of the 1993 national client follow-up survey of vocational education and training graduates and the 1997 graduate destination survey. Only broad comparisons can be made between 1992 graduates and 1996 graduates using the survey results because the scope of the 1993 survey was more extensive than the 1997 survey<sup>(6)</sup>. In addition, comparisons are problematic because of differences in the phrasing of questions in the two surveys.

Details of forms of income support received by 1996 TAFE graduates are provided in Table 13. The primary sources of income support for their VET study for 1996 TAFE graduates aged 20-24 years was paid work, apprenticeships and austudy. Graduates in this age group were more likely to have received income support through an apprenticeship for their studies than people from other age groups and less likely to have received income support from their parents or a spouse or partner. Mature aged adults were more likely to have received income support from government benefits than the 20-24 years age group. Paid work or their own business were more common forms of income support for prime age adults than young adults. Austudy and parental support were more common forms of income support for teenagers than for young adults.

Based on the responses to the 1993 and 1997 surveys, there was little difference in the percentage of responding graduates aged 20–24 years who indicated they had received financial support from austudy or abstudy between 1992 and 1996. A slightly larger percentage of 1996 graduates indicated they had received support through an apprenticeship or government benefit compared with 1992 graduates. The increase in apprenticeship as a form of financial support for 1996 graduates may reflect an increase in age of commencing apprentices over the period.

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<sup>6</sup> The 1997 survey was limited to graduates who completed a Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Associate Diploma, Diploma or Advanced Diploma of at least 200 hours or one semester in duration. The 1993 survey included graduates and course completers.

**Table 13: Source of income during course for 1992 and 1996 TAFE graduates**

	Financial support* 1992 TAFE graduates	Source of income 1996 TAFE graduates			
		20-24years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-54 years
Austudy	24.9	29.6	24.8	18.7	10.4
Abstudy	0.7	0.6	0.6	1.0	1.8
Government benefits	5.2	8.1	9.3	20.5	34.9
Apprenticeship	24.3	13.6	27.3	2.0	0.5
Traineeship	4.2	7.6	3.7	1.1	1.3
Scholarship / cadetship	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
Paid work		32.9	37.2	49.8	33.8
Own business		0.4	0.9	6.4	12.2
Parents or spouse / partner		22.7	11.7	16.6	13.2
Other	8.4**	2.3	1.5	1.6	3.0

\*\*In the 1993 survey questionnaire options for financial support did not include paid work, own business, parents or spouse / partner.

\*includes employer contributions, personal income

Source: Unpublished NCVET data from the 1993 National client follow-up survey of TAFE graduates and 1997 TAFE Graduate Destination Survey

The distribution of qualifications received by 1992 and 1996 TAFE graduate survey respondents is shown in Table 14. About half of all 1996 respondents aged 20-24 years had completed AQF Certificate III or qualifications at an equivalent level, including trade certificates. Over a quarter of graduates in this age group had completed diplomas. Less than one in ten young adults who graduated had completed AQF Certificates I or II or qualifications of a comparable level. The remaining 13 per cent had completed qualifications at AQF certificate IV level or equivalent. The profile of qualifications gained by teenage graduates and mature age adults was skewed towards lower level qualifications than 20-24 year olds. Over a quarter of teenagers and one in two mature age adults obtained an AQF level I or II level qualification.

There was almost no difference in the profile of qualifications obtained by graduates who responded to the 1993 and 1997 surveys. Graduates at the lower end of the distribution of qualification who responded to the 1993 survey tended to have obtained endorsements or other certificates such as certificates of competency or proficiency compared with 1997 responding graduates who had obtained AQF Certificates I or II.

The occupation of graduates in the first year of employment after completion of TAFE studies in 1997 differs according to age group with young adults and teenagers more likely to be employed as tradespersons or salespersons and personal service workers than older workers (see Table 15). In comparison to workers in older age groups, relatively fewer 20-24 year olds are working as managers and administrators, professionals or para-professional. A greater percentage of teenagers and mature age adults are working in labouring and related occupations compared to 20-24 year olds.

**Table 14: Distribution of qualifications received by 1992 and 1996 TAFE graduates**

Qualification	1992 TAFE graduates	1996 TAFE graduates			
	20-24 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-54 years	55-64 years
Diploma	8.0	0.1	1.1	0.5	0.6
Associate Diploma	17.1	2.4	18.2	10.6	4.8
Advanced certificate – post trade	{ 12.0	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.2
Advanced certificate – other		4.7	7.4	11.1	9.3
Trade certificate	{ 50.2	15.8	27.0	4.1	2.0
Other certificate		32.8	16.3	29.1	40.8
AQF Advanced diploma		0.4	1.8	1.5	0.9
AQF diploma		2.0	6.7	4.2	2.3
AQF certificate IV		5.2	4.8	9.7	6.3
AQF certificate III		10.5	7.4	11.7	12.3
AQF certificate II		18.9	6.7	12.2	14.4
AQF certificate I		6.8	2.2	4.4	6.0
Endorsements	5.5				
Other	7.1				
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Unpublished NCVER data from the 1993 National client follow-up survey of TAFE graduates and 1997 TAFE Graduate Destination Survey

While there was no noticeable difference in the profile of qualifications attained by 20-24 year olds over the period 1992 to 1996 there was a marked change in the occupational profile of graduates in the year after they completed TAFE studies. Graduates in this age group in 1992 were more likely to be in professional occupations or labouring and related occupations compared with 1996 graduates. While an equivalent percentage of TAFE graduates were employed in tradesperson occupations in 1997 as in 1993, a much higher percentage of 1996 graduates were employed in clerical and salespersons and personal service worker occupations in the year after graduating than was the situation in 1993.

## TAFE graduates and the labour market

The labour force status of 20-24 year olds of 1996 TAFE graduates in the year after they completed their VET studies was similar to the labour force experience of 1992 graduates in 1993 (Table 16).

**Table 15: Occupation of 1992 and 1996 TAFE graduates**

	1992 TAFE graduates	1996 TAFE graduates			
	20-24 years	15-19years	20-24 years	25-54 years	55-64 years
Managers and administrators	1.6	1.5	3.2	10.8	16.6
Professionals	17.3	1.8	5.4	13.2	16.0
Para-professionals	8.3	3.7	8.2	15.9	13.7
Tradespersons	37.3	35.5	37.9	12.7	8.9
Clerks	5.0	15.2	11.6	17.1	14.3
Salespersons & personal service workers	8.9	28.6	23.1	17.0	13.8
Plant & machine operators	5.2	1.3	1.6	3.5	4.1
Labourers & related workers	16.4	12.4	9.1	9.6	12.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Unpublished NCVER data from responses to the 1993 National client follow-up survey of TAFE graduates and 1997 TAFE Graduate Destination Survey

TAFE graduates aged 20-24 years in 1997 had more successful employment outcomes in the year after they graduated than graduates from older and younger age groups. Over three-quarters of this age group were in employment at 30 May in the year after graduating and graduates in this age group were more likely to be in full-time employment than other graduates. About one in ten young adult graduates were unemployed and were looking for full-time work at 30 May 1997. Similarly, one in ten young adults were not in the labour force. Only 3 per cent were unemployed and looking for part-time work. About 38 per cent of mature age adults who had graduated from TAFE in 1996 were not in the labour force and a further 19 per cent in this age group were unemployed.

Young adults were more successful in obtaining employment in the year after they completed their studies than older adults. A higher percentage of 20-24 year old graduates were in employment by 30 May in the year after graduating compared to older adults yet proportionately fewer 20-24 year olds were already employed prior to the completion of their TAFE studies. About 70 per cent of 20-24 year old graduates employed in 1997 already had a job prior to completing their studies compared with three-quarters of prime age adults and 82 per cent of mature age adults employed in 1997.

The industries of employment of recent TAFE graduates by age group need to be examined within the context of the current profile of the Australian workforce and changes that are occurring in the labour market. The profile of the Australian workforce during 1996-97 and the forecast employment pattern in the medium term to 2001-02 are shown in Table 17. The forecasts were obtained using the Murphy MM2 econometric software model and August 1998 forecasting assumptions. The forecasts suggest that in the medium term employment in the communications and property, business services and construction industry sectors will increase relative to other



industry sectors. The model forecasts negative employment growth in electricity, gas and water, government administration and defence and transport and storage industry sectors. Notwithstanding the decline in jobs in these sectors some jobs will be available in these sectors to replace the existing workforce, particularly in industries with an aging workforce.

**Table 16: Labour force status and employment characteristics of 1992 and 1996 TAFE graduates**

1996 graduates at 30 May 1997	Graduates in employment		Graduates looking for work		Graduates not in the labour force %
	Full-time %	Part-time %	Full-time %	Part-time %	
15-19 years	48.6	23.6	11.7	5.0	11.1
20-24 years	58.5	18.0	10.3	3.4	9.8
25-54 years	46.3	21.1	11.0	5.5	16.0
55-64 years	24.4	18.8	13.0	5.8	38.0
1992 graduates at 30 April 1993	Graduates in employment		Graduates looking for work		Graduates not in the labour force %
	Employed full-time %	Employed part-time /casual/self-employed %	%		
20-24 years	60.3	15.3	15.0		9.4
1996 graduates at 30 May 1997	Time taken to find a job after completion of course				
	Already had a job %	Less than one month %	One to three months %	More than three months %	Total
15-19 years	52.1	18.3	17.7	11.9	100.0
20-24 years	69.2	11.9	10.4	8.5	100.0
25-54 years	75.6	8.3	7.7	8.4	100.0
55-64 years	82.2	6.3	5.4	6.1	100.0

Source: Unpublished NCVER data from the 1993 National client follow-up survey of TAFE graduates and 1997 TAFE Graduate Destination Survey

The profile of employment by industry of 1996 TAFE graduates is presented in Table 17. The main industry sectors employing graduates aged 20-24 years are retail trade, manufacturing, health, construction and accommodation, cafes and restaurants. Notably, relatively few graduates in this age group are employed in the industry sectors with forecast negative employment growth compared with graduates from older age groups. This confirms that these industry sectors are not areas of employment for job seekers and are areas of employment for older graduates because a high proportion of older graduates were already in employment prior to graduation (see Table 16). The high proportion of teenagers and graduates aged 20-24 years employed in the retail trade and accommodation, cafes and restaurants industry sectors compared with older graduates, and compared with the profile of the Australian workforce as-a-whole, suggests that these industries provide transitory employment for TAFE graduates who are young adults.

**Table 17: Employment shares and distribution of industry of employment of 1992 and 1996 TAFE graduates**

ANZSIC Industry	Employment share		Distribution of employment by industry				
			1992 graduates	1996 graduates			
	1996-97 – actual	2001-02 – forecast	20-24 years	15-19 yrs	20-24 yrs	25-54 yrs	55-64 yrs
Agriculture	5.1	5.1	2.9	3.3	2.1	3.0	9.0
Mining	1.0	1.0	1.2	0.7	1.0	1.1	1.5
Manufacturing	13.4	13.5	18.7	11.6	14.1	14.1	8.7
Electricity, gas and water	0.8	0.7	1.3	0.3	0.9	1.3	1.2
Construction	7.0	7.9	9.6	10.0	11.5	4.9	4.3
Wholesale trade	5.8	5.5	{ 19.5	2.2	2.9	3.4	2.6
Retail trade	14.7	14.4		28.0	19.9	7.7	7.8
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	4.7	4.8	*	12.2	9.8	4.6	2.2
Transport and storage	4.7	4.2	3.1	2.6	2.6	3.4	2.2
Communications	1.9	2.2	0.8	0.3	0.8	1.7	0.7
Finance and insurance	3.8	3.6	{ 7.0	2.0	2.5	3.6	1.5
Property and business services	9.8	11.2		7.7	8.3	10.8	9.0
Government administration and defence	5.1	4.4	4.1	2.1	2.9	7.8	6.0
Education	6.9	6.4	{ 12.8	1.0	1.8	7.8	15.2
Health	9.2	9.0		7.0	11.5	18.3	22.8
Culture and recreation services	2.3	2.1	{ 18.1	2.4	3.0	2.4	1.9
Personal and other services	3.8	4.0		6.5	4.4	4.2	3.4
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Employment share forecasts obtained using Murphy MM2 Model software

Source: Unpublished NCVER data from the 1993 National client follow-up survey of TAFE graduates and 1997 TAFE Graduate Destination Survey

## Apprentices and trainees

There are now considerably more opportunities available for 20-24 year olds to take up a contract of training than was possible in 1992. Prior to 1993, traineeships were only available to teenagers. The traineeship system has expanded training opportunities to non-trade based occupations such as computing, hospitality, sport and recreation, tourism, child care, retail, metals and engineering, multi-media and horticulture.

Since the introduction of the new ASCO occupational classification it has not been possible to accurately classify people undertaking contracts of training as apprentices or trainees. Many traineeships are now trade based and are classified to the same occupational category as apprentices and information about the AQF level qualification that is being undertaken is not currently collected. About 30 per cent of contracts of training can not be classified for 1997 and 1996 (for the most up to date figures available). To report only those trainees and apprentices that can be correctly classified would provide a misleading picture of the numbers actually engaged in traineeships or apprenticeships.

Since 1992 there has been a major expansion in the number of 20-24 year olds engaged in a contract of training. The number of 20-24 year olds in training increased from about 6400 to 22400, or 250 per cent between 1992 and 1996, and by a further 4500 or 20 per cent during 1997. Over the same period, the total number in training increased by 107 per cent and 24 per cent, respectively.

**Table 18: Contracts of training commencements by age**

Commencements	1991-92 Contracts of training				
	Apprentices	Trainees	1991-92	1996	1997
Age 14 or less			{ 36682	29	73
Age 15-19	{ 27466	{ 9216		49524	51864
Age 20	1957		1957	7916	9305
Age 21	{ 4457		{ 4457	5112	6137
Age 22				3829	4579
Age 23				3054	3804
Age 24				2515	3151
Ages 20-24	6414		6414	22426	26976
Age 25 and over				17412	31880
Total	33990	9216	43206	89391	110793

Source: Australian Traineeship System: Trainee commencements 1985/86 – 1992/93 DEET, mimeo; *Apprenticeship statistics 1984-85 to 1993-94*, NCVER 1995; Unpublished NCVER data from the contracts of training collection

About a quarter of all people in training during 1997 were aged 20-24 years, and almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of this age group were male compared with 62 per cent across all ages.

Over 60 per cent of 20-24 year olds in training had completed year 12 prior to commencing their training contract in 1997 (see Table 19). The proportion in this age group who had completed year 12 was considerably higher than for both older and younger people in training. Twenty-year-olds,

on average, had completed more years of school than people in the age group undertaking a contract of training with the proportion who had completed year 12 declining with age.

**Table 19: Contracts of training commencements, by highest school level completed, by age, 1997**

	Contracts of training				
	Year 9 or lower	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Age 15-19	6.8	34.7	18.4	40.0	100.0
Age 20	3.3	17.5	14.6	64.6	100.0
Age 21	3.8	18.6	16.4	61.2	100.0
Age 22	4.4	20.3	15.1	60.2	100.0
Age 23	4.7	22.4	14.8	58.2	100.0
Age 24	6.1	24.8	14.5	54.7	100.0
Age 20-24	4.1	19.8	15.1	61.0	100.0
Ages 25 and over	12.5	42.2	15.2	30.1	100.0
All ages	7.7	33.0	16.7	42.5	100.0

Source: Unpublished NCVET data from the contracts of training collection

Details about the occupations of people in training are provided in Table 20. A detailed breakdown of the occupational profile of 20-24 year olds in training is provided in Table 21. About a third of all those aged 20-24 years in training are in intermediate clerical, sales and service worker occupations with half of these people being engaged in clerical occupations. A further 30 per cent are training in occupations classified as trades persons and related workers. There is a considerably higher proportion of 20-24 year olds in these occupations than people of older ages, but considerably less in these occupations compared with teenagers as over half of all teenagers in training are in these occupations.

Most of those in occupations classified as labourers and related workers (12 per cent of 20-24 year olds) are also in trade based occupations as these occupations include automotive painting, fitting, telecommunications installing, slaughtering, printing, meat processing, carpet laying, panel beating and engineering.

The profile of the industry of employment for those in a contract of training is summarised in Table 22. The major industries of employment for young adults are property and business services, manufacturing, retail trade and accommodation, cafes and restaurants, and government administration and defence. About the same proportion are in training in the property and business services industry sector across the age group. Proportionately more 23 and 24 year olds are training in the manufacturing industry sector than 20-22 year olds and teenagers. Proportionately less 23 and 24 year olds are training in the retail trade industry sector than 20-22 year olds and teenagers. Relatively high proportions of older adults are training in education and health and community services industry sectors compared with young adults.

**Table 20: Contracts of training commencements by age by ASCO group, 1997, per cent**

	15-19 years	Age 20	Age 21	Age 22	Age 23	Age 24	20-24 years	25-54 years	55-64 years	All Ages
Managers and administrators	1.8	2.1	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.4	0.7	1.8
Professionals	0.2	0.4	0.9	1.0	1.4	1.1	0.8	3.2	8.1	1.3
Associate professionals	2.8	4.1	5.0	6.7	7.8	8.2	5.7	9.2	9.6	5.4
Tradespersons and related workers	52.4	36.3	31.0	28.9	24.8	23.2	30.7	11.9	3.3	35.5
Advanced clerical and service workers	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	23.8	34.2	34.2	32.4	32.9	32.2	33.5	39.4	45.5	30.6
Intermediate production and transport workers	1.7	2.5	3.1	3.3	3.7	4.1	3.1	5.4	5.9	3.1
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	8.8	10.6	11.8	12.0	11.8	11.8	11.4	8.9	7.0	9.4
Labourers and related workers	8.2	9.5	12.0	13.3	15.1	17.1	12.4	20.1	19.6	12.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Unpublished NCVET data from the contracts of training collection

**Table 21: Contracts of training commencements of 20-24 year olds by ASCO group, per cent**

ASCO Group	Contracts of training	
	1996	1997
<b>1 MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.0</b>
12 SPECIALIST MANAGERS	1.7	1.5
13 FARMERS AND FARM MANAGERS	0.7	0.5
<b>2 PROFESSIONALS</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.8</b>
21 SCIENCE, BUILDING AND ENGINEERING PROFESSIONALS	0.5	0.5
22 BUSINESS AND INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS	0.1	0.1
23 HEALTH PROFESSIONALS	0.1	0.2
24 EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS		
25 SOCIAL, ARTS AND MISCELLANEOUS PROFESSIONALS		
<b>3 ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>5.7</b>
31 SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND RELATED ASSOCIATE PROF	1.7	2.2
32 BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS	2.1	2.9
34 HEALTH AND WELFARE ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS	0.1	0.1
39 OTHER ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS	1.3	0.6
<b>4 TRADESPERSONS AND RELATED WORKERS</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>30.7</b>
41 MECHANICAL AND FABRICATION ENGINEERING TRADESPERSONS	4.8	3.8
42 AUTOMOTIVE TRADESPERSONS	7.1	5.1
43 ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS TRADESPERSONS	4.5	3.9
44 CONSTRUCTION TRADESPERSONS	6.5	6.5
45 FOOD TRADESPERSONS	7.3	5.8
46 SKILLED AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL WORKERS	1.0	0.9
49 OTHER TRADESPERSONS AND RELATED WORKERS	5.7	4.7
<b>5 ADVANCED CLERICAL AND SERVICE WORKERS</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>
5 ADVANCED CLERICAL AND SERVICE WORKERS, NFD		
59 OTHER ADVANCED CLERICAL AND SERVICE WORKERS	0.4	0.3
<b>6 INTERMEDIATE CLERICAL, SALES AND SERVICE WORKERS</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>33.5</b>
6 INTERMEDIATE CLERICAL, SALES AND SERVICE WORKERS, NFD		
61 INTERMEDIATE CLERICAL WORKERS	14.5	12.6
62 INTERMEDIATE SALES AND RELATED WORKERS	11.1	10.6
63 INTERMEDIATE SERVICE WORKERS	6.4	10.2
<b>7 INTERMEDIATE PRODUCTION AND TRANSPORT WORKERS</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>3.1</b>
71 INTERMEDIATE PLANT OPERATORS	0.3	0.2
72 INTERMEDIATE MACHINE OPERATORS	0.3	0.5
73 ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT DRIVERS	0.1	0.3
79 OTHER INTERMEDIATE PRODUCTION AND TRANSPORT WORKERS	1.8	2.2
<b>8 ELEMENTARY CLERICAL, SALES AND SERVICE WORKERS</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>11.4</b>
81 ELEMENTARY CLERKS		
82 ELEMENTARY SALES WORKERS	9.9	11.3
83 ELEMENTARY SERVICE WORKERS	0.1	0.2
<b>9 LABOURERS AND RELATED WORKERS</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>12.4</b>
9 LABOURERS AND RELATED WORKERS, NFD		
91 CLEANERS	0.2	0.3
92 FACTORY LABOURERS	5.1	7.0
99 OTHER LABOURERS AND RELATED WORKERS	4.5	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0
Number	22426	26976

Source: NCVER unpublished data from the contracts of training collection



**Table 22: Contracts of training commencements by age by ANZSIC industry group, 1997 (per cent)**

	15-19 yrs	Age 20	Age 21	Age 22	Age 23	Age 24	20-24 yrs	25-54 ys	55-64 yrs	All Ages
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.7	3.1	3.2	2.7	2.9	3.2	2.5
Mining	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.6
Manufacturing	14.6	14.2	14.9	16.1	18.8	18.2	15.8	18.5	17.7	16.1
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.8
Construction	10.5	7.7	6.9	6.7	5.7	6.3	6.9	2.7	0.7	7.2
Wholesale Trade	1.7	2.1	1.5	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.5	1.1	1.7
Retail Trade	18.7	16.5	17.1	15.2	14.8	13.5	15.8	9.9	5.0	15.2
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	9.7	11.5	10.9	9.9	10.8	10.3	10.8	7.1	4.1	9.2
Transport and Storage	1.8	1.7	2.2	2.6	2.0	2.6	2.1	3.0	5.8	2.3
Communication Services	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Finance & Insurance	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.5
Property & Business Services	17.8	19.5	19.6	19.2	19.4	19.8	19.5	13.3	9.4	16.7
Government Administration & Defence	9.6	10.9	9.8	9.4	8.3	7.9	9.7	7.8	5.1	9.0
Education	1.0	1.3	1.9	1.6	1.8	2.5	1.7	10.5	11.8	4.1
Health & Community Services	1.4	2.3	3.2	3.8	4.3	3.4	3.2	14.8	32.3	6.2
Cultural & Recreational Services	1.5	2.6	2.7	2.6	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.0	1.1	2.0
Personal & Other Services	6.8	5.1	4.8	5.4	4.5	6.1	5.1	4.6	1.8	5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

This data should be treated as 'indicative only' because a third of students are in the 'undefined' category. Source: unpublished NCVET data





## References

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