

University of Southern Queensland

Student Awareness of Articulation and Credit Transfer in Queensland: Results of a Web-based Survey

Integrated Articulation and Credit Transfer (IACT) Project

Byrnes J, Beaumont P, Paez D, Jackson A, Blacker J, and Dwyer C

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This document is available for download at www.usq.edu.au/iactproject , together with other information about the IACT project.

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Byrnes J, Beaumont P, Paez D, Jackson A, Dwyer C, Blacker J

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List of Acronyms Used in this Report

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACPET	Australian Council for Private Education and Training
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
CAG	Careers Australia Group
COAG	Council for Australian Government
DET	Department of Education and Training
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
EFTSU	Effective Full Time Student Unit (Europe)
HE	Higher Education
IACT	Integrated Articulation and Credit Transfer
IER	Index of Economic Resources
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Research
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SEIFA	Socio Economic Index for Areas
SES	Socio Economic Status
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TPP	Tertiary Preparation Program
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Executive Summary

The Student Awareness web-based survey was directed at current students in each of the institutions of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE) in Queensland. Valid responses were provided by 12,815 participants from students in the institutions shown in Table 1. Respondents' sector (HE and VET) ratio were 75% HE:25% VET, whilst the number of students sent invitations was 69% HE:30% VET, thereby being a 6% over-representation of HE students in the response sample. This over-representation is due in part to two VET institutions declining to participate in the survey. When compared to the estimated actual size of the HE and VET sectors in Queensland (60:40), this ratio is a 15% over-representation of HE respondents relative to VET respondents (Table 3).

Of the 25% of VET respondents, 16% of respondents were enrolled in a Certificate IV or lower qualification, and 9% in a Diploma or higher VET qualification. The majority of respondents were aged between 16 and 29, with the largest age group (29%) aged 20-24. The majority of respondents (63%) were female. The majority of respondents (89%) were Australian residents, the remainder being 11% international students studying in Australia and 1% International students studying overseas.

The Socio-economic status (SES) of Queensland-based respondents was calculated based on postcodes. With the limitations of this methodology for assessing SES background in mind (see Methodology) the SES of respondents was found to be as follows.

- 11% low SES;
- 63% medium SES (neither advantaged nor disadvantaged); and
- 25% high SES.

There were almost twice as many respondents from low SES areas in HE (7%) as in VET (4%) in the respondent sample, and the participation of low SES students suggests that recent government and institutional policies to encourage low SES students to enter HE may be having an impact. Whilst there was a small predominance of low SES respondents in lower VET (Certificate IV and below) at 23% (relative to 18% medium SES and 16% high SES) in higher level VET courses (Diploma and higher VET) all SES groups were at much the same proportion at around 10%. This result suggests that there is not a significant difference in the SES background of students in higher VET qualifications among Queensland-based respondents, and therefore no difference in the access to HE via VET on the basis of SES background and higher VET qualifications as found by Wheelahan (2009). The

representation of low SES groups in HE at 62% in this respondent group is only marginally less than medium SES (67%) and high SES (70%).

The analysis of results suggest that current students in VET and HE institutions in Queensland are, on the whole, more aware of articulation and credit transfer options and opportunities than was expected from the literature review (Byrnes J, Paez D, Jackson A, Dwyer C, & Blacker J, 2010), with 71% overall awareness of these concepts. Awareness of credit transfer specifically was found to be higher than the general concept of pathways or of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Students in age groups over 29 were the most aware, and students in the 16-19 age group were the least aware of credit transfer and RPL.

Examination of awareness by sector indicates there is little difference in awareness by sector. Gender and SES were not found to be significant variables in awareness of articulation and credit transfer options, nor of the participation of lower SES people in higher levels of VET in this sample.

Of those students who are aware of articulation and credit transfer pathways and options, the most frequently stated source of information was teachers or lecturers, although friends, career guidance officers/counsellors and other students were also significant sources of information. The internet accounted for only 21% of awareness overall, and all other sources of information, including advertising, were less important. The overall picture however masks some significant variations in source of information between the different types of awareness, as detailed in the report. Examination of information source with SES indicated no significant difference.

Of all students, 27% stated that they were influenced in their choice of study by the potential for credit transfer or RPL. The age groups of students who were most 'aware' of articulation and credit transfer opportunities were, not surprisingly, also the group who most frequently stated that they were influenced in their choice of study by credit transfer opportunities. This result suggests that awareness leads to greater utilisation of articulation and credit transfer opportunities, and is a significant motivating factor in choice of study.

Of those students who have future study plans, almost 30% of current VET (TAFE and private RTO) respondents stated they plan to enrol in a HE degree for their next qualification, suggesting that articulation and credit transfer is providing pathways from VET to HE for current students.

Introduction

Context of the Study

The rationale for articulation and credit transfer is essentially one of quality and capacity in education, and its implications for the social and economic well-being of the nation. As stated by DEEWR, (cited in Cutler et al 2008, p. 33): 'a nation's capacity to innovate is inextricably linked to the breadth and quality and focus of its education and training systems'. Specific aspects of breadth, quality and focus in education and training in Australia, with respect to the rationale for articulation and credit transfer policies, are as follows.

Access and Equity

The principle of Social Justice has underpinned higher education policy since 1990 and is one of the primary reasons for articulation and credit transfer policies. The literature indicates that people from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds are approximately one third as likely to participate in higher education as people from high SES backgrounds (Centre for the Study of Higher Education, 2008, p. 2). Students from low SES backgrounds are more likely to move into the VET sector than the HE sector. PhillipsKPA (2006b, p. 55) suggest that articulation and credit transfer to HE by people of low SES background tends to only occur once initial career and life choices have been established, that is, not directly from school. Wheelahan (2009) claims that VET pathways do not on the whole contribute to the participation of low SES groups in HE because higher level VET qualifications which articulate to HE are predominantly held by higher SES groups.

System Efficiency

Another reason for pursuing articulation and credit transfer is system efficiency and streamlining so to ensure students are not required to repeat the same learning in both the VET and HE sectors: 'Individuals need to be able to move between different types of qualifications and different occupational sectors with credit for prior learning, so reducing the time and costs to them and to governments' (Wheelahan, 2009, p. 3). Outer metropolitan and regional areas experience particular difficulties in accessing post-secondary education, and are areas categorised by population growth combined with low levels of education participation and attainment (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008, pp. 180-181).

Pathways and Seamlessness

This rationale for articulation and credit transfer originated from the assumption that VET is a lower level of education than HE, and that pathways should therefore be established to make it easier or more 'seamless' for

students to move from VET to HE (PhillipsKPA, 2006b, p. 56). However there is also movement from HE to VET, and increasingly VET and HE are seen as complementary forms of education rather than stratified (Bradley et al, 2008). The case studies undertaken by PhillipsKPA showed that, even in institutions proactively working to promote articulation and credit transfer, 'barriers continue to hamper efforts and...pathways do not always operate as smoothly, efficiently or effectively as they might' (PhillipsKPA, 2006c, p. ii) Submissions to the Bradley Review by employers 'argued for an integrated post-secondary skills environment where the differences between the sectors do not restrict the capacity of individuals to move between them' (Bradley, et al., 2008, p. 180).

Low SES people make up some 25% of the total Australian population, but only 15% of HE enrolments. The Federal Government provides incentive funding and reforms to increase the participation of low SES students in HE to 20% of enrolments by 2020 (Australian Government, 2009). Government policy addresses pathways between VET and HE, and states that 'Tertiary education in Australia should be a continuum of delivery, with better connections between sectors in both directions while avoiding one sector subsuming the other' (Australian Government, 2009, p. 43).

Why evaluate student awareness?

A key factor enabling students to move from one sector to another is the ready availability of timely, accurate and relevant information (PhillipsKPA, 2006a, p. 9). Students may not be aware of the availability of articulation and credit transfer processes or RPL and in this case may not seek to take advantage of it (Curtis, 2009). In a series of in-depth interviews with students who had experienced learning in both sectors, Harris, Rainey and Sumner (2006) found that, rather than clear pathways, students' learning journeys were more like stepping stones, zigzags or crooked paths. This was due to lack of information and guidance, lack of 'fit' between courses, inexperience and not having the course prerequisites. Significantly, most students were not aware of career services and did not seek advice. Had they done so, the authors suggest, they may have found clearer pathways.

Healy and Lonne (2010, p. 61) found that pathways for Community Services students were so obscure as to be a significant barrier:

Overall, the pathways for VET graduates to higher education were found to be unclear, inconsistent and ad hoc, with great variability in the recognition of prior learning, the granting of credit for existing training, and the accessibility nationwide. While there are notable exceptions to this, the general pathways environment is a significant impediment to workforce development.

A study of 'unmet demand' for credit transfer and RPL undertaken in Queensland (Giles-Peters, 2007) found that 41% of the sample of students interviewed were completely unaware that they could apply for credit transfer or RPL. Some 27.5% of students interviewed felt that they already had relevant knowledge or experience which was unrecognised, whilst 12% believed they already knew most or all of what they were studying in their course. A study of RPL undertaken by Smith and Clayton found that, in 2009 after many years of RPL being promoted in government policy, many people continue to be unaware of its availability. They recommend that information about RPL be provided to students before they leave school (Smith & Clayton, 2009).

Background to this Study

The Student Awareness Survey aimed to evaluate how aware Queensland post-secondary students are of articulation pathways and credit transfer options and opportunities, and by what means to best promote articulation and credit transfer processes and pathways to students. The research questions were as follows.

1. To what extent are current students in VET and HE institutions in Queensland:
 - aware of existing articulation pathways, credit transfer and/or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?
 - utilising existing articulation pathways, credit transfer and/or RPL?
 - using (or planning to use) existing articulation, credit transfer and/or RPL pathways to help make their decisions about study programs?
2. If students *have* heard of articulation pathways, credit transfer and/or RPL, through what media of communication have they heard of them?
3. Is there a correlation between age, gender, student status, postcode, type of institution, level of qualification or discipline, with either awareness or use of articulation pathways, or of media of communication?

The survey was a web-based survey of current students in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE) institutions in Queensland (full time, part time, on campus, external, domestic and international, undergraduate and postgraduate). Participants were also asked if they would be willing to participate in focus groups at a later date though the focus groups have not occurred yet and are not a part of this report.

Survey instrument

The survey instrument was a web-based 'tick and flick' format which would take approximately 5 minutes to complete. It was designed by the Integrated Articulation and Credit Transfer (IACT) project team in consultation with the Planning and Quality Unit of USQ. Students were invited to participate in the survey via an email letter, but participation was voluntary. Prizes of Apple Store products were offered in appreciation for students' time in completing the survey, with a draw to be completed at the close of the survey. Ethics approval was sought and gained through the USQ human research ethics committee; approval number H10REA032. A copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix A.

Definitions of Terms

This study uses the common terminology developed by the AQF and published in the *AQF Draft National Policy and Guidelines on Credit Arrangements* released in May 2009 (Australian Qualifications Framework Council, 2009, pp. 8-9). The summary of this terminology is quoted below from this publication.

Credit is the value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications which reduces the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification.

Articulation is a process that enables students to progress from one completed qualification to another with credit in a defined pathway.

Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes based on equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process that involves assessment of the individual's relevant prior learning to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.

Limitations of the Study

This is a self-report survey which relies on respondents to provide honest and accurate responses, and as is the case with all such surveys there can be no guarantee that responses provided are accurate and readers should bear this in mind.

A web-based survey of this nature is necessarily only going to be completed by people who have access to the internet and the knowledge to complete a web-based survey. However, this method was chosen since almost all post-school students now have access to the internet, if only through their educational institution, and use of

internet technologies is generally widespread among students. Even so, it may be the case that there is a bias in the survey sample in favour of those with internet access and skills, and willingness to complete a web-based survey. This bias could be reflected, for example, in the age profile of respondents.

There is approximately a 15% over-representation of HE students relative to VET students in the sample (see Methodology). This was due in part to two TAFE institutions declining to participate, and may also reflect issues of access to the internet and skills to use it described above. Wherever possible this 15% over-representation has been taken into account in the analysis.

This report has used Socio-economic Status (SES) indices provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), to analyse responses by SES. The limitations of ascribing SES based on postcode alone however need to be borne in mind, as described by the ABS (2008a) and outlined in the Methodology of this report.

A minor oversight was made in the survey construction with respect to Question 7 on the current enrolment of respondents, the effect of which was not realised until the results were being analysed. This was that Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree were put in the same category. Advanced Diploma is a VET qualification only, but Associate Degree can be either a VET qualification or a HE qualification, therefore when on occasions current enrolment was divided into VET and HE, this unified category created a potential uncertainty in where the category should sit – VET or HE. It was decided to assess how many in this category were VET and HE, and thereby estimated how significant the impact of the uncertainty was on results. Of all 12,851 respondents, 353 (2.8%) selected Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree as their current enrolment. When cross-tabulated with the institution of current enrolment which respondents selected (Question 5) it was found that there were 170 (1.3% of all respondents and 1.8% of all HE respondents) who were currently enrolled in an HE institution, and 183 enrolled in a VET institution. It was decided on this basis to analyse Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree category respondents as VET (when this proved necessary). However the small number of respondents in this category means that the effect on the data of analysing the Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree category as a VET qualification will constitute a discrepancy of only a fraction of a percentage point and is therefore not significant. It needs also to be pointed out that respondents also separately indicated their institution (i.e. sector) of enrolment, so that when results are being analysed by sector this small discrepancy does not apply.

Methodology

Survey implementation

The Queensland Higher Education Forum and Queensland Heads of Student Administration (QHOSA) were provided with a presentation about the survey by the team. As it was intended to administer the survey to students in all TAFE and HE institutions in Queensland, and a sample of private VET providers, letters were sent to all Vice-Chancellors and/or Directors of institutions informing them about the survey and seeking their support. If they agreed to participation by their institution, they were asked to nominate a person in their institution for the IACT team to communicate with respect to contacting students. Once all were received, letters were sent to the nominated contact people with information about the survey, a sample invitation letter to students, a copy of the survey questions, a poster to be displayed around their campuses, and the time period for the survey.

The survey instrument was piloted with a group of USQ Public Relations students with the assistance of a lecturer in this discipline. There were 76 students in the pilot group. Responses were analysed to detect any inconsistencies or problems with the questions or answers, and the survey instrument was modified accordingly. Students in the pilot group were also asked for their feedback on how they found the survey, although only one responded with a feedback comment. Analysis of responses suggested that the pilot students did not have any significant difficulties in answering the survey. Some modifications were made where required.

The web-based survey instrument was designed so that students were required to first answer a series of questions to assess their eligibility to participate in the survey. For example, students were required to have been 16 years of age or over to participate, for legal reasons. They also were required to be a Queensland university or VET student. To ensure that a student could not put their name down for the prize draw without answering the survey questions, progress through the survey was dependent on the student answering each required question.

To protect the privacy of students, participating institutions were asked to send the invitation to participate in the survey as an email letter to their students on our behalf. As the letter was only an invitation to participate, and participation was voluntary, institutions were asked to send it to all of their students (full time, part time, on campus, external, domestic and international, undergraduate and postgraduate).

The reasons for sending the invitation to participate to all students were to:

- ensure a large enough sample was generated from responses to draw meaningful and accurate interpretations from the data;
- reduce bias due to the wide array of types of students (full time, part time, on campus, external, domestic, international, undergraduate, postgraduate);
- reduce sampling error as far as possible due to the necessity to involve third party institutions in sending out the invitation to participate in the survey; and
- ensure that no student was disadvantaged in being eligible for the prize draw, by not being informed about the survey's existence.

In any survey, it is necessary to take account of the fact that there will be a significant number of those approached who will refuse to participate, or be 'out of scope' for the survey (for example, under 16 years of age), or who will start but not complete the survey (invalid response), or provide dishonest answers. The larger the population sample, as a general rule, the greater the accuracy and the less such factors will impact on the validity of survey results.

A disadvantage of the email method of contacting students is that students who do not access their email will not receive the invitation. To overcome this, a poster advising about the survey and inviting students to participate via an internet web address was sent to contact persons at institutions together with the other survey information. The institutions were asked to put the poster in places around their campuses where students would see it.

The web-based survey opened on the 10th May and closed on the 2nd June, with a reminder to students sent by institutions between the 17th and 20th of May. One large institution had a policy which stated that surveys could only be sent to a sample of students. This institution therefore sent it to all students on a 1 in 4 basis. Another two institutions were unable to send an email letter to students and therefore placed a survey button on their main website where students would see it and be invited to participate in the survey via a link. Two TAFE institutions in Queensland declined to participate.

The survey was also made available via a button link on the IACT website at www.usq.edu.au/iactproject. An occasional student had difficulty accessing the survey from the emailed invitation and emailed project staff accordingly. In this case they were directed to the button link on the IACT website which was successful in enabling access.

Analysis Methods

The following is an overview of the methods used to analyse the results of the survey. Detailed statistical methodology is provided in Appendix C – *Technical Paper on Statistical Analysis Methods*.

All Queensland universities, TAFE institutions, and a sample of private VET providers were invited to participate in this survey. Of the 9 Queensland universities identified, all 9 consented to participate. Of 13 TAFE institutions, 11 agreed to participate. The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) provided a sample of 13 private VET registered training organisations (private RTOs) of which 9 agreed to participate. Table 1 presents the institutions that agreed to participate including the number of students to whom invitations to participate were sent, providing a total potential respondent pool of 243,959 students.

Of the 29 institutions participating, 23 used students' email to invite students to participate in the survey online, 3 institutions posted a notice on their website and also placed posters around their campus notifying students of the availability of the survey, and 1 institution circulated a paper copy of the survey to their students. Some institutions indicated some emails 'bounced', (approximate n = 409), and one institution agreed to only contact one in four (25%) of their students (with a total of 8,832 students sent email invitations for this institution).

In order to protect student confidentiality in their survey responses, responses were collected in two separate data files. One file (Response file) generated the responses to 15 questions about student awareness. The questions are provided in Appendix A: Student Awareness Survey Questions. After answering the 15 questions, respondents were directed to another page to provide their names and contact details *if* they wished to enter the prize draw (Personal file). Entry was optional; if they did not want to enter they could say 'no' and enter no details. On this page also they were asked whether they would be willing to participate in a confidential focus group at a later date. This question was separate to the prize draw entry and it was made clear that focus group participation was not a condition of prize draw entry.

The participants were advised that duplicate entries would be removed, in order to dissuade people from entering numerous times to increase their chances of winning a prize. However in the analysis it was noted that the personal file contained a small (3.8%) number of duplicates. These duplicates were removed before the prize draw. However, as the response file was separate to the personal file the response file duplicates could not be removed. As such both files were assessed for participation validity separately.

Table 1: Numbers of students sent email as advised by participating institutions (target population)

TT = 243,959

Universities	N	TAFE Institutes	N	VET Private RTOs	N
Australian Catholic University	3,200	Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE	2,911	Australian Apostolic College	38
Bond University	4,113	Brisbane North Institute of TAFE	7,973	Australian Tech College (Nth Brisbane)	270
Central Queensland University	15,759	Central Queensland Institute of TAFE	3,404	Careers Australia Group	996
Griffith University (1:4)	8,832	Gold Coast Institute of TAFE	16,700	Charlton Brown	581
James Cook University	13,270	Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE	7,438	Jazzworx! Music Institute	40
QUT	45,476	Skills Tech Australia	4,878	QANTM	451
University of Queensland	39,404	Southern QLD Institute of TAFE	10,377	Sarina Russo Schools Australia	200
University of Sunshine Coast	7,276	Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE	5,000	Study Group Australia Pty Ltd	242
University of Southern Qld	30,615	The Bremer Institute of TAFE	3,375	Toowoomba Education Coalition	235
		Tropical North QLD Institute of TAFE	8,000		
		Wide Bay Institute of TAFE	2,905		
TOTAL	167,945		72,961		3,053

Personal File

There were 12,885 cases listed in the Personal file before analysis. Using SPSS Version 17, 494 cases were identified as duplicates based on cross referencing duplicate IP numbers and Names and removed¹.

Prize Draw

After removing the cases with no names or contact details a final sample resulted in 12,280 entries. From this sample, one case was selected randomly in 10 consecutive instances using the SPSS program. These cases were labelled from 1 to 10 in the order they were generated. There were 6 prizes for Apple Store products on offer 2 x 1st prize = \$1,000, 2 x 2nd prize = \$600, 2 x 3rd prize = \$300. Each winner was selected from the rank ordered, randomly generated list. Each person was then contacted and asked to provide evidence that they were a currently enrolled VET or HE student. This was then cross-checked with the institutions before the students were advised they were the winners².

Focus group

To agree to be contacted for focus group participation, participants were required to provide a yes or no answer. If they answered yes, they were asked to provide their contact details. After removing the 'yes' cases with no names or contact details a final sample resulted in 3,279 participants agreeing to be contacted for focus group participation³.

Note: Focus Groups are a future study, and are not included in this Report.

Response File

The 15 survey questions were designed to require respondents to answer before they could move on to the next question, with the exception of questions 4 and 14, which due to complexities of possible responses (Q.4) or the optional nature of the question (Q.14), did not force students to answer before progressing. As such, if any remaining questions contained missing data, the responses were considered potentially invalid and subsequently deleted. Of the 12,823 remaining cases; 3 questions contained missing entries, resulting in a further 7 deleted entries and a final sample of N = 12,815 participants⁴.

Sectors represented by respondents

Students were asked to state the type of Queensland educational institutions they were enrolled in with four possible responses being (a) TAFE, (b) University, (c) Private VET RTO, and (d) Other. Those providing an 'Other' response also asked for details, however, upon perusing the text answers to the 'other' responses (n = 156)

¹ See Appendix C – *Technical Paper* for details of methods.

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

it was noted that the majority of responses indicated one of the three institutions noted above and were subsequently re-coded into the appropriate category, although 6 could not be re-coded. Table 2 compares the frequency rates of the participants' responses to the survey and the student numbers invited to participate in each sector.

Table 2: Comparison of Student Population of Participating Institutions with Survey Respondents

Survey Respondents			Institutional Student Numbers Invited to Participate (as reported by institutions)		
Institution	N	%	Institution	N	%
TAFE	2,932	22.9	TAFE	72,961	29.9
University	9,561	74.6	University	167,945	68.8
Private VET RTO	316	2.5	Private VET RTO	3,053	1.3
Other	6	0.0			

Respondents by actual sector Queensland

In order to assess how representative the survey sample is of the VET and HE sectors in Queensland, it was necessary to assess the relative size of the sectors in Queensland. However, this proved to be difficult as statistical information for VET is collected and published by NCVER, whilst information on universities is collected and published by DEEWR. Neither source provides a direct comparison of the size of the sectors in one document. It was therefore necessary to find comparable data in different documents. It was determined that data must be comparable in terms of:

- Reporting time period – half year, full year etc.
- Student status (part-time, full-time, domestic, international etc) – Full Year Training Equivalents (FYTE) or Effective Full Time Student Load (EFTSL) is the most comparable unit of measurement.
- Geographic area e.g. by state.
- Institution type (public, private, both).

The only (publicly available) comparable data at the time of writing was from 2008, for students in the VET sector and HE sector in Queensland in both (NCVER and DEEWR) data sets. This showed that:

The total number of EFTSL students in all (public and private) universities in Qld in 2008 for the full year = 136,081 (DEEWR, 2009).

The total number of EFTSL students in all (public and private) VET providers in Qld in 2008 for the full year = 88,500 (NCVER, 2009, p. Table 18)

Total VET + HE QLD 2008 EFTSL students full year = 224,581.

Therefore the actual HE and VET sector sizes in 2008 in Queensland were as follows:

- Size of HE as % of total = 61%
- Size of VET as % of total = 39%

This indicates that the survey sample size approximates the actual size of the 2008 HE and VET sectors in Queensland, with a small over-representation of HE respondents. This can be partly accounted for by the fact that two TAFE institutions declined to participate in the survey.

Table 3: Comparison of Sector Size HE and VET Qld 2008 with Respondent Sector Size

Survey Respondents x Sector Qld (from Table 2)	Approximate Sector Size VET and HE 2008 Qld (from sources shown above)
HE all providers = 75 %	HE all providers = 61%
VET all providers = 25 %	VET all providers = 39%

Calculation of Response Rate

Based on information received from participating institutions about the number of emails sent to students, 243,959 Queensland VET and HE students were invited to participate in the survey. Calculating the response rate however requires estimating how many students would have actually received the email invitation, as email invitations *sent* are not necessarily equal to email invitations *received* by students.

Institutions provide an email address to all students who enrol in a program of study (such as a Certificate or Degree program), however at any one time up to 50% of these students will not be *currently enrolled in a course*, either because they are not studying in the current semester, have ceased studying but have not formally withdrawn, or have completed and are waiting to graduate (USQ statistics and student management divisions, personal communication). These students are unlikely to be accessing their institutional email accounts on a regular basis. They are therefore unlikely to have received the email invitation to participate in the survey. Even of those currently enrolled in a course at any time, approximately 10-15% will not *ever* use their email account. According to the USQ statistics and student management divisions (personal communication), only 26% of students with email accounts who are *currently enrolled this semester* actively use their email accounts in any 30 day period.

We asked participating institutions to send the invitation email to 'all students', which we assumed meant they would send them to all students with email accounts at that institution. If we can generalise from USQ statistics and student management figures to other institutions, only 26% of all enrolled students will be actively using their email account. Whilst numbers will vary from institution to institution, anecdotal evidence suggests this 'ballpark' figure is a reasonable estimate (Minutes of IACT Steering Committee, personal communication July 2010). TAFE Queensland

estimates that 15-20% of emails 'bounce' i.e. are not received by students sent the annual Student Awareness Survey (Jonkers, personal communication August 2010). However, this does not take into account the number who received the emails but do not read their email⁵. Therefore, based on this very rough calculation of 26%:

- Total number of invitations sent to Queensland students: 243,959 (as reported by institutions).
- 26% of 243,959 = 63,429
- Therefore only approximately 63,429 students across Queensland will have actually received and read the email invitation.
- Total valid responses to survey = 12,815 (as calculated above)
- 12,815 as a proportion of 63,429 is a 20% response rate.

Analysis method for Socio-economic status

In order to ensure whether the respondents represented a cross-section of locations, and to assess whether there was a correlation between socio-economic status (SES) and other variables in the survey, respondents were asked to state their home postcode.

In order to assess the socio-economic status (SES) of these participants the ABS socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA) was utilised (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008b). The SEIFA ranks geographic areas (defined by postcodes) across Australia in terms of their socio-economic characteristics, and is created by combining selected census information to create a 'score' for each area. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008a) however cautions that the concept of socio-economic data by postcode is neither a simple nor well defined concept, and as such this data can only be used to provide an approximate guide of SES status by postcode.

SEIFA provides a number of indices, of which the Index of Economic Resources (IER) was considered to be the most relevant in establishing socio-economic status (SES) given researchers were interested in assessing a broad range of SES areas. As stated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008a, p. 1), the IER "focuses on Census variables like the income, housing expenditure and assets of households". More specifically, the IER index includes the proportion of high and low income households in the area, respectively, the proportion of home owners in the area, and the proportion of unemployed people in the area (2008a, p. 41).

⁵ Other Queensland institutions were asked to provide feedback on the 26% estimated email access rate. Those who responded either were unable to comment or supported the estimate, at least approximately. It was not possible to establish a viable generalised figure for all institutions in Queensland, as email systems are all different.

Appendix C: Technical Paper on Statistical Analysis Methods includes the SEIFA guidelines of how both of these variables are constructed.

International students were excluded as they do not have postcodes, and the 9% of students from other states than Queensland were also excluded because they were not considered representative of the student population in Australia as a whole. The 91% of respondents who were resident in Queensland were the sample used for the SES analysis of respondents.

As recommended by the ABS (2000a), decile values were used when comparing the IER index. Decile values range from 1 – 10 and are values that have been ordered depending on percentage scores. For example, the lowest 10% of areas in Queensland (QLD) would be given a state rank value of 1, whereas the highest 10% of areas within QLD would be given a rank value of 10. In order to consider a criterion for high or low SES consideration, an arbitrary criterion for a low, medium and high SES values is made. The ABS (2008a) provided a distribution of IER scores which showed decile values clumped together within 1 standard deviation of the mean. As recommended by the ABS, mid range scores should be considered as areas neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by SES. As such, the criterion for a low SES consideration was set at 1 or 2 decile values (areas scoring less than the 20th percentile), a medium decile value ranged between 3 – 8 (representing neither advantaged or disadvantaged SES), and a high criterion for SES consideration was set at 9 or 10 decile values (areas scoring greater than the 80th percentile).

Results and Analysis

Demographics of Respondents

Age

To complete the survey, participants were required to be at least 16 years old for legal reasons. Participants were asked (Question 1) to state their age in categories that ranged from 16–19 to 95–99. Except for the youngest group (16 – 19 year olds), each participant age group covered a five year span.

As shown in Table 4, the largest age group of respondents (28.6%) were in the 20–24 age group category. The majority of respondents (66.8%) were aged between 16 - 29.

Table 4: Frequency Rates for Age Groups in Ascending Order

(N = 12,815)

Age Groups	n	Frequency (%)
16-19	3078	24.0
20-24	3665	28.6
25-29	1815	14.2
30-34	1129	8.8
35-39	1047	8.2
40-44	784	6.1
45-49	640	5.0
50-54	392	3.1
55-59	162	1.3
60-64	67	.5
65-69	29	.2
70-74	4	.0
85-89	1	.0
95-99	2	.0

Note: No participants were aged 75-79, 80-84, and 90-94.

Gender

In Question 2 students were asked their gender. Female respondents totalled 8,126 (63%) and male respondents totalled 4,689 (37%). It is normal for surveys to have a preponderance of female respondents.

Student Status (Australian, International)

Of the 12,815 participants in the study, 11,341 (88%) were Australian students whilst 1,474 (12%) were international students (1344 on campus; 130 external). Of the 1,474 international students, 122 either did not provide their current country of residence or indicated they were international students and noted Australia as their country of residence. A total of 1,352 international students provided their country of residence and this list is provided in Appendix B.

Location

Question 4 asked students for their 'residential postcode before you started studying' in order to establish their home location as closely as possible, as opposed to the location of the institution where they are studying. This is a somewhat arbitrary determinant of home location but the best available in a web-based survey of this nature. A total of 11,241 participants provided valid postcodes. As shown in Table 5, the majority of participants (91%) live in Queensland, with other Australian states also represented by Australian students studying externally.

Table 5: Frequency of Australian Students in each Australian State

(n = 11,241)

Australian State	Frequency	Percentage
QLD	10,212	90.8%
NSW	570	5.1%
VIC	188	1.7%
SA	65	0.6%
WA	62	0.6%
NT	52	0.5%
TAS	47	0.4%
ACT	45	0.4%

Sector of enrolment

With respect to type of institution of current enrolment (question 5), 23% of respondents stated that they were enrolled in TAFE, 75% that they were enrolled in University, and 2% that they were enrolled with a private VET RTO. A small number of respondents ticked 'Other' and wrote a text answer but almost all of these were found to correspond to one of the three main sectors, and therefore were subsequently re-coded into these sectors⁶. When TAFE and Private VET RTOs are combined as VET, this makes a ratio of 75 HE: 25 VET as reported by sector. However, when compared with qualifications reported for current enrolment there is an HE:VET breakdown of 72:28. This minor discrepancy could be due to assumptions based in ascribing sectors to qualifications. For example 'Certificate not sure level' which was used as a 'catch all' category in the survey has been assumed in counting to be a lower VET qualification but could be a post-graduate HE qualification. Note however that this applies only to the question on qualification of current enrolment; the question on sector of current enrolment is separate. Other issues such as this are described in Limitations of this Study in the Introduction.

Previous qualification

Question 6 asked respondents what was the highest level of qualification they had successfully completed before the one they are currently enrolled in.

⁶ See Appendix C – *Technical Paper* for details of methods.

Responses (rounded) were as follows.

- 41% School
- 31% VET
- 22.5% HE
- 6% Other

Current enrolment

Question 7 asked about the qualification respondents were currently enrolled in. Respondents were currently enrolled in the types of qualifications shown in Table 6. The majority of respondents (56%) were enrolled in a Bachelor or Honours degree at the time they undertook the survey. Of the 28% of VET respondents, 15% were enrolled in a Certificate IV or lower, and 12% Diploma or above⁷.

Table 6: Current enrolment of respondents

Qualification types	Frequency	Percent
Cert I	87	.7
Cert II	205	1.6
Cert III	991	7.7
Cert IV	677	5.3
Diploma	957	7.5
Advanced diploma / associate degree	353	2.8
Bachelor / honours degree	7134	55.7
Grad cert	224	1.7
Grad Dip	405	3.2
Master or Doctorate	1302	10.2
Cert not sure level	155	1.2
TPP ⁸ or bridging	253	2.0
Other	72	.6
Total	12815	100.0

⁷ Note: Adv Dip/Assoc Deg included in higher VET count. Certificate not sure level included in lower VET count; TPP/Bridging included in higher VET. Other not counted.

⁸ Tertiary Preparation Program.

Socio-economic status of respondents

Introduction

As stated in the Methodology, the socio-economic status (SES) of respondents was estimated using the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008b). The SEIFA ranks geographic areas (defined by postcodes) across Australia in terms of their socio-economic characteristics. Within SEIFA there are a number of indices, of which the Index of Economic Resources (IER) was chosen for this analysis.

The concept of socio-economic ranking by postcode is imprecise, however, and should only be used to provide a very broad, generalised guide to SES by postcode (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008a). With the limitation of SES by home postcode in mind, place of home residence of respondents was analysed to answer the research question *Is there a correlation between age, gender, student status, postcode, type of institution, level of qualification or discipline, with either awareness or use of articulation pathways, or of media of communication?* As stated in the Methodology, only the 91% (10,212) of respondents who stated that their home residence was Queensland were used for this analysis.

SES of all Queensland-based respondents

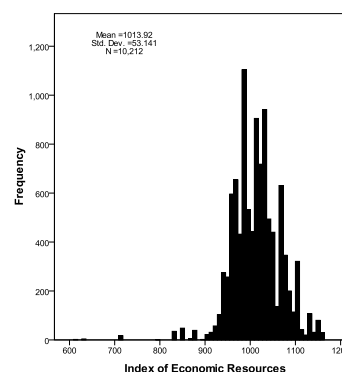
Accordingly, respondents whose home postcode is in Queensland were found to have the following high, medium or low SES background as defined by the ABS IER index:

- 11% low SES;
- 63% medium SES (neither advantaged nor disadvantaged); and
- 25% high SES.

Viewed as a histogram chart, this appears as follows.

(N=10,212)

Figure 1: Frequency of scores for students residential postcodes based on ABS SES (ABS scores are based on a mean of 1,000, and a standard deviation of 100).



SES by Sector

Analysis was undertaken of the respective SES of respondents from VET, HE and Private RTO institutions. To begin, the SES of respondents from TAFE Institutions and Private VET RTOs were assessed. A T-test was conducted⁹ which suggested that, whilst respondents from private RTOs resided in areas slightly more socio-economically advantageous than TAFE students, the difference was not statistically significant. It was therefore decided to analyse respondents from TAFE and private VET RTOs combined as 'VET' for the SES analysis.

Analysis of respondents' SES by institution is shown in Table 7, and shows that there were more than twice as many medium SES respondents in HE (46.1%) as in VET (17.1%) and almost three times as many high SES respondents in HE (18.4%) as VET (6.9%). However, there were *almost twice as many respondents from low SES areas in HE (7.3%) as in VET (3.9%)*.

Table 7: SES by institution of current enrolment

	All Queensland students (n = 10,208)				
	VET		HE		VET and HE
<i>SES</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Low	400	3.9%	754	7.3%	11.3
Medium	1,753	17.1%	4,714	46.1%	63.2
High	708	6.9%	1,879	18.4%	25.3
Totals	2,861	27.9%	7,347	71.8%	100.00

Wheelahan's (2009) analysis of the access that VET provides to HE for low SES students found that VET pathways do not, on the whole, contribute to the participation of low SES groups in HE because higher level VET qualifications which articulate to HE are populated by predominately high SES groups, rather than low SES groups. The respondent sample was analysed to examine this result with the Queensland-based respondents.

The analysis (Table 8) showed that, whilst there is a predominance of low SES respondents in lower VET (Certificate IV and below) at 25%, the difference with other SES groups (19% medium SES and 17% high SES) in lower VET levels is not major. Of greater significance, in *higher level VET courses which articulate to HE (Diploma and higher VET)*, all SES groups are at much the same proportion although low SES is slightly higher at 13% and medium SES and high SES are both 12%¹⁰.

⁹ See Appendix C – *Technical Paper* for details of methods.

¹⁰ Note: Adv Dip/Assoc Deg included in higher VET count. Certificate not sure level included in lower VET count; TPP/Bridging included in higher VET. Other not counted.

This result suggests that there is not a significant difference between the SES background of students in lower and higher VET qualifications among Queensland-based respondents, and therefore no difference in their potential access to HE via VET on the basis of SES background and higher VET qualifications as found by Wheelahan (2009). However, Wheelahan's analysis was based on national DEEWR university enrolment data and some NCVET data, not on a one state student self-report survey. The extent of comparability of results is therefore limited.

It would seem significant, however, that *the representation of low SES groups in HE at 62% in this respondent group is only marginally less than medium SES (67%) and high SES (70%)*.

Table 8: SES by current enrolment

Currently enrolled (Q7)	SES					
	Low		Medium		High	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Cert I	7	0.6%	50	0.8%	20	0.8%
Cert II	39	3.4%	119	1.8%	34	1.3%
Cert III	141	12.2%	571	8.8%	207	8.0%
Cert IV	77	6.7%	398	6.2%	151	5.8%
Diploma	104	9.0%	484	7.5%	211	8.2%
Advanced Diploma / Assoc. degree	17	1.5%	158	2.4%	64	2.5%
Bachelor/honours	619	53.6%	3710	57.4%	1517	58.6%
Grad cert	13	1.1%	111	1.7%	36	1.4%
Grad Dip	31	2.7%	187	2.9%	68	2.6%
Master or Doctorate	50	4.3%	424	6.6%	182	7.0%
Cert not sure level	20	1.7%	78	1.2%	37	1.4%
TPP or bridging	30	2.6%	153	2.4%	42	1.6%
Other	7	0.6%	26	0.4%	19	0.7%
Total	1155	100.0%	6469	100.0%	2588	100.0%

N = 10,212

Awareness of Articulation and Credit Transfer

Introduction

Note: this analysis is for all respondents, not just Queensland resident students as was the case for the SES analysis.

Questions 9, 10 and 11 sought information from respondents about their awareness of pathways, credit transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Q.9 People choose to take many pathways in life. There are some 'pathways', or tracks, that you can take to gain access to different types of education qualifications. Some of these pathways can start with school education and proceed through vocational education to university, or go directly to university, or go from university to vocational education/TAFE. You can also enter and exit the pathways at any point in your life or career with a qualification at any one of these levels. Before today, had you heard about these education pathways?

A similar question, with a definition of the term, was asked of Credit Transfer in Q.10, and RPL in Q.11. Please see the survey instrument in Appendix A: Student Awareness Survey Questions for these questions.

Awareness - all respondents

Table 9 indicates that most students (71% overall) stated that they were aware of ('had heard about') the concepts of articulation pathways, credit transfer and/or RPL. Of those respondents who answered Yes regarding awareness, the frequency rates ranged from 65% for pathways to 79.5% for credit transfer. The 'don't know' response was 2 – 3 times higher for 'Pathways' than for credit transfer or RPL. This suggests that students are more familiar with the concept of credit transfer than either education pathways or RPL.

Table 9: Student Awareness of Pathways, Credit Transfer and RPL

(N = 12,815)

Student Awareness	Q. 9 Pathways		Q. 10 Credit Transfer		Q. 11 RPL		Mean
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Yes	8,383	65.4	10,183	79.5	8,658	67.6	70.8
No	3,446	26.9	2,301	18	3,683	28.7	24.5
Don't know	986	7.7	333	2.6	474	3.7	4.7

Awareness by Age Group

The following analysis ignores age groups with less than 10 respondents as too small to be statistically accurate. The results are compiled in Table 10, **Error! Reference source not found.** and Table 12.

Of those who answered Yes to questions 9 on awareness of pathways, students in the 16-19 age group had the highest level of awareness with 72.5%. The next most aware groups at 68% were the 50-54 and 55-59 age groups, however all age groups indicated a reasonably high level of awareness of pathways, with the lowest being 57% which was the 30-34 age group. This situation is reversed when awareness of credit transfer is considered, when the 16-19 year age group is the least aware of all age groups, although all age groups show a high level of awareness overall, with the 55-59 year age group being the most aware at 87%. Awareness of RPL by younger age groups is much lower than older age groups, with the 16-19 year age group being the least aware of RPL at 50%, followed by the 20-24 age group at 57%. The older age groups are much more aware of RPL with the most aware groups being 50-54 and 55-59 with 92% awareness. These results overall suggest that promotion efforts to raise awareness, especially of specific opportunities such as credit transfer and RPL, should be targeted at the 16-19 age group, and for RPL also the 20-24 age group.

Table 10: Age Groups x Awareness of Pathways

	Awareness of Pathways						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
Age	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
16-19	2231	72.5%	585	19.0%	262	8.5%	3078	24.0%
20-24	2381	65.0%	968	26.4%	316	8.6%	3665	28.6%
25-29	1107	61.0%	563	31.0%	145	8.0%	1815	14.2%
30-34	647	57.3%	401	35.5%	81	7.2%	1129	8.8%
35-39	642	61.3%	344	32.9%	61	5.8%	1047	8.2%
40-44	509	64.9%	225	28.7%	50	6.4%	784	6.1%
45-49	430	67.2%	180	28.1%	30	4.7%	640	5.0%
50-54	266	67.9%	101	25.8%	25	6.4%	392	3.1%
55-59	110	67.9%	44	27.2%	8	4.9%	162	1.3%
60-64	41	61.2%	20	29.9%	6	9.0%	67	0.5%
65-69	17	58.6%	11	37.9%	1	3.4%	29	0.2%
70-74	0	0.0%	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.0%
85-89	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
95-99	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	2	0.0%
Total	8383		3446		986		12815	100.0%

Table 11: Age groups by Awareness of Credit Transfer

Total	Awareness of Credit Transfer						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
Age	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
16-19	2138	69.5%	820	26.6%	120	3.9%	3078	24.0%
20-24	3031	82.7%	549	15.0%	85	2.3%	3665	28.6%
25-29	1526	84.1%	249	13.7%	40	2.2%	1815	14.2%
30-34	927	82.1%	173	15.3%	29	2.6%	1129	8.8%
35-39	866	82.7%	159	15.2%	22	2.1%	1047	8.2%
40-44	627	80.0%	143	18.2%	14	1.8%	784	6.1%
45-49	523	81.7%	105	16.4%	12	1.9%	640	5.0%
50-54	326	83.2%	60	15.3%	6	1.5%	392	3.1%
55-59	141	87.0%	21	13.0%	0	0.0%	162	1.3%
60-64	52	77.6%	14	20.9%	1	1.5%	67	0.5%
65-69	22	75.9%	6	20.7%	1	3.4%	29	0.2%
70-74	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.0%
85-89	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
95-99	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	2	0.0%
Total	10183		2301		331		12815	100.0%

Table 12: Age groups by awareness of RPL

	Awareness of RPL						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
Age	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
16-19	1545	50.2%	1357	44.1%	176	5.7%	3078	24.0%
20-24	2105	57.4%	1396	38.1%	164	4.5%	3665	28.6%
25-29	1328	73.2%	420	23.1%	67	3.7%	1815	14.2%
30-34	921	81.6%	186	16.5%	22	1.9%	1129	8.8%
35-39	912	87.1%	117	11.2%	18	1.7%	1047	8.2%
40-44	686	87.5%	88	11.2%	10	1.3%	784	6.1%
45-49	563	88.0%	65	10.2%	12	1.9%	640	5.0%
50-54	361	92.1%	29	7.4%	2	0.5%	392	3.1%
55-59	149	92.0%	12	7.4%	1	0.6%	162	1.3%
60-64	58	86.6%	8	11.9%	1	1.5%	67	0.5%
65-69	26	89.7%	3	10.3%	0	0.0%	29	0.2%
70-74	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.0%
85-89	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
95-99	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	2	0.0%
Total	8658		3683		474		12815	100.0%

Awareness by Gender

Correlation of the awareness variables with gender indicates that females are slightly more aware of pathways (by a difference of 8%), credit transfer (difference of 5%) and RPL (difference of 5%) than males, as shown in the tables below.

Table 13: Awareness of Pathways by Gender

	Awareness of Pathways						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Male	2853	60.8%	1476	31.5%	360	7.7%	4689	36.6%
Female	5530	68.1%	1970	24.2%	626	7.7%	8126	63.4%
	8383		3446		986		12815	100.0%

Table 14: Awareness of Credit Transfer by Gender

	Credit Transfer						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Male	3582	76.4%	972	20.7%	135	2.9%	4689	36.6%
Female	6601	81.2%	1329	16.4%	196	2.4%	8126	63.4%
	10183		2301		331		12815	100.0%

Table 15: Awareness of RPL by Gender

	Awareness of RPL						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Male	3021	64.4%	1468	31.3%	200	4.3%	4689	36.6%
Female	5637	69.4%	2215	27.3%	274	3.4%	8126	63.4%
	8658		3683		474		12815	100.0%

Awareness by Sector

When examining awareness according to sector, as shown in the tables below, indicates there is little difference in awareness of *pathways* by sector. However HE respondents had a high level of awareness of *credit transfer* at 84%, which was 6% more than higher VET respondents, who in turn reported 12% more awareness than lower VET respondents. Lower VET respondents had a higher awareness of *RPL* than of credit transfer or pathways, and their awareness of RPL was higher than that of

HE respondents. Higher VET sector respondents had the highest level of awareness of RPL of all the sectors, however, at 81%.

Table 16: Awareness of Pathways by Sector

Sector	Pathways						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't Know			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
VET < Dip	1269	64.7%	534	27.2%	157	8.0%	1960	100%
VET ≥ Dip	861	65.7%	356	27.1%	93	7.0%	1310	100%
HE	5950	65.6%	2429	26.7%	686	7.5%	9065	100%
Total	8080	65.5%	3319	26.9%	936	7.5%	12335	100.0%

Table 17: Awareness of Credit Transfer by Sector

Sector	Awareness of Credit Transfer						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't Know			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
VET < Dip	1288	65.7%	582	29.6%	90	4.5%	1960	100%
VET ≥ Dip	1029	78.5%	241	18.3%	40	3.0%	1310	100%
HE	7589	83.7%	1297	14.3%	179	1.9%	9065	100%
Total	9906	80.3%	2120	17.1%	309	2.5%	12335	100.0%

Table 18: Awareness of RPL by Sector

Sector	Awareness of RPL						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't Know			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
VET < Dip	1516	77.3%	377	19.2%	67	3.4%	1960	100%
VET ≥ Dip	1057	80.6%	207	15.8%	46	3.5%	1310	100%
HE	5785	63.8%	2942	32.4%	338	3.7%	9065	100%
Total	8358	67.7%	3526	28.5%	451	3.6%	12335	100.0%

Awareness by SES

Awareness of pathways, credit transfer and RPL was examined in light of the SES of all Queensland-based respondents. However, the awareness levels closely align with SES proportions in the respondent group (11% low SES, 63% medium and 25% high SES). There does not therefore appear to be any significant difference between respondents' awareness of articulation opportunities based on their SES background.

Source of information for awareness

Introduction

Those who said 'yes' to each or any of questions 9, 10, 11 regarding awareness of articulation and credit transfer, were then asked (questions 9a, 10a and 11a) to indicate where they had heard of articulation and credit transfer pathways, and given a range of options. Respondents were invited to tick as many options as applied and were not asked to prioritise their responses, which means that frequencies in the tables below indicate the number of times an item was ticked. 'Other' responses were re-coded where possible, but some could not be re-coded.

Information sources for all respondents

Responses in Table 21 have been ordered in terms of the most frequently cited mean response across all awareness categories. Of those who answered Yes to the awareness questions 9, 10 and 11, the most frequently cited mean source of information was teachers or lecturers (41.8% mean). The second most common source of information was Friends (30.9% mean) followed closely by Career Guidance Officer or Counsellor (27.9% mean) and Other Students (27.2% mean). If Friends and Other Students are combined, however, this becomes the most frequently cited source at 58.1% overall. The Internet was cited by 21.3% of respondents. Marketing or advertising sources of information such as newspapers and letterbox drops were not commonly cited sources with 8.7% and 1.4% respectively. Front desk staff at institutions accounted for only 11% of respondents' information overall.

Whilst the mean has been used above as a general guide to the major sources of information, and overall reflects the frequencies cited by respondents, the differences between the information source used for the type of articulation information (pathways, credit transfer and RPL) are also significant. For example, Career Guidance Officer accounted for 41% of awareness of pathways, but then only 23% of credit transfer and 19% of RPL awareness. The Internet, TV and Newspaper or Magazine accounted for relatively high percentages of awareness of *pathways* (i.e. general awareness), but much less awareness of the more specific information about credit transfer and RPL. Conversely, front desk staff in institutions provided 6.8% of awareness of pathways, but higher percentages of credit transfer and RPL awareness.

Table 19: Information Source by Awareness

Information source	Pathways (n = 8,383)		Credit Transfer (n = 10,183)		RPL (n = 8,658)		Mean%
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Teacher or lecturer	3,791	45.2	4,049	39.8	3,498	40.4	41.8
Friends	2,953	35.2	3,298	32.4	2,164	25	30.9
Career Guidance Officer/ Counsellor	3,437	41	2,377	23.3	1,676	19.4	27.9
Other Students	2,191	26.1	3,281	32.2	2,008	23.2	27.2
Internet	2,514	30	1,807	17.7	1,407	16.3	21.3
Work Place	1,568	18.7	950	9.3	1,678	19.4	15.8
Enrolment Form	573	6.8	1,876	18.4	1,634	18.9	14.7
Parents	1,728	20.6	1,073	10.5	896	10.3	13.8
Front desk staff	569	6.8	1,428	14	1,052	12.2	11
TV	1,847	22	324	3.2	312	3.6	9.6
Newspaper or Magazine	1,487	17.7	446	4.4	338	3.9	8.7
Student Liaison/ Support Officer	533	6.4	673	6.6	555	6.4	6.5
Other ^a	444	5.3	393	3.9	361	4.2	4.4
Radio	540	6.4	112	1.1	150	1.7	3.1
Employment Agency	364	4.3	148	1.5	212	2.4	2.7
Letterbox drop	240	2.9	58	0.6	62	0.7	1.4

Notes: Type of communication is presented in order of highest to lowest Pathways mean percentages.
Multiple response possible.
^a Other' types of communication not listed.

Information Source by Sector

For those respondents who answered 'yes' to awareness of articulation and credit transfer, the information source for respondents' awareness (questions 9a, 10a and 11a) was cross-tabulated with sector of current enrolment of respondents (question 7), to see whether there was a difference between information source by sector. Sector of enrolment was divided into lower VET (Certificate IV and below), higher VET (Diploma and above) and HE. With analyses by sector some significant differences become apparent.

Awareness of Pathways

With respect to awareness of pathways, the most frequent information source as 'Teacher or lecturer' is the same as overall results, and the sectors are similar at 14% lower VET, and 16% for both higher VET and HE. However the next most frequently cited information source is Career Guidance Officer/Counsellor rather than Friends as in overall results. The sectors are similar for Career Guidance Officer at 11%, 12% and 15% respectively (however note the increasing significance with

movement from lower VET to HE). The third most frequent is Friends (12% mean) followed by the Internet (10% mean) and then Other students (9% mean). Broadly speaking the sectors are similar in each category of information, except for the internet which showed a stronger awareness by both VET (13%) respondents than HE (9.5%). The other exception is Work place which was a significant source of information on pathways for lower VET at 10% and higher VET at 9% compared to HE at 5%.

Table 20: Information Source for Pathways by Sector

Info Source	Pathways						Total	
	Lower VET < Dip		Higher VET ≥ Dip		HE			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Teacher or lecturer	437	13.9%	339	15.6%	2905	15.6%	3681	15.4%
Career Guidance Officer / Counsellor	351	11.0%	258	11.9%	2724	14.6%	3333	13.9%
Friends	339	10.8%	271	12.5%	2228	12.0%	2838	11.9%
Internet	368	11.7%	281	12.9%	1771	9.5%	2420	10.1%
Other Students	191	6.1%	175	8.0%	1767	9.5%	2133	8.9%
TV	248	7.9%	124	5.7%	1401	7.5%	1773	7.4%
Parents	182	5.8%	127	5.8%	1363	7.3%	1672	7.0%
Work Place	327	10.4%	193	8.9%	996	5.4%	1516	6.3%
Newspaper or magazine	177	5.6%	124	5.7%	1127	6.1%	1428	6.0%
Enrolment Form	97	3.1%	54	2.5%	393	2.1%	544	2.3%
Front desk staff	90	2.9%	50	2.3%	403	2.2%	543	2.3%
Radio	62	2.0%	35	1.6%	426	2.3%	523	2.2%
Student Liaison/Support Officer	65	2.1%	37	1.7%	412	2.2%	514	2.1%
Other	53	1.7%	41	1.9%	328	1.8%	422	1.8%
Employment Agency	108	3.4%	41	1.9%	198	1.1%	347	1.5%
Letterbox drop	42	1.3%	24	1.1%	163	0.9%	229	1.0%
Total	3137	100.0%	2174	100.0%	18605	100.0%	23916	100.0%

Note: Multiple responses possible.

Awareness of Credit Transfer

In this category the most frequently cited source of information was Career Guidance Officer / Counsellor with an overall mean of 18%. The sector which most frequently cited this source of information was higher VET (25%) closely followed by lower VET (24%) with HE at 16.5%. The second most frequently cited source of information was Teacher or Lecturer with an overall of 15%, with HE at 16% citing this more often than higher VET at 11% and lower VET at 8%. The third cited information source was Front desk staff, with a mean of 15%. This category was cited by 16% of HE respondents, and 11% of both VET categories. The fourth most cited overall category was Student Liaison/Support Officer at 11% mean, which was cited by 11% of HE respondents, and 8% of both VET respondent categories. Parents (8%) and Friends (8%) were the next most common categories, with no significant differences across sectors, and this continues for the remainder of the information categories, with the exception again of Work place which shows a higher result for lower VET at 8.5% than 7% higher VET and 3% HE.

Table 21: Information Source for Credit Transfer by Sector

Info Source	Credit Transfer						Total	
	Lower VET < Dip		Higher VET ≥ Dip		HE			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Career Guidance Officer / Counsellor	585	24.1%	503	24.9%	2840	16.5%	3928	18.1%
Teacher or lecturer	197	8.1%	216	10.7%	2813	16.3%	3226	14.9%
Front desk staff	256	10.6%	220	10.9%	2741	15.9%	3217	14.8%
Student Liaison/Support Officer	191	7.9%	164	8.1%	1964	11.4%	2319	10.7%
Parents	219	9.0%	154	7.6%	1461	8.5%	1834	8.5%
Friends	217	8.9%	187	9.3%	1345	7.8%	1749	8.1%
Other Students	175	7.2%	134	6.6%	1091	6.3%	1400	6.5%
Enrolment Form	97	4.0%	77	3.8%	870	5.0%	1044	4.8%
Work Place	206	8.5%	134	6.6%	577	3.3%	917	4.2%
Employment Agency	50	2.1%	54	2.7%	556	3.2%	660	3.0%
TV	60	2.5%	59	2.9%	305	1.8%	424	2.0%
Internet	35	1.4%	43	2.1%	297	1.7%	375	1.7%
Radio	63	2.6%	33	1.6%	212	1.2%	308	1.4%
Newspaper or magazine	43	1.8%	20	1.0%	71	0.4%	134	0.6%
Letterbox drop	23	0.9%	13	0.6%	69	0.4%	105	0.5%
Other	8	0.3%	6	0.3%	40	0.2%	54	0.2%
Total	2425	100%	2017	100%	17252	100%	21694	100%

Note: Multiple responses possible.

Awareness of RPL

Information sources for awareness of RPL were similar to Credit Transfer, with Career Guidance Officer/Counsellor cited most frequently at a mean of 19.5%. Interestingly awareness was higher for this category with lower VET at 23% and higher VET at 26.5% than HE at 17%. Teacher or Lecturer was the second most commonly cited information source with an overall mean of 12%, and HE respondents slightly ahead at 13% over both VET categories both at 9.5%. A similar ratio of results was found for the third category which was Front desk staff, and the fourth which was Student Liaison/Support Officer. The RPL awareness category was the only one to not show a significant increase of frequency for Work Place as an information source in the VET categories and in fact HE was slightly higher than VET at 5.5%. This is somewhat surprising as it could be expected that Work places were a source of information for RPL awareness.

Table 22: Information Source by Sector

Info Source	RPL						Total	
	Lower VET < Dip		Higher VET ≥ Dip		HE			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Career Guidance officer or counsellor	711	23.2%	545	26.5%	2129	17.3%	3385	19.5%
Teacher or lecturer	291	9.5%	195	9.5%	1600	13.0%	2086	12.0%
Front desk staff	214	7.0%	204	9.9%	1542	12.6%	1960	11.3%
Student Liaison	225	7.4%	162	7.9%	1237	10.1%	1624	9.3%
Parents	338	11.0%	218	10.6%	1053	8.6%	1609	9.3%
Friends	309	10.1%	186	9.1%	1100	9.0%	1595	9.2%
Other Students	240	7.8%	157	7.6%	952	7.8%	1349	7.8%
Enrolment Form	204	6.7%	128	6.2%	688	5.6%	1020	5.9%
Work Place	131	4.3%	60	2.9%	677	5.5%	868	5.0%
Employment Agency	88	2.9%	45	2.2%	403	3.3%	536	3.1%
TV	47	1.5%	43	2.1%	252	2.1%	342	2.0%
Internet	67	2.2%	41	2.0%	215	1.8%	323	1.9%
Radio	68	2.2%	30	1.5%	200	1.6%	298	1.7%
Newspaper or magazine	78	2.5%	15	0.7%	98	0.8%	191	1.1%
Letterbox drop	34	1.1%	19	0.9%	91	0.7%	144	0.8%
Other	15	0.5%	6	0.3%	38	0.3%	59	0.3%
Total	3060	100%	2054	100%	12275	100%	17389	100%

Note: Multiple responses possible.

Information Source by SES

Those who said 'yes' to each or any of questions 9, 10, 11 regarding awareness of articulation and credit transfer have been cross-tabulated in Table 25 with SES (Queensland-based students only), however only low SES and high SES have been used due to the complexity of the data. The results indicate that there is no significant difference between low and high SES respondents on the type of information source used to gain awareness of articulation and credit transfer.

Table 23: Information Source x Awareness x SES

Info Source	Pathways				Credit Transfer				RPL			
	Low SES (n = 787)		High SES (n = 1,759)		Low SES (n = 911)		High SES (n = 2,080)		Low SES (n = 855)		High SES (n = 1,780)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Teacher or lecturer	342	43.5	865	49.2	383	42	835	40.1	381	44.6	723	40.6
Friends	250	31.8	633	36	237	26	741	35.6	190	22.2	471	26.5
Career Guid. Off'r	297	37.7	814	46.3	192	21.1	494	23.8	172	20.1	351	19.7
Other Students	184	23.4	487	27.7	265	29.1	758	36.4	182	21.3	431	24.2
Internet	225	28.6	512	29.1	135	14.8	325	15.6	130	15.2	282	15.8
Work Place	167	21.2	323	18.4	93	10.2	191	9.2	183	21.4	331	18.6
Enrolment Form	46	5.8	111	6.3	169	18.6	368	17.7	157	18.4	340	19.1
Parents	144	18.3	393	22.3	80	8.8	258	12.4	90	10.5	192	10.8
Front desk staff	60	7.6	103	5.9	120	13.2	263	12.6	107	12.5	206	11.6
TV	208	26.4	433	24.6	33	3.6	69	3.3	35	4.1	53	3
Newspaper magazine	151	19.2	301	17.1	38	4.2	89	4.3	37	4.3	67	3.8
Student Liaison Off'r	54	6.9	109	6.2	65	7.1	109	5.2	67	7.8	106	6
Other	35	4.4	87	4.9	36	4	68	3.3	31	3.6	59	3.3
Radio	40	5.1	149	8.5	10	1.1	28	1.3	18	2.1	37	2.1
Employ Agency	47	6	54	3.1	23	2.5	16	0.8	38	4.4	27	1.5
Letterbox drop	22	2.8	53	3	7	0.8	11	0.5	9	1.1	10	0.6

Influence of the potential for credit transfer on study plans

Influence of the potential for credit transfer for all students

All students were asked if the potential for credit transfer or RPL influenced their decision to enrol in their current program of study (question 12). It should be noted that this was asked of all students, whether they had said they were aware of articulation and credit transfer options or not, therefore one might expect there to be a relatively high 'no' or 'don't know' response. Of all students, 27% responded 'yes', and 73% responded either 'no' or 'don't know'.

Influence of the potential for credit transfer on study plans by age

Cross-tabulating these results with age (and ignoring age groups with less than 10 members as statistically unrepresentative), students aged 65-69 were the age group who most frequently (38%) stated that the potential for credit transfer or recognition for previous study had influenced their decision to enrol in their current program of study, closely followed by the 50-54 age group (38%) and the 25-29 age groups on 35%. The 16-19 age group were least influenced by the potential for credit transfer, which is not surprising since they were also the group least aware of credit transfer and RPL. Examination of awareness by influence on study plans suggests that awareness of the opportunity for credit transfer or recognition for previous study is a significant motivating factor in choice of study plans.

Table 24: Influence of potential credit transfer on study plans by age

Age	Yes		No		Don't Know		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	
16-19	533	17.3%	2319	75.3%	226	7.3%	3078
20-24	1006	27.4%	2525	68.9%	134	3.7%	3665
25-29	647	35.6%	1107	61.0%	61	3.4%	1815
30-34	363	32.2%	740	65.5%	26	2.3%	1129
35-39	296	28.3%	728	69.5%	23	2.2%	1047
40-44	220	28.1%	551	70.3%	13	1.7%	784
45-49	200	31.3%	429	67.0%	11	1.7%	640
50-54	139	35.5%	248	63.3%	5	1.3%	392
55-59	49	30.2%	113	69.8%	0	0.0%	162
60-64	19	28.4%	46	68.7%	2	3.0%	67
65-69	11	37.9%	17	58.6%	1	3.4%	29
70-74	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	4
85-89	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1
90-94	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
95-99	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	2
Total	3485		8827		503		12815

Influence of the potential for credit transfer on study plans by gender

Cross-tabulation of influence of the potential for credit transfer or recognition for previous study on study plans by Gender (Question 12 x Question 2) indicates that males are slightly more (4%) influenced by the potential for credit transfer or recognition for previous study than are females.

Table 25: Influence of the potential for credit transfer on study plans by gender

Gender	Credit or recognition from previous study						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Male	1396	29.8%	3089	65.9%	204	4.4%	4689	36.60%
Female	2089	25.7%	5738	70.6%	299	3.7%	8126	63.40%
Total	3485		8827		503		12815	100.00%

Influence of the potential for credit transfer on study plans by sector

Cross-tabulation (Question 12 x Question 5) regarding influence of the potential for credit transfer or recognition for previous study on study plans by sector (Table 26) shows that there is no significant difference between respondents in the TAFE and University sectors on this question. There is however a 6% increase in influence by respondents in the private VET RTO sector, over both TAFE and University.

Table 26: Influence of the potential for credit transfer on study plans by sector

Institution	Credit or recognition from previous study						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
TAFE	800	27.3%	1983	67.6%	149	5.1%	2932	22.90%
University	2580	27.0%	6660	69.7%	321	3.4%	9561	74.60%
Private VET RTO	103	32.6%	180	57.0%	33	10.4%	316	2.50%
Other	2	33.3%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%	6	0.00%
Total	3485		8827		503		12815	100.00%

Breaking this analysis down further into lower VET and higher VET by qualification type (question 7) shows no significant difference between the VET components on 'yes' responses, with lower VET on 14% and higher VET on 13%.

Influence of potential for credit transfer on study plans by SES

Cross-tabulation of influence of the potential for credit transfer or recognition for previous study on study plans by SES (Question 12 x Question 4) shows that there is no significant difference between SES groups on this question.

Table 27: Influence of the potential for credit transfer on study plans by SES

SES	Influence of potential for credit transfer on study plans						Total	
	Yes		No		Don't know			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Low	280	24.2%	833	72.1%	42	3.6%	1155	100%
Medium	1574	24.3%	4687	72.4%	208	3.2%	6469	100%
High	593	22.9%	1904	73.5%	91	3.5%	2588	100%
Total	2447	23.9%	7424	72.6%	341	3.3%	10212	100.0%

Future study plans

Study Plans All respondents

All respondents were asked in question 13 whether they plan to enrol in another qualification, and 27% said yes to this question, 69% said no and 4% were unsure. Those who answered yes were asked in question 14 what level of qualification they plan to enrol in, and in question 15 what type of educational provider they plan to choose next.

Study Plans by Sector

Of the 27% who said yes to having future study plans in Question 13, Table 28 cross-tabulates respondents' current enrolment sector (Question 5) with their planned next sector of enrolment (Question 15). This indicates that, of those students who have future study plans, 61% of students currently enrolled in a VET institution (TAFE and private VET RTO) plan to next enrol in a VET institution, whilst *almost 30% of VET students who have future study plans, intend to enrol in a HE degree*. This suggests that a significant proportion of students may be using VET as a pathway to HE, whether via credit transfer or simply for access.

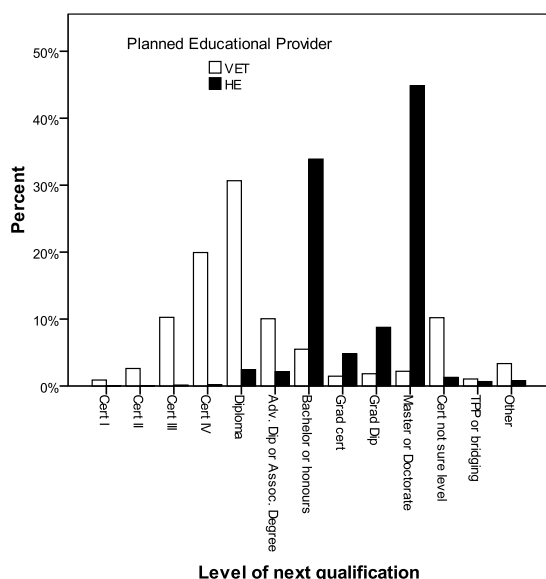
Of students currently enrolled in a HE institution who have future study plans, 71.3% plan to re-enrol in a HE institution, and approximately 7% of HE students plan to enrol in a VET institution (reverse articulation).

Table 28: Respondents' current sector institution x planned institution sector

(N = 12,815)

Planned Institution	Current Institution					
	VET (TAFE + private) (n = 3248)		HE (n = 9,561)		Other (n = 6)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
VET	1,970	60.6	681	7.1	2	33.3
HE	950	29.2	6,818	71.3	4	66.7
Not enrolling	328	10.0	2,062	21.6	-	-

Students were also asked to indicate the type of qualification they plan to enrol in (question 14). Figure 2 displays graphically the type of qualification students plan on pursuing cross-tabulated with the type of educational institution they plan on studying with. Of those who do intended to enrol in further study (question 13), the most frequent type of qualification cited by students planning to enrol in the VET sector was a Diploma (31%), followed by Certificate IV (20%), with approximately 10% of students planning to enrol in an Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree and another 23% planning to enrol in a Certificate III or lower. The most frequent type of qualification sought by students planning to enrol in the HE sector was a Masters or Doctorate (45%), Bachelor or Honours Degree (34%), and a Graduate Diploma (9%).

**Figure 2:** Type of qualification students plan on pursuing by planned educational provider.

(N = 12,815)

Further analysis of Study Plans (Question 14) by sector of current enrolment indicates that:

- Of those students currently enrolled with a Private VET RTO, the largest group (46%) plan to enrol in HE, whilst 24% plan to enrol again with a Private VET RTO, and 13% plan to enrol in TAFE (Table 30).

- Of students currently enrolled in HE, 71% plan to enrol in HE, 7% plan to enrol in VET (2.7% TAFE; 4.4% private VET) whilst 21% have no further study plans (Table 32).
- Of students currently enrolled in TAFE, the majority (60%) plan to re-enrol in TAFE, whilst 27% plan to enrol in HE (Table 33).

If private VET and TAFE are combined, of students currently enrolled in the combined VET sector, 29% plan to enrol in HE, whilst 61% plan to enrol in VET (either TAFE or private).

Table 29: Students currently enrolled in Private VET RTO x Study Plans

N = 316	Frequency	Percent
TAFE	42	13.3
University	146	46.2
Private VET Provider	76	24.1
Not enrolling	52	16.5
Total	316	100.0

Table 30: Students currently enrolled in HE x Study Plans

N = 9,561	Frequency	Percent
TAFE	257	2.7
University	6818	71.3
Private Provider	424	4.4
Not enrolling	2062	21.6
Total	9561	100.0

Table 31: Students currently enrolled in TAFE x Study Plans

N = 2,932	Frequency	Percent
TAFE	1762	60.1
University	804	27.4
Private Provider	90	3.1
Not enrolling	276	9.4
Total	2932	100.0

Articulation – previous

In order to see to what extent and in what way articulation has occurred previously among the respondent group, a cross-tabulation of Question 6 – highest previous qualification by Question 7 – current enrolment was undertaken. This is depicted by a line graph in Figure 3 below.

It needs to be borne in mind in this analysis that 41% of respondents had previously been at school, and that 75% of the total respondent group were HE students. With this proviso in mind, this analysis indicates that:

- Of those whose highest previous qualification was a VET qualification, 58% were currently enrolled in a HE qualification;
- Of those previously in HE, 14% were currently studying a VET qualification.

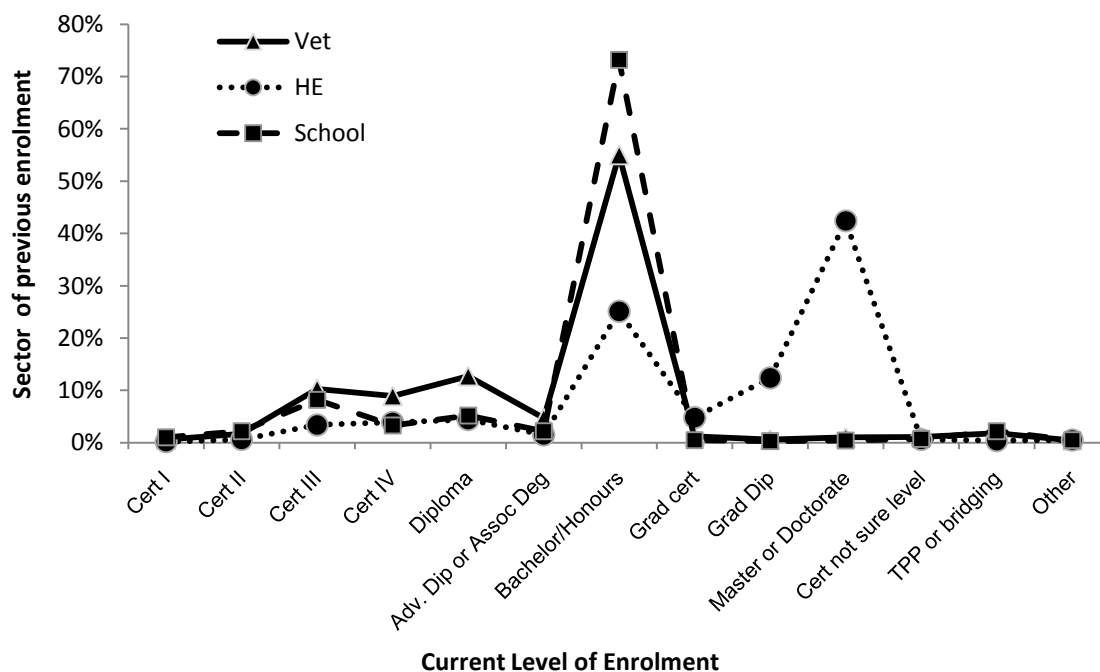


Figure 3: Sector of previous enrolment by current level of enrolment

Articulation aspirations

In order to see what students' aspirations for articulation were, a cross-tabulation of Question 5 (institution of current enrolment) by Question 14 (planned level of next qualification) was undertaken. This is depicted by a line graph in Figure 4 below.

This analysis indicates that:

- Of those students currently enrolled at a TAFE institution, 26% plan to enrol in HE.
- Of those students currently enrolled at a VET private RTO, 50% plan to enrol in HE.
- Of those students currently enrolled in a HE institution, 5% plan to enrol in a VET qualification (either TAFE or private provider).

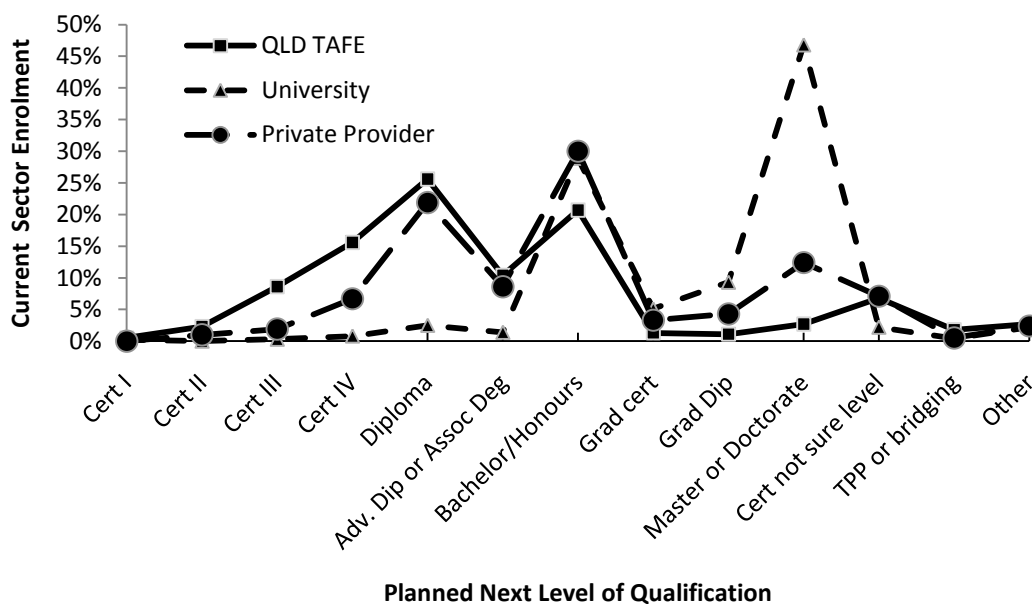


Figure 4: Current sector of enrolment by planned next enrolment.

Opportunities for planned credit transfer

Credit can only be transferred within a similar subject area. To assess whether students had the opportunity to apply for credit transfer due to studying in a similar subject area, students were asked in question 8 if their previous qualification was in a similar subject area (or discipline) to the program they are currently enrolled in.

Of all respondents, 40% indicated their previous qualification was 'school' and therefore were not applicable to this analysis since school is not a subject area. Of the remainder, 28% were enrolled in a similar subject area to their previous qualification, and 32% were enrolled in a different subject area to their previous qualification. Therefore, in as far as it is possible to analyse this data in terms of students taking advantage of credit transfer opportunities (which is somewhat tenuous) this data indicates no discernible or significant trend.

Students were also asked in question 13 whether their planned next qualification was in a similar or different subject (or discipline) area, and this was cross-tabulated with Question 8 – previous qualification by subject area. The results for the approximately one third of respondents whose previous *and* current studies are in the *same* subject area *and* who have future study plans are shown in Table 32 below. Of these, 42% plan to study next in the same subject area or discipline as their current and previous qualification, either in the next year or some time in future. Only 9.5% plan to study in a different area, either in the next year or some time in future. This does suggest a pattern of studying in the same area, but this could be for any number of reasons (including career development) and is not necessarily because of articulation and credit transfer opportunities. Taken overall,

for the one third of students who have previous and current studies in the same subject area or discipline, and who have future study plans, 42% plan to study in the same area in future. However, this 42% represents only 12% (n = 1513) of the total respondent group (n = 12,815).

Table 32: Previous and current subject same area by planned subject area

Planned Subject Area Future Study	Previous Qual in Same Area as current study area	
	Count	%
Same area within year	734	20.6%
Same area in future	779	21.8%
Different area within year	142	4.0%
Different area in future	197	5.5%
Not sure	1078	30.2%
No	637	17.9%
Total	3567	100.0%

Future Study Plans by SES

Cross-tabulation of student's sector of planned next qualification (Question 15) with SES (Question 4) is provided in Table 33. This indicates that there is a slight, but not significant, difference between SES background of respondents in terms of their future study plans by sector. Low SES respondents slightly favour TAFE as their planned next sector of enrolment (23%) compared to medium SES (18%) and high SES (17%) respondents. Conversely low SES respondents are slightly less likely to have selected HE as their planned next sector of enrolment (55%) compared to medium SES or high SES (both 59%) respondents. However the difference is not stark. The interesting anomaly is in private VET RTOs: slightly more high SES respondents (5.4%) chose a private VET RTO as their sector of next enrolment, than medium SES (4.4%) or low SES (4.7%). Again, however, the differences are minor.

Table 33: Sector of planned next qualification by SES

Planned sector of enrolment (Q15)	SES						Total	
	Low		Medium		High			
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
TAFE	263	22.8%	1168	18.1%	451	17.4%	1882	18.4%
HE	634	54.9%	3813	58.9%	1516	58.6%	5963	58.4%
Private VET RTO	54	4.7%	285	4.4%	140	5.4%	479	4.7%
Not Enrolling	204	17.7%	1203	18.6%	481	18.6%	1888	18.5%
Total	1155	100.0%	6469	100.0%	2588	100.0%	10212	100.0%

Conclusion

This research set out to answer some specific questions, which are answered in summary form below. Please see the body of report for details of analysis and methods, and Appendix A: Student Awareness Survey Questions for the questions used in the student survey.

To what extent are current students in VET and HE institutions in Queensland aware of existing articulation pathways, credit transfer and/or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

Results suggest that current students in VET and HE institutions in Queensland are, on the whole, more aware of articulation and credit transfer options and opportunities than was expected from the literature review (Byrnes J, et al., 2010), with 71% overall awareness of these concepts. Awareness of credit transfer specifically was found to be higher than the general concept of pathways or of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Students in age groups over 29 were the most aware, and students in the 16-19 age group were the least aware of credit transfer and RPL.

To what extent are current students in VET and HE institutions in Queensland utilising existing articulation pathways, credit transfer and/or RPL?

Of those students who have future study plans, almost 30% of current VET (TAFE and private RTO) students plan to enrol in a HE degree for their next qualification, suggesting that articulation and credit transfer opportunities may provide pathways from VET to HE for current students. Enrolment in a VET qualification was reported by 7% of HE respondents as the next planned qualification. This suggests that some HE to VET pathways are planned pathways rather than 'drop downs' as suggested by some researchers (such as Moodie, 2005).

To what extent are current students in VET and HE institutions in Queensland using (or planning to use) existing articulation, credit transfer and/or RPL pathways to help make their decisions about study programs?

Of all students, 27% stated that they were influenced in their choice of study by the potential for credit transfer or RPL. The age groups of students who were most 'aware' of articulation and credit transfer opportunities were, not surprisingly, also the group who most frequently stated that they were influenced in their choice of study by credit transfer opportunities. This suggests that awareness leads to greater utilisation of articulation and credit transfer opportunities, and is a significant motivating factor in choice of study.

If students have heard of articulation pathways, credit transfer and/or RPL, through what media of communication have they heard of them?

Of those students who are aware of articulation and credit transfer pathways and options, the most frequently stated source of information was teachers or lecturers, although friends, career guidance officers/counsellors and other students were also significant sources of information. The internet accounted for only 21% of source of information overall, and all other sources of information, including advertising, were much less frequently reported. The overall picture however masks some significant variations in source of information cited by respondents between awareness of pathways, credit transfer or RPL, as detailed in the report. Nonetheless as Teacher or Lecturer was cited as a primary source of information for most respondents, promotion strategies clearly need to be targeted at Teachers and Lecturers as an important information source, as well as Career Guidance Officers/Vocational Counsellors.

Is there a correlation between age, gender, student status, postcode, type of institution, level of qualification or discipline, with either awareness or use of articulation pathways, or of media of communication?

There were almost twice as many respondents from low SES areas in HE (7%) as in VET (4%) in the respondent sample, suggesting that recent government and institutional policies to encourage low SES students to enter HE may be having an impact. Whilst there was a small predominance of low SES respondents in lower VET (Certificate IV and below), the difference with other SES groups in lower VET levels was not significant. In higher level VET courses (Diploma and higher VET), all SES groups were at much the same proportion at around 12%. This result suggests that there was not a significant difference between the SES background of students in lower and higher VET qualifications among Queensland-based respondents, and therefore no difference in the access to HE via VET on the basis of SES background and higher VET qualifications as found by Wheelahan's (2009) analysis. The representation of low SES groups in HE at 62% in this respondent group is only marginally less than medium SES (67%) and high SES (70%).

Correlation of the awareness variables with sector indicates there is little difference in awareness by sector. Gender and SES were not found to be significant variables in

awareness of articulation and credit transfer options, nor of the participation of lower SES people in higher levels of VET in this sample.

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 - Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE
 - Bond University
 - Brisbane North Institute of TAFE
 - Careers Australia Group
 - Central Queensland Institute of TAFE
 - Central Queensland University
 - Charlton Brown
 - Gold Coast Institute of TAFE
 - Griffith University
 - James Cook University
 - Jazzworx! Music Institute
 - Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE
 - QANTM
 - QUT
 - Sarina Russo Schools Australia
 - Skills Tech Australia
 - Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE
 - Study Group Australia Pty Ltd
 - Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE
 - The Bremer Institute of TAFE
 - Toowoomba Education Coalition
 - Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE
 - University of Queensland
 - University of Southern Qld
 - University of Sunshine Coast
 - Wide Bay Institute of TAFE

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Appendices

Appendix A: Student Awareness Survey Questions

Student Awareness

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This survey is being conducted by the University of Southern Queensland, in partnership with the Queensland Department of Education and Training, Australian Council of Private Education and Training and Careers Australia Group. It is mainly a 'tick and flick' survey and should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

We are interested in the views of all students currently studying at Queensland tertiary educational institutions, such as TAFE Institutes, universities and private education and training providers. This includes Queensland campuses of universities based in other states. If you are under the age of sixteen, thank you but you are not eligible to participate.

We want to gauge the level of awareness that students have about credit transfer options and pathways between vocational education and training (VET) and university education. This is so that we can provide information about pathways and credit transfer that will better meet your needs.

Prize Draw

In appreciation of your time in completing the survey, at the conclusion of the survey eligible* participants will be included in a prize draw. These prizes are:

1st Prize: \$1000 worth of Apple Store products

2nd Prize: \$600 worth of Apple Store products

3rd Prize: \$300 worth of Apple Store products

*Please note you must answer **all** questions you are asked to be eligible to go in the draw for prizes. You may only complete the survey once. Any duplicate entries will not be eligible for the prize draw. In order to be in the draw, you will need to add your name and contact details to a private section at the end of the survey. This section will not be connected with your survey results, and will be used for entries to the prize draw only. Contact details will be destroyed once the draw has been completed and all winners notified. You may complete the survey without adding your name to the draw if you wish, but in that case you will not be included in the prize draw. If you would like to know more about USQ's privacy policy, please click here to view: [USQ Privacy Policy](#)

Confidentiality and access to results of the survey

All information collected which might identify you will remain confidential. All data collected during the study will be retained by the University of Southern Queensland and will be securely stored for a period of seven years. Information obtained during the study will be published however; at no time will you or the institution you are enrolled at be identified. All participating institutions will be provided with a copy of the results to distribute to students, and the results will also be available on this website after 30 May 2010. Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any consequences.

Should you have any concern about the conduct of this research project, please contact the USQ Ethics Officer, Office of Research & Higher Degrees, University of Southern Queensland, West Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Telephone (07) 4631 2690, ethics@usq.edu.au

Are you a currently enrolled student at a **Queensland TAFE Institute, a Queensland university or a Queensland private registered training organisation?**

Yes or **No**

Student Awareness

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If you proceed with the survey you are agreeing that:

- You are 16 years of age or older; and
- You are a currently enrolled student at a Queensland TAFE Institute, a Queensland university or a Queensland private registered training organisation; and
- You have read the introductory information and agree to participate in this survey; and
- You have not already completed the survey; and
- You know that your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time with no consequences; and
- The information provided will be confidential and your name will not be connected with the survey results in any way.

If you do not want to participate, please close this browser window. Otherwise, please click the next page button.

Student Awareness

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1. What is your age?	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

	Male	Female
2. What is your gender?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Australian Student	International Student studying on campus in Australia	International Student studying externally outside Australia
3. Are you a domestic (Australian resident) student or an international student?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. If you are an Australian student, what was your residential postcode before you started studying. If you are an International student, what country are you from? (This is so that we can check we have a cross-section of locations.)	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------

5. Please tick which one of the following best describes the institution where you are **now** enrolled. If you are enrolled in more than one right now, please tick your highest level of study:

- A Queensland TAFE Institute
- A university in Queensland
- A Queensland private registered training organisation
- Other (please give details)

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6. What is the **highest level** of qualification you had successfully achieved **before** the one you are enrolled in now?

School

- Year 10 qualification
- Year 12 qualification
- School but I did not get a qualification

Vocational/Undergraduate

- Certificate I
- Certificate II
- Certificate III
- Certificate IV
- Diploma
- Advanced Diploma/Associate Degree
- Bachelor degree/Honours

Post-graduate

- Graduate Certificate/Vocational Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma/Vocational Graduate Diploma
- Master/Doctorate

Other

- Certificate but not sure which level
- Tertiary Entrance/Tertiary Preparation Program/Bridging course
- Other (please give details)

7. What qualification are you **now** enrolled in? If more than one please tick the highest level of qualification you are currently enrolled in.

Vocational/Undergraduate

- Certificate I
- Certificate II
- Certificate III
- Certificate IV
- Diploma
- Advanced Diploma/Associate Degree
- Bachelor degree/Honours

Post-graduate

- Graduate Certificate/Vocational Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma/Vocational Graduate Diploma
- Master/Doctorate

Other

- Certificate but not sure which level
- Tertiary Entrance/Tertiary Preparation Program/Bridging course
- Other (please give details)

8. Was your previous qualification:

- In a similar subject (or discipline) as the qualification you are now enrolled in.
- In a different subject (or discipline) to the qualification you are now enrolled in.
- I was at school so this question does not apply to me.

Next Page

People choose to take many pathways in life. There are some 'pathways', or tracks, that you can take to gain access to different types of education qualifications. Some of these pathways can start with school education and proceed through vocational education to university, or go directly to university, or go from university to vocational education/TAFE. You can also enter and exit the pathways at any point in your life or career with a qualification at any one of these levels.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
9. Before today, had you heard about these education pathways?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9a. Where did you hear about educational pathways? Please tick any or all that apply below.

- I ticked NO or DON'T KNOW above - please go to the next page
- Career guidance officer/counsellor
- Teacher or lecturer
- Front desk staff such as receptionists, enrolment officer
- Student liaison or support officer, such as an Indigenous support officer or Disability Officer
- Parents
- Friends
- Other students
- Enrolment form
- Work place
- Employment agency
- Media or advertising such as:
 - TV

- Internet
- Radio
- Newspaper/magazine
- Letterbox drop
- Other (please give details)

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Student Awareness

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You may get credit for study in one qualification (for example, at a TAFE) from a similar subject area in another qualification (for example, at a university), so that you don't have to repeat subjects you have already learned, and don't have to study all the units in the new qualification. This is called credit transfer.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
10. Before today, had you heard about credit transfer?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10a. Where did you hear about credit transfer? Please tick any or all that apply below.

- I ticked NO or DON'T KNOW above - please go to the next page
- Career guidance officer/counsellor
- Teacher or lecturer
- Front desk staff such as receptionists, enrolment officer
- Student liaison or support officer, such as an Indigenous support officer or Disability Officer
- Parents
- Friends
- Other students
- Enrolment form
- Work place
- Employment agency

Media or advertising such as:

- TV
- Internet
- Radio
- Newspaper/magazine
- Letterbox drop
- Other (please give details)

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Student Awareness

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You may get credit for previous work experience if it relates to your subject of study (discipline). This assessment process is called Recognition of Prior Learning (or RPL).

	Yes	No	Don't Know
11. Before today, had you heard about RPL?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11a. Where did you hear about RPL? Please tick any or all that apply below.

- I ticked NO or DON'T KNOW above - please go to the next page
- Career guidance officer/counsellor
- Teacher or lecturer
- Front desk staff such as receptionists, enrolment officer
- Student liaison or support officer, such as an Indigenous support officer or Disability Officer
- Parents
- Friends
- Other students
- Enrolment form
- Work place
- Employment agency
- Media or advertising such as:
 - TV

- Internet
- Radio
- Newspaper/magazine
- Letterbox drop
- Other (please give details)

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Student Awareness

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12. Did the possibility of getting credit or recognition for previous study influence your decision to enrol in your current study program?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

13. When you graduate from your current qualification do you plan to enrol in another qualification?

- Yes in a similar subject (or discipline) within the next year
- Yes in a similar subject (or discipline) sometime in the future
- Yes in a different subject (or discipline) within the next year
- Yes in a different subject (or discipline) sometime in the future
- Not sure - please go to Q15 on the next page
- No - please go to Q15 on the next page

[Next Page](#)

14. What level of qualification do you plan to enrol in next?

Vocational/Undergraduate

- Certificate I
- Certificate II
- Certificate III
- Certificate IV
- Diploma
- Advanced Diploma/Associate Degree
- Bachelor Degree/Honours

Post-graduate

- Graduate Certificate/Vocational Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma/Vocational Graduate Diploma
- Master/Doctorate

Other

- Certificate but not sure which level
- Tertiary Entrance/Tertiary Preparation Program/Bridging course
- Other (please give details)

15. Please indicate the type of education and training organisation you are **most likely** to enrol in next.

- TAFE Institute
- University
- Private registered training organisation
- I am not thinking of enrolling

Thank you for participating

[Click here to submit and enter the draw](#)

Thank you for participating in this survey.

	Yes	No
Would you be willing to participate in a confidential interview or anonymous small group discussion (called a focus group) on the topic of student awareness? (Please note: participation in a focus group is voluntary and you do not need to register for a focus group to be eligible to enter the prize draw.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Would you like to be entered into the prize draw? If you do not wish to enter the prize draw please close your browser.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To enter the prize draw or be contacted for the focus group please enter your details below. The information you provide will be confidential and not connected to your survey responses.

Name	<input type="text"/>
Postal Address	<input type="text"/>
City/Town	<input type="text"/>
State	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Contact Phone Number	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>

Enter Draw

Appendix B: Country of Residence International Students

Note: Countries are presented in alphabetical order (n = 1,352)

Country	Frequency	Percentage	Country	Frequency	Percentage
America	53	3.9%	Myanmar	2	0.1%
Austria	2	0.1%	Nepal	32	2.4%
Bahrain	4	0.3%	Netherlands	5	0.4%
Bangladesh	6	0.4%	New Caledonia	3	0.2%
Belgium	1	0.1%	New Zealand	24	1.8%
India	1	0.1%	Nigeria	1	0.1%
Bhutan	3	0.2%	Norway	24	1.8%
Brazil	9	0.7%	PNG	1	0.1%
Brunei	10	0.7%	Oman	7	0.5%
Canada	59	4.4%	Pakistan	13	1.0%
Chile	2	0.1%	Papua New Guinea	12	0.9%
China	225	16.6%	Paraguay	1	0.1%
Colombia	17	1.3%	Peru	4	0.3%
Croatia	1	0.1%	Philippines	20	1.5%
Czech Republic	1	0.1%	PNG	3	0.2%
Denmark	4	0.3%	Portugal	1	0.1%
Egypt	2	0.1%	Republic of Korea	25	1.8%
Faroe Islands	1	0.1%	Republic of Korea(South)	1	0.1%
Fiji	7	0.5%	Reunion Island	1	0.1%
Finland	2	0.1%	Russia	9	0.7%
France	27	2.0%	Samoa	1	0.1%
Germany	59	4.4%	Spain	2	0.1%
Greece	2	0.1%	Saudi Arabia	22	1.6%
Grenada	1	0.1%	Scotland	4	0.3%
Hungary	2	0.1%	Seychelles	3	0.2%
India	191	14.1%	China	1	0.1%
Indonesia	30	2.2%	Singapore	47	3.5%

Iran	14	1.0%	Slovak Republic	1	0.1%
IRAQ	1	0.1%	Slovenia	1	0.1%
Ireland	2	0.1%	Solomon Islands	3	0.2%
Isle of Man	1	0.1%	South Africa	15	1.1%
Israel	2	0.1%	South Korea	21	1.6%
Italy	1	0.1%	Spain	2	0.1%
Japan	29	2.1%	Sri Lanka	13	1.0%
Jordan	1	0.1%	Sweden	17	1.3%
Kenya	4	0.3%	Switzerland	5	0.4%
Kiribati	4	0.3%	Tahiti	2	0.1%
Kuwait	3	0.2%	Taiwan	41	3.0%
Libya	1	0.1%	Thailand	18	1.3%
Macao	1	0.1%	Turkey	1	0.1%
Macau	1	0.1%	Uganda	1	0.1%
Malaysia	70	5.2%	United Arab Emirates	7	0.5%
Maldives	6	0.4%	United Kingdom	20	1.5%
Mauritius	9	0.7%	Venezuela	3	0.2%
Mexico	3	0.2%	Vietnam	24	1.8%
Mozambique	1	0.1%	Zambia	1	0.1%
India	1	0.1%	Zimbabwe	11	0.8%

***Appendix C: Technical Paper on Statistical Analysis Methods
Used in this Study.***

Validation Process for Participation of Student Awareness Survey

The survey was provided for students to access online from May 10, 2010, to May 28, 2010. In order to protect student's confidentiality in their survey responses, two files were generated. One file (Personal file) contained personal information (names and contact details) and responses to two questions: (a) Do you wish to go in a prize draw? and (b) Do you agree to be contacted for focus group participation. The second file (Response file) generated the responses to 15 questions provided in Appendix A. It was noted that the personal file contained a number of duplicates that were subsequently removed, however, as the response file was set up separate to the personal file the response file duplicates could not be removed. As such both files were assessed for participation validity separately.

Personal File

There were 12,885 cases in the Personal file. Using SPSS Version 17, 490 cases were identified as duplicates based on cross referencing duplicate IP numbers and Names (N = 12,885). Initially, these duplicate cases were manually assessed and a duplicate case was manually deleted if it did not meet the following criteria. The case was a duplicate and:

1. No contact details were provided.
2. Prize draw or focus group entry was not indicated.
3. After responding either 'Yes' or 'No' to prize draw or focus group entry, no name or contact details were provided.

This resulted in 325 cases being deleted. Another assessment of duplicates resulted in 169 cases being identified and removed resulting in a final sample of N = 12,391 participants, which was further refined for prize draw and focus group entry.

Prize Draw: To enter the prize draw participants were required to be a VET or HE student, and to provide a yes or no answer. If they answered yes, they were asked to provide their contact details. Of the 12,391 participants, 78 (0.6%) responded 'No' and 11,710 (95%) responded 'Yes' (missing data, n = 603 or 5%). It was noted that the majority of participants with missing prize draw responses provided their contact details, and as such it was decided to include these participants in the prize draw. After removing the cases with no names or contact details a final sample resulted in N = 12,280 (Yes, N = 11,684; Missing, N = 596). From this sample, one case was selected randomly in 10 consecutive instances using SPSS, with each case labelled from 1 to 10 in the order they were generated.

Focus group: To agree to be contacted for focus group participation, participants were required to provide a yes or no answer. If they answered yes, they were asked to provide their contact details. Of the 12,391 participants, 8,424 (68%) responded 'No', and 3,288 (27%) responded 'Yes' (missing data, n = 679 or 5%). It was decided that only the participants who responded 'Yes' to focus group participation would be included in the final focus group list, given missing entries with contact details are more likely to have intended to enter the prize draw. After removing the cases with no names or contact details a final sample resulted in N = 3,279 participants agreeing to be contacted for focus group participation.

Response File

Sample validation: There were 12,837 cases in the Response file. Using SPSS Version 17, 14 cases were identified as test cases that were tested by project staff prior to the official survey start date (May 10, 2010), and subsequently removed.

The 15 survey questions were designed to be answered before a student could move onto the next question, with the exception of questions 4 and 14, which due to the following reasons were able to be 'bypassed' by students without the questions being answered; question 4 asked only Australian students to supply their postcodes therefore, International students were not required to answer this question; and question 14 required students to

answer their next planned qualification they intended to enrol in, with not all students expected to enrol in another qualification.

Of the remaining questions any missing responses were considered to represent an invalid response pattern such as sampling error, and as such, if any remaining questions contained missing data, the responses were considered potentially invalid and subsequently deleted. Of the 12,823 remaining cases; Question 8 presented with 5 missing entries, Question 9 presented with 1 missing entry, Question 10 presented with 1 missing entry, resulting in a further 7 deleted entries and a final sample of N = 12,815 participants.

Variable validation: The student survey provided 15 variables of interest which are the 15 Questions provided in Appendix A. Of these variables, questions 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 14 required further consideration for validation due to 'other' text responses, and question 4 required further considerations for examination of socio-economic status.

'Other' responses: Questions 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 14 indicated participants could provide an 'other' response with a text answer. The 'other' response also asked for details; however, upon perusing the text answers to the 'other' responses it was noted that the majority of responses indicated an existing response provided within the question, and were subsequently recoded accordingly.

Questions, 5, 6, 7, and 14 allowed for one 'other' response, which are described as follows: Question 5 asked students to describe the type of institution they were currently enrolled in with four possible responses indicated; (a) TAFE, (b) University, (c) Private Provider, and (d) Other. Initially, 156 students provided an 'other' response, however, it was noted that the majority of responses indicated one of the three institutions of interest and were subsequently recoded accordingly, leaving a total of 6 "other" responses as documented in Table 1

Please Note: where 'Other' responses of students have been listed, these have been quoted verbatim to preserve the integrity of student responses i.e. spelling and typographical errors have not been corrected.

Table 1
'Other' Text Responses to Question 5 (Type of Institution)

Text Responses	N
Distance education, doing work placement at Royal Brisbane Hospital	1
FLEX LEARNING	1
Management Centre	1
School	1
Senior College	1
Missing Text Responses	1

Question 6 asked students to indicate the highest level of previous qualification with 16 possible responses including an 'other' response (see Appendix A – Student Awareness Survey, Question 6). Initially, 280 students provided an 'other' response, however, the majority of 'other' text responses was indicated in one of the 15 provided responses and were subsequently recoded accordingly, leaving a total of 45 'other' responses as documented in

Table 2

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Table 2
'Other' Text Responses to Question 6 (Previous Qualification)

Text Responses	N	Count
Certificate in AUSLAN 1	1	2.2
Certificate of International College of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies	1	2.2
Chef qualification	1	2.2
CIMA Passed Finalist	1	2.2
Coach building New Zealand	1	2.2
Collage in Korea	1	2.2
College certificates from UK. Also British and International certificate in beauty therapy	1	2.2
Corporate Training/Certification Schemes	1	2.2
currently attending school	1	2.2
Disability Student	1	2.2
Management experience gained from full time employment	1	2.2
Myob computer based accounting software	1	2.2
NCEA Lev1	1	2.2
not sure what the question is asking	1	2.2
On the job work experience 20 + years	1	2.2
Post graduate qualifications from the UK- Certificate in Education	1	2.2
PRI Nadcap Training,Mti heat treatment courses.	1	2.2
printing machinist	1	2.2
QTAC admission exam	1	2.2
Queensland Tertiary Admission Test	1	2.2

Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator	1	2.2
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL COLLEGE	1	2.2
school	1	2.2
Skilling Solutions Scholarship	1	2.2
sorry, we don't have this system in austria	1	2.2
STAT	1	2.2
STAT test	1	2.2
Studying.	1	2.2
Various short courses on marketing, merchandising, customer service and sales	1	2.2
Very limited formal education prior to university	1	2.2
vocational college certificate	1	2.2
vocational training as bank clerk	1	2.2
Vocational Training as wholesaler	1	2.2
year 9 qualification	3	6.6
Missing Text Responses	9	20.0
Total	45	100.0

Question 7 asked students to indicate the highest level of current qualification with 13 possible responses including an 'other' response (see Appendix A – Student Awareness Survey, Question 7). Initially, 187 students provided an 'other' response, however, the majority of 'other' text responses was indicated in one of the 12 provided responses and were subsequently recoded accordingly, leaving a total of 72 'other' responses as documented in

Table 3

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Table 3
'Other' Text Responses to Question 7 (Current Enrolment)

Text Responses	N	Count
A level	1	1.4
A Trade Certificate in Hairdressing 1993	1	1.4
Acting Training	1	1.4
BCSE - Solar install accreditation	1	1.4

bicycle frame building	1	1.4
business course	1	1.4
casual photoshop elements course it runs for 12 hours	1	1.4
communicating with computers	1	1.4
Computer Course	2	2.8
computers maths literacy	1	1.4
EAP	1	1.4
English Academic Purpose(s) II	1	1.4
Enrolled in 2 music short courses, not sure about the qualifications	1	1.4
exchange students	1	1.4
I am a junior in college	1	1.4
i dont get this question, im still in school if that helps	1	1.4
i finished yr 11	1	1.4
Industry Certification	1	1.4
Intermediate Diploma (Germany)	1	1.4
learning English	1	1.4
Migration internship program	1	1.4
Modules required for CEC accreditation	1	1.4
MS Access databases	1	1.4
Non Assessed Disability Student	1	1.4
Non-award program	1	1.4
Not in postgraduate	1	1.4
one and two day training courses,certificate of attendance	1	1.4
One off professional development course	1	1.4
One subject via the Insolvency Practitioners Association of Australia	1	1.4
Photovoltaic Grid connected solar systems	1	1.4
PLT	1	1.4
Professional Development Short Course	1	1.4
PYP	1	1.4

RPL	1	1.4
RPL DIESEL FITTING	1	1.4
RPL for a Builders licence (special structures)	1	1.4
school	2	2.8
Senior Studies	3	4.2
Short Course Introduction to Photoshop	1	1.4
single subject for professional development	1	1.4
single university subject	1	1.4
Skilling Solutions Scholarship	1	1.4
Solar k25,k48	1	1.4
Statement of Attainment	1	1.4
Still in High School	1	1.4
Study abroad	2	2.8
training course for work	1	1.4
Two subjects only to upgrade information	1	1.4
upgrade to current certificate held in service industry	1	1.4
voluntary tutor course in literacy and ESL	1	1.4
Volunteer Adult Literacy course	1	1.4
Volunteer Tutoring Course	1	1.4
Volunteer tutor for english as a second language	1	1.4
Woodcarving course	1	1.4
Workplace Health and Safety Officer	1	1.4
Year 10 certificate Maths and English	1	1.4
year 10 equivalency (access 10)	1	1.4
year 11/12	1	1.4
Year 12	1	1.4
Missing Text Responses	8	11.1
Total	72	100.0

As noted previously students were able to 'skip' Question 14, as such, of the 12,815 possible responses only 7,842 students responded. Question 14 asked students to indicate the highest level of qualification they are currently enrolled in with 13 possible responses including an 'other' response (see Appendix A – Student Awareness Survey, Question 14). Initially, 363 students provided an 'other' response, however, it was noted that the majority of 'other' text responses was indicated in one of the 12 provided responses and were subsequently recoded accordingly, leaving a total of 182 'other' responses as documented in

Table 4

¹.

Questions 9, 10, and 11 referred to student awareness of pathways (q9), credit transfer (q10), and recognised prior learning (RPL, q11). Students who answered yes to an awareness question were asked to provide the medium of communication through which they developed their awareness. However, as multiple responses were allowed for question 9, 10, and 11, the 'other' responses that were recoded were not deleted from the 'other' variable.

For students who answered yes to questions 9, 10 and 11; question 9 indicated there were 447 'other' responses, 14 students did not provide a text response and 46 students provided a text answer that was relevant to the communication media provided (Table 5

¹ provides 'other' Pathways text responses).

Question 10 indicated there were 393 'other' responses, 206 students did not provide a text response and 33 students provided a text answer that was relevant to the communication media provided (Table 6

¹ provides 'other' Credit Transfer text responses). Question 11 indicated there were 361 'other' responses, of which no text answers were provided.

Socio-Economic Status (Question 4): Participants in the student awareness survey were asked to provide their postcode (Question 4) if they were an 'Australian student', or the country they resided in if they were an international student (either studying on campus or externally). Of the 12,815 participants in the study, 11,341 (88%) identified themselves as Australian students, and 1,474 (12%) identified themselves as international students (ONC, n = 1344; EXT, n = 130). Of the 1,474 international students, 122 either did not provide their current country of residence or indicated they were international students and noted Australia as their country of residence (n = 7). This left a total of 1,352 international students listing their country of residence which are provided in Appendix B.

Of the 11,341 Australian students, 40 participants did not provide a postcode, 12 participants provided an incorrect postcode, and 48 participants provided a postcode that did not match the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2008a) postcodes, nor were they recognised from a postcode search leaving a total of 11,241 participants providing postcodes to compare with the ABS postcodes.

Table 1

provides the breakdown of participants in the states they resided in. Queensland contained the majority of participants (91%) with other Australian states also presented by Australian students studying externally.

In order to assess the socio-economic status of these participants the ABS socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA) was utilised (ABS, 2008a). ABS (2008b) note the concept of socio-economic data is neither a simple, nor well defined concept, and as such this data was only used to provide a generalised guideline for the student awareness survey sample. SEIFA provided a number of indices of which the Index of Economic Resources (IER) was considered to be the most relevant in establishing socio-economic status (SES) given researchers were interested in assessing a broad range of SES areas. As stated by the ABS

(2008b, para. 3), the IER “focuses on Census variables like the income, housing expenditure and assets of households.” More specifically, the IER index includes the proportion of high and low income households in the area, respectively, the proportion of home owners in the area, and the proportion of unemployed people in the area.

In order to combine the student survey (SS) data with the ABS (2008a) SEIFA data the SEIFA data file was increased to match the frequency of the SS postcodes and the SS postcodes were increased numerically to match the ABS SEIFA postcodes. The data was then transferred into the SS data file.

The student survey analysis was based on Queensland students, which was indicated with over 90% of Australian students indicating they resided in Queensland. In order to avoid issues with type 1 errors, insufficient power and sample representation, only Australian students residing in Queensland were considered for any analysis conducted using SEIFA based postcodes.

Initially, we were interested in assessing the difference between VET and HE providers based on socio-economic residence. However, given the VET providers were made up of TAFE Institutions ($n = 2,745$) and Private Providers ($n = 208$), these two institutions were assessed for differences. If a significant, relevant difference was noted, this could impact on these two providers being compared as an overall VET provider and separate analysis would be recommended.

The IER scores were provided for all of the Australian states based on a mean of 1,000 and a standard deviation of 100. A t test was conducted, including the TAFE and Private providers as the independent variable and the IER scores ($M = 1,000$, $SD = 100$) as the dependant variable.

An advantage of using t tests for the inferential analysis is that t tests have been demonstrated as being robust to violations of normality based on the central limit theorem (Moore, 2000). The central limit theorem asserts sampling distributions of the mean are normally distributed—regardless of the variable distribution—if there are sufficiently large sample sizes (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Tabachnick & Fidell recommend a sample that produces 20 degrees of freedom (or in unequal sample sizes the smallest group with $n = 20$) should ensure a robust solution. Therefore, as the minimum sample contained 208 participants, issues of normality were not considered relevant. However, given the size of the sample, small differences could be considered significant, as such, Cohan’s D effect sizes will be used to compare the difference with only a medium (.5 - .7) to large ($\geq .8$) difference considered relevant.

Homogeneity of variance was established (Levene’s = .268, $p > .05$), with the comparison between the TAFE ($M = 1010.25$, $SD = 57.63$) and private providers ($M = 1,023.52$, $SD = 56.18$) indicating a significant difference when compared to the IER scores, however, this difference was only small ($t_{(2,951)} = -3.21$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.2$). This suggests the private providers indicated they resided in more areas more socio-economically advantageous than TAFE students, however, given these differences were small and as such could be due to a sampling error, comparisons between HE institutions and combined TAFE and private providers (VET) were considered valid.

This led to a post hoc comparison of Australians students studying at HE ($n = 8,248$) or VET ($n = 2,953$) institutions depending on their IER scores. As such, the independent variables were the type of institution (HE or VET) and the dependent variable was the IER index scores. In order to compensate for family-wise error rates a significance level of .01 was set (bonferroni = $.05/4$ variables).

Homogeneity of variance was established (Levene's = 3.237, $p > .05$), with the comparison between the VET ($M = 1011.19$, $SD = 57.62$) and HE ($M = 1,012.95$, $SD = 53.70$) institutions indicated no significant difference based on the IER scores ($t_{(2,11,235)} = -1.50$, $p > .01$). This suggests there are no differences between students enrolled in a HE or VET institution based on their SES.

References

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Moore, D. S. (2000). *The basic practice of statistics* (2nd ed.). New York: W H Freeman and Company.

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Table 4
'Other' Text Responses to Question 14 (Level of Next Qualification)

Text Responses	N	Count
A post-grad course relating to my undergrad course	1	.5
Admission to Practise as a Lawyer	1	.5
Alternate Therapy/Healing	1	.5
Am doing a Grad. Dip. in Psychology and need to do the honours year next.	1	.5
ANI	1	.5
Any courses which I feel might be of interest or benefit to me	1	.5
Automotive Apprenticeship	1	.5
CFA	1	.5
child care	1	.5
Contractor Licence	1	.5
contractors licence	1	.5
Currently doing MBBS. Will probably go on to do an internship in a hospital.	1	.5
depends	1	.5
Depends on progress of current study	1	.5
Depends what I need to do to get a job at a school	1	.5
design of photovoltaic systems	1	.5
Disability Advocacy	1	.5
Don't plan to enrol in any level of qualification at this time.	1	.5
electrical contractors licence	1	.5
enough for me, no more	1	.5
Fashion Design	1	.5
Finish study	1	.5
Full Time Job	1	.5
Further solar course	1	.5
i am not planning on studyinng again	1	.5
I am not planning to enrol in another program once I have graduated	1	.5

I am not thinking of enrolling	1	.5
I am unsure at the moment - maybe something completely different such as cooking at TAFE	1	.5
I clicked no.	1	.5
I don't intend to	1	.5
I plan on undertaking training from specialist colleges, such as AFTRS.	1	.5
I study for my own amusement and to keep my mind active.	1	.5
I ticked no to previous question	1	.5
I was planning on broadening my qualifications with weekend courses.	1	.5
I was told about a graduate program offered for my current line of study, but I am not sure the details yet.	1	.5
I will be enrolling in a university bridging course in maths and physics	1	.5
I would like to specialise in nursing but not sure which areas or where at the moment.	1	.5
I'll get myself a job in my chosen field	1	.5
I'm unsure of what i want to enrol in	1	.5
If I enjoy my course and want to further myself I have thought about furthering my qualifications, but this is after many years in the future. I am studying nursing so may go back and be a nurse practitioner but only if I see it beneficial and are interested	1	.5
Im working on my PhD, so no need to seek further qualification	1	.5
Job	1	.5
job/career	1	.5
Keeping up skills only to job requirements	1	.5
Language	1	.5
legal practitioners/bar course	1	.5
licensing courses	1	.5
MACVS	1	.5
management courses, probably thru tafe or internally thru work	1	.5
Massage	1	.5
May go from Interior decorating to some design courses	1	.5
mines	1	.5
minor studies	1	.5

N/A	1	.5
NA	1	.5
no	1	.5
no more after this bachelor degree	1	.5
no more study	1	.5
No Plan a this stage	1	.5
no plans	1	.5
none	13	7.1
None	9	4.9
None, i'll have my Bachelor	1	.5
not applicable	1	.5
Not planning to enrol in one next	1	.5
not sure	6	3.3
Not sure	3	1.6
Not sure - will depend on employment opportunities	1	.5
Not sure as per Q13!	1	.5
Not sure at this point in time	1	.5
Not sure at this stage what is on offer	1	.5
Not sure how to proceed with further musical studies	1	.5
not sure if I will be continuing	1	.5
not sure if I will do more study	1	.5
Not sure what avenues are available	1	.5
Not sure yet	1	.5
Not sure yet, an electrical one of some sort to advance my opportunities	1	.5
Not sure yet.	1	.5
Not sure, but something industry specific - maybe masters	1	.5
Not sure!	1	.5
not too sure at this stage other than i want to continue further studies	1	.5
not yet sure if I will	1	.5

nothing	1	.5
Plan to get a full-time job after university.	1	.5
planning to join the workforce once i graduate and finish my bachelor degree	1	.5
PLT	2	1.1
Practical Legal Training	1	.5
Practical Legal Training	1	.5
professional course	1	.5
professional development courses	1	.5
professional training qualification	1	.5
Scale calibration	1	.5
Senior year of college	1	.5
Short course such as 'outboard maintenance' or 'coxswain'	1	.5
Some kind of course relating to setting up and running a small business, and maybe fashion and accessory design	1	.5
some subject of interest	1	.5
something along the same lines	1	.5
telecommunications	1	.5
TESOL	1	.5
Trade qualification	1	.5
Training in the Navy	1	.5
Training Qualifications	1	.5
unknown	1	.5
Unknown at this time. Will depend on where life and work takes me	1	.5
unsure	1	.5
Unsure	2	1.1
unsure - University?	1	.5
unsure as to what pathways i will want to take after graduation	1	.5
Unsure at this stage	2	1.1
Unsure, but will look at a different area	1	.5

Unsure. I'd like to further my qualifications, but not sure of the best avenue	1	.5
what ever the job requires me to enrol in	1	.5
Whatever is required for my teaching to enhance my bachelor degree	1	.5
whso	1	.5
Work	1	.5
work related	1	.5
Work specific courses, focused on my industry	1	.5
work while doing a vet nurse traineeship	1	.5
workplace	1	.5
Year 11 / 12	1	.5
Missing Text Responses	32	18.0
Total	182	100.0

Table 5
'Other' Text Responses to Question 9 (Pathways)

Text Responses	N	Count	Recode
...have heard about pathways, known about for years...	1	0.2	
A personal development subject at school	1	0.2	
a training group who were arranging school based traineeships for my children in the year of introduction	1	0.2	
A variety of marketing sources, research prompted by self	1	0.2	
ACE services at QAS	1	0.2	
Advertising by educational institution and just plain general knowledge.	1	0.2	
agency	1	0.2	
Agency brochure	1	0.2	
ALIA website/ tafe website	1	0.2	
All of the above - i.e. It's common knowledge.	1	0.2	
Also read about it on uni web site	1	0.2	
also work in VET Education sector	1	0.2	10
annual careers day at university and also an annual higher education convention	1	0.2	
As I work in education myself and have young adults in my extended family, and have siblings who have returned to formal education in later life I have an awareness of what is available in terms of career paths.	1	0.2	10
Asked the TAFE	1	0.2	
Asking questions to help myself and my kids	1	0.2	
At TAFE	1	0.2	
at TAFE as an employee working in that area.	1	0.2	10
at Uni open days	1	0.2	
At university previously	1	0.2	
Auspak (visa agent)	1	0.2	
Australian Pacific Training College Visit	1	0.2	
Back of a bus advertising	1	0.2	
beef week rockhampton field day	1	0.2	

being on hold when phoning the tafe	1	0.2
billboard	1	0.2
Billboard	1	0.2
Billboard advertisement	1	0.2
Books	1	0.2
Books.	1	0.2
bridging program at cqu	1	0.2
brochures at TAFE	1	0.2
Brochures handed out at career expo	1	0.2
brochures provided at USQ open days and at TAFE	1	0.2
brochures supplied at school	1	0.2
Brother	1	0.2
Bus advertisements on the rear window	1	0.2
career and further study information booklets and pamphlets. eg	1	0.2
Career days for my children	1	0.2
career expo	1	0.2
Career Expo	1	0.2
Career fairs	1	0.2
Career Market Stalls	1	0.2
career path book	1	0.2
Career seminars	1	0.2
Career/University Expos	1	0.2
Career's Expo	1	0.2
careers expo	2	0.4
Careers Expo	3	0.7
careers expo-TAFE booth	1	0.2
careers fairs and uni open days	1	0.2
Careers guide for senior school students	1	0.2
carrer expos	1	0.2

Carrers Fair	1	0.2	
Central Queensland University's (CQU) website	1	0.2	
Centrelink	1	0.2	
Checked it out myself through internet and calling educational institutions	1	0.2	
Children's Senior School	1	0.2	
College/University prospectus	1	0.2	
Collegues in the profession I'm choosing to study	1	0.2	10
Commenwelath Rehabilitation Services	1	0.2	
common knowledge	1	0.2	
Content from Cert IV TAA	1	0.2	
Conversation	1	0.2	
Could have been government propaganda on bus-stops or something like that.	1	0.2	
course info pamphlets	1	0.2	
Course information from the University	1	0.2	
curriculum documents	1	0.2	
Daughters	1	0.2	
daughters school	1	0.2	
DAUGHTERS SCHOOL	1	0.2	
deta's skills qld office in bundaberg	1	0.2	
discipline lecturers/examiners	1	0.2	10
drive past the signs everyday	1	0.2	
During completion of Cert IV in Training and Assessment	1	0.2	
education agency	2	0.4	
Education agency	1	0.2	
Education agent	1	0.2	
Education Agent	1	0.2	
Education expo at Brisbane Convention & Entertainment Centre	1	0.2	
Education Expos	1	0.2	

education guides	1	0.2	
Education journals	1	0.2	
educational course guides	1	0.2	
Educational expo	1	0.2	
Educational institution publication	1	0.2	
electronic direct mail	1	0.2	
email	1	0.2	
Email	3	0.7	
email from usq	1	0.2	
Emails distributed by the University	1	0.2	
emails through school	1	0.2	
established working relationship with tafe colleges in providing training equipment	1	0.2	10
Exit Lane	1	0.2	
Experience and approach by an academic	1	0.2	3
expo	1	0.2	
Face to face	1	0.2	
Figured it out myself	1	0.2	
flyer and posters	1	0.2	
flyer at tafe	1	0.2	
flyer on noticeboard at TAFE	1	0.2	
flyers at school	1	0.2	
For myself it was by searching it out for myself - it was not presented to me. Currently I work in a school so I am now aware of what students can do because of the information we give them together with my experience	1	0.2	10
friends	3	0.7	7
From a Friend who Studies at USQ	1	0.2	7
from an Australian Immigration Agent	1	0.2	
From my own research	1	0.2	
From my workplace being approached by schools	1	0.2	

From prior dealings with University as well as being a previous student	1	0.2	
From speaking with work colleagues.	1	0.2	
general knowledge	2	0.4	
General knowledge	1	0.2	
government agencies	1	0.2	
Grandparents	1	0.2	
Handout	1	0.2	
Haven't heard any from media advertising	1	0.2	
high school	2	0.4	
High school	1	0.2	
High School	1	0.2	
High School Newsletters	1	0.2	
I also used to work for TAFE	1	0.2	10
I am a Director of a private RTO	1	0.2	10
I am a currently a Workplace Trainer	1	0.2	10
I am currently the careers officer in a school	1	0.2	10
I am involved through my work with education and career pathways	1	0.2	10
I am not sure but where, but I have heard of them before.	1	0.2	
I assumed they would exist	1	0.2	
I commenced a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment at TAFE Toowoomba in 2008	1	0.2	
I decided alone because I had an interest in anthropology	1	0.2	
I did my own research	1	0.2	
I discovered a bridging pathway was necessary when I researched prerequisites for my desired Degree	1	0.2	
I found the information my self by calling education providers and by searching on the net.	1	0.2	
I gained knowledge through the TAA40104	1	0.2	
I have 4 children who have just complete High School over the last 5 years	1	0.2	
I have been a university student for over 10 years and thus have heard	1	0.2	

along 'the path'.			
I have been studing since I left high school	1	0.2	
I have not seen/heard any advertising	1	0.2	
I have researched it myself, and also I work in a university	1	0.2	
i have tertiary academic experience since 1977	1	0.2	
I initiated the search to enter a change of career	1	0.2	
I just gathered it from things I have read	1	0.2	
I just knew. Isn't it obvious, education pathways are made up of the course or mode of study you must undertake to be qualified. That is what I understand it to be.	1	0.2	
I KNEW ABOUT IT MYSELF	1	0.2	
I knew it existed and believed it would further my understanding	1	0.2	
I made my own enquires and followed though with information.	1	0.2	
I rang the uni & asked about mature age entry & they told me about TPP	1	0.2	4
I teach VET (Conservation and Land Management) aware of pathways	1	0.2	10
I think I've seen flyers put up on walls.	1	0.2	
I used to work as an academic advisor in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Qld	1	0.2	10
i was an indigenous student support officer so i know from previous experience	1	0.2	10
i went from high school to TAFE, to university	1	0.2	
I work as a researcher in this field	1	0.2	10
I work at ACK in Kuwait which is competency based training - vocational	1	0.2	10
I work for a private Graduate School and have a good understanding of what is available	1	0.2	10
I work for TAFE Queensland	1	0.2	10
I worked for Brisbane North Institute of TAFE/Open Learning Institute for a period of 2 years where I learned about the pathways program.	1	0.2	10
I worked in the administration office at a University for 5 years.	1	0.2	10
I worked within a university and tafe so learnt it from	1	0.2	10

organisational knowledge

I'm a past student of USQ and TAFE, and have been aware of different educational options through those experiences

1 0.2

I'm not sure, just heard about it here and there.

1 0.2

in a normal conversation with family and friends

1 0.2 7

In Africa during my orientation process to be relocated in Australia.

1 0.2

in the workplace

1 0.2 10

Industry Organisation (QMBA)

1 0.2

Information brochures given by the guidance officer

1 0.2

information days at school

1 0.2

information from IDP Education Australia (orientation session in Germany about studying in Australia)

1 0.2

Information night - high school

1 0.2

Institution literature/websites

1 0.2

Institutions themselves

1 0.2

Institutions, such as TAFE colleges, who promote certain courses in these terms.

1 0.2

internet

1 0.2

Internet

3 0.7

INTERNET

1 0.2

Internet - tafe websites

1 0.2

Internet and phone calls whilst assisting family member to transfer from TAFE to Uni based course

1 0.2

It was through searching for degree information

1 0.2

Job Guide, QTAC information

1 0.2

journal articles

1 0.2

just decided to go back to uni

1 0.2

Just heard and participated in discussions about them

1 0.2

leaflets and booklets

1 0.2

lecturing in a University

1 0.2 10

Liaison officer at time of enrolment

1 0.2 5

life experience	1	0.2	
Literature provided by educational institution	1	0.2	
Local friends	1	0.2	7
Local library	1	0.2	
Local university, local knowledge	1	0.2	
Logical - from when we were at school	1	0.2	
mature student - second tertiary qualification	1	0.2	
Meetings	1	0.2	
Mobile Advertisement (Bus)	1	0.2	
MY aunt is a lecturer at griffith University and told me that USC was beginning a new course of undergraduate psychology	1	0.2	3
My children	1	0.2	
My Children	1	0.2	
My daughters high school	1	0.2	
My daughters school	1	0.2	
My husband was working in this area some years ago. My daughter is currently having her RPL's reviewed.	1	0.2	
my own research	1	0.2	
My own research	1	0.2	
My own research, to start an LLB as a mature age student	1	0.2	
My previous university-Edith Cowan in Perth	1	0.2	
my school children who have done, and doing school based traineeships	1	0.2	
My son's school - Mountain Creek High	1	0.2	
My university sometimes send out e-mails with details and workshops on career pathways	1	0.2	
NA	1	0.2	
National Youth Science Forum	1	0.2	
Newspaper advertisements	1	0.2	15
Nil	1	0.2	
no other	1	0.2	

NONE, I RESEARCHED MYSELF	1	0.2	
not sure	1	0.2	
not sure can't remember	1	0.2	
Not sure, I've just always known about them	1	0.2	
One more idea bandied around in general conversation during 40 years since leaving school.	1	0.2	
Open Days	1	0.2	
Open learning TAFE website	1	0.2	
own knowledge	1	0.2	
Own research	1	0.2	
Own research on internet	1	0.2	
own research- on USQ study desk	1	0.2	
pamphlet	1	0.2	
Pamphlets	1	0.2	
Pamphlets at TAFE in Admin Block	1	0.2	
Paperwork my teenage children have received.	1	0.2	
pathways or career pathways is mentioned on just about every letter head, brochure or course guide at TAFE	1	0.2	
Personal communication	1	0.2	
personal research/experience	1	0.2	
picked up the info from the	1	0.2	
poster	1	0.2	
Poster in school office	1	0.2	
POSTERS	1	0.2	
Posters around MSIT Loganlea Campus	1	0.2	
posters around school	1	0.2	
Posters around school	1	0.2	
Posters at Highschool and Uni	1	0.2	
Posters at School	1	0.2	
previous university study and teaching - I was a teacher so needed to know about them to inform my students about them	1	0.2	10

too

previously have completed a pathway course	1	0.2
private research	1	0.2
Professional development courses.	1	0.2
Professional membership (NIA)	1	0.2
Promotional Videos/DVD	1	0.2
psychologist	1	0.2
QTAC	5	1.1
QTAC book	2	0.4
QTAC Book	1	0.2
QTAC Booklet	1	0.2
QTAC Booklet + Website	1	0.2
QTAC guide	3	0.7
QTAC Guide	1	0.2
QTAC magazine thing which Year 12 students get	1	0.2
QTAC personnel	1	0.2
QTAC Site	1	0.2
Rang and asked if I was too old to become what I have always wanted to be	1	0.2
Really not sure, I just know. I am guessing from university emails and the like	1	0.2
registered training organisation	1	0.2
Representatives of the Uni coming to speak to us in year 12	1	0.2
research	2	0.4
Research on the internet	1	0.2
research on the web at various institutions	1	0.2
researched them myself	1	0.2
school	4	0.9
School	6	1.3
School expo	1	0.2

school gave us university brochures	1	0.2
School info	1	0.2
School information from Careers Advisor	1	0.2
School magazines	1	0.2
School presentation	1	0.2
school presentations about after high school	1	0.2
school prospectus or brochures	1	0.2
School provided information	1	0.2
school trips to careers expos	1	0.2
School Visits from Universities, National Youth Science Forum	1	0.2
school, private enterprise via learning & development	1	0.2
Schools emphasize that you can create an alternative pathway to the qualification that you want. I haven't seen much in the community or thought the university i am currently at.	1	0.2
school when i was there	1	0.2
Searched for course on internet	1	0.2
Searched through QUT website	1	0.2
searching through university website	1	0.2
Seeking Jobs Sites	1	0.2
self directed enquiry	1	0.2
self investigation via web	1	0.2
Self research	1	0.2
Self research on the internet	1	0.2
Self research, ie: reading uni published materials, googling info on the internet, govt tertiary publications.	1	0.2
self study	1	0.2
sign at tafe	1	0.2
Signs in the University	1	0.2
Signs, Bus stop Names	1	0.2
Skilling Solutions Qld brochure	1	0.2

social worker	1	0.2	
social workers and religion workers	1	0.2	
sourced myself through calling	1	0.2	
Speakers from the Universities who used to visit our school and speak to seniors	1	0.2	
SSQ Brochure	1	0.2	
Started studying the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and this is covered in the course	1	0.2	
Student Advice packs given out at school	1	0.2	
Student ambassador	1	0.2	
Student emails	1	0.2	
student guide	1	0.2	
tafe	1	0.2	
Tafe	1	0.2	
TAFE	4	0.9	
TAFE (North Point)	1	0.2	
tafe advertising	1	0.2	
TAFE and UNIVERSITY books given out in year 12	1	0.2	
TAFE and university staff and related brochures	1	0.2	
TAFE booklet	1	0.2	
Tafe brochure	1	0.2	
TAFE brochure	1	0.2	
TAFE Course Subject Booklets from Newsagents when my children were in high school	1	0.2	
TAFE Guide	1	0.2	
TAFE Pamphlets/brochures indicating courses of study	1	0.2	
Tafe teacher	1	0.2	3
TAFE/University advertising	1	0.2	
Teacher aide at the school where I volunteer.	1	0.2	
Teaching resources	1	0.2	

Tertiary education guides provided at school	1	0.2	
Tertiary Studies Expo, University Guides	1	0.2	
text message	1	0.2	
The Certificate IV in TAA	1	0.2	
the current tafe course I am doing	1	0.2	
The uni	1	0.2	
the uni came to give us a talk	1	0.2	
The university's program specifications	1	0.2	
The USQ Open Day	1	0.2	
This seems to be a commonsense notion - don't know where I first came across it.	1	0.2	
Though children's school	1	0.2	
Through information for my children at secondary school.	1	0.2	
through my own research	1	0.2	
through my own searching for new studies	1	0.2	
Through my place of employment Telstra.	1	0.2	10
Through Previous College Studies	1	0.2	
training Providers	3	0.7	
TSXPO	1	0.2	
uni open day	1	0.2	
Uni Open Day	1	0.2	
Uni Open Day/Events etc	1	0.2	
uni opens days and stalls at careers expos	1	0.2	
Uni Orientation	1	0.2	
uni website	2	0.4	
Uni Website	1	0.2	
University Marketing Staff	1	0.2	
UNIVERSITY & TAFE EXPO AT BRISBANE EXHIBITION GROUNDS	1	0.2	
University broadcasts	1	0.2	

University brochure	1	0.2	
university brochures	1	0.2	
University correspondence	1	0.2	
university course outline & info	1	0.2	
University Expo	1	0.2	
University internet sites	1	0.2	
University materials/prospectus, etc	1	0.2	
University of Sydney pathways programs though not sure if the same	1	0.2	
university open day	1	0.2	
University Open Day	2	0.4	
University Open Day information	1	0.2	
University Representatives who visit schools	1	0.2	
University web site	1	0.2	
University website	4	0.9	
university website (QUT)	1	0.2	
university websites	1	0.2	
University websites - links regarding explanations of these pathways and various options.	1	0.2	
University Websites (JCU, CQU, UQ)	1	0.2	
University websites, QTAC	1	0.2	
USQ open day	1	0.2	
USQ visited our high school	1	0.2	
Verbally	1	0.2	
Volunteering	1	0.2	
wanted to study so googled	1	0.2	
Was TAFE staff previously	1	0.2	10
When I was doing my first degree	1	0.2	
When I was studying to get my Certificate IV in assessment	1	0.2	
when we went out for a coffee	1	0.2	

word of mouth	3	0.7	
Word of mouth	1	0.2	
Word of Mouth	1	0.2	
Word Of Mouth	1	0.2	
work	2	0.4	10
work for RTO	1	0.2	10
work in education so some knowledge	1	0.2	10
Work in tertiary education	1	0.2	10
Work place	1	0.2	10
WORKED AS AN HR MANAGER & ORGANISED THIS FOR OTHERS	1	0.2	10
worked at TAFE	1	0.2	10
worked in education	1	0.2	10
www.seek.com.au	1	0.2	
Year 12 careers book	2	0.4	
young mum's groups	1	0.2	
Missing Text Responses	14	3.1	
Total	447	100	

Note. Text responses that were recoded are presented in bold typeface. Recoded responses are Q3 = Teacher or lecturer; Q4 = Front desk staff such as receptionists, enrolment officer; Q5 = Student liaison or support officer, such as an Indigenous support officer or Disability Officer; Q7 = Friends; Q10 = Work place; Q15 = Newspaper/Magazine.

Table 6
'Other' Text Responses to Question 10 (Credit Transfer)

Text Responses	N	Count	Recode
I Work in education	1	.3	10
again because of previous job roles	1	.3	10
APTC Visit	1	.3	10
Army personnel	1	.3	
As per previous	1	.3	
At university	1	.3	
Australian College of Kuwait	1	.3	
Aware of this through previous study	1	.3	
before enrolment from lecturer	1	.3	3
Brisbane North TAFE	1	.3	
brother	1	.3	
Career Expo	1	.3	
common knowledge	2	.5	
Common knowledge	1	.3	
commonly used with training / qualifications	1	.3	
Content from Cert IV TAA	1	.3	
course information booklets	1	.3	
course outline	1	.3	
deta's skills qld office in bundaberg	1	.3	
do not know source, is something I have just known about, even before starting uni.	1	.3	
Don't remember	1	.3	
Education Agency	1	.3	
Educational institution publication	1	.3	
email	1	.3	
experience and supervisors	1	.3	10

Family members	1	.3	
From completing a Cert IV course	1	.3	
From other tafe courses	1	.3	
From Resettlement Agency during Cultural Orientation	1	.3	
from studies at TAFE	1	.3	
From the Queensland university's website	1	.3	
from work	1	.3	10
general conversation with a skills queensland office officer	1	.3	5
general knowledge	1	.3	
Griffith University web site	1	.3	
Had looked into previous study, so had read up on it.	1	.3	
HAVE HEARD OF RPL, UNSURE WHERE FROM	1	.3	
have known this for years from anyone I know of mature age entering TAFE or Uni	1	.3	
I am a Workplace Trainer Cert IV	1	.3	10
I am also a teacher	1	.3	10
I assumed they would accept previous learning	1	.3	10
I can't remember	1	.3	
I currently work in education	1	.3	
I have been given RPL before through my studies	1	.3	
i have claimed exemptions when i transfered universities midway through my Beng. course.	1	.3	
I have heard about RPL along 'the path'	1	.3	
I have never heard of Reconision of Prior Learning through the media	1	.3	
I heard it through students only.	1	.3	8
I knew you could get RPL from when I was attending OUA	1	.3	
I know about this as part of my job because I work for a university	1	.3	10
i know of this within the context of the EU Lifelong Learning project and the Bologna Process	1	.3	
I qualified for RPL in order to study at Masters Level while having a	1	.3	10

diploma qualification as I have worked in this field for 20 years.			
I was given RPL when I applied to do a Bachelor of Nursing degree	1	.3	
I work for TAFE Queensland	1	.3	10
I Worked at TAFE (Barrier Reef - Charters Towers Campus)	1	.3	10
i worked for a training organisation	1	.3	10
I worked in the administration office at a University	1	.3	10
I worked with Education Queensland dealing with VET subjects	1	.3	10
In literature from TAFE colleges and universities.	1	.3	
Included in the TAFE's learning material	1	.3	
Information pack sent out by University	1	.3	
internet	2	.5	
Is something I have done	1	.3	
Lecturing in a Univeristy,	1	.3	10
Martin College	1	.3	
My husband used RPL for his Carpentry Cert and i found out I can get RPL too	1	.3	
my own research	1	.3	
My own research	1	.3	
My position as a VET trainer	1	.3	10
NA	1	.3	
Nil	1	.3	
No media	1	.3	
none	1	.3	
Not sure where initially, but I enquired about this at my university and came to realise that they did not have policy for work experience RPL, only formal qualifications	1	.3	
on enrollment website	1	.3	
open day and educational expo	1	.3	
Open learning TAFE website	1	.3	
own research	1	.3	

Own research	1	.3	
Part of my job as a Director of Education & Training	1	.3	10
past studies	1	.3	
personal research/experience	1	.3	
previous academic experience	1	.3	
Previous awareness from other tertiary courses	1	.3	
Previous certificate level study	1	.3	
previous college	1	.3	
previous course	1	.3	
previous study	1	.3	
Previous study	2	.5	
Previous uni	1	.3	
Previous university	1	.3	
Prior studies at TAFE	1	.3	
professional development meetings	1	.3	
professional publications	1	.3	
qtac	1	.3	
QTAC	2	.5	
QTAC Book	1	.3	
Related to my work	1	.3	10
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL COLLEGE	1	.3	
RPL are common Knowledge	1	.3	
Same ticks as previous answer	1	.3	
Sarina Russo Apprenticeship Services	1	.3	
School Careers Advisor	1	.3	2
School information sessions	1	.3	
school prospectus or brochures	1	.3	
See previous answer	2	.5	

self directed enquiry	1	.3	
Self research	1	.3	
Skilling Qld. Adviser	1	.3	
Skilling solutions	1	.3	
skilling solutions qld	1	.3	
Skilling Solutions Qld	1	.3	
Skillings Queensland	1	.3	
student ambassador	1	.3	
Student ambassador	1	.3	
tafe	2	.5	
TAFE	4	1.0	
TAFE (North Point)	1	.3	
Tafe Brochure	1	.3	
TAFE information	1	.3	
TAFE information sheet	1	.3	
TAFE Toowoomba	1	.3	
tafe website	1	.3	
TAFE website	2	.5	
TAFE websites	1	.3	
Through the TAA40104	1	.3	
through word of mouth by friends and other students	1	.3	7
thur uni	1	.3	
training course	1	.3	
TRAINING COURSE AT WORK CONDUCTED BY TAFE	1	.3	10
Uni literature - handbooks etc	1	.3	
Uni Programme Brochure	1	.3	
University	1	.3	
university brochere	1	.3	

University brochure	1	.3	
University Course Handbooks	1	.3	
University Guidelines for RPL	1	.3	
university handbook	1	.3	
University handbook	1	.3	
university intranet pages	1	.3	
university paperwork/online information	1	.3	
University Policy	1	.3	
university website	3	.8	
University website	5	1.3	
University Website	1	.3	
University websites	2	.5	
University wesite	1	.3	
Used in earlier Degree	1	.3	
Utilized it both at the start of TAFE and UNI	1	.3	
Various course enquiries	1	.3	
verbally	1	.3	
volunteering	1	.3	
Was TAFE staff previously	1	.3	10
went in person and they discussed it in person to me	1	.3	
When I rang for career counselling	1	.3	2
When I studied my cert 3	1	.3	
when I study at TAFE	1	.3	
When I was studing to get my Certificate IV in assessment	1	.3	
word of mouth	4	1.0	
Word of Mouth	1	.3	
work	1	.3	10
Work at BNIT introduced me to RPL. I also helped to complete RPL applications for students as an Administration Officer.	1	.3	10

work for RTO	1	.3	10
Work in tertiary education	1	.3	10
Worked as a prospective student adviser at newcastle uni	1	.3	10
worked in vet sector and have cert IV TAA	1	.3	10
working in this area	1	.3	10
Missing Text Responses	206	52.4	
Total	393	100.0	

Note. Text responses that were recoded are presented in bold typeface. Recoded responses are Q2 = Career Guidance Officer/Counsellor; Q5 = Student liaison or support officer, such as an Indigenous support officer or Disability Officer; Q7 = Friends; Q8 = Other students; Q10