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### Recommended Citation

ACER, "ACER eNews Issue 01 January 2013" (2013).  
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## **Staff in Australia's Schools Survey 2013**

ACER is conducting the third cycle of the Staff in Australia's Schools survey (SiAS) in 2013. SiAS is an Australia-wide survey to collect information directly from school teachers and leaders about their background and qualifications, their work, their career intentions, and school staffing issues. A large sample of primary and secondary schools in all sectors and states and territories will be randomly selected and invited to participate in SiAS.

The voluntary survey, which should take approximately 15 minutes to complete, is intended to provide a snapshot of the Australian teacher workforce, including demographic information such as gender, age, qualifications and work roles. It will also gather information that may be used to assist in planning for the future, including data from current teachers and school leaders about their employment intentions and career plans, and staffing issues that schools are facing. This survey will also map key trends since the previous SiAS surveys in 2006-07 and 2010.

SiAS has been commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The Advisory Committee includes representatives of government and non-government school authorities in all states and territories, national principals associations, teacher unions, teacher education institutions and the ABS. The on-line survey will be conducted in April and May.

For further information visit [www.acer.edu.au/sias](http://www.acer.edu.au/sias)

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## Destinations of Victorian school leavers

*The On Track Survey 2012* by Sheldon Rothman and Catherine Underwood reports on the pathways to further education, training or employment of Year 10 to 12 government and non-government school students. Conducted annually since 2003, the *On Track* survey of school leavers provides valuable insights into post-school destinations and pathways.

Over the 10 years of the the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *On Track* survey, the percentage of Year 12 or equivalent completers who went on to bachelor degree study has increased, from 41.6 per cent in 2003 to 52.2 per cent in 2012.

More than 33 000 Year 12 or equivalent completers and more than 3500 early leavers from 2011 were surveyed by telephone in April and May 2012, accounting for nearly 64 per cent of all Year 12 or equivalent completers. Year 12 or equivalent completers are defined as those who completed the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), International Baccalaureate (IB) or Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) at Intermediate or Senior level in schools, TAFE institutions or adult and community education providers. Early school leavers are those who left school before completing one of these qualifications.

More than three quarters of 2011 Victorian Year 12 or equivalent completers continued in some form of education or training in 2012. The most common activity was study towards a bachelor degree (52 per cent), followed by certificate-level study (17.5 per cent), and apprenticeship or traineeship (8 per cent).

Young women more frequently than young men entered bachelor degree study (54.7 per cent compared to 48.9 per cent). Young men much more frequently than young women entered an apprenticeship (8.7 per cent compared to 1.5 per cent), and young women more frequently than men entered a traineeship (3.7 per cent compared to 2.5 per cent).

Year 12 or equivalent completers from the highest socioeconomic status (SES) quarter were more frequently enrolled in a bachelor degree (60.5 per cent). Completers from the lower SES quarters were more frequently enrolled in certificate level courses than were those from higher quarters (22.5 per cent from the lowest quarter and 14 per cent from the highest). Completers from the lower SES quarters were more frequently in the labour market than those from the highest quarter.

One-fifth of respondents said they speak a language other than English at home. The three most common language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) were Vietnamese, Cantonese and Mandarin. Among LBOTE speakers, 67.3 per cent were enrolled in a bachelor degree program. This is higher than the 52 per cent of all Year 12 or equivalent completers studying towards a bachelor degree.

Most of the Year 12 completers not in education or training were working either full time (6.9 per cent) or part time (10.6 per cent). Just over four per cent were unemployed and 0.9 per cent not in the labour force, education or training.

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Of those who left school early, 94.8 per cent were in some form of education or training or had entered the labour market and were either employed or looking for work. The remaining 5.2 per cent were not in the labour force, education or training. More than 60 per cent of early school leavers were males.

*On Track* provides detailed analyses of the transitions experienced by different groups of school leavers that education providers can use to monitor and improve their programs. The project also provides a referral service for school leavers who appear to be experiencing difficulties in the transition process.

Further information is available in the full report, [\*The On Track Survey 2012: The Destinations of School Leavers in Victoria: Statewide Report\*](#), which was released in October.

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## **IB graduates more likely to progress through university**

ACER research for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Organisation has found that IB Diploma Program (DP) graduates progress through university studies at higher rates than non-IB cohorts and that IB DP graduates are more likely than non-IB DP graduates to complete their degree within five years.

*IB Graduates in Australian Universities: Entry and Outcomes: A case study of two institutions* by ACER Principal Research Fellow Dr Daniel Edwards and ACER Research Fellow Catherine Underwood, examined the postsecondary transition, progression, academic performance and post-university pathways of IB DP graduates undertaking tertiary studies at two Australian universities.

The study, the first of its type commissioned by the IB in Australasia, provides valuable insight into the transition of 154 IB DP graduates as they progressed through their university careers at two universities.

IB graduates were notably more likely than non-IB graduate applicants to be successful in applying for university. However, figures also show that IB graduates are less likely than other applicants to accept their offer and enrol.

This study has offered an initial insight into the relationship between school achievement and university outcomes – showing that the correlations between secondary school grades and performance at university were higher for IB DP graduates when compared to other school completers.

The study found little difference in university achievement between IB and non-IB students when variables such as gender, age, language background and secondary school achievement are taken into account. Essentially, IB students perform as well as other students at university when accounting for demographic characteristics and prior academic achievement.

IB graduates enrolled at one of the universities were more likely to come from high socioeconomic status areas than non-IB graduates. On other comparisons, IB graduates have similar characteristics to the comparable national figures. Data from this university suggest that when student characteristics and secondary school achievement are taken into account, IB students perform at the same levels as non-IB students.

There has been growth in the IB DP in Australia in recent years, with the number of schools offering the IB, the number of students enrolled in the IB and the number of IB DP graduates applying to university all expanding between 2007 and 2011.

While the overall number of IB DP graduates remains in the minority, there is still a need to build a greater understanding of the relationship between IB scores and the standard Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) score for admissions to university. Expanding this research across a wider variety of institutions and students could provide valuable benefits for the IB Organisation and for individual universities who attract IB DP graduates.

The ACER report is available at [www.ibo.org/research/policy/programmevalidation/diploma/](http://www.ibo.org/research/policy/programmevalidation/diploma/)

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## New data confirms dramatic decline in Indian university student visas

A higher education research briefing paper released on 13 December 2012 by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), drawing on new data, has confirmed the dramatic decline of international student enrolments in higher education in recent years and has highlighted how a massive downturn in Indian students has been a key driver in this overall trend.

The number of higher education visas for Indian students declined from 34 200 in 2007/08 to just 9750 in 2011/12 – a 71 per cent fall, according to ACER's most recent *Joining the Dots* briefing paper. The briefing, co-authored by ACER researchers Dr Daniel Edwards and Ms Eva van der Brugge, attributes this decline to five key factors:

- Changes to the Australian migration program that weakened the connection between studying in Australia and gaining permanent residency
- Strengthening of the Australian dollar
- Negative impact on Australian education as a result of violence against international students that gained widespread media attention
- Closure of some tertiary providers (mainly in the VET area)
- Growing competition for international students both from traditional competitors (US, UK, Canada and NZ) as well as from developing nations.

Dr Edwards said the decline in overseas higher education students studying in Australia in recent years is not confined to Indian students, as there was also a decrease in other source countries too.

'The downturn in international students in Australian higher education since 2009, following years of very strong growth, has also come from other key countries such as China and Malaysia. However, the declines in these countries are far smaller than that recorded for India,' Dr Edwards said.

Dr Edwards said the international student market is lucrative, and while Australia has been at the forefront of provision over the past two decades, other developed and developing countries are increasing their presence in the market.

'While Australia's international student numbers are declining, key competitors in this market, such as the USA, UK, New Zealand and Canada, have all experienced growth since 2009, suggesting there may be factors specific to Australia influencing this decline,' Dr Edwards said.

'More than 100 countries are now enrolling international students in tertiary education, with many in the Asian region developing their capabilities in this regard over the past five or so years. In addition to this, higher education institutions in the USA have increased their intake of international students in recent years, and Canada has increased its international recruiting activity by easing visa requirements for international students.'

*Joining the Dots* is a subscription-based resource provided by ACER to those with an interest in Australian higher education. Details for subscriptions are available at [www.acer.edu.au/jtd](http://www.acer.edu.au/jtd)

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\* The ACER Joining the Dots research briefing 'Recent trends in higher student visa numbers' draws on new data from the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship, supplemented by statistics collected from the Australian Education International and the Department of Industry,

Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education. It also uses data from the US, UK, New Zealand and Canada for comparative purposes.

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## ACER Update

### Research Developments online

ACER last year determined to replace the print edition of *Research Developments*, after 14 years, with a free, online-only magazine, coming in May. [Subscribe](#) to *Research Developments*.

### Excellence in Professional Practice conference

ACER invites you to share and learn with the best in the profession at the inaugural Excellence in Professional Practice Conference for teachers.

The conference addresses the theme, 'Teaching the Australian Curriculum: Excellence and innovation in the classroom' by drawing together teachers from across Australia to share their professional practice and expertise, and learn from one another about best practice in teaching the Australian Curriculum from classrooms across the country.

The Excellence in Professional Practice Conference takes place on the Gold Coast on 17 and 18 March, 2013. Further information is available from <http://www.acer.edu.au/eppc>

### Vocational and workplace education and training conference

The second National Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Conference, addressing the theme, 'Building on evidence to improve skills,' to be held in May 2013 will bring together evidence-based research with industry and training perspectives in order to share and discuss issues around the assessment of language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) and implications for effective vocational and workplace education and training (VET).

Speakers at the conference will include researchers, managers and coordinators with local and international expertise in LLN skills and adult learning, from industry and the VET sector, along with policy makers from industry, industry skills councils and government.

The conference takes place at Ultimo College, Sydney Institute, on 9 and 10 May 2013. Further information is available from <http://www.acer.edu.au/nallnac>

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## **National School Improvement Tool**

On 7 December 2012, Australia's education ministers, meeting as the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood, endorsed the *National School Improvement Tool*, to be made available to schools and systems so that it can be incorporated into existing school improvement processes. The *National School Improvement Tool* was developed by ACER for the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations based on a series of national consultations conducted during 2012. The tool incorporates material developed by Professor Geoff Masters for ACER in collaboration with the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment.

Further information on the *National School Improvement Tool* is available from

<https://www.acer.edu.au/nsit>

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