STUDENTS AND PART-TIME WORK ...2

MONITORING ATTITUDES AND VALUES ..............4

GRADUATE SKILLS TO BE ASSESSED .............6

NEW INDEX FOR PRIMARY RESOURCES ............6

LITERACY CONFERENCE ......................7

PAPER & PEN ..................................7

WORKSHOPS ..................................8
School students benefit

Students who work part-time in Year 11 and 12 are less likely to be unemployed at age 19 than those who do not work during secondary school, according to a study by ACER.

Author of the report, Ms Lyn Robinson, said “Students who have part-time jobs gain a knowledge of the labour market and develop skills and contacts which provide them with some advantage in that labour market, at least in the early years after leaving school”.

“Having a part-time job while at school is one of the ways a young person can achieve a smoother transition into later full-time employment,” Ms Robinson said.

Those who had part-time work while at school were also significantly less likely to experience lengthy periods of unemployment, and in some cases, were likely to earn slightly higher hourly wages.

If I hadn’t been working I would have spent more time studying.

I found it difficult to balance the demands of work and study.

The full report is available from ACER Customer Service (09L9SA; $20, plus p&h);
Phone: (03) 9277 5656 Fax: (03) 9277 5678 Email: sales@acer.edu.au
from part-time work

How does part-time work affect studies?

Concern about the impact of part-time work on students’ schooling appears to be unfounded. The fact that students had a part-time job did not reduce the likelihood of completing secondary school, or affect academic performance in Year 12.

However, Year 12 results were a little lower for those who worked more than ten hours per week during Year 11 and 12 than they were for non-workers during those years. In addition, Year 11 students who worked more than ten hours per week were slightly less likely to finish Year 12 than non-workers.

“Students as a whole didn’t perceive their part-time jobs to have had a significant negative impact on their school performance. However there was some evidence that females were more likely than males to say that their school work was affected,” Ms Robinson said.

Those who worked more than 10 hours per week were relatively more concerned about juggling the competing demands on their time, and were more likely to feel that their school work suffered as a result.

The study was based on over 3000 young people who were aged 19 in 1994 and who had been surveyed annually since they were 14 years old. It forms part of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth research program, which is supported by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

What type of work were the students involved in?

Up to one-third of 17-year-old students were employed during the school year and spent an average of nine hours per week in their jobs. Over half of all these 17-year-old student-workers in 1992 were employed in sales jobs, and a third were labourers. There was a marked gender difference – twice as many females as males were sales workers, while many more males than females did labouring jobs.

‘... we say we’re looking for a good degree with a serving of chips and fries, because if they’ve stuck at McDonalds for a few years and become a manager or whatever, or Myer or a factory, or working at Woolies or Coles for say 5 or 6 years, and they stick to it, they have to put up with a whole lot of things, so we do look at that.’


Photograph courtesy of Coles Supermarkets
Monitoring

When Michael Chaney, chair of the Council of John XXIII College in Perth, and College principal Greg Clune contacted ACER in 1997, they had an intriguing question: Could ACER assist the College to monitor the attitudes and values of its students?

Chaney and Clune explained that one objective of John XXIII College is to develop academic competence. The College already uses a range of measures to monitor the academic achievements of its students. But the College also aims to develop people of conscience and compassion who are committed to God and the service of others. How well was the College achieving those objectives? What could be said about the social and emotional development of students in the College? Exactly how committed were John XXIII students to God and the service of others?

Dr Geoff Masters, now Director of ACER, saw Chaney and Clune's question as an interesting challenge:

"At ACER we have considerable experience in measuring and monitoring achievement in literacy and numeracy and in the key learning areas, but we have much less experience in monitoring the development of attitudes and values. The challenge for us was to combine the limited research base in these areas with the College's stated intentions for its students, and our technical expertise, to measure what some might consider unmeasurable."

The starting point was a weekend retreat with senior staff and members of the College Council to explore in detail the attitudes and values John XXIII College seeks to develop in its students. The questions addressed over those two days went to the heart of the College's intentions: What is conscience? What would be evidence of more and less compassion? What would indicate a commitment to serving others? What could be watched for as evidence of emotional development?

On the basis of these initial discussions, and over the following months, Geoff Masters and Margaret Forster drafted statements relating to seven dimensions identified by staff of the College. The draft statements were trial tested on students in Victorian secondary schools who were asked to respond anonymously to each statement by strongly agreeing, agreeing, disagreeing, or strongly disagreeing. Responses in the field trial were then used to select 20 statements for each of the seven dimensions.

---

Emotional Intelligence

Yale psychologist Peter Salovey identifies a number of aspects of emotional growth including:

**Knowing one's emotions** 'Self-awareness—recognising a feeling as it happens—is the keystone to emotional intelligence.' This aspect includes: recognising one's emotions and their effects; knowing one's strengths and limits; and a strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities.

**Managing emotions** 'Handling feelings so they are appropriate is an ability that builds on self-awareness.' This aspect includes: keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check; maintaining standards of honesty and integrity; taking responsibility for personal performance; flexibility in handling change; and being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information.

**Motivating oneself** 'Marshalling emotions in the service of a goal underlies accomplishment of every sort.' This aspect includes: striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence; aligning with the goals of the group or organisation; readiness to act on opportunities; optimism and persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks. (Goleman, D (1998). Working with emotional intelligence. London: Bloomsbury).

"One of the most rewarding aspects of this work occurred as people who initially had been sceptical about the whole activity began to engage in spirited discussions of possible indicators of students' attitudes and values. By the time we had drafted statements for the seven dimensions, there was an eagerness to see how students would respond to them."

Analyses of the returned questionnaires have allowed staff of the College to study the kinds of responses students give, to compare the responses of Year 8 and Year 12 students, and to compare those responses with the responses of graduates of the College in their twenties. The 1998 exercise also revealed interesting gender differences on the seven dimensions.

John XXIII College Objective

'In the spirit of Mary Ward, Ignatius Loyola and John XXIII, our College seeks to develop people of competence, conscience and compassion, who are committed to God and the service of others.'

Geoff Masters and Margaret Forster say the next challenge is to use students' responses to map and understand development on each of the seven dimensions:

“The 20 statements we have written for each dimension are best thought of as a limited set of indicators of that dimension. The real challenge is to see beyond those indicators to the underlying continuum of development. If we can do that, then we may begin to understand growth itself.”

For further information contact Margaret Forster (03) 9277 5611 or forster@acer.edu.au

---

**Emotional Growth**

- I rarely worry about decisions I’ve made.
- I have strategies for dealing with my anger.
- I don’t let my feelings dictate my behaviour.
- If I am feeling inadequate, I see it as an opportunity for growth.
- If someone is critical of my behaviour, I try not to react with anger.
- It’s not important to be popular.
- I don’t need praise to feel good about myself.
- I would enter a relationship only if it builds mutual esteem and respect.
- Being with competent people doesn’t destroy my feeling of self-worth.
- I try not to take my anger and frustration out on others.
- I reflect on my behaviour to help me in the future.
- I feel optimistic about my future.
- I eventually recover from my mistakes.
- I’m not afraid to try new things.
- I like who I am.
- I am happy for others when they do well.
- I feel comfortable working with a group.
- You can be proud of yourself without being arrogant.
- If I’ve made a mistake, I try to learn from it.
- It’s human to feel frustrated sometimes.

- displays self-worth independently of others
- displays optimism and a determination to improve
- displays self-awareness/confidence
- recognises emotions

© 1998 John XXIII College and the Australian Council for Educational Research
Skills of graduates to be assessed

ACER will develop the new Graduate Skills Assessment for students entering and exiting undergraduate courses at Australian universities.

ACER Assessment Services Manager, Ms Deirdre Jackson, has begun consultations with universities about the types of skills they would like to test.

"There seems to be a high level of agreement about a small number of skills to be assessed. However, we are awaiting the written responses from universities before we are in a position to make final decisions about the key dimensions to be assessed," Ms Jackson said.

The Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) is introducing the Graduate Skills Assessment to assist universities in providing accountability, to increase the focus on outcomes and to highlight the added value a university can provide. DETYA also recognises that universities may find the program useful for entrance to postgraduate courses and for promoting the university to prospective students. In addition, the program responds to employers' needs for employees with high levels of generic skills.

Universities will be invited to participate in a pilot test in March 2000. The first exit test will be conducted prior to students finishing their degree in 2000, and the first entry test will be in March 2001.

In addition to developing the tests, ACER will administer the three-hour test at each of the participating universities, enter and analyse the student response data and report back to the students and universities. DETYA has commissioned ACER to deliver the Graduate Skills Assessment over the next three years.

For further information contact ACER Assessment Services Manager, Ms Deirdre Jackson, telephone (03) 9277 5587, email: jackson@acer.edu.au

New index for primary resources

ACER has contributed to the development of a new information resource entitled Primary Sources: Children's Information Resources for Primary and Early Secondary Schools. Primary Sources contains the largest collection of children's resources available in Australia, and has been released by RMIT Publishing.

Accessible via CD-ROM or over the internet, it is designed to assist primary and early secondary school librarians, teachers and students to find the latest information for children's study and project work, and teachers' professional development.

Primary Sources covers the following areas:

- Children's literature and books in print
- Educational research on children
- Children's films and videos
- Classroom resources for primary and early secondary schools
- Children's poetry
- Multimedia tools for primary and early secondary schools

ACER's Cunningham Library has produced one of the four databases available, Children's Educational Resources. The database indexes Australian resources for the classroom for use by children up to Year 8. It lists resources developed by government-funded agencies as well as commercial producers and includes literature on child development, student learning, teaching, subject guides, use of resources, and classroom management.

Primary Sources is a collaborative project between RMIT Publishing and Australia's leading educational resource providers, including ACER, D.W. Thorpe, School of English and the Library of the University College of the University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

Free Trial

Primary Sources is available for a free trial to your library – to register for a free trial please contact RMIT Publishing subscriptions on (03) 9341 3210.

http://www.rmitpublishing.com.au
Email: info@rmitpublishing.com.au
Paper & pen assessment

What is the secret to writing good multiple-choice questions?
How can teachers make best use of student self-assessments?
What issues need to be addressed in the use of cloze procedures?
When is consistency of judgement important and how is it achieved?
What are Likert scales?
What factors should be taken into account to ensure that paper & pen assessments are fair?

These are just some of the dozens of questions addressed in the recently-released ARK magazine Paper & Pen. This latest magazine is one in a series developed to support teachers in their use of varied assessment techniques. Previous ARK magazines include Portfolios, Performances, Projects, Products, Developmental Assessment, and Progress Maps.

Since their introduction, the ARK (Assessment Resource Kit) magazines have become the leading source of information for Australian teachers on issues and developments in assessment and reporting, with more than 45,000 magazines purchased for use in schools. The accompanying ARK videotape Understanding Developmental Assessment also has been a best-seller with more than 1,400 copies of the videotape now in schools.

The latest ARK magazine outlines issues that need to be addressed in developing paper & pen assessments in a range of contexts for a variety of purposes: from everyday classroom assessments of students’ strengths and weaknesses in an area of learning to externally-developed ‘high stakes’ tests for university entry or the award of scholarships. As in all ARK materials, an emphasis is placed on practical tips to improve classroom practice.

from ARK Paper & Pen

The stem (question or incomplete statement) should focus students on what is being asked. Students should have some idea about what is being asked before they read the options.

Next Sally
☐ had dinner.
☐ went home.
☐ went to bed.
☐ read a book.

What did Sally do next?
☐ had dinner.
☐ went home.
☐ went to bed.
☐ read a book.

To minimise the amount of reading required, as many words as possible should be put in the stem.

Jim went to
☐ the river with his friends.
☐ the park with his friends.
☐ the beach with his friends.
☐ the movies with his friends.

Jim and his friends went to the
☐ river.
☐ park.
☐ beach.
☐ movies.

ARK is developed with support from the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. For further information, contact ACER Press Customer Service, Telephone (03) 9277 5656; Fax (03) 9277 5678; email: sales@acer.edu.au

Improving Literacy Learning  What does the research tell us?

ACER Research Conference 1999, Monday 18 – Tuesday 19 October, Stamford Grand Hotel, Adelaide

A number of recent research studies have provided important new insights into literacy learning in schools. This conference, organised by the Australian Council for Educational Research, brings together leading literacy researchers to review the current state of knowledge on ways of improving literacy learning. Outstanding international and national literacy researchers will review research findings in the areas of:

- enhancing early literacy learning
- setting international benchmarks in literacy
- exploring literacy and new technologies.

For a conference brochure please contact:
Ms Lexie Marshall, ACER
Phone: (03) 9277 5503 Fax: (03) 9277 5500
Email: conference@acer.edu.au
EDUCATION

'Stop Think Do' Workshop
A multi-purpose tool for motivating children's social and learning skills.
Melbourne (ACER) August 16
Bendigo August 17
Presenter: Liddy Petersen
Cost: $100

PARENT EDUCATION

Talking about Families:
Opening Doorways with Art, Role-play and Visualisation
ACER July 22
Presenter: Mark Pearson
Cost: $95

Working with Vulnerable Families
ACER August 6
Presenter: Constance Jenkins
Cost: $95

Emotional Release: Dealing with Grief and Loss
ACER September 17
Presenter: Mark Pearson
Cost: $95

Working with Children and Families when a Parent has a Mental Illness
ACER October 21
Presenter: Vicki Cowling
Cost: $95

Safe Anger Release for Children and Adolescents
ACER November 5
Presenter: Mark Pearson
Cost: $95

PSYCHOLOGY

Workshops in the following areas:
- Assessment Instruments for Trauma
- Assessment Instruments for Adult and Childhood Depression
- Assessment Instruments for Personality
- Assessment Instruments for Intelligence

The aim of these workshops is to provide hands-on experience, historical background, theoretical framework and current research will be covered. These workshops are aimed at the practising professional.

Two four-hour twilight workshops will be offered at ACER from August to December.
Presenter: Dalva Verbyla

MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

Familiarisation for Psychologists: How to administer, use and apply the MBTI
Sydney Holiday Inn, Potts Point July 22
Presenter: Jo Fleischer
Cost: $210

Do What You Are: MBTI and Career Planning
Discover the perfect career for you through the secrets of personality type.
Sydney, Holiday Inn, Potts Point July 23
Presenter: Jo Fleischer
Cost: $210

MBTI Step II Program
ACER August 2-3
Presenter: Peter Geyer
Cost: $295

MBTI Form M
(half-day workshop)
ACER August 4
Presenter: Peter Geyer
Cost: $75

MBTI and Team Building
Sydney, Holiday Inn, Potts Point August 17-18
Presenter: Jo Fleischer
Cost: $300

MBTI for Organisations
Using the work of Sandra Hirsch
ACER August 23-24
Presenter: Peter Geyer
Cost: $320

MBTI Qualifying Program (5-day course)
ACER August 23-24
Presenter: Peter Geyer
Cost: $1975

Type for Counsellors
ACER September 6-7
Presenter: Peter Geyer
Cost: $320

HUMAN RESOURCES

Choosing the Appropriate Test Batteries for Managerial, Clerical and Trade Occupations
Sydney Office August 5
Presenter: Melissa McCloough
Cost: $45

PIN-POINT Training
A 3-day program providing the skills to effectively incorporate personality assessment into recruitment and selection processes.
Melbourne July 28-30
Sydney August 10-12
Sydney November 17-19
Presenters: Melissa McCloough
Cost: $1495

Occupational Testing Course
An intensive 5-day program covering psychometrics and statistics, test administration, scoring, interpretation and professional assessments issues.
Melbourne August 23-27
Sydney September 20-24
Presenters: Melissa McCloough
Cost: $3295

Test Administration Course
A practical 1-day program providing the essential skills and understanding for professional test administration.
Sydney September 7
Melbourne October 6
Melbourne November 26
Presenters: Melissa McCloough
Cost: $695

Assessment Centre Exercises
A 2-day program covering everything required to use the ACE materials effectively and professionally, in a well-run assessment centre.
Sydney September 9-10
Melbourne November 11-12
Presenters: Melissa McCloough
Cost: $1395