

**Supp. Submission 121.1**  
**EoB Inquiry**



**NCVER**

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR VOCATIONAL  
EDUCATION RESEARCH LTD  
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Our ref: DR106/JB/mh  
Your ref: Education of boys

Mr James Rees  
Inquiry Secretary  
House of representatives standing committee  
on employment, education and workplace relations  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Rees

**Inquiry into the education of boys**

I refer to a letter dated 18 June 2001 in which I provided the committee with some changes to the introductory remarks made by myself on NCVER's submission to the inquiry into the education of boys. These changes related to the participation rates of boys and girls aged 20.

I also undertook at this time to provide some extra material to the committee on the courses and outcomes undertaken by boys in vocational education and training. Please find attached the additional information requested by the committee.

Please do not hesitate to call me on (02) 6230 0699 if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Jessie Borthwick  
Deputy Director



**Adelaide (head office)**  
252 Kensington Road, Leabrook  
SA 5068, Australia  
PO Box 115 Kensington Park, SA 5068  
ph +61 8 8333 8400 fax +61 8 8331 9211  
e-mail <ncver@ncver.edu.au>

**Canberra**  
99 Northbourne Ave, Turner, ACT 2612  
PO Box 1899 Canberra City, ACT 2601  
ph +61 2 6230 0699 fax +61 2 6230 0799  
e-mail <actncver@act.ncver.edu.au>

# Participation of Boys in Vocational Education and Training

## **Introduction**

This report investigates participation in vocational education and training undertaken by boys. The analysis identifies the type of training undertaken by boys aged 15 to 19 who are in vocational education and training of any kind and specifically by boys who are still at school.

In 1999, there were over 1.6 million people undertaking vocational education and training in Australia. Of these, around one in five (342,900 or 20.8%) were aged 15-19 years and of those aged 15-19 years just over half (193,700 or 56.5%) were males. Young people (those aged between 15 and 19 years) undertook over 7,000 different courses in 1999, ranging from food retailing at McDonalds to computing skills for the office.

Of the 342,900 young people that were undertaking a vocational program in 1999, some (93,700 or 27.3%) undertook their training while still at school. Of these that were still at school around 47,100 were males (50.3% of those attending school).

Some of these young people were also undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship as part of their training. As at 31 December 1999, over 54,000 boys were involved in an apprenticeship or traineeship and of these about 2,000 were still at school.

## **About the data**

Boys have been identified as males aged between 15 and 19 inclusive, while 'boys at school' have been identified as males who are still attending school and have undertaken vocational education and training with providers in receipt of public funds.

It should be noted that while the data presented in this report are sourced from the NCVER 1997 to 1999 Vocational Education and Training collections, its scope differs slightly to that used to derive information provided in other NCVER reports. This primarily involves different treatment of school based VET training. In particular the information for 1999 in this report differs slightly to that provided in the submission to the house of representatives standing committee due to revised information on school based vocational education and training.

## **What boys do in vocational education**

### **1. Top 20 courses undertaken in 1999**

With thousands of courses undertaken by boys and with a huge variety undertaken by boys still at school, table 1 provides the top 20 courses undertaken by boys in vocational education in general. The second column shows where the courses listed for boys still at school are ranked in relation to all boys. For example, the greatest number of boys undertook a course in learning support (2.9%) and is therefore

ranked first, while for boys still at school this course was ranked 76<sup>th</sup>. The highest ranked course for boys still at school was business studies (general access), which was ranked second for all boys (1.3% undertaking this course).

Table 1 lists the 20 most popular courses undertaken by all boys based on 1999 course enrolments and also provides the ranking of these courses for boys still at school. Table 1 shows:

- The most popular course among all boys is 'Course in learning support' which is a recognised short course offering additional learning assistance to people enrolled/intending to enrol in a TAFE or similar course. This course is ranked 76<sup>th</sup> for boys still at school.
- Other popular courses for all boys relate to studies in business studies, hospitality, engineering, building and construction, automotive and information technology.
- For boys still at school, the most popular courses were 'Business Studies (general access) Course' followed by 'Certificate II in Vocational Communication', 'Certificate I in Engineering (Manufacturing)' and 'Certificate I or II in Information Technology'. All of these courses feature in the top 20 course list, for boys in general irrespective if they are still at school or not.

**Table 1: Top 20 courses undertaken by boys in vocational education and training, 1999**

	Per cent of course enrolments undertaken by boys	Rank of course enrolments undertaken by boys still at school
Course in Learning Support	2.9	76
Business Studies (general access) Course	1.3	1
Certificate II in Hospitality (Operations)	1.2	16
Certificate I in Engineering (Pre-Vocational)	1.1	9
Manufacturing and Engineering	1.1	6
General Construction (Carpentry)-Housing	1.1	17
Certificate II in Vocational Communication	1.1	2
Certificate III in Automotive (Light Vehicle Maintenance)	1.0	152
Certificate I in Engineering (Manufacturing)	1.0	3
Certificate II in Information Technology	0.9	4
Certificate I in Information Technology	0.9	5
Certificate I in Vocational Access	0.9	30
Electrical - Mechanic - Fitter/Mechanic	0.9	254
Matriculation	0.8	33
Certificate III in Engineering	0.8	571
Training Program in General Construction (Pre Employment)	0.8	11
Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery)	0.7	214
Certificate in Engineering (Mechanical, Fabrication, Electrical, Electronics)	0.7	128
Certificate I in Furnishing	0.7	7
Certificate III in Building & Construction (Fitout and Finish)	0.7	257
Number ('000) Course Enrolments	260.2	

## 2. Time series of subject outcomes

Tables 2 and 3 provide a time series of subject outcomes for boys undertaking VET, for all students undertaking VET, boys still at school and for all students still at school.

The main points to note from tables 2 and 3 are:

- Over the years 1997 to 1999 about nine in 10 VET students obtained a successful outcome, although the proportion achieving a successful outcome has declined since 1997. However, the result remains good and compares well with results achieved over all.
- For boys in VET just over eight in 10 (83.8%) achieved a successful outcome in 1999, down from around nine in 10 (90.2%) in 1997.
- Boys in school have consistently achieved rather more successful outcomes than boys in general. For instance in 1999, 88.8% of boys in school achieved a successful outcome compared to 83.8% for boys in general.
- The outcomes for boys still at school are not all that different to the outcomes for all school based students. For instance, in 1997 around 92% of boys at school achieved a successful outcome, compared to around 94% for all students still at school.
- As with boys and total VET, the proportion of boys at school and all at school are showing a declining trend in achieving successful outcomes since 1997. However, no one group is declining at a faster rate than any other.

**Table 2: Per cent of assessed subject enrolments undertaken by boys and all in vocational education and training by outcome, 1997 to 1999**

	Boys			Total VET		
	1997	1998	1999	1997	1998	1999
Pass	89.3	84.5	82.9	89.1	85.3	84.2
Recognition of Prior Learning	0.9	0.9	0.9	3.5	3.7	3.5
<i>Total successful</i>	<i>90.2</i>	<i>85.4</i>	<i>83.8</i>	<i>92.6</i>	<i>89.0</i>	<i>87.7</i>
Fail	9.8	14.6	16.2	7.4	11.0	12.3
Total assessed ('000)	1,160.7	1,406.7	1,596.1	6,562.9	7,422.3	8,381.3

**Table 3: Per cent of assessed subject enrolments undertaken by boys and all still at school a by outcome, 1997 to 1999**

	Boys at school			All at school		
	1997	1998	1999	1997	1998	1999
Pass	90.9	87.7	88.2	92.9	90.1	90.3
Recognition of Prior Learning	1.0	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.7	0.7
<i>Total successful</i>	<i>91.9</i>	<i>88.4</i>	<i>88.8</i>	<i>93.8</i>	<i>90.8</i>	<i>91.0</i>
Fail	8.2	11.6	11.1	6.2	9.2	9.0
Total assessed ('000)	120.9	196.2	271.5	256.6	406.7	552.2

### 3. Qualifications

- Over a quarter (26.7%) of course enrolments undertaken by boys are in an AQF Certificate III or equivalent qualification (in other words in an accredited course leading to formal qualifications). This compares to around 18.8% for all course enrolments and to less than 10% of course enrolments for boys still at school.
- Over half (57.4%) of course enrolments by all students still at school are undertaken at AQF Certificate levels I and II, about the same as for boys still at school (55.5%). This compares to only 24.0% for all students and 33.9% for boys.
- Boys still at school are more likely than all boys to be undertaking a non award course (20.4% c.f. 15.3%).

**Table 4: Per cent of course enrolments undertaken by boys in VET by qualification, 1999**

Qualification	Boys	Total VET	Boys still at school	All still at school
AQF diploma or higher	8.5	11.3	2.1	1.7
AQF certificate IV or equivalent	4.8	9.8	1.8	1.8
AQF certificate III or equivalent	26.7	18.8	8.1	9.8

AQF certificate II	19.8	16.4	27.9	34.4
AQF - level unknown	3.2	3.5	2.3	2.4
AQF certificate I	14.1	7.6	27.6	23.0
AQF senior secondary	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3
Other recognised courses	7.3	9.4	9.7	6.0
Non award courses	15.3	22.9	20.4	20.6
<b>Total Course Enrolments ('000)</b>	<b>260.2</b>	<b>1,992.2</b>	<b>69.2</b>	<b>131.9</b>

#### 4. Apprentices and trainees by occupation

The following table looks at the participation of boys and boys in school that are undertaking their training through apprenticeship or traineeship pathways. Table 8 highlights that:

- Around 2,000 of boys still at school were undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in 1999.
- Only around 4% of boys are undertaking their apprenticeship or traineeship while still at school, compared to around 24% of VET students.
- Boys (76.7%) are far more likely to be working in a trade related area compared with boys still at school (30.7%).
- Boys still at school are more likely to be working in the lower occupational areas, such as *labourers and related workers* (21.9% compared to 6.2% for boys), *elementary clerical, sales and service workers* (15.6% c.f. 5.2%) and *intermediate clerical, sales and service workers* (15.3% c.f. 6.0%).

**Table 5: Per cent of apprentices and trainees in training by occupation at 31 December 1999**

	Boys still at school	All Boys
Managers & administrators	3.4	1.5
Professionals	0.2	0.2
Associate professionals	11.2	2.4
<i>Trades &amp; related workers sub-total</i>	<i>30.7</i>	<i>76.7</i>
Mechanical & fabrication engineering	4.6	11.7
Automotive	6.9	16.4
Electrical and electronic	4.0	8.8
Construction	6.5	21.7
Food	3.8	9.8
Skilled agriculture & horticulture	0.5	2.0
Other trades & related workers	4.3	6.4
Advanced clerical and service workers	0.0	0.0
Intermediate clerical, sales & service workers	15.3	6.0
Intermediate production & transport workers	1.8	1.7
Elementary clerical, sales & service workers	15.6	5.2
Labourers and related workers	21.9	6.2
<b>Total in training (number)</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>54,200</b>

Source: Unpublished apprentice and trainee data, NCVER, March quarter 2001.