

more
than
money



NAB Education Insights Special Report

Part 3: Life after school

NAB Behavioural & Industry Economics
April 2025

NAB Education has again reached out to a large representative sample of Australian secondary school students across the country to better understand how they view their lives, and the role schools play in supporting them. Hundreds of students contributed from the public, private independent and Catholic sectors and across all year levels. In the final of this three part series, we look at life beyond school exploring issues such as student optimism, the future, barriers to realising goals and general attitudes to life. What emerges is an optimistic and civic minded generation, with a strong sense of self belief, but who also worry about the future of the planet and the economy.

They are focussed on life after school and are confident they will achieve their goals with girls having quite different aspirations to boys, particularly around further education. They are increasingly concerned about money (particularly girls) and their overall financial security but also desire to achieve a good work-life balance. They are driven to learn more and improve their finances, but boys are more financially confident than girls. They have an entrepreneurial spirit that must be nurtured with a growing number keen to own their own business if they knew how. They believe strongly in gender equity particularly equal pay and shared parenting responsibilities. And they believe success is defined by having a balanced life with a high paying job, owning their own home, living debt free & a family.

Being an optimist means much more than simply being positive. Optimism is closely aligned with hope. It's about the explanations they take on for the changing events in their lives. Optimists tend to see positive events as permanent and pervasive. Students were most positive they would receive a better education than their parents, having an interesting and well paid career, living a happy life with friends they can count on, and making positive financial decisions. In contrast, students were much less optimistic that Australia will meet its climate change targets, they will be able to own their own business (despite a growing number wanting to do so), the state of the economy, artificial intelligence benefitting them, owning their own home, or living where they want to (no doubt also impacted by poor housing affordability).

When asked about their plans for life after school some important gender differences clearly emerge. Overall, around 3 in 4 students plan to go to university, 1 in 2 get a job and 1 in 4 travel overseas or take a gap year. But, while 8 in 10 girls plan to go to university, only 6 in 10 boys did. Despite continuing reports of widespread trade

shortages, few plan to start an apprenticeship. A much larger number of students at private independent schools (almost 1 in 4) plan to start a business. When asked about career aspirations, having a high income & financial success is still paramount to an unchanged 6 in 10 students. Slightly more (around 1 in 2) indicated they wanted a good work-life balance and to be enthusiastic about work. A somewhat lower number want a career with a sense of purpose and have a positive impact on society, but more want job security. High incomes and financial success, good work-life balance, and a sense of purpose and impact on society were more common career goals for girls in general, and growth and career advancement among boys.

Fewer students know what they want to do for a career, with 54% quite sure, down from 60% in 2023. It is however encouraging that 3 in 4 young Australians had chosen a career based on what they enjoy and 1 in 2 because it was what they were good at. A large number (around 2 in 3) also said they were choosing jobs that pay well.

Interestingly, a much higher number of girls than boys in general chose a job because it was what they enjoy. Most (around 3 in 4) are confident they will achieve their goals (although boys slightly more so) – an encouraging result given research showing a strong correlation between confidence and success. Students believe the biggest barriers to achieving their goals are not having enough money, not knowing where to start, not doing well enough academically at school and too much competition. More students are also now worried about not having enough experience and not knowing what they want to do with their lives. Noticeably more girls are worried about all these factors, particularly lack of money.

With greater uncertainty around the future of work, a growing number of students are looking to take greater control of their own careers with nearly 1 in 2 (47%) interested in starting a business when they leave school if they knew how, up significantly from 1 in 3 (35%) in 2023.

This suggests a growing need to embed entrepreneurial approaches to education in school curriculums to equip them with skills to adapt with the changing world. But a gender divide remains with 52% of boys keen to start a business compared to 41% of girls. When asked to assess their financial life skills, students scored themselves quite highly across a range of key areas, but understanding was relatively lower around credit cards and debt. Boys in general scored themselves higher than girls and in most areas. Having grown up in the digital age, teenagers have also become key targets for scammers. Around 3 in 10 said they themselves or someone in their household had experienced or detected a scam.

Young Australians remain strongly supportive of gender equity including the importance of shared responsibilities for child raising and equal pay for the same job. Still in solid agreement but down sharply on last year as financial concerns grow, was the desire to work for an organisation that had a positive impact on the world. Wanting to become a leader in their chosen profession or field and doing meaningful work that helps others being more important than a high salary, also scored somewhat lower, while belief in making a difference in personally tackling climate change was much lower. Agreement remained lowest overall and largely unchanged for the belief that having children has a negative impact on your career.

Success can have many meanings, but ultimately for most it means being the best possible version of themselves, becoming who they want to be and behaving in a way that leaves them happy with their mark on the world and those around them. In the eyes of students, the most important measure of success (identified by 6 in 10 overall) is having a balanced life between work, study and pleasure. Over 1 in 5 also pointed to a job with high income and just under 1 in 2 buying a house or a property to live in, being debt free and having a partner, family and children. Significantly more girls than boys overall said being successful meant having a balanced life, working in a role or field they were passionate about or travel.



Optimism about the future

High school years are a critical period of human development, and a time when many students (particularly those coming towards the end of their high school journey) begin to worry about their future. Optimists generally have more positive than negative expectations about their future, while pessimists have a less favourable perception of the world ahead. In this section, we explore how optimistic Australian high school students are about some important aspects of their future life and the world they live in. It paints a somewhat testing picture with the average student reporting moderate to low levels of optimism about key aspects of their future lives.

When asked to score a range of questions about their future lives, students were most positive that they would receive a better education than their parents (scoring on average 58.3 pts, where 100 is completely optimistic). They were next most optimistic about having a career they enjoy and were interested in (57.9 pts), one that paid well (57.4 pts), that they would live a happy life (56.6 pts), have friends they could count on (54.9 pts), would make confident financial decisions (54.5 pts) and would have

enough money to save and invest (53.0 pts). These are all encouraging responses.

Students were least optimistic that Australia could meet its climate change targets (40.7 pts), being able to own their own business, despite a large and growing number wanting to do so (44.2 pts), the Australian economy (44.3 pts), AI benefitting them after school (48.2 pts) and at school (48.6 pts) and buying their own homes (50.5 pts). This is not surprising as housing affordability continues to worsen with the average dwelling costing 16.4 times household income per capita at the end of 2023 compared to around 9.5 times though the 1990s and 14.0 times as recently as end-2020. This has also likely to have influenced very low levels of optimism about starting a family (51.5 pts) – despite many believing this is an important element of having a ‘successful’ life – and living where they want to (52.7 pts).

To put these average scores in perspective, 6 in 10 young people scored low (less than 40 points) for Australia meeting its climate change targets and being able to own their own business. About 1 in 2 were not at all optimistic about the economy or benefitting from AI and over 4 in 10 about starting a family, owning a home or living where they

Chart 1: Optimistic about the the future regarding the following (score)

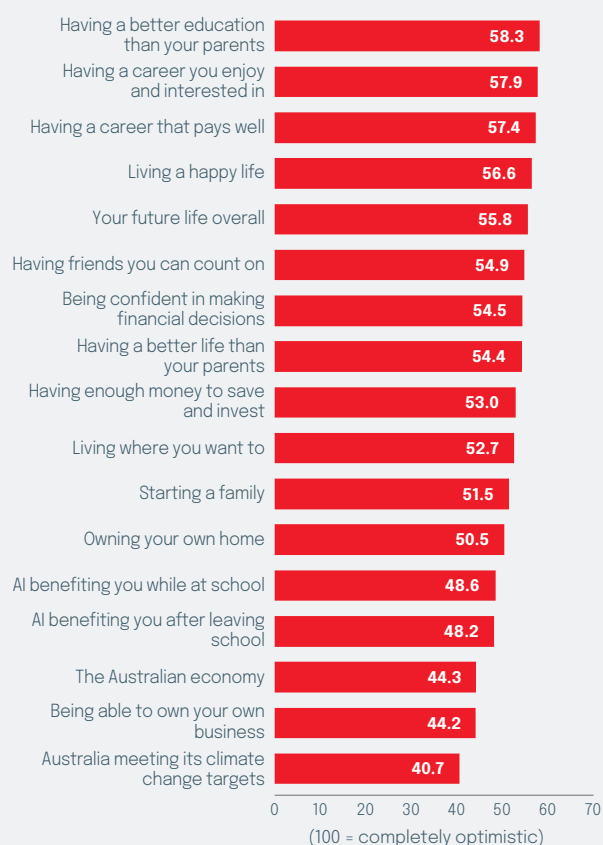
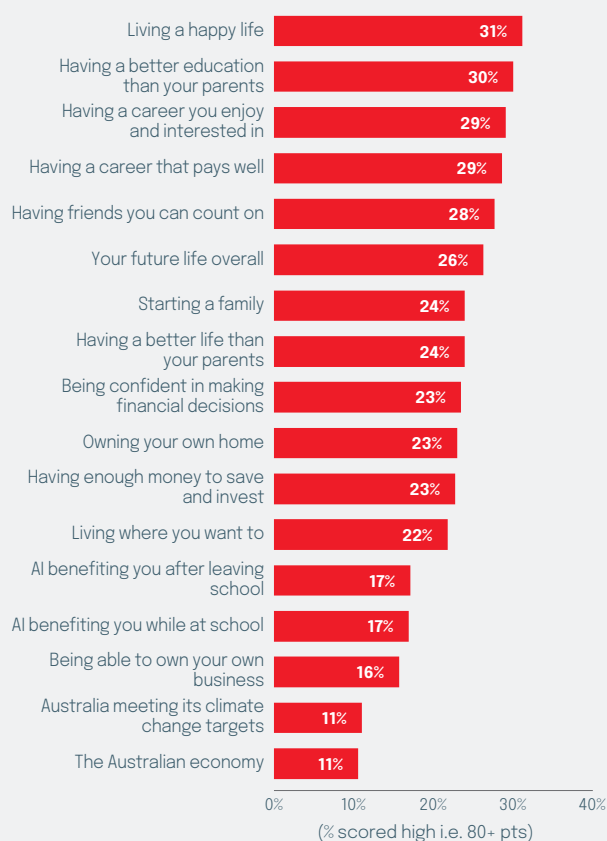


Chart 2: Optimism about the future regarding the following (scored high)



Optimism about the future regarding the following: 2024

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Having a better education than your parents	58.3	60.5	56.7	58.2	53.8	60.4	58.5	56.9	59.7	56.6	58.6	65.5	58.0	55.2	58.8
Having a career that you enjoy and are interested in	57.9	60.4	56.9	57.5	58.6	54.7	58.4	58.2	58.1	50.5	59.2	65.7	58.9	55.4	57.6
Having a career that pays well	57.4	57.4	57.8	57.3	58.6	56.8	57.4	57.7	57.6	46.2	59.3	64.8	60.0	55.0	56.4
Living a happy life	56.6	58.1	56.9	56.1	52.6	57.5	57.0	55.5	57.7	48.9	57.9	68.2	56.6	55.0	55.2
Your future life overall	55.8	58.8	57.6	54.2	53.1	56.8	55.9	55.0	56.5	48.7	56.9	63.9	55.8	54.7	54.7
Having friends you can count on	54.9	54.4	52.9	55.7	52.9	56.0	55.0	54.3	55.3	51.0	55.6	67.5	54.4	52.9	53.9
Being confident in making financial decisions	54.5	57.8	52.3	54.2	56.0	51.8	54.8	56.2	53.1	42.5	56.5	62.0	55.1	54.4	52.5
Having a better life than your parents	54.4	56.2	52.2	54.7	49.3	57.9	54.5	52.5	56.1	48.4	55.5	59.1	56.1	55.1	52.3
Having enough money to save and invest	53.0	56.1	52.1	52.4	55.7	52.1	52.8	54.4	52.0	42.5	54.8	59.3	58.2	53.2	49.6
Living where you want to	52.7	56.9	52.5	51.5	51.4	54.0	52.6	52.1	53.3	43.4	54.2	64.8	53.2	53.3	49.4
Starting a family	51.5	52.2	51.4	51.4	54.0	54.2	50.8	52.7	50.4	37.4	53.9	64.5	51.3	52.2	48.1
Owning your own home	50.5	51.2	50.0	50.5	51.0	48.4	50.8	51.4	49.4	36.1	52.9	62.5	49.6	52.1	46.9
Artificial Intelligence benefiting you while at school	48.6	49.5	51.3	47.4	54.0	50.9	47.5	50.6	46.8	37.9	50.4	57.3	50.7	46.1	47.5
Artificial Intelligence benefiting you after leaving school	48.2	50.3	51.0	46.7	51.9	52.1	47.1	49.8	46.8	37.2	50.1	55.7	44.5	46.9	48.9
The Australian economy	44.3	45.2	43.0	44.4	50.5	43.0	43.7	45.6	43.3	33.4	46.1	51.4	46.8	41.1	43.8
Being able to own your own business	44.2	48.4	43.1	43.3	48.3	43.3	43.8	46.2	42.1	32.3	46.2	49.8	48.2	43.3	42.0
Australia meeting its climate change targets	40.7	43.5	40.9	39.7	48.1	39.8	39.8	41.6	40.0	29.7	42.5	50.5	43.9	37.1	39.8

want to. The number of students who scored optimism low was somewhat lower (but still elevated) for having a better education than their parents (33%), their future life overall (37%), living a happy life (38%) and having a better life than their parents (38%). Conversely, almost 1 in 3 scored high (80+ points) that they would live a happy life and that they would have a better education than their parents.

By student cohort, we noted somewhat lower optimism at public schools for AI benefitting them after leaving school (46.7 pts), in girls only schools for having a career they enjoy or are interested in (54.7 pts) and at coeducational schools AI benefitting them while at school (47.5 pts) and after school (47.1 pts). Girls on average were somewhat less optimistic than boys about being able to start their own business (42.1 pts vs. 46.2 pts) and AI benefitting them at school (46.8 pts vs. 50.6 pts). LGBTQI+ students were noticeably less optimistic about all these parts of their

future. Optimism was higher for students in years 7-9 than in all other year levels, whereas students in year 12 reported somewhat lower optimism about being confident of making financial decisions (49.6 pts) than did students in all other year levels.



Plans after school

Finishing high school can be an exciting but stressful time for students as they decide on which path to pursue in their future. In this report, we explore student life after high school - their plans, career goals, confidence in achieving their goals, barriers they may face, and optimism about the future - and compare the results against student plans in 2023.

Intentions are largely unchanged. Around 3 in 4 (72%) students still plan to go to university after high school, though this was down slightly from 78% in 2023. A broadly unchanged 1 in 2 (49%) plan to get a job, and slightly more travel overseas or take a gap year (23% up from 21% in 2023).

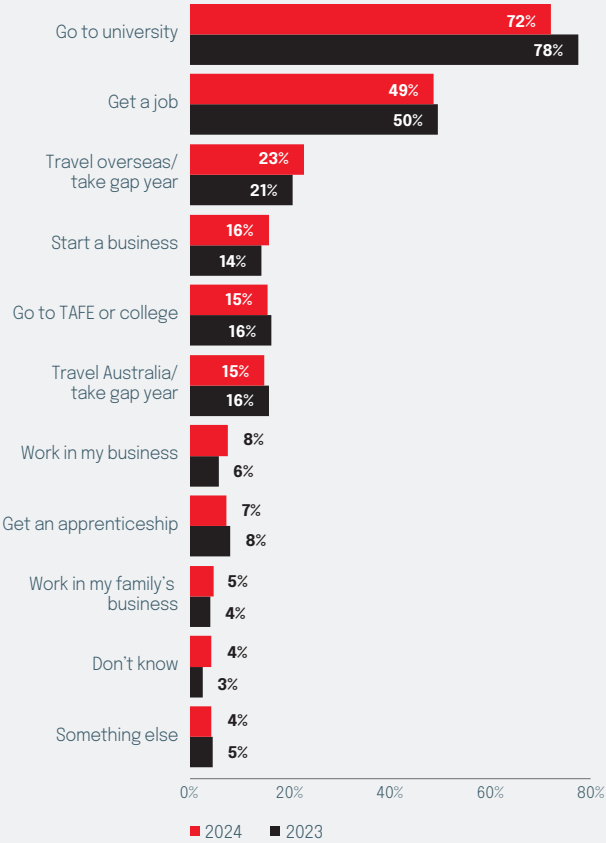
Broadly similar numbers also plan to start a business (16% vs. 14% in 2023), go to TAFE or college (15% vs. 16%) and travel around Australia and take a gap year (15% vs. 16%). Despite continuing reports of widespread trade shortages, just 7% planned to get an apprenticeship. 1 in 20 said they planned to work in their family's business (5%), while 1 in 25 did not know or planned to do something else (4%).

Key differences across student groups included a much larger number at private independent schools with plans to start a business (23%) and in private Catholic schools get an apprenticeship (13%). Noticeably more students at girls only schools planned to go to university (82%), get a job (63%) and travel overseas and take a gap year (30%), but more students at boys only schools work in their business (12%).

A lot more girls in general planned to go to university (80%), get a job (55%) and travel overseas and take a gap year (27%), while more boys are looking to apply for an apprenticeship (10%) and work in their own business (10%).

Somewhat more LGBTQI+ students planned to start their own business (20%), while across all students, we noted much higher numbers in years 7-9 who planned to work in their business (14%) and did not know (11%), and in year 10 get a job (58%).

Chart 3: What do you plan to do after you leave school?



Plans after school: 2024

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Go to university	72%	74%	68%	73%	74%	82%	70%	65%	80%	66%	73%	68%	75%	75%	69%
Get a job	49%	51%	49%	48%	52%	63%	46%	43%	55%	49%	48%	50%	58%	43%	48%
Travel overseas/take gap year	23%	22%	25%	22%	17%	30%	22%	19%	27%	20%	23%	20%	28%	26%	19%
Go to TAFE or college	15%	16%	20%	15%	17%	16%	16%	16%	16%	7%	17%	16%	23%	19%	10%
Travel Australia/take gap year	15%	19%	15%	15%	12%	14%	16%	13%	17%	16%	15%	18%	14%	12%	17%
Start a business	16%	23%	11%	13%	10%	19%	15%	12%	17%	20%	14%	16%	13%	19%	12%
Get an apprenticeship	7%	6%	13%	6%	10%	9%	7%	10%	5%	3%	8%	11%	10%	10%	4%
Work in my business	8%	9%	10%	6%	12%	5%	7%	10%	4%	5%	8%	14%	7%	6%	7%
Work in my family's business	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	9%	4%	5%	4%	3%	5%	0%	3%	8%	4%
Something else	4%	3%	6%	4%	2%	4%	5%	2%	5%	8%	4%	5%	3%	5%	4%
Don't know	4%	6%	6%	3%	0%	4%	5%	5%	3%	7%	4%	11%	4%	3%	3%

Career goals, confidence achieving them & barriers they may face

Career goals are about setting short-term and long-term objectives related to one's career path. These goals help define the ultimate job people aspire to throughout their careers. In this section we ask Australian high school students to select the top 3 factors that best describes their career goals and see if they have changed since 2023.

High income & financial success is still key according to an unchanged 6 in 10 (57%) students. Slightly more however indicated they want a good work-life balance (50% vs. 46% in 2023), but somewhat fewer to be enthusiastic about their work (44% down from 50% in 2023).

A somewhat lower number also want a career with a sense of purpose & to have a positive impact on society (29% down from 35% in 2023), but more want job security (26% vs. 22%). An unchanged 1 in 4 want to have control over their future (25%) and 1 in 5 growth & career advancement (20%). Slightly fewer students set fame & recognition as a career goal (9% down from 10%), while 3% do not know.

Goals varied by student groups. More students at private independent schools want a sense of purpose & to have an impact on society (34%) and at private Catholic schools, job security (32%).

Noticeably more students at girls only schools aspire to high incomes & financial success (63%), good work-life balance (54% vs. only 21% at boys only schools) and having a sense of purpose & a positive impact on society (37%), and at boys only schools, growth & career advancement (29% vs. 12% at girls only schools). High incomes & financial success (61%), good work-life balance (50% vs. 38% for boys) and a sense of purpose & impact on society (35% vs. 23%) were more common career goals among girls in general, and growth & career advancement for boys (26% vs. 13% for girls).

Noticeably more LGBTQI+ students aspire to high incomes & financial success (61%), good work-life balance (48%), a sense of purpose & positive impact on society (39%) and control over their future (34%). By year level, we also noted a much higher number of students in year 12 who want to be enthusiastic about their work (56%), in year 11 growth & career advancement (27%), but in years 7-9 that did not know (11%).

Confidence levels around achieving their career goals were broadly unchanged in 2024 with around 3 in 4 (74%) students confident of achieving them (73% in 2023). This is a particularly encouraging result considering research which shows a strong correlation between confidence and success.



Moreover, NAB's 2024 survey results also found a somewhat higher number of students who were "very" confident of achieving their goals in the 2024 survey, rising to 1 in 4 (24%) students from 1 in 5 (20%) in 2023. At the same time, however the number of students who were "quite" confident of achieving their goals fell slightly to 50% (53% in 2023).

A basically unchanged 20% were "not very" confident of achieving their career goals (21% in 2023), and only 1% "not at all" confident (2% in 2023).

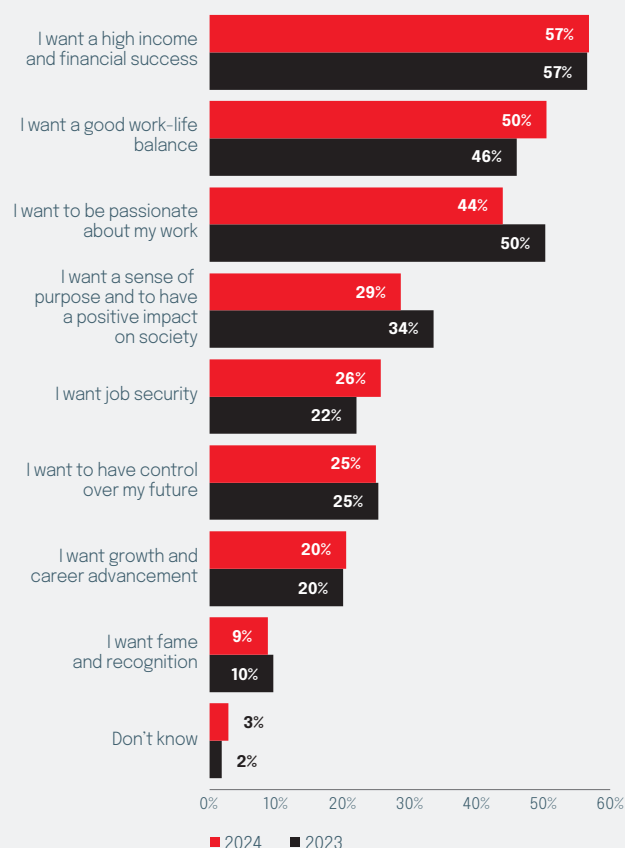
Around 8 in 10 students were confident of achieving their career goals at private Catholic (79%) and independent (78%) schools compared to 7 in 10 (71%) at public schools. Around 3 in 10 at private Catholic schools (30%) were also "very" confident, compared to around 2 in 10 (22%) at both private independent and public schools. More students at coeducational schools were confident of achieving their goals (76%) than in girls (68%) and boys (71%) only schools, though boys only schools had the highest number who were "very" confident about achieving them (31%).

Boys overall were more confident than girls (77% vs. 72%), with significant differences noted in the number who were "very" confident (27% boys; 20% girls) and "not at all"

Career goals 2024

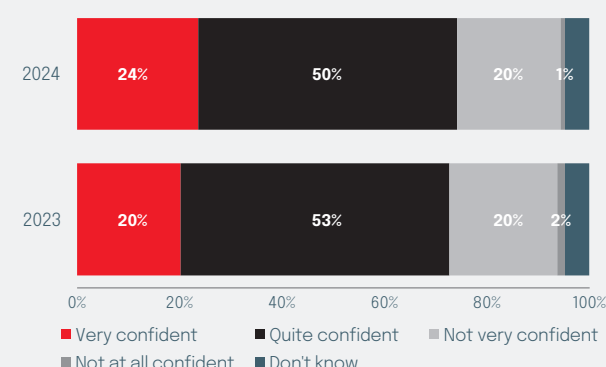
	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
High income & financial success	57%	53%	61%	56%	57%	63%	56%	54%	61%	61%	56%	59%	49%	58%	58%
Passionate about my work	44%	55%	43%	52%	43%	49%	52%	48%	53%	39%	52%	48%	44%	47%	56%
Good work-life balance	50%	48%	41%	44%	21%	54%	45%	38%	50%	48%	43%	41%	51%	35%	49%
Purpose & impact on society	29%	34%	28%	27%	26%	37%	28%	23%	35%	39%	27%	30%	24%	27%	31%
Control over my future	25%	26%	24%	26%	26%	25%	26%	25%	26%	34%	24%	14%	28%	22%	30%
Job security	26%	17%	32%	25%	24%	21%	26%	22%	27%	23%	25%	30%	25%	29%	21%
Growth & career advancement	20%	16%	23%	21%	29%	12%	21%	26%	13%	21%	20%	20%	14%	27%	18%
Fame & recognition	9%	9%	5%	10%	14%	9%	8%	10%	7%	3%	10%	9%	11%	12%	5%
Don't know	3%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	1%	5%	2%	11%	1%	2%	2%

Chart 4: Which of the following best describes your career goals



confident (23% girls; 17% boys). Far fewer LGBTQI+ students were confident of achieving their career goals (63%) than non-LGBTQI+ students (77%) – though a slightly higher 25% of LGBTQI+ students were “very” confident of achieving them than non-LGBTQI+ students (24%). Almost twice as

Chart 5: Confident you will achieve your career goals

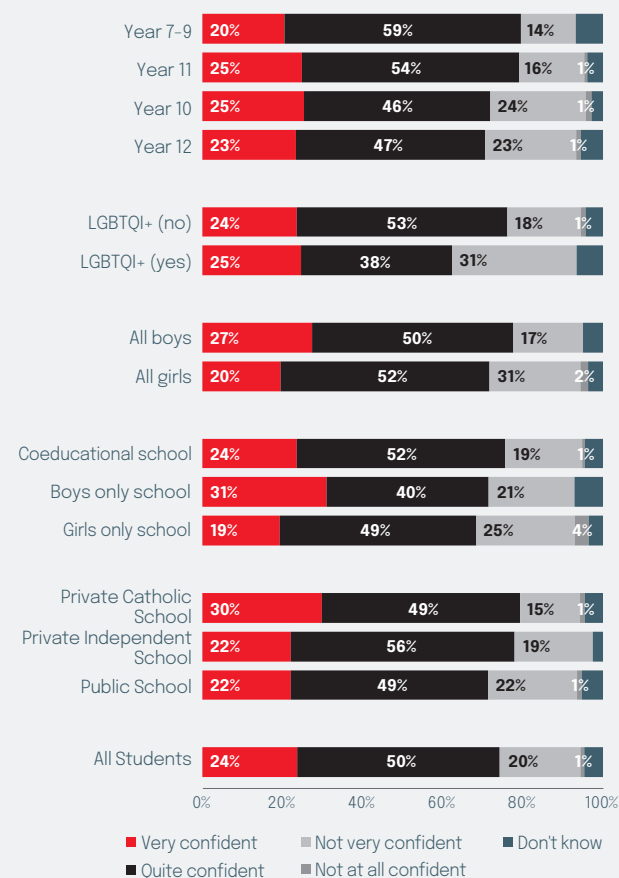
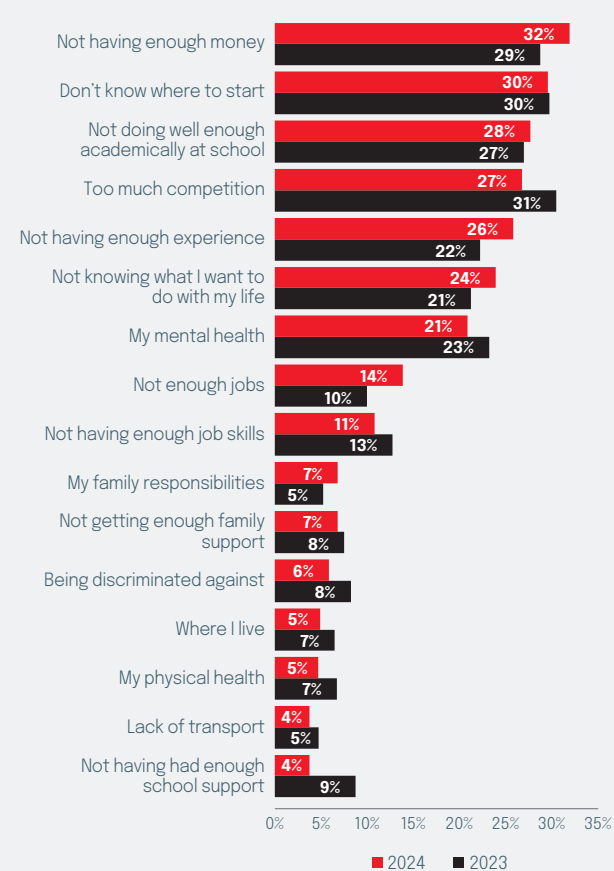


many LGBTQI+ students were also “not very” confident (31% vs. 18%) in doing so.

By year level, overall confidence was highest in years 7-9 and year 11 (79%) and somewhat higher than in year 10 (71%) and year 12 (72%) where almost 1 in 4 students in both year levels said they were “not at all” confident about meeting their career goals.

A career is often accompanied by personal pride and satisfaction in the work done – whatever the role or skill set. But achieving desired career goals can be fraught with obstacles – both real (e.g. a lack of opportunities, child-care issues, the need to up-skill etc.) and perceived (such as lack of initiative and negative assumptions we make about ourselves such as I am too young etc.).

One of the most critical changes students will eventually encounter is joining the workforce – whether straight from high school or after further education. Adjusting to these changes can be stressful and barriers may be

Chart 6: Confident you will achieve your career goals: 2024**Chart 7: Biggest barriers you face achieving goals after high school**

encountered along the way, particularly in relation to achieving their career goals. In the following section, students were again asked to identify the top 3 barriers in achieving their goals once they leave school, and we have noted some subtle changes compared to last year.

What students see as the biggest barriers for achieving their goals after high school have been reshuffled a little since last year.

In 2024, the most common barrier was not having enough money according to 1 in 3 (32%) students overall and increased from 29% in 2023. The next biggest barrier according to an unchanged 3 in 10 (30%) was not knowing where to start and in third place not doing well enough academically at school (28% vs. 27% in 2023).

Too much competition was identified as a barrier by over 1 in 4 students (27%), but this was down from 31% in 2023 when it was also highlighted as the biggest obstacle by most students.

More students now are also worried about not having enough experience (26% vs. 22%) and not knowing what they want to do with their life (24% vs. 21%) but are a little less concerned about their mental health (21% vs. 23%). In other key takeouts, we noted a somewhat higher number

of students who believe a lack of jobs will be an issue for them (14% vs. 10%), but noticeably fewer not having had enough school support (4% vs. 9%).

By school type, noticeably more students at private Catholic (30%) and public (29%) schools cited not doing well enough at school as a barrier, at private independent and public schools (29%) too much competition, private independent schools not having enough experience (32%) and public schools mental health (23%).

More students at girls only schools pointed to not having enough money (44%), too much competition (37%) and not knowing what they want to do with their life (37%), but at boys only schools physical health (10%) and lack of transport (12%). Not knowing where to start and not doing well enough at school were also bigger issues at girls only and coeducational schools, and not having enough experience and job skills at boys only and coeducational schools.

Noticeably more girls worried about not having enough money (40% vs. 23%), not doing well enough at school (33% vs. 22%) and not knowing what they wanted to do with their life (27% vs. 20%) and boys not having enough experience (29% vs. 22%). Not enough money (46%), mental health (41%) and being discriminated against (11%) were highlighted by

Biggest barriers you face achieving goals after high school: 2024

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Not having enough money	32%	23%	37%	33%	21%	44%	31%	23%	40%	46%	30%	34%	31%	29%	33%
Don't know where to start	30%	26%	32%	30%	17%	30%	31%	29%	31%	20%	31%	23%	42%	28%	28%
Not doing well enough at school	28%	19%	30%	29%	12%	30%	29%	22%	33%	26%	28%	30%	24%	32%	26%
Too much competition	27%	29%	18%	29%	31%	37%	24%	26%	28%	20%	28%	32%	27%	23%	28%
Not having enough experience	26%	32%	20%	26%	26%	14%	28%	29%	22%	26%	26%	25%	20%	24%	30%
Not know what to do with life	24%	26%	20%	25%	29%	37%	21%	20%	27%	18%	25%	27%	27%	26%	21%
My mental health	21%	18%	17%	23%	19%	16%	22%	19%	23%	41%	18%	14%	15%	21%	25%
Not enough jobs	14%	17%	13%	13%	19%	19%	12%	13%	14%	15%	14%	11%	8%	13%	17%
Not having enough job skills	11%	12%	8%	11%	12%	5%	12%	12%	9%	15%	10%	9%	14%	10%	10%
Not enough family support	7%	10%	5%	6%	5%	5%	7%	5%	8%	5%	7%	2%	10%	6%	7%
My family responsibilities	7%	5%	7%	7%	0%	9%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%	5%	6%	9%	6%
Being discriminated against	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	9%	5%	6%	6%	11%	5%	9%	8%	7%	3%
Where I live	5%	6%	7%	4%	7%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	2%	7%	5%	4%
My physical health	5%	4%	5%	5%	10%	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%	5%	0%	7%	5%	4%
Lack of transport	4%	6%	5%	3%	12%	2%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	0%	3%	4%	5%
Not enough school support	4%	5%	3%	3%	5%	2%	4%	4%	3%	2%	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%

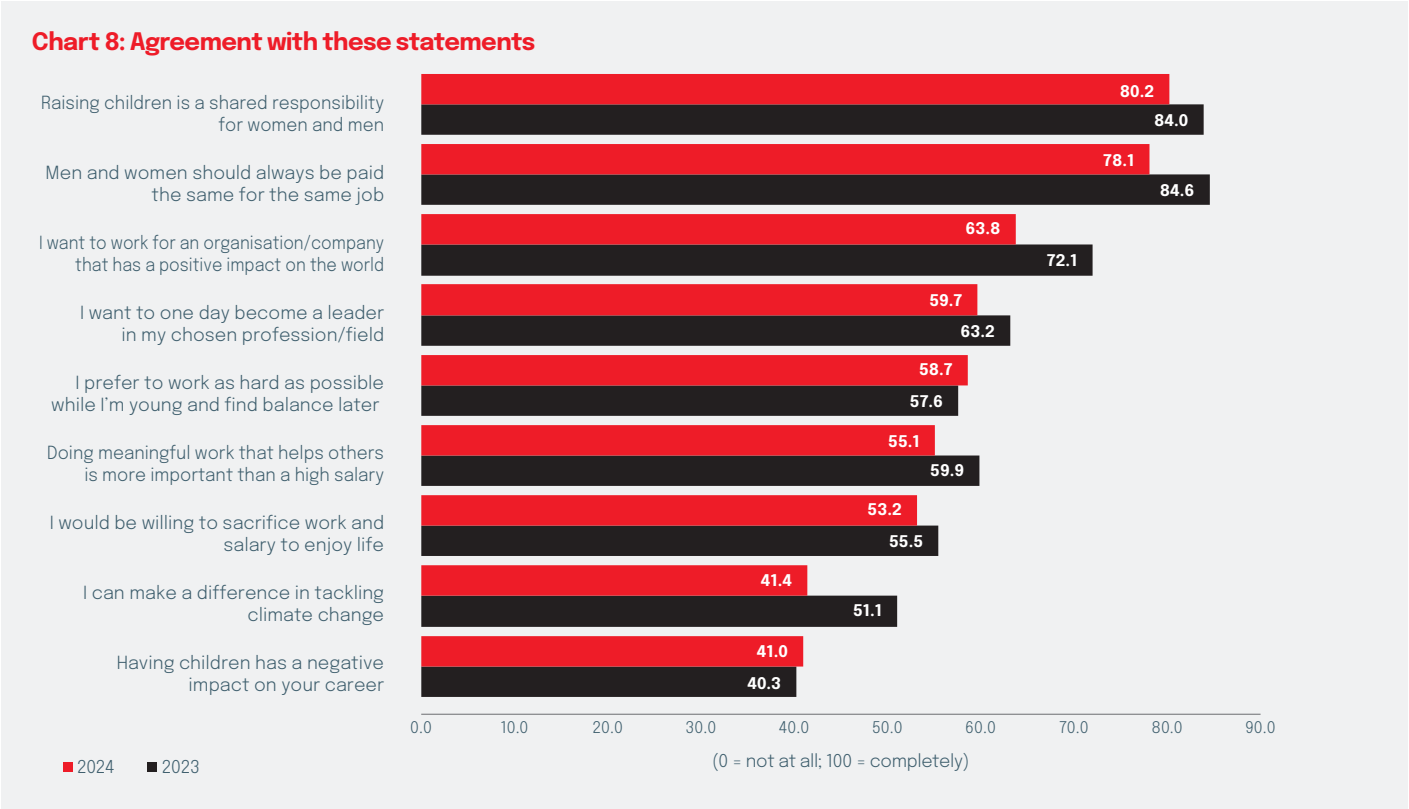
significantly more LGBTQI+ students. By year level, the main contrasts were in year 10 where more did not know where to start (42%), and in year 12 not having enough experience (30%) and mental health (25%).

Attitudes are believed to be one of the main factors determining human behaviours, affecting the conduct of individuals or whole groups of people. They can be decisive for undertaking jobs in various fields. In this next section, we again ask students to rate the extent they agreed with statements relating to their attitudes to life, work and the employment landscape.

In 2024, agreement was strongest for the statement “raising children is a shared responsibility for women and men” (80.2 pts vs. 80.4 pts in 2023). Students scored agreement next highest for “men and women should always be paid the same for the same job” (78.1 pts) - though agreement was noticeably lower than in 2023 (84.6 pts), when this statement was also scored highest overall. Agreement was next highest (but also fell sharply) for “I want to work for an organisation or company that has a positive impact on the world” (63.8 pt down from 72.1 pts in 2023).

Agreement with “I want to become a leader in my chosen profession or field (59.7 pts vs. 63.2 pts) and “doing meaningful work that helps others is more important than





a high salary” (51.9 pts vs. 59.9 pts) were also scored somewhat lower in the 2024 survey, and the statement “I can make a difference in tackling climate change” much lower (41.4 pts vs. 51.1 pts). Agreement with the statements “I prefer to work as hard as possible while I’m young and find balance later” (58.7 pts vs. 57.6 pts), and “I would be willing to sacrifice work and salary to enjoy life” (53.2 vs. 55.5 pts) remained broadly similar. Agreement remained lowest overall and largely unchanged for “having children has a negative impact on your career” (41.0 pts vs. 40.3 pts).

Agreement with these statements did however vary across student cohorts.

By type of school, some of the more obvious differences included much higher agreement among students at private Catholic schools over the statement about working for a company that has a positive impact on the world (69.5 pts), at girls only schools for equal pay between men and women (83.8 pts) and at boys only schools working hard now and finding balance later (62.2 pts), willing to sacrifice work and salary to enjoy life (62.0 pts), making a



Agreement with statements: 2024

	All students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Raising children is shared responsibility for women & men	80.2	80.6	83.7	79.0	74.9	84.1	80.3	77.1	83.7	85.4	79.4	80.5	75.6	78.0	83.3
Men and women always be paid the same for the same job	78.1	76.9	79.5	78.0	74.9	83.8	77.5	70.8	85.4	87.2	76.6	76.2	78.2	73.9	81.6
Work for a company that has a positive impact on world	63.8	64.4	69.5	61.7	60.0	66.1	63.9	62.4	65.9	65.4	63.5	61.9	60.7	63.8	65.2
One day become a leader in my chosen profession/field	59.7	62.2	64.2	57.4	62.4	63.1	58.8	60.7	59.0	53.4	60.8	57.6	57.8	60.6	59.8
Work as hard as possible while young and find balance later	58.7	61.3	64.1	56.1	62.2	57.9	58.4	59.6	58.7	53.1	59.6	62.6	59.5	56.3	58.9
Work that helps others more important than a high salary	55.1	57.8	54.5	54.5	58.3	49.1	55.7	54.7	55.5	56.9	54.8	59.3	51.7	55.6	55.3
I would be willing to sacrifice work and salary to enjoy life	53.2	55.1	54.5	52.2	62.0	49.5	52.7	55.4	51.5	51.6	53.5	50.7	53.1	52.7	54.2
I can make a difference in tackling climate change	41.4	40.8	43.3	41.0	55.6	41.1	39.7	44.0	39.0	39.3	41.8	31.9	46.1	43.4	41.1
Having children has a negative impact on your career	41.0	41.5	40.4	41.0	47.5	41.7	40.0	41.1	40.5	42.3	40.8	29.8	44.3	41.4	42.5

difference in tackling climate change (55.6 pts) and the negative impact of having children on career (47.5 pts).

Girls overall were also in higher agreement than boys over the statements relating to shared responsibility for raising children (83.7 pts girls; 77.1 pts boys) and equal pay (85.4 pts vs. 70.8 pts), as were students that identified as LGBTQI+ (85.4 pts & 87.2 pts respectively). Agreement however did not vary materially for most statements by student year level, except for making a difference in tackling climate change and the statement having children has a negative impact on your career where it scored much lower among students in years 7-9 (31.9 pts & 29.8 pts respectively).



Do students know what jobs they want to do and why?

In an ideal scenario, students who know what type of job they eventually want to do can make decisions now that will help them achieve their goals in their future.

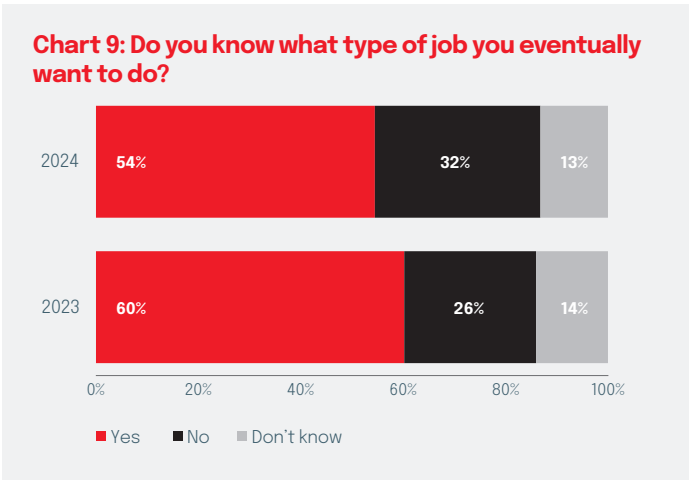
Knowing what they want to do can assist them finding appropriate classes and experiences that will benefit them and help them find the job they want.

But how many students know what type of job they eventually want to do? Less than in 2023!

In 2024, the number of students that said they knew fell to 54%, down from 60% in the 2023 survey.

Around 1 in 3 (32%) had no idea what job they wanted to do, up from 1 in 4 (26%) in 2023.

A basically unchanged 13% were considering several options but were unsure which one they would ultimately decide on.



The number of students that knew what type of job they eventually wanted to do in 2024 varied somewhat by type of school. It was noticeably higher in private Catholic schools (61%), than in public (53%) and private independent schools (52%), where uncertainty was much higher (15% & 13% respectively) than in private Catholic schools (9%). Interestingly, a lot more students at coeducational schools knew what they wanted to do (57%) than in all girls (47%) and boys (45%) schools, but twice as many students at coeducational schools were also unsure (15%).

A similar number of boys and girls in general (55%) said they knew what type of job they wanted. Somewhat more boys however did not (34% vs. 30%) while more girls were unsure (15% vs. 10%). More students who identified as LGBTQI+ (59%) also knew what they wanted to do than students that did not identify as LGBTQI+ (54%)

We again saw a direct correlation with student year level. The lowest number of students who knew what type of job



they eventually want to do were in years 7-9 (43%), but this stepped up incrementally in each year level to 60% among students in year 12. Uncertainty also diminished as students progressed through school, falling from 18% in years 7-9 to 11% by year 12.

Students who knew what type of job they eventually wanted to do were also asked for the first time to tell us why they decided on that particular job.

It was extremely positive to find that 3 in 4 (76%) said it was what they enjoy – a situation psychologists believe can lower stress levels, improve happiness and increase levels of personal fulfilment and confidence. Building on this, it was also encouraging to find around 1 in 2 also said it because it was what they were good at (49%)

But a very large number of students – around 2 in 3 – also said they chose the job because it pays well (64%). This is also not surprising with external studies showing many workers prefer higher salaries over meaningful work because they believe earning more money will translate into a happier and more meaningful personal life.

Less common reasons students chose a particular job were because it was expected of them by their family (14%), it was the only option they had (6%) or they were advised by their career counsellor (4%).

Why did you decide on that particular job: 2024

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
It's what I enjoy	76%	78%	70%	78%	68%	78%	76%	71%	81%	81%	75%	74%	71%	76%	78%
It pays well	64%	63%	57%	68%	58%	63%	65%	67%	63%	64%	64%	74%	63%	63%	65%
It's what I am good at	49%	48%	51%	49%	47%	52%	49%	54%	45%	50%	49%	26%	57%	53%	48%
Expected of me by my family	14%	13%	8%	17%	16%	30%	11%	13%	15%	3%	16%	16%	14%	15%	12%
It's the only option I have	6%	3%	9%	6%	16%	7%	5%	8%	4%	0%	7%	5%	6%	8%	5%
What career counsellor advised	4%	3%	8%	3%	11%	15%	2%	4%	4%	0%	5%	0%	9%	4%	3%
Other	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Don't know	1%	3%	2%	1%	0%	4%	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%	5%	0%	1%	1%

Chart 10: Do you know what type of job you eventually want to do: 2024

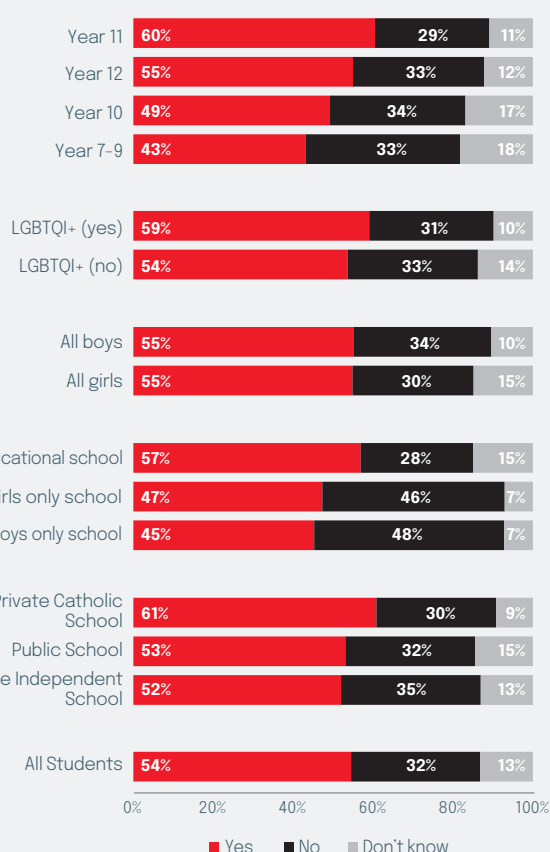
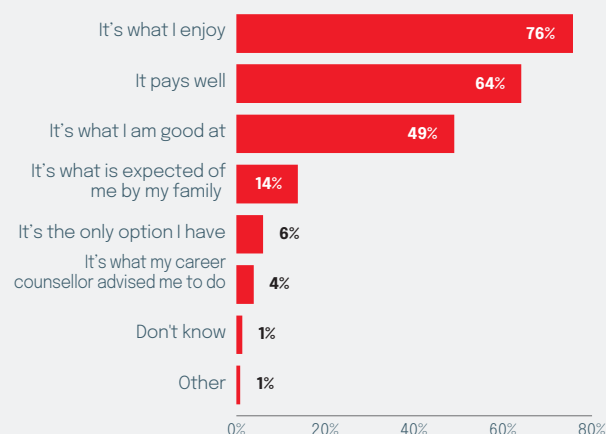


Chart 11: Why did you decide on that job?



counsellors at private Catholic schools (8%). Enjoyment and pay influenced more students at girls only (78% & 63%) and coeducational schools (76% & 65%). A much higher number at girls only schools also decided on a job because of family expectations (30%), but at boys only schools as it was the only option they had (16%). Advice from career counsellors impacted noticeably more students at girls (15%) and boys only (11%) schools than coeducational schools (2%). A much higher number of girls than boys in general chose a job because it was what they enjoy (81% girls; 71% boys), but more boys because it was what they were good at (54% vs. 45%) and as it was the only option they had (8% vs. 4%). Somewhat more LGBTQI+ students said they did so because it was what they enjoy (81%) but fewer because it was expected by their family (3%). The key differences by year level included the much higher number of students in years 7-9 that based their choice on pay (74%) and lower number in years 7-9 who also said it was what they were good at (26%)

By type of school, we noted a somewhat higher number of students in private independent (78%) and public schools (78%) that chose the job because it was what they enjoyed. Noticeably more students in public (17%) and independent (13%) schools also said it was expected of them by their family. Pay was a bigger consideration for students at public schools (68%), and advice from career

What success looks like after school

Success is defined differently by each student based on what they find meaningful and rewarding in life. In this section, we explore for the first time what students believe success looks like after school. It comprises many different things, but the most common components a balanced life between work, study & pleasure, a high paying job, buying a house to live, being debt free, having a partner, family & children and working in a role or studying in a field they are enthusiastic about.

The most common measure of success according to 6 in 10 students overall was having a balanced life between work, study & pleasure (61%). Over 1 in 5 however also pointed to a job with high income (54%) and just under 1 in 2 buying a house or a property to live in (47%), being debt free (46%) and having a partner, family & children (45%).

A large number – around 4 in 10 – also classified success as working in a role they are passionate about (42%) or studying in a field they are passionate about (40%). For 1 in 3, it was having enough money to invest in property or shares (35%), having a full time job in their chosen industry (33%) or entry into their choice of further education institution or course (32%).

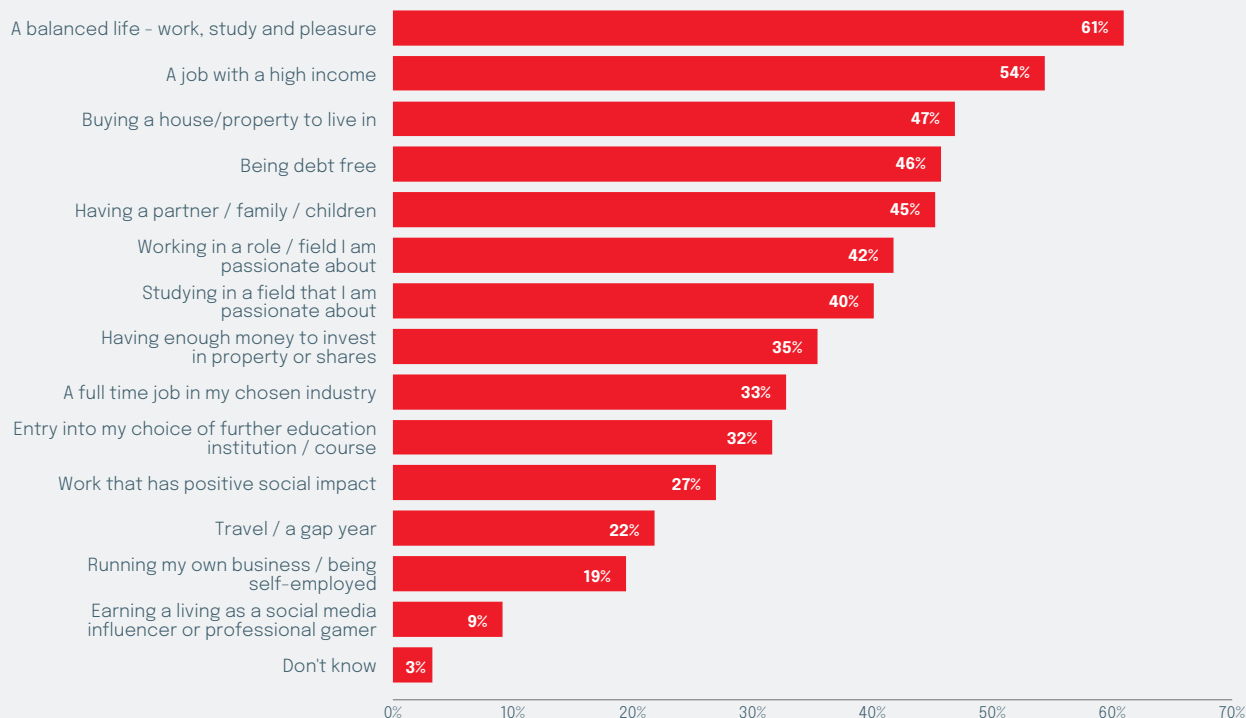
Just over 1 in 4 said success was doing work that has positive social impact (27%), and 1 in 5 traveling or taking a gap year (22%) or running their own business or being self-employed (19%). Around 1 in 10 students overall defined success as earning a living as a social media

influencer or professional gamer (9%). Only 3% did not know what success looked like.

What success looks like varied somewhat across students at different types of schools. In particular, we noted a much higher number at private independent schools who said it meant having enough money to invest (44%), a full time job in their chosen industry (40%), they entered into their preferred choice of further education institution or course (38%) or were earning a living as a social media influencer or pro gamer (13%) than in private Catholic or public schools. We also recorded much higher numbers at girls only schools who defined success as having a balanced life (74%), jobs with high incomes (61%), being debt free (53%), had a partner, family & children (60%), worked in a job (54%) or studied (58%) in a role they were passionate about, entered into their preferred choice of further education institution or course (39%) and travelled or took a gap year (30%). Noticeably more students at all boys schools however said success meant buying a house to live in (52%) and working full time in a job in their chosen industry (30%).

Significantly more girls than boys overall said being successful meant they were working in a role or field they were passionate about (51% girls; 34% boys), studying in a field they were passionate about (48% vs. 32%), had a balanced life between work, study & pleasure (68% vs. 54%), were debt free (52% vs. 40%) and travelled or took a gap year (27% vs. 16%). Noticeably more students who identified as LGBTQI+ said success entailed travel or a gap year than

Chart 12: What would success look like when you leave school?



students that did not identify as LGBTQI+ (33% vs. 20%), but significantly fewer also defined success as having a partner, family & children than non-LGBTQI+ students (33% vs. 47%). By year level, outliers included a somewhat higher number of students in year 12 who said success meant they had a balanced life (64%) and studied in an area they were passionate about (47%), in years 7-9 who had a partner, family & children (52%) and in year 11 who owned a business or were self-employed (29%).

What success looks like after school: 2024

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
A balanced life	61%	62%	61%	61%	48%	74%	61%	54%	68%	64%	61%	59%	56%	59%	64%
A job with a high income	54%	58%	48%	55%	43%	61%	55%	52%	59%	59%	54%	50%	59%	50%	57%
Buying a house to live in	47%	51%	41%	48%	52%	44%	47%	45%	49%	43%	48%	50%	38%	51%	46%
Being debt free	46%	49%	52%	43%	45%	53%	45%	40%	52%	48%	45%	43%	45%	46%	47%
A partner/family/children	45%	45%	47%	45%	36%	60%	44%	41%	50%	33%	47%	52%	44%	48%	42%
Work in role passionate about	42%	44%	37%	43%	36%	54%	40%	34%	51%	46%	41%	39%	42%	41%	43%
Study in area passionate about	40%	44%	38%	40%	33%	58%	38%	32%	48%	41%	40%	25%	38%	37%	47%
Enough money to invest	35%	44%	37%	32%	38%	39%	35%	33%	38%	30%	36%	32%	31%	39%	36%
Full time job in chosen industry	33%	40%	32%	31%	36%	26%	34%	33%	33%	38%	32%	32%	25%	34%	36%
In choice further education	32%	38%	29%	31%	31%	39%	31%	28%	35%	28%	32%	18%	27%	34%	36%
Work in positive social impact	27%	31%	29%	25%	31%	35%	25%	23%	32%	31%	26%	16%	31%	29%	26%
Travel/a gap year	22%	27%	20%	21%	10%	30%	22%	16%	27%	33%	20%	23%	28%	18%	22%
Own business/self-employed	19%	25%	21%	18%	24%	21%	19%	20%	19%	18%	20%	14%	14%	29%	16%
Social influencer or pro gamer	9%	13%	6%	9%	10%	14%	8%	7%	11%	11%	9%	9%	8%	11%	8%
Don't know	3%	5%	3%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%	9%	3%	3%	2%



Starting a business

Starting a business can be a lucrative and viable career path for some students. And it appears the entrepreneurial spirit among Australian high school students is growing. When students were asked if they would like to start a business when they leave school if they knew how, almost 1 in 2 (47%) said they would in the 2024 survey. This up noticeably from around 1 in 3 (35%) when also asked in the 2023 survey.

Given almost 1 in 2 students would like to start a business if they knew how, this suggests strong demand to embed entrepreneurial approaches to education in school curriculums to equip them with skills they need to adapt with the changing world. According to Young Change Agents (YCA), an Australian education not-for-profit, entrepreneurial education is currently taught by just 1 in 10 Australian schools.

A significant number of students in all cohorts said they would like to start a business if they knew how. In fact, the number who said they would like to start a business exceeded those who said they did not in nearly all student groups except at girls only schools (35% yes; 49% no), among students who identified as LGBTQI+ (38% yes; 51% no), girls in general (41% yes; 44% no) and in years 7-9 (41% yes; 41% no). Somewhat more students at Private Catholic and independent schools (around 1 in 2 or 49%) would like to start a business than in public schools (45%). Noticeably more students at boys only schools (50%) were also keen to do so than students at girls only schools (35%). Around 1 in 2 boys overall (52%) said they would like to start a

business compared to around 4 in 10 girls (41%). Noticeably fewer students who identified as LGBTQI+ however would like to start their own business (38%) than students that did not identify as LGBTQI+ (48%). By year level, it ranged from 41% in years 7-9 to 49% in years 11 and 10.

While almost 1 in 2 students on average indicated they did not want to start a business, over 1 in 10 (12%) were also unsure, suggesting demand to help students learn how to start a business could be even greater. Uncertainty was somewhat higher than average among students in years 7-9 (18%), at girls only schools (16%) and private Catholic schools (15%). In contrast, the number of students who said they did not want to start a business if they knew how was highest among LGBTQI+ students (51%) and girls only schools (49%), and lowest at private Catholic schools (36%).

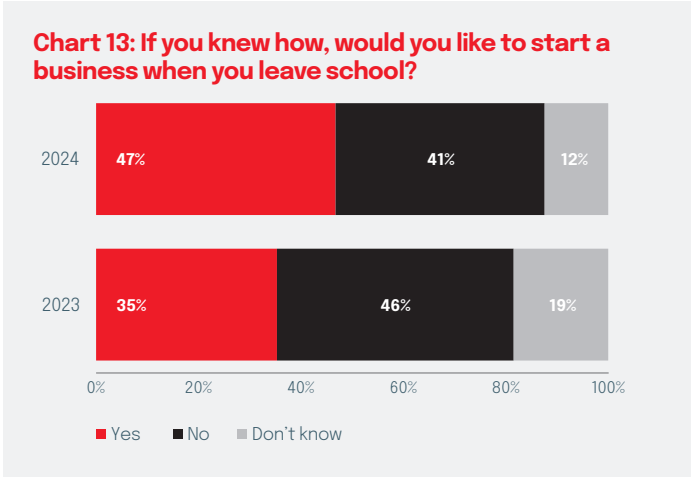
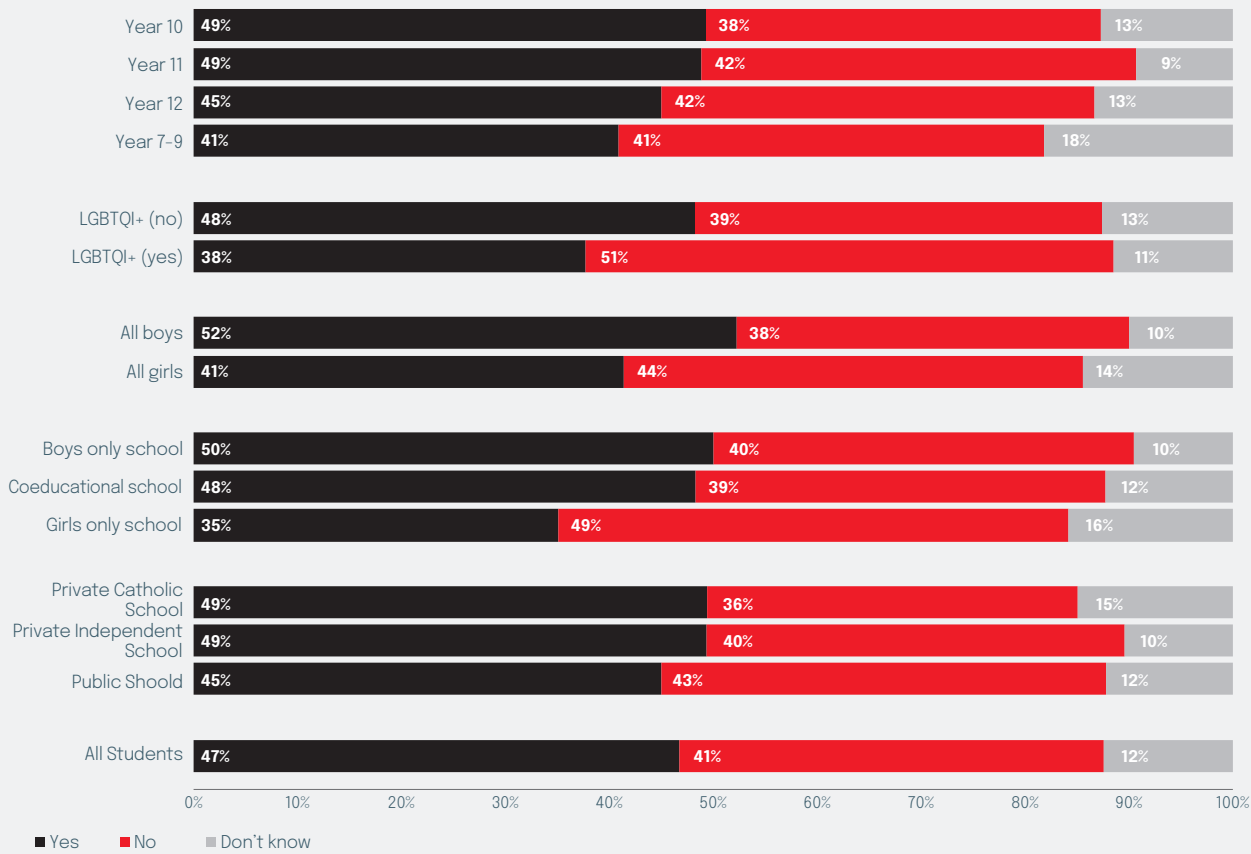


Chart 14: Like to start a business when you leave school if you knew how: 2024



Financial skills

Research shows the importance of equipping students for a future beyond the classroom with life skills pertaining to financial literacy - particularly as it has been proven that strong financial literacy can help reduce rates of financial hardship and improve life satisfaction. In this section, we seek to ascertain for the first time how well prepared high school students think they are to tackle key financial life skills. We do this by asking them to self-score their themselves in relation to their money management skills, and other financial life skills like applying for a credit card, creating a budget, setting financial goals, tracking their expenses, opening a bank account and dealing with debt.

The Australian curriculum acknowledges students need financial literacy to operate in our financial world. Financial literacy is featured in the curriculum but not as a standalone subject or learning area. Moreover, this curriculum only covers up to year 10. In years 11 and 12 - the years that are particularly important in shaping students' financial capability - it is taught only in lower-level maths subjects (Ecstra Foundation 2023).

Overall, students scored highest in relation to opening a bank account at a quite high 69.5 pts. They also indicated they were quite proficient in tracking their expenses (65.2 pts), with their money management skills (64.3 pts), creating a budget (63.5 pts) and setting financial goals (62.6 pts). They scored their skills in relation to applying for a credit card (52.3 pts) and dealing with debt (55.2 pts) much lower. This is perhaps not surprising as most high school students are not old enough to open their own credit card account or obtain personal loans (must be 18 or over).

Average scores do however mask big differences in the number of students who said they had "excellent" financial life skills (i.e. scored 80+ pts) or "low" life skills in these areas (i.e. scored less than 40 pts). Almost 1 in 2 believe they have "excellent" skill levels for opening a bank account (45%), and around 4 in 10 tracking their expenses (41%), creating a budget (38%) and money management skills (37%), and 1 in 3 setting financial goals (33%). Only 1 in 4 said their skills were "excellent" in relation to dealing with debt (27%) and 1 in 5 applying for a credit card (21%). Moreover, around 1 in 3 expressed "low" skills in relation to dealing with debt (33%) and applying for a credit card (37%) - see chart above.

Scores also ranged widely in different student groups. By school type, students at private independent schools scored their skills in relation to applying for a credit card much lower (43.3 pts) and at girls only schools much lower



for setting financial goals (57.7 pts), dealing with debt (45.0 pts) and applying for a credit card (47.9 pts). Financial life skills were scored higher by boys in general than girls in all areas, particularly dealing with debt (59.2 pts boys; 51.1 pts girls) and applying for a credit card (56.9 boys; 47.7 pts girls). Financial life skills were scored much lower by LGBTIQ+ students in all areas than non-LGBTIQ+ students, except for opening a bank account where they scored highest of all groups (71.0 pts).

Scores did not vary materially by year level, except when it came to dealing with debt and applying for a credit card which was scored somewhat lower by students in year 12 (51.9 pts & 44.9 pts respectively) and creating a budget which was scored noticeably higher by students in years 7-9 (71.4 pts), and also much higher than in any other student group - see table above.

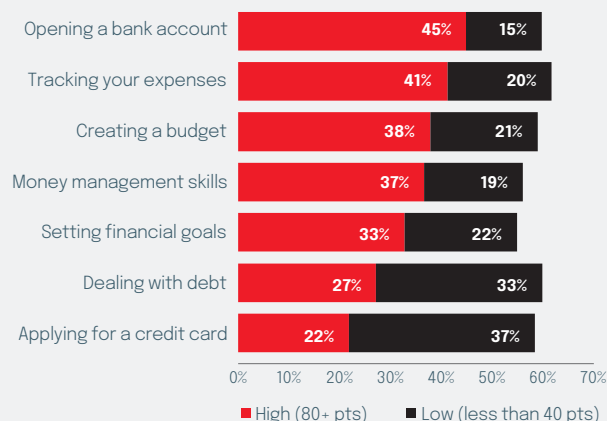
We also noted some large differences in student numbers with excellent financial life skills in different groups. By school type, we found a much higher number at public schools that scored excellent for applying for a credit card (26%) than in private independent (12%) and Catholic schools (17%), but much lower for setting financial goals (29%).

Far fewer students at boys only schools scored excellent for opening a bank account (35%), but noticeably more for

Chart 15: Financial life skills



Chart 16: Financial life skills (high and low)



dealing with debt (40%), particularly compared to girls only schools (11%), where students also fell well behind for creating a budget (31%) and setting financial goals (29%). Somewhat more boys overall scored excellent than girls for money management skills (40% vs. 34%), dealing with debt (31% vs. 21%) and applying for a credit card (25% vs. 18%). Somewhat more LGBTQI+ students for opening a bank account (53%) and applying for a credit card (26%), but substantially lower than non-LGBTQI+ students for all other financial skills. The survey also discovered somewhat lower numbers of students who scored excellent in years 7-9 for opening bank account (34%), in year 11 for tracking expenses (36%) and in year 12 applying for a credit card (16%).

When it came to students with low financial life skills, the survey revealed a significantly larger number of students at private independent schools with low financial skills in relation to applying for a credit card (45%) and creating a budget (26%), and at girls only schools for applying for a credit card (42%), dealing with debt (44%), setting financial goals (33%) and tracking their expenses (31%).

More girls in general had low financial life skills than boys in all areas, particularly applying for a credit card (44% girls: 29% boys) and dealing with debt (39% vs. 28%). The survey also found a much higher number of LGBTQI+ students with low financial life skills in all areas except opening a bank account. The gap was particularly evident for setting financial goals (42% LGBTQI+ students; 19% non-LGBTQI+ students), applying for a credit card (56% vs. 34%), dealing with debt (50% vs. 30%), creating a budget (34% vs. 19%) and money management skills (29% vs. 18%).

By year level, we found a much higher number of students in year 12 had low financial skills in relation to applying for a credit card (46%) and dealing with debt (40%) and in years 7-9 opening a bank account (25%).

Financial life skills: 2024 (score)

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Opening a bank account	69.6	67.7	69.5	70.2	68.5	69.6	69.8	70.5	69.1	71.0	69.4	64.1	67.5	70.1	70.8
Tracking your expenses	65.2	64.1	64.3	65.8	63.4	61.6	66.0	65.6	64.7	59.2	66.2	70.3	67.7	64.7	63.8
Money management skills	64.3	67.7	65.9	62.8	66.5	62.3	64.4	65.9	62.7	54.3	66.0	66.9	64.8	66.3	62.2
Creating a budget	63.5	60.9	65.3	63.7	64.1	62.2	63.7	64.7	61.9	55.1	64.9	71.4	63.6	63.7	61.6
Setting financial goals	62.6	65.2	64.1	61.3	66.3	57.7	63.0	64.9	60.6	47.9	65.0	66.1	62.6	64.0	60.8
Dealing with debt	55.2	55.2	57.3	54.7	59.7	45.0	56.4	59.2	51.1	44.1	56.9	60.8	59.8	56.1	51.9
Applying for a credit card	52.3	43.3	51.7	55.1	57.7	47.9	52.3	56.9	47.7	43.2	53.7	61.2	61.0	56.1	44.9

Financial life skills: 2024 (scored high)

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Opening a bank account	45%	41%	45%	46%	35%	43%	46%	44%	46%	53%	43%	34%	44%	45%	46%
Tracking your expenses	41%	42%	37%	42%	37%	33%	43%	40%	43%	30%	43%	50%	47%	36%	41%
Creating a budget	38%	42%	39%	36%	41%	31%	39%	39%	37%	23%	40%	42%	34%	42%	36%
Money management skills	37%	41%	40%	34%	35%	30%	38%	40%	34%	17%	40%	44%	36%	40%	33%
Setting financial goals	33%	43%	36%	29%	34%	25%	34%	35%	31%	11%	36%	42%	29%	33%	32%
Dealing with debt	27%	31%	31%	25%	40%	11%	28%	33%	21%	18%	29%	33%	30%	27%	25%
Applying for a credit card	22%	12%	17%	26%	27%	24%	21%	25%	18%	26%	21%	32%	34%	21%	16%

Financial life skills: 2024 (scored low)

	All Students	Private Indep. school	Private Catholic	Public School	Boys only school	Girls only school	Co-ed school	All boys	All girls	LGBTQI+ (yes)	LGBTQI+ (no)	Years 7-9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Applying for a credit card	37%	45%	36%	34%	30%	42%	37%	29%	44%	56%	34%	24%	32%	30%	46%
Dealing with debt	33%	33%	31%	33%	23%	44%	32%	28%	39%	50%	30%	21%	33%	26%	40%
Setting financial goals	22%	18%	20%	24%	17%	33%	21%	18%	26%	42%	19%	18%	21%	19%	26%
Creating a budget	21%	26%	18%	21%	19%	24%	21%	18%	25%	34%	19%	8%	20%	21%	25%
Tracking your expenses	20%	20%	21%	20%	23%	31%	18%	17%	24%	26%	19%	12%	17%	21%	23%
Money management skills	19%	20%	15%	21%	15%	23%	19%	18%	21%	29%	18%	18%	20%	17%	21%
Opening a bank account	15%	14%	12%	16%	9%	10%	16%	10%	18%	17%	15%	25%	18%	12%	14%

Scams

High schools students are not immune from scams. Data from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) Scamwatch shows children and teenagers under the age of 18 lost around \$562,000 to scams in 2023, with more than 1,900 reports to the watchdog. This was up from \$362,000 lost in 2022 and 1,550 reports. But the true number is likely to be higher, given not all scams are reported.

Many factors make teenagers good targets for scammers. Having grown up in the digital age, they have constant online access to phones, tablets, computers and gaming. The more time spent online, the greater the exposure to potential risks. Social media is prime territory for Internet-based scams that target teenagers, often through fake accounts on popular platforms such as Instagram and TikTok to try gain information, trust and eventually money. Other common scams include fake online stores, romance scams, employment scams and fake online contests.

In this section, NAB explores for the first time how concerned students are about a scam (i.e. a cyber-criminal tricking you into paying money or giving away your personal information) affecting them or someone in their household family, and have students or someone in their household ever experienced or detected a scam.



Chart 17: Concern about a scam affecting you or your family

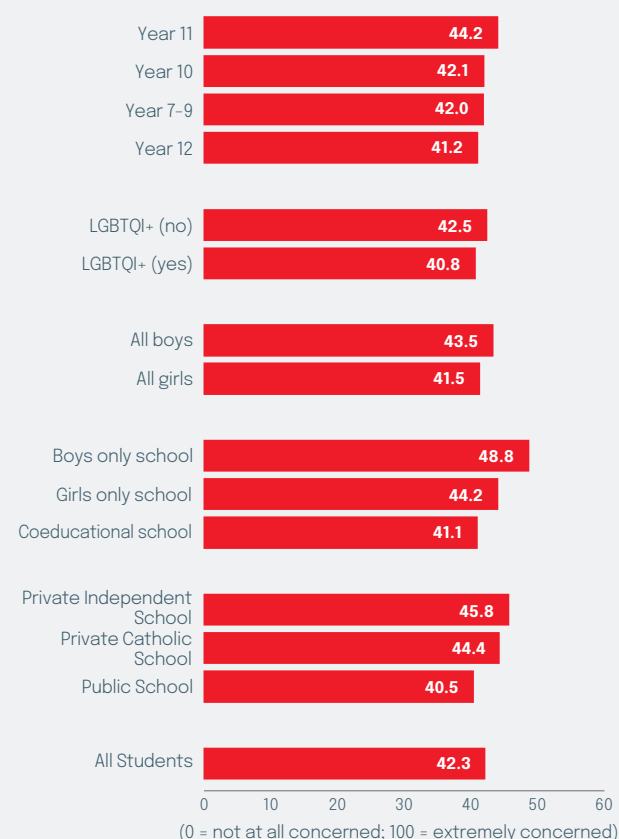
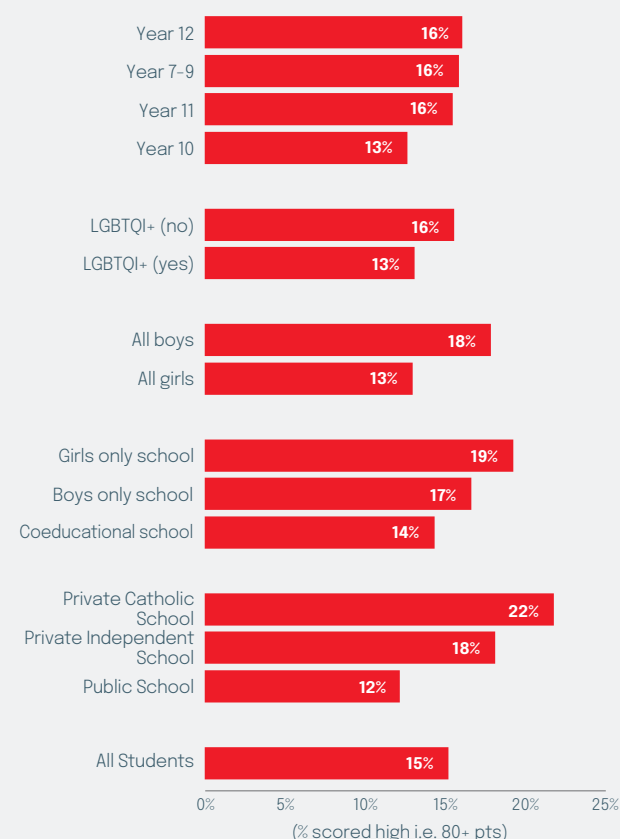


Chart 18: Concern about a scam affecting you or your family (high)



Overall, students were only “moderately” concerned about a scam affecting them or someone in their household, scoring 42.3 pts out of 100 (where 100 is “extremely” concerned). However, this varied by type of school attended. Students at private independent (45.8 pts) and Catholic (44.4 pts) schools were somewhat more concerned than students at public schools (40.5 pts). Students at boys only schools also expressed somewhat higher concern about being affected by a scam (48.8 pts) than at girls only (44.2 pts) and coeducational (41.1 pts) schools.

The level of concern however did not vary materially between boys (43.5 pts) and girls (41.5 pts) in general. Nor did it contrast much according to students who identified as LGBTQI+ (40.8 pts) and those that did not (42.5 pts). The range was also quite narrow by year level – 41.2 pts among students in year 12 to 44.2 pts for students in year 11.

While on average students were only “moderately” worried about being affected by a scam, about 1 in 7 (15%) students overall were extremely concerned (i.e. scored 80+ pts). However, this increased to over 1 in 5 (22%) students in private Catholic schools and was also relatively higher at girls only schools (19%) and among boys in general (18%). It was somewhat lower in public schools (12%), coeducational schools (14%), for girls in general (13%), students who identified as LGBTQI+ (13%) and students in year 10 (13%).

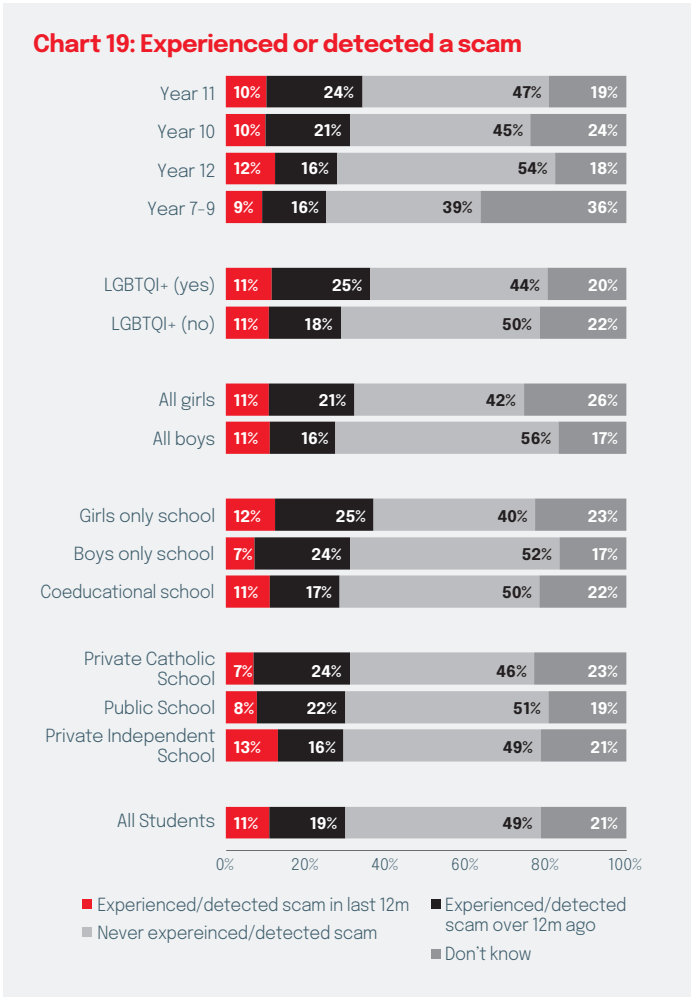
Student experiences with scams were quite common. NAB’s 2024 survey found that 3 in 10 (30%) said they or someone in their household had experienced or detected a scam at some time. Specifically, 1 in 10 (11%) experienced or detected a scam in the last 12 months and 1 in 5 (19%) over a year ago. Around 1 in 2 (49%) never detected or experienced a scam, while 1 in 5 (21%) were not sure if they had.

A similar number of students (around 3 in 10) experienced or detected a scam in private Catholic (31%), independent (30%) and public (29%) schools. But somewhat more students at public schools did in the last 12 months (13%). Having experienced or detecting scams was more common among students in girls only schools (37%) than boys only (31%) and coeducational (28%) schools.

Far more students at girls only (12%) and coeducational (11%) schools did in the last 12 months than at boys only schools (7%). A similar number of boys and girls overall experienced or detected a scam in the last year (11%), though somewhat more girls than boys over 12 months ago (21% vs. 16%). The survey also showed that while a similar number of LGBTQI+ and non-LGBTQI+ experienced a scam in the last 12 months (11%), a higher number of LGBTQI+ students did over 12 months ago (25% vs. 18%).

By year level, students who experienced or detected a scam at some time ranged from 25% among students in years 7-9 to 34% among those in year 11. This mainly reflected a somewhat lower number of students in years 7-9 who said they had experienced or detected a scam over 12 months ago compared to 24% of students that did in year 11.

In other key takeouts, the survey found a somewhat lower number of students in years 7-9 (39%), at girls only schools (40%) and girls in general (42%) that never experienced or detected a scam, particularly when compared to boys in general (56%) and students in year 12 (54%). We also note that uncertainty was considerably higher among students in years 7-9 (36%) than in any other student group.



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