


ICT Skills Research

Attitudes to ICT Careers and Study among
14-19 year old Victorians (Years 9-12)





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Foreword

The ICT industry in Victoria is thriving. Turning over \$22 billion per year, the industry has, since 2002, experienced an annual growth rate of almost four per cent – higher than the national average.

Thirty-five percent of Australia's ICT students are studying in Victoria, but research has shown that young people's interest in ICT as a career is waning – which does not auger well for the industry or the economy as a whole.

The number of students studying ICT has declined by up to 19% Australia-wide since 2002.

We need to understand why this is occurring and what can be done to address the situation.

And we need to act now, given the critical role of ICT as a key enabler of innovation in other industry sectors and one of the world's most important industries in its own right.

The so-called "Generation Y", born between 1981 and 1995, are highly discerning in their choice of careers. They demand excitement, creativity and fun in the work they perform.

The key to attracting young people to the ICT field is to explain how the ICT industry meets these criteria. We need to demonstrate that an ICT career doesn't have to involve sitting in front of a computer all day - it requires a diversity of skills and encompasses a large variety of jobs across every sector – from fashion to finance to pharmaceuticals.

We must improve young people's perceptions of ICT careers and provide positive alternatives to the stereotypes that currently exist.

The Victorian Government is working innovatively and collaboratively with the education and industry sectors to do just that.

The ICT: Start here. Go anywhere campaign aims to raise the profile of ICT as a career. It brings together the key players – education initiatives and industry, and targets those who have the power to change perceptions – parents of teenagers, teachers, careers advisers and the media, as well as young people themselves.

Testimonials from recent ICT graduates working in the industry have been a powerful tool for informing school students about the possibility of careers in ICT. Results of information forums attended by 1,600 students last year showed that after attending the forum, 76% said they would consider studying ICT.

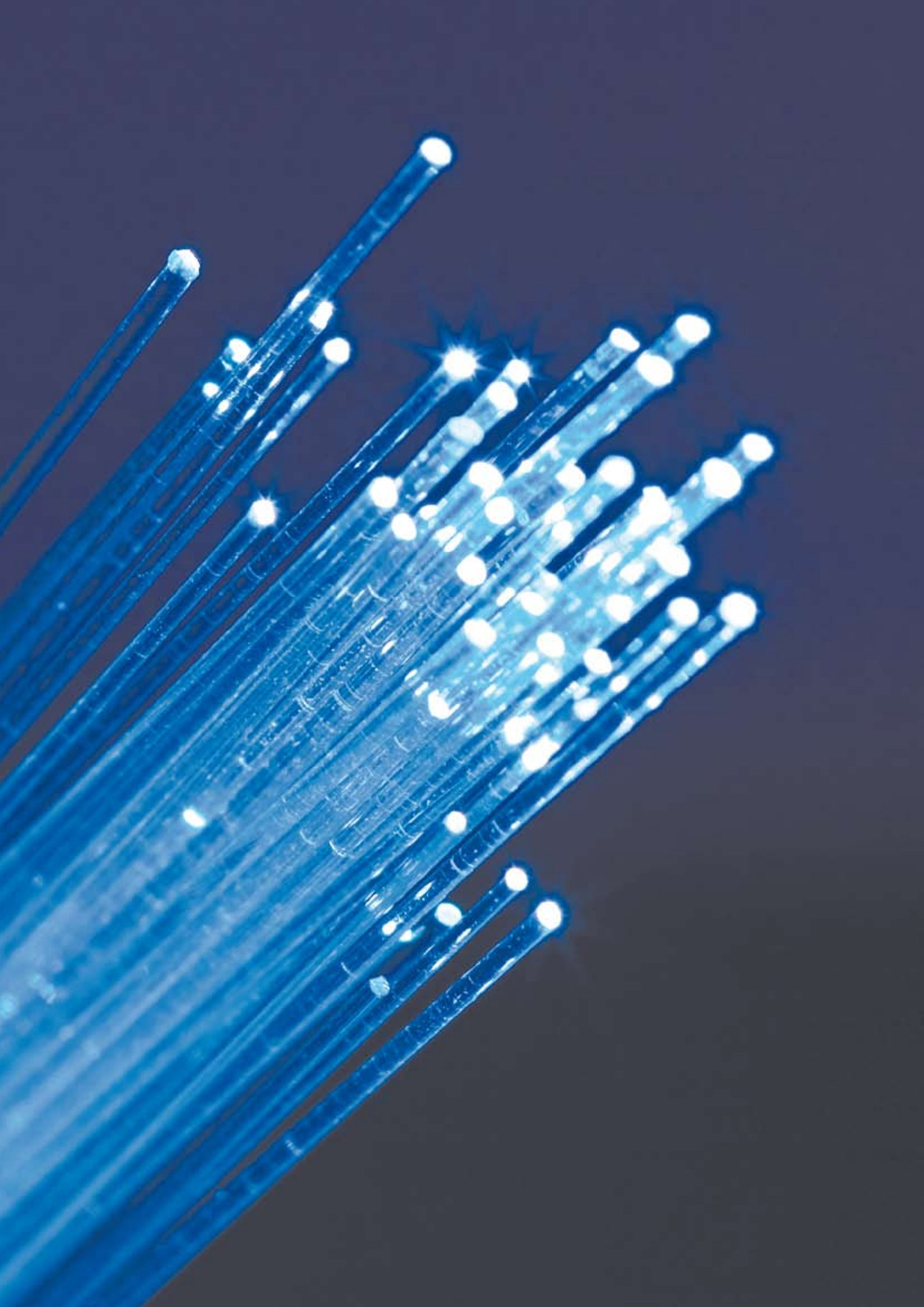
So far, outcomes of the campaign have been encouraging, with Victoria reporting a 1.8% increase in tertiary ICT preferences for 2007, but more work needs to be done.

The Victorian Government is committed to working with the education and industry sectors to inform and inspire our young people to enter the exciting, challenging and lucrative ICT industry.



A black ink handwritten signature, appearing to read 'Tim Holding', written in a cursive style.

Tim Holding
Minister for Information
and Communication Technology



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1. Background

A key priority of the Victorian Government's ICT Industry Plan 2005-2010 (the Industry Plan) is to ensure that Victoria can encourage, develop and deliver a high quality and skilled workforce to support Victorian industry.

The challenge for the Victorian Government, Victorian tertiary institutions and Victorian industry is that while Victoria continues to have the highest supply of ICT students – 34.7% of the national total in 2005 – numbers have declined significantly since 2002 by 16% in Victoria compared with 19% nationally.

This decline coincides with growth in ICT employment demand of 19.6% and as such could impact on the Victorian and national economies in terms of a potential ICT skills shortage.

As early as 2000, the importance of understanding the interests and motivations of future ICT professionals led the Victorian Government to study young people's attitudes to technology skills.

The resultant report Reality Bytes, released in 2001, revealed that young people believed learning ICT skills would hinder rather than help their future careers.

An ICT careers awareness campaign, New Realities, for students in Years 9 and 10 was implemented in 2001 to address some of the issues that were raised by the 2001 report.

A subsequent evaluation of the campaign, showed that while greater awareness of ICT careers had been achieved, this was unlikely to influence the eventual career choices of students.

A further comprehensive survey of attitudes to ICT careers among current and recently graduated Year 12 students aged 17-19 conducted in 2004 identified that while there was a significant group interested in ICT as a career there was a lack of knowledge about the range and type of possible jobs available and the study required to attain these jobs.

In addition, there was resistance to moving into a career that was perceived to involve sitting in front of the computer all day and the impact this would have on self-image.

What the most recent research indicates is that the reasons behind the decline in interest in ICT careers amongst young people are more complex than just low awareness.

This report contains the findings of a quantitative and qualitative study undertaken by Open Mind Research Group in 2006 among young people aged 14-19 years. This research aims to better understand and articulate the complex drivers and barriers to young people's decisions about ICT study and careers.

The age range for this research was broadened to 14-19 year old students compared to 17-19 year old students in the 2004 study. By investigating the attitudes of younger people, the current research provides useful information on the key decision making factors influencing 14-16 year olds when deciding which areas of study to focus on and how this influences their choice and uptake of tertiary courses.

The methodology used in the two-phased study is outlined in Appendix 1.



2. Key Findings

This report summarises the results of a quantitative and qualitative study into the attitudes of 14-19 year old students studying in Victoria with regard to pursuing further study and/or a career in ICT.

In particular, the study sought to understand what young people wanted from a career, their perceptions about a career in ICT and their perceptions about studying ICT.

Participants in the qualitative focus groups and the quantitative study covered a representative sample of young people who were either in Years 9-12 of secondary school or their first year of tertiary education.

2.1 Overview

Since the 2004 survey there has been little shift in the levels of understanding of ICT and perceptions regarding the adequacy of the information provided about the career opportunities in ICT and no apparent shift in the level of interest in a course or career in ICT.

Some of the barriers to students accepting and understanding ICT as a possible area of study or career are now clearer. Similarly, the factors that are more likely to predispose a student to take an interest in ICT study or career are also better known.

One of the major barriers to overcome are the perceptions that working in ICT means sitting in front of a computer all day and that as a career ICT would be very boring.

“I want to be out with people...not just stuck in some office behind a boring computer all day.”

Students also continue to relate ICT with IT and transfer their associations from one to the other. As their associations with IT tend to be negative, many of the participants interviewed felt that studying ICT at school and at a tertiary level was unappealing.

Given that almost 40% of students surveyed said they had no real understanding of the ICT career opportunities in Australia these perceptions are not surprising.

Any awareness of ICT career options that participants had, seemed to be based on the more 'conventional' ICT jobs such as ICT managers, software developers and programmers, ICT sales and marketing, ICT trainers and web developers.

Even students who had studied ICT in Year 9 or above had low levels of understanding of ICT, suggesting there is a limited association between what is taught in school, the term ICT and what might be a future course or career path.

The study revealed that the ICT industry would benefit from an 'image makeover' with better communication regarding the depth, variety and breadth of potential ICT career choices required to increase the level of interest.

Those surveyed indicated that an effective means of promoting ICT careers to young people would be through listening to and talking with successful young people about their experiences and opportunities studying or working in ICT. Other effective promotional activities identified were work placements for young people at ICT companies and scholarships.

While current strategies that encourage a partnership approach between government, industry and the education sector provide practical industry-based learning experiences for undergraduate ICT students, students are clearly seeking more practical experiences at secondary level to help choose a tertiary course.

In most of the areas that were covered in the study, students who had exposure to ICT at secondary school (particularly in Years 9 and 10) were more likely to be interested in exploring the possibility of further study and/or a career in ICT.

Exposure to ICT is only effective in positively impacting young people's future study and career choices when the breadth and depth of future ICT job opportunities are understood.

Encouragingly, almost 30% of students showed 'some interest' and understanding in ICT which, combined with 13% of students who showed 'strong interest' suggested a solid starting point from which to build further interest and understanding.

2.2 Career aspirations

The qualitative research revealed that there was a preference for generalist undergraduate education as a means of postponing decisions about career choice because of a fear among some students that they 'may get it wrong'.

The quantitative research also showed that the most important factors in choosing a career are:

- security
- being proud of the job
- the chance to earn good money
- plenty of variety.

Students equated "security" with having control over their career and being able to choose jobs they were interested in at a time of their own choosing.

In terms of ICT, 25% of students were interested in working in an industry classified as part of the ICT industry, although not necessarily using ICT skills.

Students are most likely to be influenced by work experience and talking to people working in careers that they are considering. Parents play a significant role and are more influential than teachers, career advisors and friends.

Students are seeking a career that:

- provides interaction with interesting people
- presents new challenges
- avoids high levels of stress
- does not involve being 'stuck' in an office or in front of a computer all day
- has a high income
- has glamour.

2.3 Perceptions of ICT studies at school and beyond

The most common reasons for not studying ICT relate to the topic itself. Some 42% of respondents had a preference for other subjects and 39% were not interested in ICT. Gender preferences were already apparent in Years 9-12 with 54% of males more likely to choose to study ICT compared with 34% of females.

The standard of ICT teaching within schools was considered to be high, with around two thirds of students rating it good, very good or excellent. Around one third of students in Years 9-12 said that ICT was not offered in their school.

Almost 40% of students also said that there wasn't enough variety in ICT subjects, 36% said that ICT subjects at school did not inspire them to continue ICT study and 33% said ICT subjects at school were boring.

Around one third of students said they had at least 'some interest' in further ICT studies, with a further 11% having a 'strong interest'. Interest was stronger among males and those who had studied ICT at Year 9 or above.

2.4 Perceptions of an ICT career

The most positive aspect of a career in ICT was the perception that 'computer skills are always useful' however this was not seen as exciting or appealing. While ICT careers can offer the chance of earning good money, they are not necessarily viewed as 'cool' or prestigious jobs.

Around half the students believed that the information they had been given on ICT as a career choice was at least adequate, while the other half felt it was a little or well below adequate.

Choosing from a list of ICT options that students were interested in, game development (28%) and graphic design (27%) were the ICT career options of choice. Some 39% of respondents weren't interested in any of the options and more traditional IT type roles were of low interest.

The most negative aspect of a career in ICT was being in front of a screen all day (57%), followed by being indoors (48%), lack of human interaction (46%) and system crashes and losing information (40%).

The most positive aspect of a career in ICT is working with the latest technology (62%).

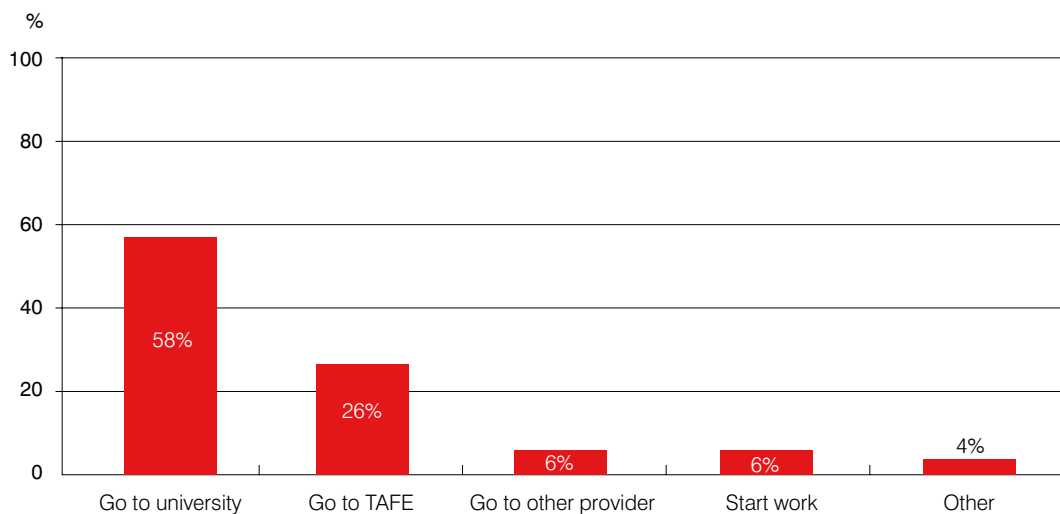
Other positive aspects include:

- ICT is a growing industry (47%)
- lots of job opportunities available (47%)
- ICT is well paid (42%).

3. Detailed Findings

Chart 1: Intentions when leaving school

Q1a: When you leave school, are you planning to go to university, TAFE, some other education provider or are you planning to start work or do something else?



3.1 Future study intentions and careers

Future study intentions

Many students indicated a preference for courses that offer a more generalist approach in the initial phases of higher education as a means of leaving their future career options open.

This preference for general qualifications could be based on young people's fairly simplistic perceptions of careers more broadly as demonstrated in the focus groups; and therefore their reluctance to choose a specific area of study would seem to apply beyond ICT alone.

"If I knew exactly that I wanted to be a doctor or something then I'd do something specific but I don't so I'm thinking I'll just do something broad like Commerce or something like that."

The fundamental characteristics of desirable careers are:

- security
- not being stuck in the office
- interaction with interesting people
- pride in the profession
- good money
- a lot of fun
- helping others
- variety
- a balanced life without too much stress.

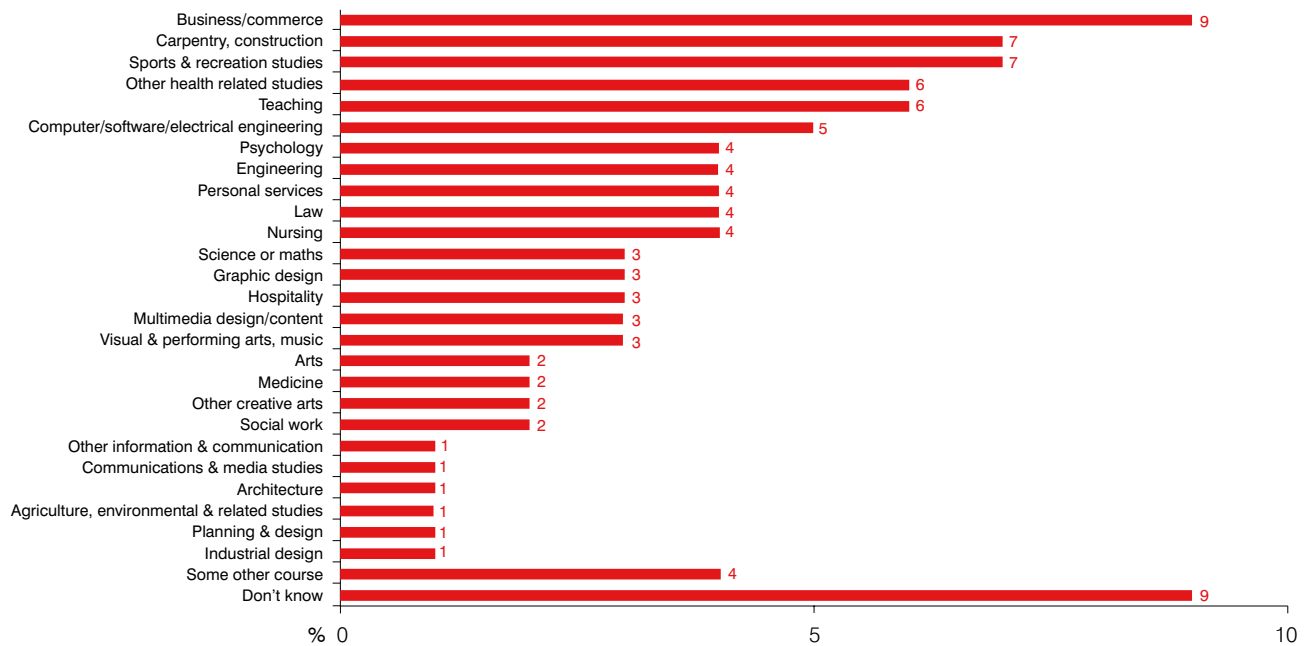
Desirable careers include rock stars, sports people and actors/models. Undesirable careers include cleaners, accountants and factory workers. Of interest was the fact that medicine and law while having high incomes were potentially undesirable because of perceived high stress levels.

All students in the quantitative study were either intending to study when they left school or at some time in the future:

- 58% intended to go directly to university
- 26% intended to go to TAFE
- 6% intended to go to another provider
- 10% intended to work or do something else prior to commencing tertiary study.

Chart 2: Course intended to study

Q1b: What course do you intend to study when you leave secondary school?



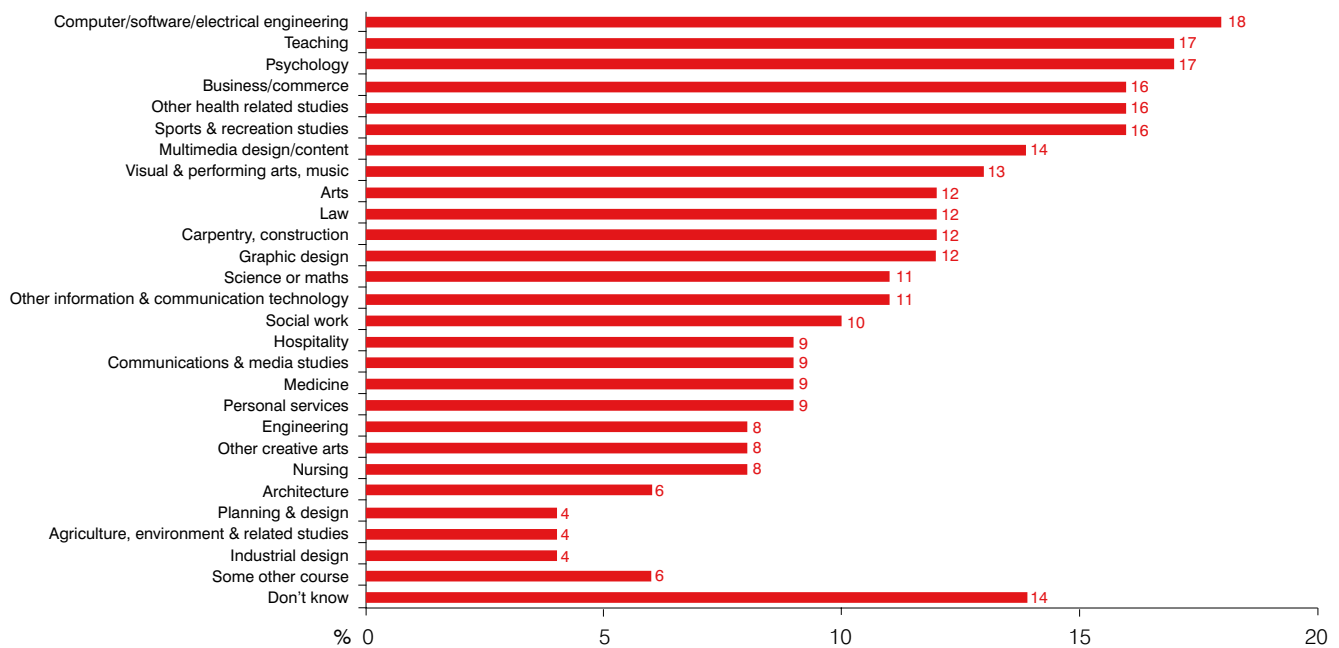
When students were asked about their tertiary study intentions, they most commonly mentioned business or commerce (9%). When all the ICT based courses were combined together, however, around the same percentage intended to study ICT.

More males (15%) intended to study ICT than females (3%).

Students who had studied ICT at Year 9 or above were also more likely to study ICT at tertiary levels (16% compared with 3%).

Chart 3: Courses consider/intend to study

Q1b/c: What course do you intend to study when you leave secondary school? What other courses would you consider?

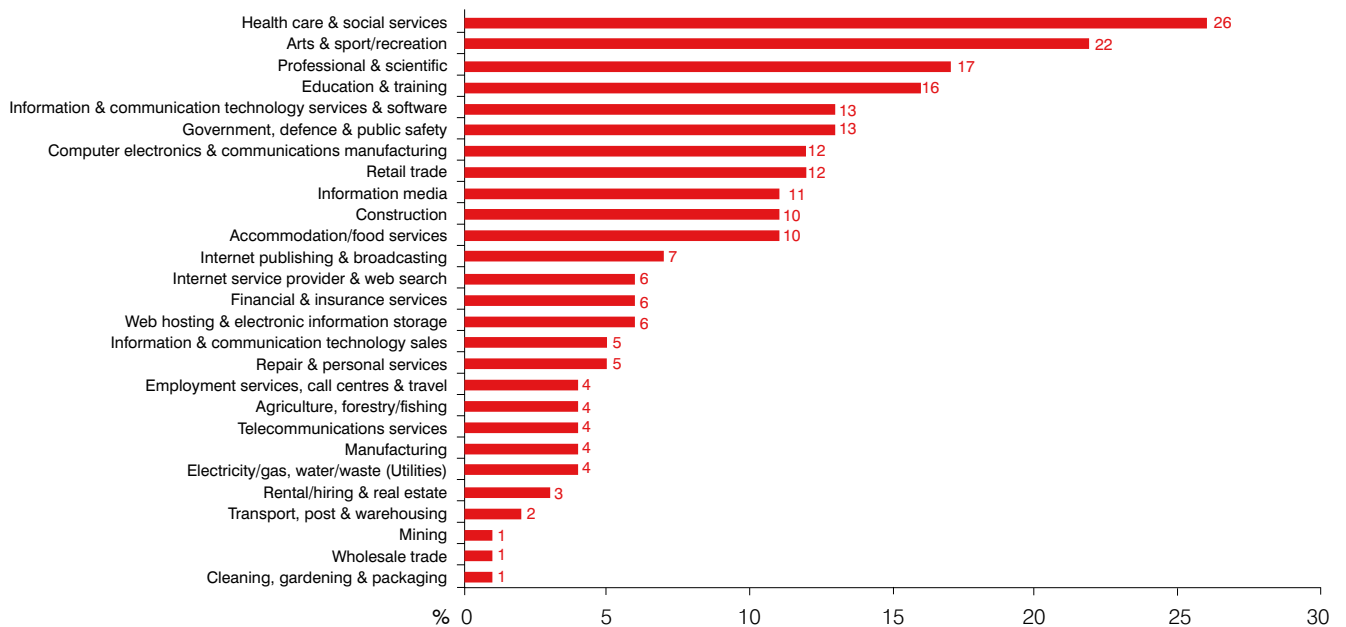


Explanatory Note: The level of interest in different course areas is based on the course that students indicated they intend to study as well as the other courses they would consider studying. As a result, students were able to indicate interest in more than one course area. The responses most relevant to ICT courses relate to computer/software/electrical engineering and multimedia design/content.

When students were asked what other courses they would consider studying, 32% indicated an ICT related course compared to 9% who said ICT would be their first preference.

Chart 4: Industries interested in working in

Q3a: Thinking about the future, what industries are you interested in working in?



Explanatory Note: The level of interest in different industry areas is based on all those industries that students indicated they were interested in working in. As a result, students were able to indicate interest in more than one industry. The responses most relevant to ICT relate to information & communication technology services & software and computer electronics & communications manufacturing industries.

Future careers

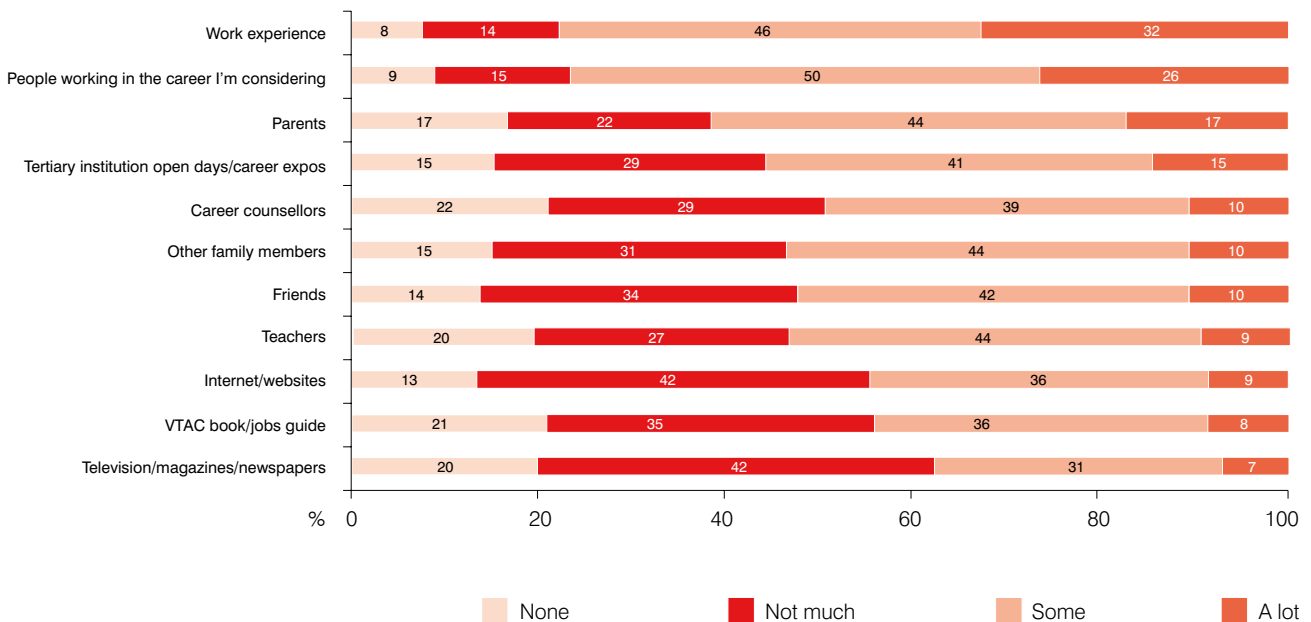
The industries that most students in Years 9-12 are most interested in working in are health care and social services (26%) and arts and sport/recreation (22%).

Around 25% of students were interested in the ICT industry with the most popular segments being ICT services and software (13%) and computer electronics and communications manufacturing (12%)

Almost 40% of males were interested in working in the ICT industry compared with just 11% of females. Again, those who had studied ICT were significantly more likely to be interested in the ICT industry (36% compared with 16%).

Chart 5: Career influences

Q4: How much influence do each of the following have on your choice of a career?



Career influences

While students seek information about courses and careers from various sources, 'actual experiences' are significant in influencing a student's decision making process.

Students cited work experience (32%) and talking with people who work in careers they were considering (26%) as being the two most important information sources. Parents were the third most influential group (17%).

Further supporting the importance of experiential influences, tertiary institution open days and career expos were

considered to be more influential than other sources such as internet websites or the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) guide.

While career books and VTAC guides were seen as factual, they were also felt to be overwhelming due to their comprehensiveness and failed to present any 'real' insight about people's actual experience in particular careers.

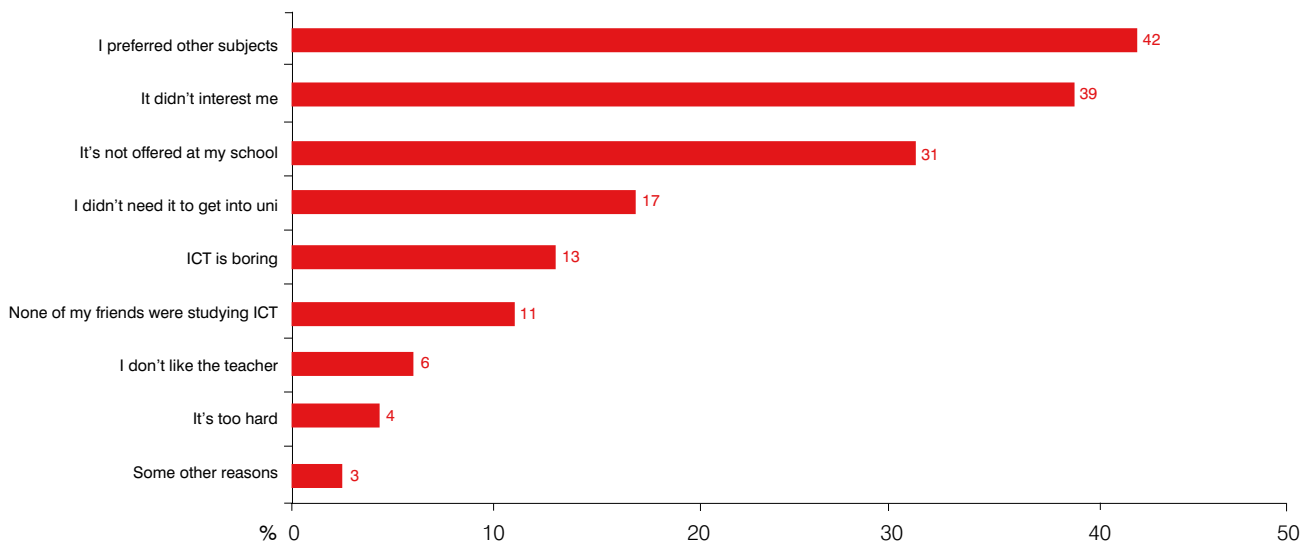
Teachers and parents were both seen to provide experience-based advice and career choices of family members could also play a role in influencing career decisions.

Teachers were seen to influence students towards more specific choices, while family were seen to move students towards more generalist education.

Popular media, including TV series and movies also played a role in providing information about careers as did news and current affairs programs or newspaper articles. Information from these sources in relation to the economy or particular industries could influence the choice of a suitable career.

Chart 6: Reasons for not studying ICT at school

Q12b: Why did you not study ICT in Year 9 or above? Respondents to this question did not study ICT in Year 9 or above



3.2 ICT at school

Studying ICT at school

Just under half of those interviewed had studied ICT in Year 9 and above, with males (54%) significantly more likely to have studied ICT than females (34%).

The most common reason for not studying ICT in Year 9 and above was a preference for other subjects (42%) followed by a lack of interest (39%). Almost one third mentioned that ICT was not offered at their school.

Older students and females were more likely to say that ICT didn't interest them. Older students were also more likely to say that they didn't need ICT to get into university.

ICT teaching

Overall the standard of ICT teaching was considered to be positive with 67% of students rating it as good, very good or excellent.

Those who considered ICT was taught well were likely to attribute it to good equipment and resources (43%), good teachers (36%), the subject being interesting (33%) and getting good results (30%). (See Chart 7.)

Those who had studied ICT were more likely to mention good teachers, ICT being interesting, getting good results, learning a lot and having fun compared with those who had not studied ICT who were more likely to mention the good equipment and resources.

Teachers were also mentioned as a reason that students thought ICT was taught well, suggesting that teachers were extremely important to a student's outlook.

Chart 7: Reasons ICT was taught well

Q14a: Why do you feel that ICT was taught well? Respondents to this question rated ICT teaching at their school as good, very good or excellent.

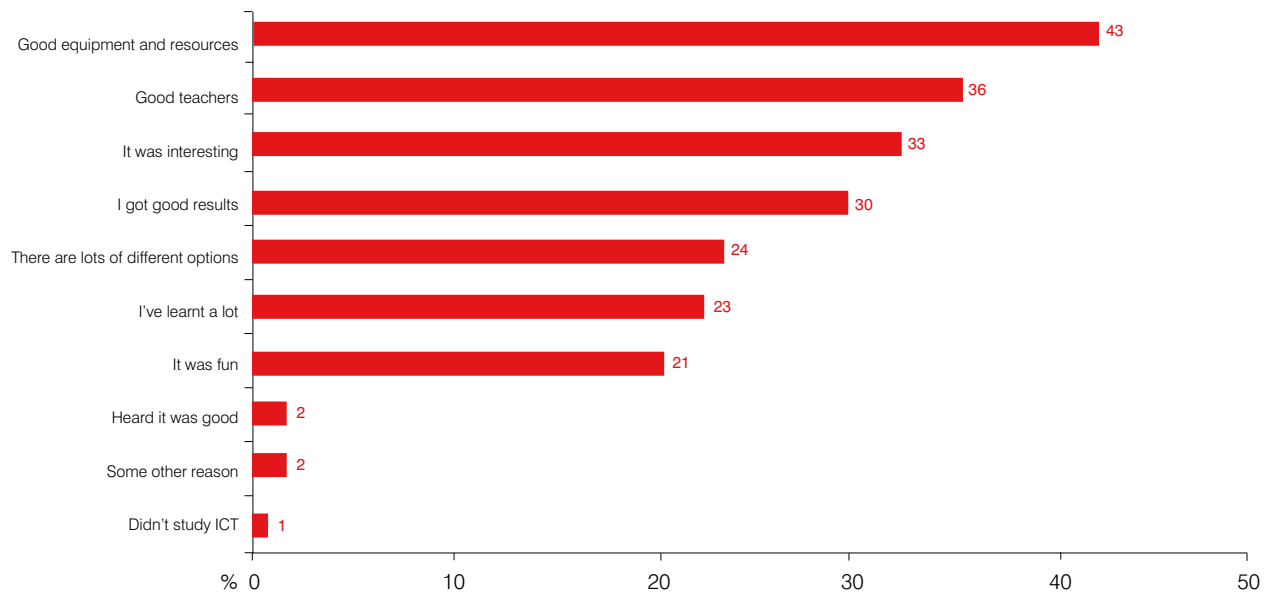
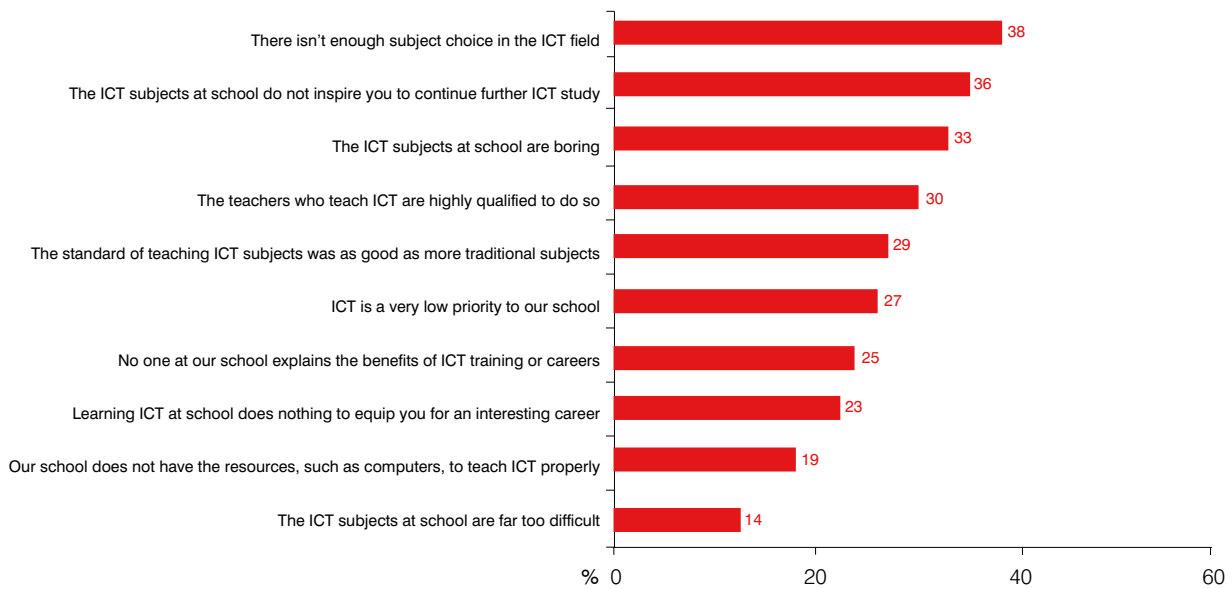


Chart 8: Attitudes towards ICT teaching

Q15: Still thinking about the ways ICT is taught at your school, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Attitudes

The most common negative attitudes toward ICT teaching were from students who had not studied ICT. Their attitudes toward ICT were that there wasn't enough subject choice in the area of ICT (38%), ICT subjects at school were not inspiring students to continue further ICT study (36%) and ICT subjects at school were boring (33%).

Those who had studied ICT at Year 9 and above were significantly more likely to have a positive view of the standard of teaching. They were, however, more likely to believe that there was not enough subject choice in the area of ICT (42% compared with 32%).

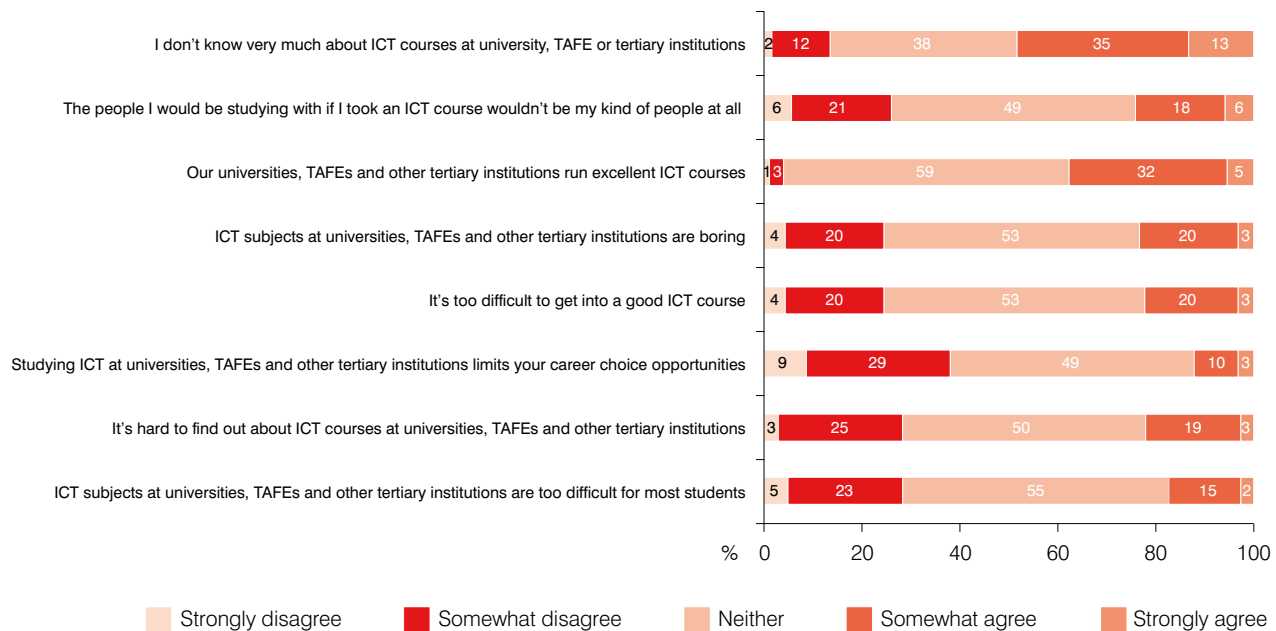
A quarter of students felt that no one at their school explained the benefits of ICT training and careers and 23% felt that learning ICT at school did nothing to equip them for an interesting career.

ICT career information

Half of the students felt that information provided by their school about ICT as a career path was adequate or more than adequate – the other half stated this information was inadequate.

Chart 9: Attitudes towards studying ICT at tertiary institutions

Q19: To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements about ICT courses at university, TAFE or other tertiary institutions?



3.3 ICT in tertiary education

Interest in studying ICT at a tertiary institution

32% of students expressed some interest in studying ICT at a university, TAFE or other tertiary institution and a further 11% expressed a strong interest.

This interest was higher in the younger age group (14-16 year olds), where 48% had at least some interest compared with 36% of the older students (17-19 year olds).

Interest was also stronger among males (53%) compared with females (33%) and those who had studied ICT in Year 9 and above (58%) compared with those who had not studied ICT (30%).

Attitudes toward ICT study at tertiary institutions

While 48% of students believed that they did not know much about ICT courses at tertiary institutions, there was a general view that Victorian tertiary institutions run excellent ICT courses. This may be a broader reflection of the perceptions of the quality of Victorian tertiary institutions.

Of concern is the fact that almost a quarter (22%) of students said that it was difficult to find out about ICT courses at tertiary institutions. This view was more common among older students (26% compared with 18%) and those who had studied ICT (27% compared with 19%).

3.4 ICT careers

The ICT name

Only 17% of respondents reported having heard of the term ICT, with awareness significantly higher among those who had studied ICT in Year 9 and above (29% compared with 7%). Awareness was also higher among males (19%) compared with females (14%) and among those in Years 11 and 12 (20%) compared to those in Years 9 and 10 (14%).

In the qualitative research, students hypothesised that ICT was likely to have something to do with computers, technology or online communications. It was also seen simply as another or new name for IT.

IT was associated with negative perceptions with many students having a very narrow view of what it involved. IT work was understood to be about making computers operate either by writing software or building hardware. This was considered to be boring and students were largely unable to move beyond the perception that working with computers was mundane, monotonous and repetitive.

Unfortunately, these perceptions also influenced students' impressions of ICT and this narrow view meant that the prospect of studying and working in this area offered little attraction.

“You hear stuff and apparently IT just isn't a great job – apparently it doesn't pay too well anymore and it can be really hard to find a job.”

Understanding of ICT careers

Almost 40% of those students interviewed had no real understanding of the career opportunities for ICT in Australia with only 8% believing they had a clear understanding. (See Chart 10)

Three quarters of those who had studied ICT, however, had at least some understanding compared to 50% of those who had not studied ICT.

“IT is like programming and stuff... no thanks.”

Awareness of ICT career options

When shown a list of options, Years 9-12 students were most likely to be aware of IT/ICT managers, software developers/programmers, ICT sales and marketing, ICT trainers and web developers.

In general, one third to one half of the students were aware of each of the ICT options when prompted, although there was a lower awareness of positions such as Chief Information Officer (20%) and security specialist (16%).

Those who had studied ICT had a higher awareness across most ICT positions than those who had not.

ICT career options

When discussing ICT career options, students expressed a view that this was an industry where there was significant competition from overseas students and only limited opportunity for career progression.

ICT jobs in Australia were seen as technical and mundane, with exciting jobs perceived to be available only overseas.

As a result of these perceptions, ICT as a course and a career was second tier. Students would only consider ICT as a career if they had a love of computers or if preferred career options were not available. This was despite an acknowledgement that being trained in ICT was a useful skill.

“I'd love to be a games developer but I think that's all in the States.”

Chart 10: ICT career options aware of

Q5c: The following are some career options in ICT. Before today, which of the following would you have considered to be ICT careers?

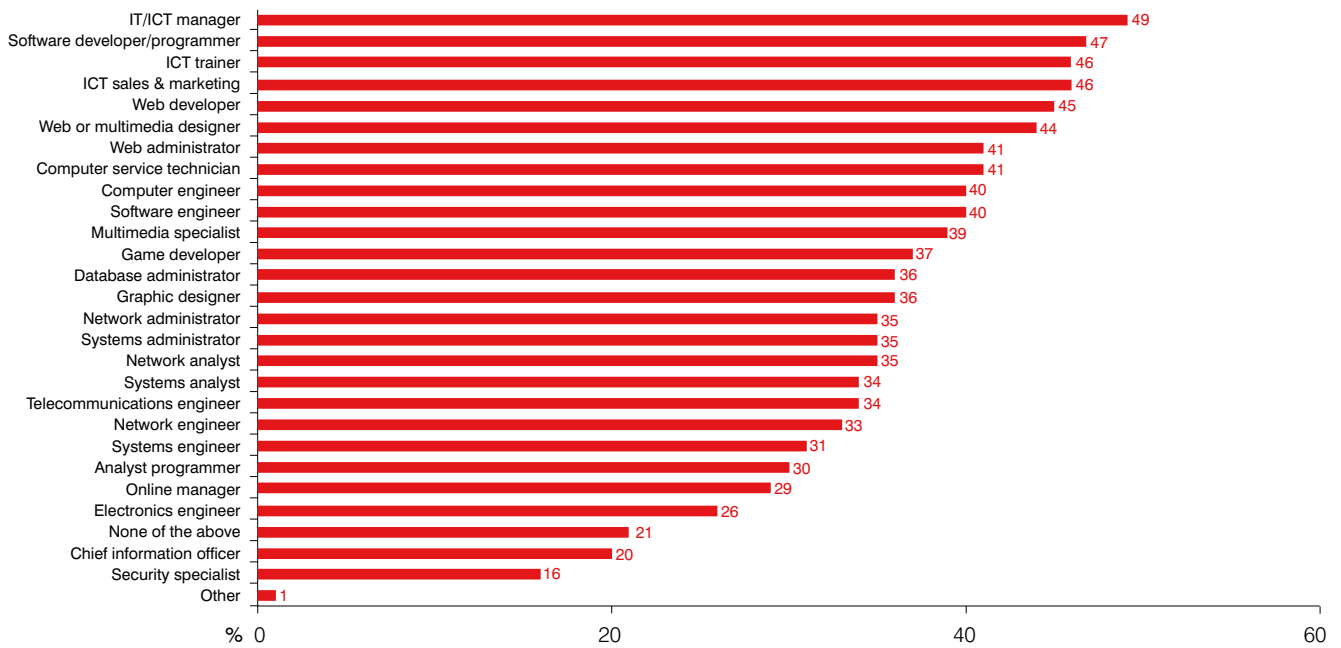
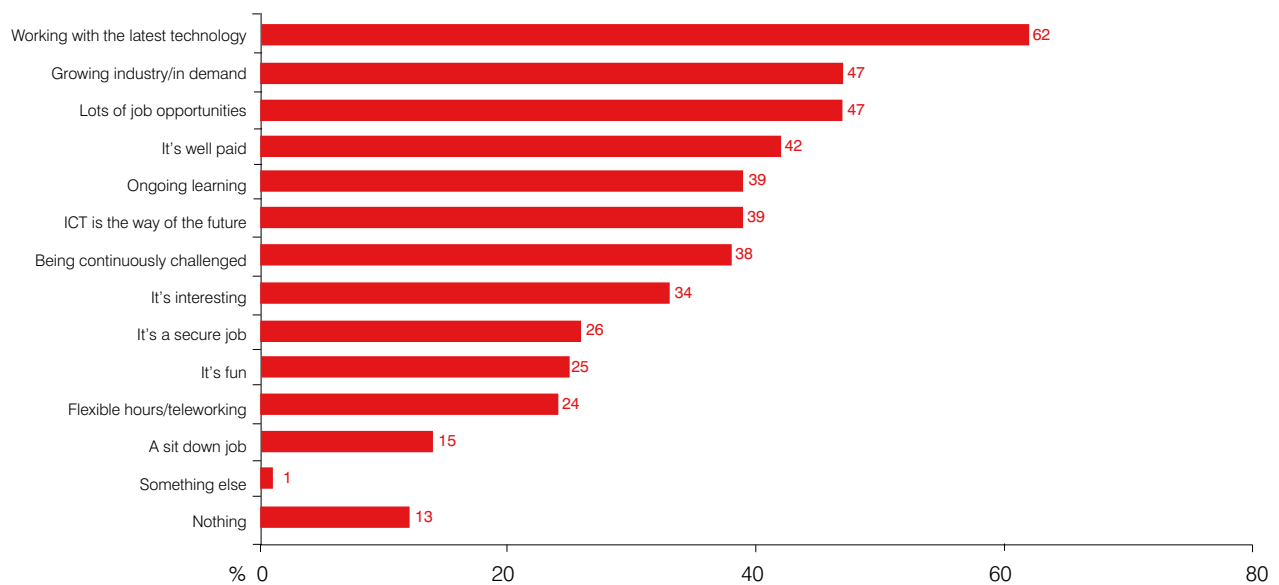


Chart 11: Positive aspects of an ICT career

Q8a: What would you see as the good things about a career in ICT?



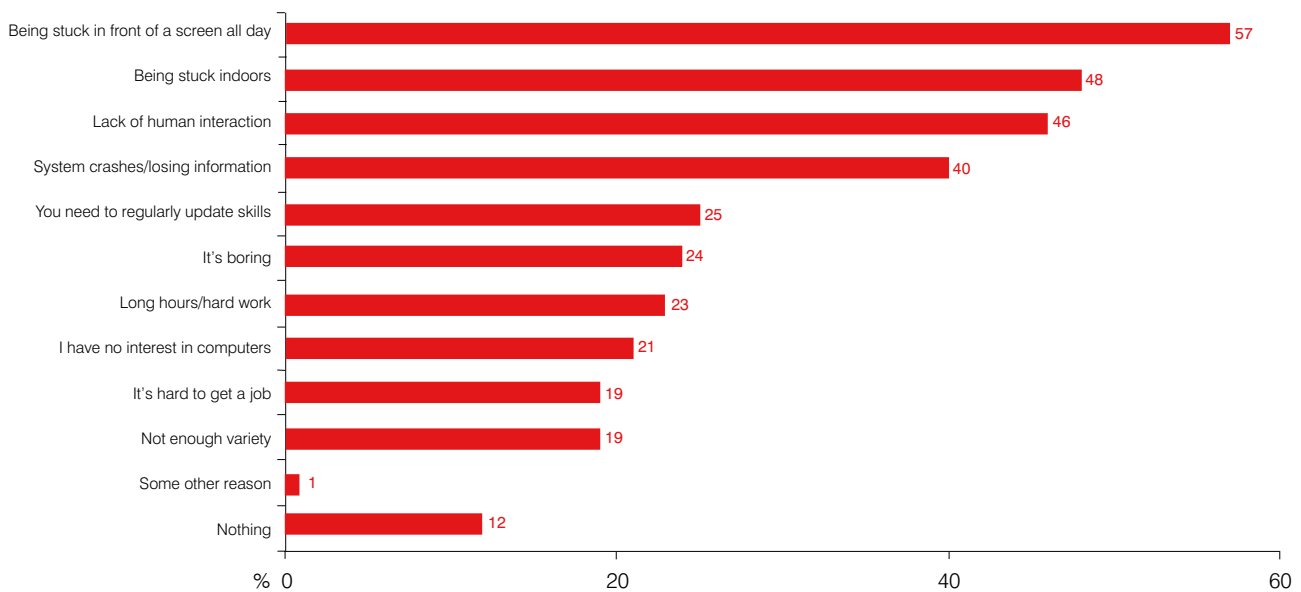
Perceptions of ICT careers

Positive aspects of a career in ICT included working with the latest technology, working in an industry that is growing or in demand and having lots of job opportunities.

Males and those who studied ICT at Year 9 or above were significantly more likely to list positive aspects than females and those who had not studied ICT.

Chart 12: Negative aspects of an ICT career

Q8b: What would you see as some of the bad things about a career in ICT?



Perceived negative aspects included being stuck in front of a screen all day, being stuck in doors and the lack of human interaction.

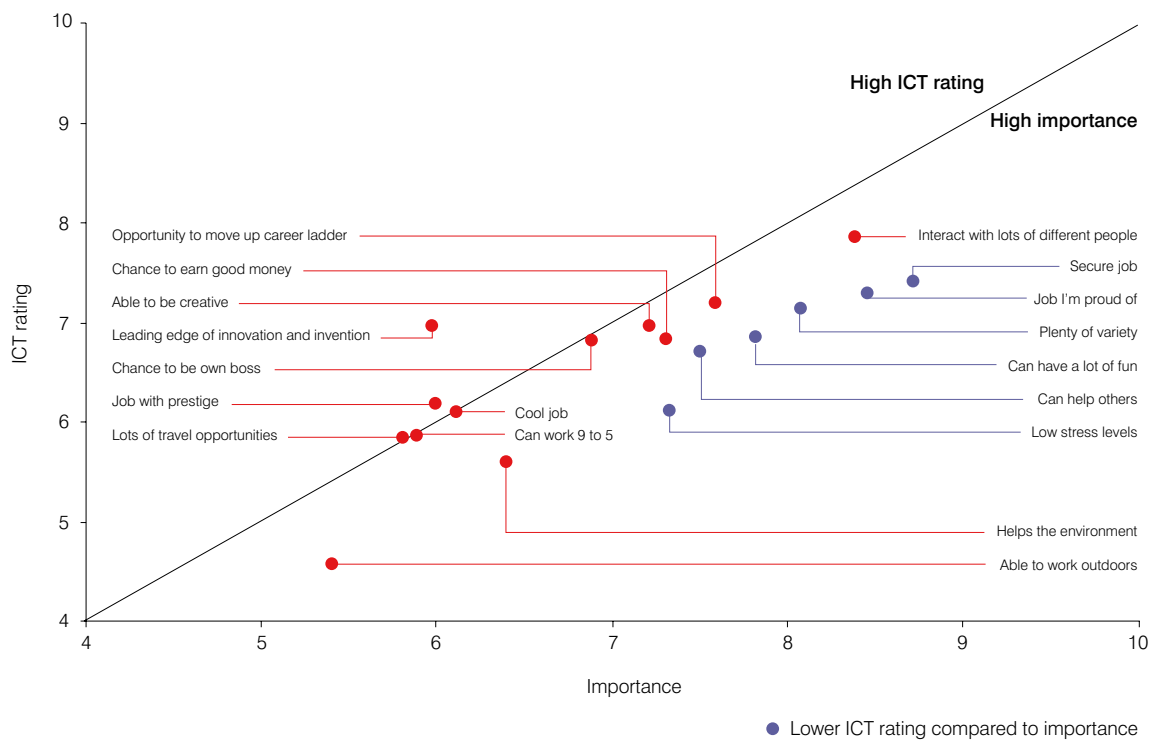
Females were more likely to mention negative aspects and while there were few differences between those who had studied ICT and those who hadn't, those who had not studied were more likely to say that ICT careers were boring and they had no interest in computers.

ICT careers were seen to offer the chance to earn good money as well as security.

When comparing students' beliefs about ICT careers with the factors that they consider are important when choosing a career, ICT can fall short in some areas. In particular, ICT is less able to offer the ability to work outdoors, help the environment or have low stress levels. It also doesn't measure up against important aspects of a career such as having a job to be proud of, having variety or fun and providing an opportunity to help others.

"You want it to be kinda cool...something you're happy to tell people you do."

Chart 13: Important factors vs perceptions of ICT



Almost half of the students believed that careers in ICT allowed them to work in many industries. A similar number believed that there was a wide variety of ICT careers to choose from and that there were lots of opportunities in ICT.

Despite these positive attitudes, 50% of students interviewed still held the belief that a career in ICT meant sitting in front of a computer all day, while 31% thought ICT could be very boring. (See Table 1)

Female students were significantly less likely to believe that there was a wide range of ICT careers to choose from (45% compared with 59%) and were significantly more likely to say that it's hard to find out what an ICT career could offer (38% compared with 29%).

Those who studied ICT in Year 9 and above tended to be more positive about ICT careers and 45% were also more likely to say that one needs to be much brighter than average to work in ICT compared to 33% who did not study ICT.

Chart 14: Attitudes towards careers in ICT

Q10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about a career in ICT?

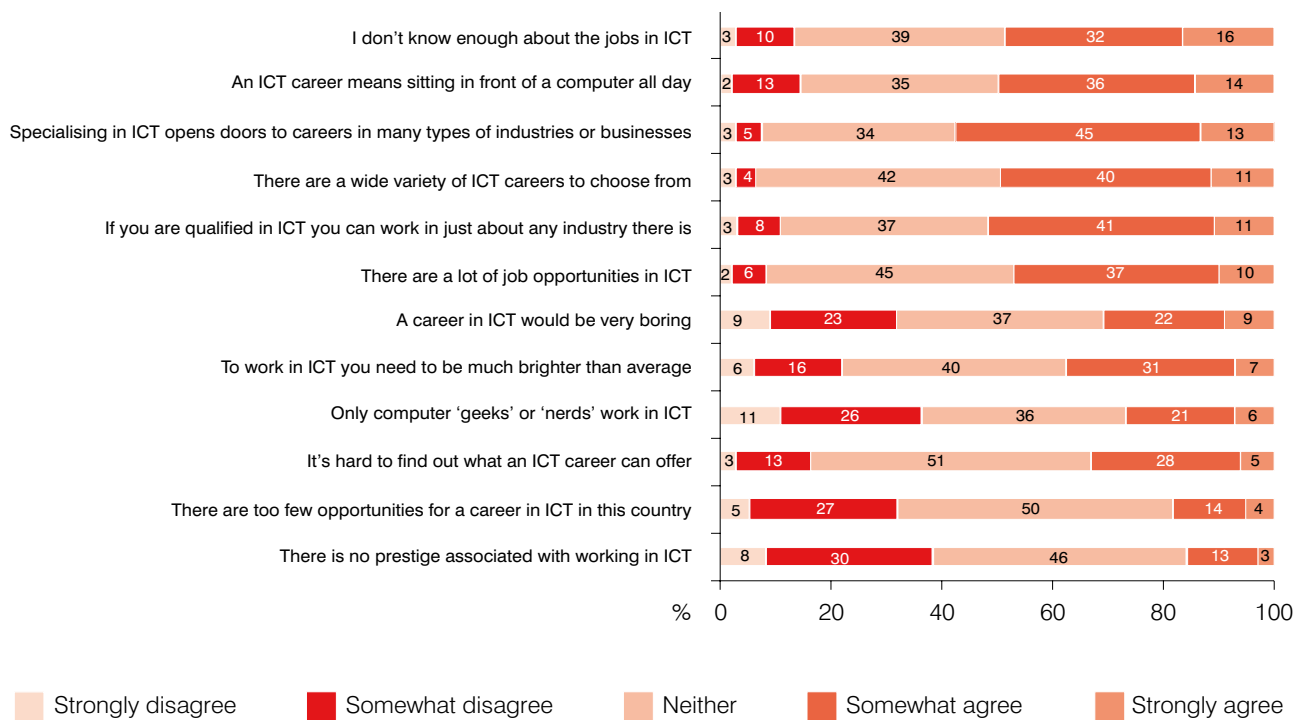
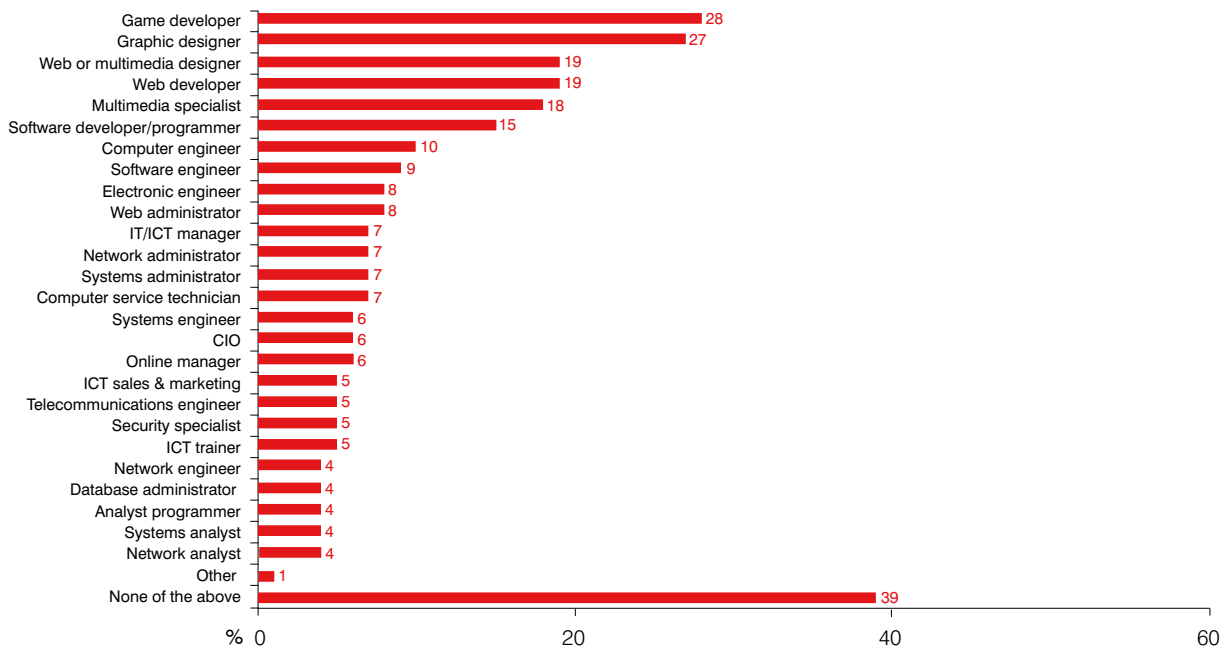


Chart 15: ICT career options interested in

Q5d: Which (if any) interests you?



Interest in an ICT career

Half of the Years 9-12 students interviewed had at least some interest in an ICT career, with 10% describing themselves as having a 'strong interest'.

Interest was stronger in Years 9-10 students (55%) than in Years 11-12 students (44%). There were also significant differences in interest between males and females (62% compared with 37%). Studying ICT in Year 9 or above also resulted in greater interest (67% compared with 36%). (See Table 1)

The career options with the highest level of interest were game development and graphic design, followed by web/multimedia design, web development and multimedia specialist. More 'traditional' ICT roles were of less interest.

Males were significantly more likely to be interested in the majority of ICT careers than females, with the notable difference being graphic design, which held similar levels of interest for both. Overall, 48% of females were interested in at least one ICT career, compared with 74% of males. (See Table 1)

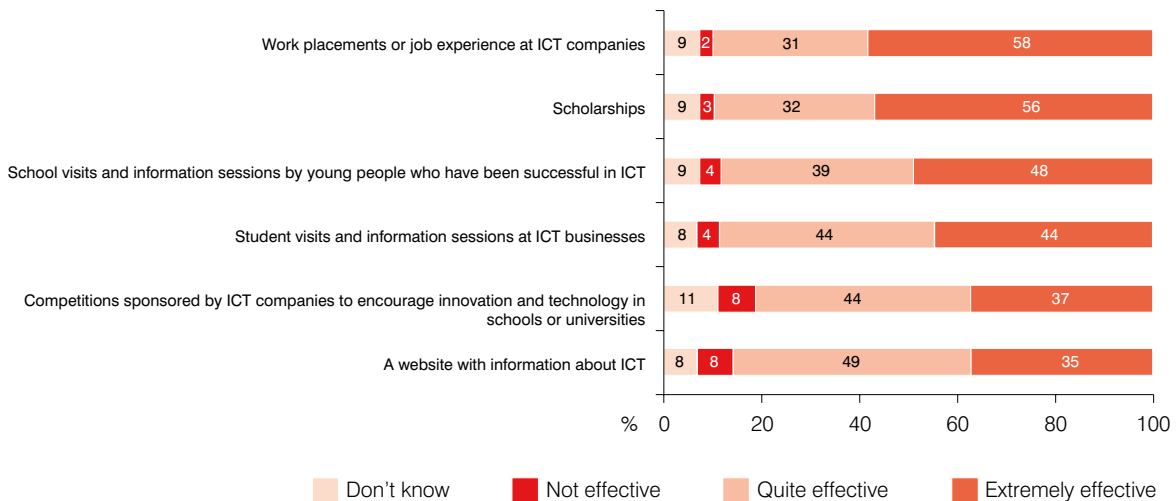
Table 1: ICT career options interested in

Q5d: Which (if any) interests you? Significant differences highlighted in purple.

	Total per cent	Year 9/10 per cent	Year 11/12 per cent	Male per cent	Female per cent	Studied ICT at school per cent	Did not study ICT per cent
Games developer	28	31	25	44	12	38	20
Graphic designer	27	30	23	28	25	35	20
Web or multimedia designer	19	21	17	24	13	27	12
Web developer	19	20	17	25	12	29	11
Multimedia specialist	18	19	17	20	15	23	13
Software developer/programmer	15	16	13	23	6	23	8
Computer engineer	10	11	9	16	3	14	6
Software engineer	9	10	8	14	3	12	6
Electronics engineer	8	8	8	13	3	11	6
Web administrator	8	8	7	11	4	13	3
IT/ICT manager	7	7	8	10	4	10	5
Network administrator	7	7	7	9	4	10	4
Computer service technician	7	9	4	11	2	9	5
Systems administrator	7	6	7	10	4	12	3
Chief Information Officer	6	5	7	9	3	7	6
Systems engineer	6	11	2	5	7	4	6
Online manager	6	5	7	7	5	9	4
ICT sales & marketing	5	5	6	7	4	8	3
Telecommunications	5	4	6	7	3	6	4
Security specialist	5	5	5	8	2	7	3
ICT trainer	5	5	5	6	3	6	4
Database administrator	4	5	4	7	2	5	4
Network engineer	4	4	5	8	1	7	2
Analyst programmer	4	4	4	5	3	5	3
Network analyst	4	3	5	6	2	5	3
Systems analyst	4	6	1	3	4	6	7
Other	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
None of the above	39	35	42	26	52	23	51

Chart 16: Promoting ICT careers to young people

Q11: If the ICT industry were to promote careers in ICT to young people, how effective would the following means of promotion be?



Promoting ICT careers to young people

Students believed that the most effective means of promoting ICT careers to young people would be through work placements or job experience at ICT companies and scholarships. School visits by young people who had been successful in the ICT industry and student visits to ICT businesses were also seen as quite effective.

Those who studied ICT in Year 9 and above were significantly more likely to believe that work placements (64% compared with 54%), scholarships (63% compared with 51%) and visits to ICT businesses (50% compared with 40%) would be an effective means of promotion.





Appendix Methodology

The research program undertaken by Open Mind Research Group in November-December 2006 involved both qualitative and quantitative research.

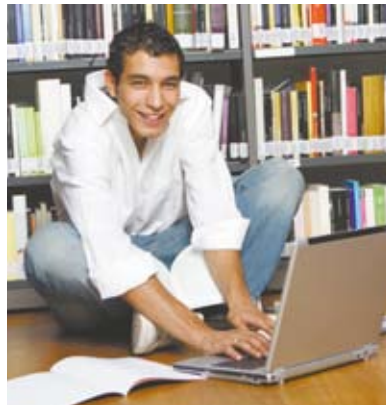
Qualitative research

- eight focus groups, two mini groups and 12 depth interviews with students in Years 9-12 or in first year of tertiary education
- affinity pair depth interviews were conducted with students in Years 9 and 10

- mini groups were conducted with Year 11 students
- standard group discussions were conducted with Year 12 and first year tertiary students.

Quantitative research

- an online survey of 648 Victorian Years 9-12 students
- sample included students from both government and private schools in metropolitan and regional areas.



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