Student Preferences for Bachelor Degrees at TAFE

The socio-spatial influence of schools

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Key Points

Key Points from previous research reviewed in this report:

- There are three main influences on students' preferences for bachelor degrees and higher education (HE) institutions: (1) students' families and communities, (2) the socio-spatial location of schools and (3) school practices;
- Families and communities (i.e. cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds) shape what students understand to be important and feasible in their choices of bachelor degrees and institutions;
- A school's socio-spatial location (i.e. school context) is indicative of the forms and levels of its cultural and socioeconomic resources. These are reflected in the patterns of students' preferences;
- The influence of school practices (i.e. career advice, subject availability and engagement with HE) on students' HE preferences depends on the type, size and social mix of the school.

Key points from research data analysed in this report:

- Most students who lodge a preference with VTAC or SATAC to undertake a bachelor degree at a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institution, tend to do this only once out of a possible twelve preferences. Almost all students who expressed a preference for more than one TAFE bachelor degree include only two TAFE bachelor degrees;
- Just over half of students who indicate a preference to undertake a TAFE bachelor degree are from government schools;
- Students who indicate a preference to undertake a TAFE bachelor degree are most often from metropolitan schools and schools in high socioeconomic status (SES) areas;
- Preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees are more likely to come from students in high SES schools than from students in metropolitan schools.
- In Victoria, the preference rate for TAFE bachelor degrees by students from low SES schools is lower than their preference rate for university bachelor degrees nation-wide. In South Australia, the low SES student preference rate for TAFE degrees is higher than for university bachelor degrees nation-wide but still below 25 per cent (DoE 2014a). TAFE bachelor degree preferences from low SES schools in each state are about the same as their preference rate for bachelor degrees state-wide (DoE 2013).
- In Victoria, TAFE bachelor degrees are offered in eleven fields of study: approximately one-third of student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees are in the field of Creative Arts; approximately one-quarter are in the field of Management and Commerce;
- In South Australia, TAFE bachelor degrees are offered in only two fields of study: approximately two-thirds of student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees are in the field of Creative Arts; approximately one-third are in the field of Management and Commerce;
- Students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees marginally increase after students' Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) results are known (Victoria only), particularly in the Health and Education fields of study;
- Post-ATAR (in Victoria), students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees in Creative Arts proportionally decrease, albeit marginally;
- Students who indicate a preference for TAFE bachelor degrees also tend to indicate a preference for university bachelor degrees offered by non-aligned and ATN universities.

Contents

1| Executive Summary

This report on *Student Preferences for Bachelor Degrees at TAFE* (Technical and Further Education) institutions is derived from research commissioned by Australia's National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) hosted at Curtin University and conducted by researchers at Deakin University's Strategic Centre for Research in Educational Futures and Innovation (CREFI). The report focuses on the influence of schools on their students' higher education (HE) preferences – particularly their preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees – as recorded by the Victorian and South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centres (VTAC and SATAC). Influence is researched in terms of a school's socioeconomic status, geographical location and sector. The SATAC data set is considerably smaller, at around 8 per cent of the VTAC data set.

Bachelor degrees offered by TAFEs are relatively small in number but a growing higher education option for students in Australia (Gale et al. 2013). The Australian Government's proposal to extend Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) to include Australian higher education not delivered by the nation's public universities (Department of Education 2014b), is likely to fuel further growth in TAFE bachelor degree offerings. The recent *Report of the Review of the Demand Driven Funding System* in Australian higher education (Kemp & Norton 2014), which recommended this change, also makes special mention of non-university degree options as something that would be of particular benefit to students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds.

The research reported herein is informed by a review of the international research literature, which indicates three main influences on students' HE preferences: (1) students' families and communities; (2) the socio-spatial location of their schools; and (3) school practices. This report contributes to understandings on the second of these: the influence of school context (their socio-spatial location) on students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees.

The research found that the annual rate of student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees was relatively stable (at around 1,500 per annum) from 2009 to 2012 but rose significantly (by 30%) in 2013. Students from high socioeconomic status schools (and with an average ATAR of 56.9) were the group that registered the largest number of preferences. The number of preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees lodged by students from metropolitan schools exceeded the preferences of students from schools located in all other regions combined. This might reflect the fact that TAFE institutions offering bachelor degrees tend to be located in metropolitan areas.

The research also found that students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees increased after announcement of their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), by between 25 and 30 per cent each year. The post-ATAR increase was most noticeable in the Health and Education fields of study and among students from high socioeconomic status schools.

The report concludes that while the public perception of TAFE is that it is a sector primarily for students from low SES backgrounds, this is not reflected in students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees. Instead, the preferences of students from high socioeconomic schools outnumber other SES groups in almost every TAFE-degree field of study. This includes the fields of Health and Education, which are often seen to be typical low SES student choices in universities (Gale & Parker 2013).

2| Influences on students' post-school preferences

This chapter reviews the research on the influences on students' preferences[1] for bachelor degrees and for the types of higher education (HE) institutions that offer these. It identifies three key elements that mediate these preferences: (1) student background, (2) school context, and (3) school practices. The chapter proceeds on the premise that these three elements are involved in the formation of a students' 'habitus', which informs students' aspirations and preferences for the future.

2.1 *Student Background*

Much of the research literature on student preferences draws attention to the influence of students' backgrounds, particularly to the influence of the socioeconomic status (SES) of their family and community. That is, their preferences are seen to be informed by the interplay between individual agency and social structures. An individual's agency is not created in a vacuum but rather emerges from the cultural capital particular to families and communities. While students may have the capacity to make rational choices for themselves, these choices are framed by their familial and cultural contexts (Smyth & Banks 2012). Individuals operate according to a 'pragmatic rationality' (Reay, David & Ball 2001: 864). Be it in educational or occupational preferences, people make 'structurally contingent' choices (Croll 2008). They are constrained by their 'collective fate' (Reay 2004) or collective identity: by their socio-economic status, gender, geographical location, cultural identity, race and so on. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1990: 226) put it:

> Depending on whether access to higher education is collectively felt, even in a diffuse way, as an impossible, possible, probable, normal or banal future, everything in the conduct of the families and the children (particularly their conduct and performance at school) will vary, because behaviour tends to be governed by what it is 'reasonable' to expect [… vis-à-vis the available] collective opportunity. (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990: 226)

Several researchers have similarly observed that aspirations for HE are "a collective cultural capacity" to imagine possible futures (Gale & Parker 2011; Sellar & Gale 2011). As Sellar, Gale and Parker (2011: 46) note, "The capacity to aspire involves both the ability to realise particular aspirations, but also the collective power to shape cultural contexts in which different desires are formed and valorised as 'aspirational'". As one expression of these aspirations, preferences for bachelor degrees and HE institutions reflect students' social position as members of a particular group. Thus, for example, ambitious educational and occupational aspirations often characterise students from advantaged SES backgrounds partly because they benefit in navigating towards their preferred futures from the material and social resources particular to their families and communities.

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu uses the term 'habitus' to refer to this 'embodied' cultural capital, which is constituted by a system of "durable, transposable dispositions" (Bourdieu 1990: 53). The habitus is an "acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted" (Bourdieu 1977: 95). It is generative in the

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[1] NB: (1) in this chapter and throughout the report, our focus is on 'preference' rather than 'commitment' (Sayer 2005); (2) we take student preferences for bachelor degrees and higher education institutions as a proxy for aspirations.

sense that it guides actions and interactions in everyday life. It enables an individual to adapt or transform the objective structures of opportunities or constraints in a particular social field such as schooling. The argument is that a person's subjective expectations are "a product of the internalization of objective conditions" expressed in the form of opportunities and constraints (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990: 156). This suggests that students' early educational experiences and socialization inform their aspirations for HE.

According to Yang (2013: 6), "People who are inherently disadvantaged in a particular field would naturally adjust their aspirations (one embodiment of habitus) and very often turn to self-elimination without consciously assessing the real chances of success." In the context of preferences for degrees and institutions, this form of self-exclusion is expressed in student's tendency to lower their expectations based on their assessment of what is possible and what is not within their own situations. Bourdieu (1990) refers to this phenomenon as "subjective expectation of the objective probability" (59). He explains:

> Agents shape their aspirations according to concrete indices of the accessible and the inaccessible, of what is and is not 'for us' […] the sense of the probable future is constituted in the prolonged relationship with a world structured according to the categories of the possible (for us) and the impossible (for us), of what is appropriated in advance by and for others and what one can reasonably expect for oneself. (Bourdieu 1990: 64)

In other words, a person's preferences for degrees and institutions can be seen as an expression of one's perception of their chances of success. As Bourdieu asserts: "when agents make up their minds, they always, albeit unwittingly, make reference to the system of the objective relations which make up their situation" (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990: 156).

Empirical studies in various national contexts support the claim that SES background and dispositions influence preferences for degrees and HE institutions. In a study on HE choice in England, Diane Reay and her colleagues showed that class and socialization affect individuals' preferences for degrees (Reay, et al. 2001; Reay, David & Ball 2001). In addition to differences in attainment of entry-level qualifications, inequality in access to HE in the UK is also related with "strong class-based differences in the extent to which HE is considered a feasible option" (Brooks 2008: 1358). Whereas people from disadvantaged backgrounds may not feel that they 'fit in' universities, individuals from higher socio-economic families develop a 'sense of entitlement' to high-status degrees in prestigious universities.

Archer, DeWitt and Wong (2014) similarly studied educational and occupational aspirations of young people aged 12/13 and the sources of influence on their ambitions. They highlighted the role of structural issues such as class, ethnicity and gender in the formation of aspirations, as well as the importance of family and school as spheres of influence (Archer et al. 2014). In Germany, Flechtner (2014) has shown that for practical reasons such as financial constraints and lack of information, parents of low socio-economic status tend to counsel their children to take shorter educational tracks (the 10-year track) so that they can take vocational qualifications rather than the 12 or 13-year track that leads to a college degree. In other words, socio-economic disadvantage is correlated with particular forms of education that in turn reinforce conditions of poverty and low future aspirations. Flechtner (2014) refers to this negative cycle as an *aspiration trap*. In a related study that analysed the relationship between parental class and school track choice in Germany since the mid-

twentieth century, Dustmann (2004) showed that intergenerational immobility in educational achievement, income and status is partly explained by the extent to which parents are involved in their children's early school track decisions (made at the age 10). Dustmann also notes, "the secondary school track the child follows is strongly correlated with post-school educational choices" and career destinations (2004: 211).

In Australia, drawing on longitudinal data generated from over 13,000 students sampled when they were in Year 9, Khoo and Ainley (2005) highlight the role aspiration plays in preferences and decisions of young people regarding education. They argue that SES backgrounds, geographical location and academic (numeracy and literacy) achievement have significant net effects on students' intentions towards participating in post-school study (including university and TAFE courses). Similarly, drawing on the same longitudinal data to understand the interaction between student background, educational aspirations and educational outcomes in Australia, Homel and Ryan (2014) found that, compared with those who do not intend to go onto university after completing school education, individuals who aspire to HE are 15 to 20 percent more likely to participate in HE.

Four interrelated and somewhat contrary points are worth highlighting from this discussion. First, the issue of aspirations (expressed in preferences) and its link with educational attainment at a school level has received increased attention in the education policy arena particularly in the UK (DfES 2005; St Clair & Benjamin 2011) and Australia (Australian Government 2009, 2014). However, the framing of associations between educational aspirations and SES backgrounds is simplistic in that it does not appreciate the logics and conditions of aspiring associated with structural inequalities (Gale, Parker et al. 2013; Gale & Hodge 2014; St Clair & Benjamin 2011; Zipin et al. in press). In sum, the 'aspirations raising' agenda tends to individualise HE participation and overlooks complex contextual attributes. Zipin et al. argue:

> […] discursive incitements to overcome obstacles through 'raising aspirations' actually increase rather than attenuate obstacles by operating ideologically to simplify the complexities and mute the severities of historic conditions in which young people in underclass and working – middle-class positions struggle to imagine and pursue futures. (in press: 2)

Second, differences between 'collective fate' and 'personal dispositions' discussed here are solely for analytical purposes. Empirically, the two are interconnected: an individual's habitus is a result of socialization, and social structures are sustained through the generative nature of the habitus.

Third, students' preferences for degrees and institutions are highly influenced by their families. In her study of HE choices among secondary school students in the Parisian region of France, van Zanten (2013) showed that school choice involves a 'social matching' – that is, in deciding on which school to send their children, parents tend to actively seek "correspondences between school milieus and social milieus" (van Zanten 2013: 88). In other words, school choice and its subsequent influence on student's preferences for HE are related to parental social positions.

Finally, while the habitus reflects the socio-cultural context in which it is formed, it is not always reproductive or adaptive. Structure is not ultimately deterministic. A closer analysis of

Bourdieu's theory of practice shows that a 'mismatch' or disjuncture between the field and habitus can trigger the 'awakening of consciousness' and make change or transformation of the habitus possible (Swartz 1997; Mills & Gale 2010). This raises the importance of schooling in the formation of the habitus.

2.2 School Context

Parents and families are not the only influences on students' aspirations and preferences for the future. Schools and their communities are also influential. In fact, drawing on their study on students' choice of HE in the UK, Reay et al. (2001) conclude that the school's "institutional habitus is having an impact over and above any family background influences" (para. 6.3). In a related study of data derived from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), Gemici, Lim and Karmel (2013) found that beyond the influence of families, "school characteristics are responsible for almost 20% of the variation in TER [Tertiary Education Rank; now ATAR] and 9% of the variation in the probability of university enrolment, after controlling for TER" (36).

In their analysis of schooling in the 1980s, Connell, Dowsett, Kessler and Ashenden (1981) distinguished between two levels of influence:

> The educational fate of individual kids is affected by the way their school is working, its general educational relationships and social dynamics; these in turn are profoundly affected by the social composition of the school's "catchment" and by the history of the relations that catchment has with the state, with academic knowledge, and with the teaching trade. (105)

The more recent research literature suggests that these distinctions continue to apply. At one level, agents (e.g. students and teachers) within the school influence students' preferences for HE through their position-takings and practices. The following section of this review explores this in relation to student learning and guidance. At another level, the socio-spatial location of the school – its position in relation to its surroundings – presents students with both opportunities and constraints. This section explores these socio-spatial influences in terms of the (low) socioeconomic status and geographical (regional/rural) locations of schools.

In Australia, there is strong alignment between students' socioeconomic status and educational attainment (as measured by national and international tests; e.g. Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), etc.) (Teese & Polesel, 2003; Gonski et al. 2011), and a significant gap between the academic performance of rich and poor schools, which has widened since the release of the Gonski Report in 2011.[2] Tranter (2005) contends that these differences between schools (their SES and geographical location) shape the likelihood of students to pursue higher education. Gemici et al. (2013: 3) similarly note that:

> the characteristics of schools do matter for the probability of going to university, even after controlling for TER. Here, the three most important school attributes

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[2] http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2014/s4113474.htm

are the proportion of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, [school] sector, and the school's socioeconomic make-up.

The research literature suggests that these differential student outcomes in advantaged and disadvantaged schools are partly due to the fact that school culture in disadvantaged communities often does not encourage academic attainment that leads to university level education. The literature also points to limits on students' exposure to a variety of careers associated with higher-level educational attainment in their schools and communities. Cultural values and class interests of the dominant social group thus operate to influence HE choices (Smyth & Hannan 2007).

The Victorian *On Track* survey data provide evidence of what these school differences mean for patterns of HE participation by SES background. Table 1 below compares destinations of Year 12 or equivalent completers in two sets of *On Track* survey data. The data show an improved but persisting gap between low and high SES quintiles in terms of students' HE participation over time.

Table 2.1: Destinations of Year 12 or equivalent completers, percentage of lowest and highest SES quintiles, 2006 and 2012, Victoria

| | VET (Cert I-IV+) | | University (bachelor deg.) | |
	2006	2012	2006	2012
Lowest SES quintile	24.8%	23.8%	37.6%	47.0%
Highest SES quintile	15.5%	14.2%	60.2%	63.0%

Source: Based on data from Teese, Nicholas, Polesel & Mason (2007); Rothman & Underwood (2012)

Although university participation by students from low SES backgrounds increased by 10 percentage points in six years (the change in the high SES is less than 3 percentage points), overall the representation of the lowest SES quintile in university degree qualifications is much lower than the top quintile. At the same time, the participation of low and high SES students in vocational education and training (VET) courses remained relatively constant. However, what these data do not show is the rising participation of students in associate and bachelor degrees offered by public and private VET providers (Gale, Hodge et al. 2013). In 2013, most of these VET-degree students were located in two states: Victoria (6,374) and New South Wales (5,578). Data on students' preferences for bachelor degrees in TAFE recorded in this present study (see Chapter 4) addresses some of the limitations of the *On Track Survey* data.

The differential post-school destinations among students of different SES backgrounds are even more marked if particular schools are analysed. By way of example, Table 2 below outlines the post-school destinations of students from four select schools in Melbourne.

Table 2.2: Post-school Destinations of Four Schools in Melbourne

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS (2012)	Presbyterian Ladies' College (high-fee non-govt. school)	Melbourne High School (selective govt. high school)	Kilbreda College (low-fee Catholic secondary college)	Hoppers Crossing Secondary College (non-selective govt. school)
University	92%	92%	69%	37%
TAFE/vocational study	4%	1%	20%	34%
Employment	1%	1%	5%	13%
Other	3%	6%	6%	16%

Source: http://www.myschool.edu.au

The emerging 'geography of education' literature (e.g. Butler & Hamnett 2007; Butler & Robson 2003; Rowe 2014) sheds light on how school location is associated with inequalities in educational opportunities and outcomes. In Australia, as is the case in many advanced economies, school location is a good indicator of quality education outcomes. For example, public school catchment areas can serve as a form of social closure, restricting attendance to students whose families can afford to live in the zone of a desirable school. As Rowe (2014: 2) notes, "in the context of the public school, your residential address is of upmost importance." In what she theorises as *geo-identity*, Rowe argues that people align their class-identity with "their geographical (or residential) positioning" (Rowe 2014: 1). In the context of shrinking public spending on social services such as education, the alignment of school location with quality of learning has become more palpable. Poor educational attainment has come to be associated with schools located in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities and geographically isolated regions.

With respect to remote schools, in 2009 the *Education and Training Committee* of the Victorian Parliament published a report on geographical differences in the rate that Victorian students participate in higher education. The report shows that there exist:

> pronounced geographical differences in higher education participation across the state … differences arise at different points in the higher education process, from making a university application, to receiving an offer and then either enrolling, deferring or rejecting the offer of a university place. (ETC 2009: xiii)

The Committee attributed these inequalities in participation in HE to:

> geographical differences… linked to a number of interrelated factors, including attainment and achievement at school and the aspiration to attend university. These factors are deeply influenced by underlying differences in individuals' backgrounds, such as socioeconomic status, gender and cultural background. (ETC 2009: 9)

2.3 School Practices

Influence on students' preferences for HE are also evident in school practices (e.g. learning experiences, extra-curricular activities and student support services). For example, in a study of the role of schools in shaping student preferences for HE in Wales, Donnelly (2014a) notes a positive relationship between student preferences for particular universities and the presence of structured events, activities and services (e.g. career advice), which strongly frame post-school choices and pathways. Donnelly argues that, through their everyday practices, schools send out different kinds of messages about HE choice – as evident in one of the case study school's tendency to prioritise specific universities and exclude non-HE alternative destinations in its extracurricular activities and career services. More generally, the research literature on relations between school practices and student aspirations for HE identify three main influences: (1) subject availability, (2) career advice, and (3) engagement with HE.

2.3.1 Subject Availability

Schools influence students' aspirations and preferences for HE in their determination of which subjects to offer and through the way they organise subject areas (Fitz-Gibbon 1999; Iannelli 2004). What is counted as a valid body of knowledge (i.e. curriculum) and ways of

knowing (i.e. pedagogy) in a school has direct ramifications for student aspirations toward university education. While it is understood that students choose subject areas in consideration of their interests, future career goals and abilities, schools play key roles in framing these decisions through structuring subject provisions. Drawing on their large scale survey in Ireland, Smyth and Hannan (2006: 307) highlight three elements of school organization that affect subject choices:

a) Schools may choose which subjects to provide to their students, a decision which will obviously affect the choices students can make;
b) Schools may allow only certain ability groups to take particular subjects or they may set prerequisites for taking certain subjects (e.g., a student may need to achieve a certain grade in order to be allowed to take a subject);
c) Schools will differ in the way in which subjects are timetabled against one another.

For example, elite private schools tend to be strongly oriented to HE and focus on academic subjects that match the expectations and practices of elite universities. They have a high proportion of teachers with qualifications from these universities, and they actively promote these institutions. As a result, their students tend apply for and are well positioned to enrol in prestigious degrees in these institutions.

In Australia, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to study traditional advanced academic subjects in secondary school. In a study that examines access to academic curriculum in secondary schools in the Perth metropolitan area, Perry and Southwell (2014) showed that the socioeconomic composition of schools significantly affects students' choice of subjects. Replicating findings by McGaw (1997) in New South Wales, Perry and Southwell noted that "Only 10 per cent of schools in the lowest SES group provide access to core academic curriculum subjects [e.g. literature, mathematics and sciences] at the advanced level" (2014: 480). In this way, schools in low SES areas tend to direct their students towards vocational-oriented subjects. Drawing on her interviews with students from three disadvantaged schools in northern Adelaide, Tranter (2005) similarly reports that the school culture in disadvantaged communities does not encourage academic attainment. For instance, she notes that one of the schools in her research:

> had determined that the traditional competitive academic curriculum was not applicable to its students. They had focused on subjects that they thought would be relevant and achievable for the students, which might fit their habitus, but all at the low end of the curriculum hierarchy. (Tranter 2005: 15)

As a result, students in disadvantaged schools are more likely to enter vocational training than university.

Even when schools offer subjects that do lead to university participation, the likelihood of students aspiring to certain types of degrees and universities is related in part to the type of curriculum they study at school. Most often, the selection of school subjects reflects the socio-economic context of the school. As van Zanten (2005: 673) suggests, the organization of educational knowledge in schools expresses "the intertwining of the intellectual and social hierarchies of disciplines". For example, as Smyth and Hannan's (2006) study shows, "students in predominantly working-class schools tend to have less access to advanced science and mathematics courses" (305). McGaw (1997) has made a similar observation in

Australia. This form of disadvantage can be attributed to a school's assumptions about what their students need and the level of resources the school has. For instance, the number and qualification of teachers (as one form of school resource) influences what subjects the school is able to offer its students, which, in turn, affects student preferences for post-school education.

2.3.2 Career Advice

Higher education options are also influenced by school-based career advice about what aspirations are worth pursuing and the translation of this advice into subject choices at schools that lead to particular post-school and career options. Thus positioned, career advisers play significant roles in the formation of student preferences for bachelor degrees and institutions. Empirical case studies in England (Reay, David & Ball 2001; Reay et al. 2001), Ireland (Smyth & Banks 2012; Smyth & Hannan 2007) and the United States (McDonough 1997) show the availability of quality career advice makes a significant difference in students' aspiration for and transition to HE.

In a qualitative study of two schools with contrasting socioeconomic backgrounds in Ireland, Smyth and Banks (2012) found that students' decisions to pursue HE are partly mediated by a school's resources and services (e.g. the availability of quality guidance and counselling). For example, students in a low socioeconomic religious-orientated school were given guidance counselling about 'realistic' further education they could undertake but were allowed only one open day excursion, as the teachers felt the students were using the excursion as 'a covert form of truancy' (Smyth & Banks 2012: 277). By comparison, private schools allocate greater resources to career advisor services for students and parents. As a result, students in state schools (mostly from working class and disadvantaged backgrounds) tend to seek advice from family members who have little scholarly habitus (Gale, Parker et al. 2013). Smith and Banks conclude that "through its institutional habitus, a school may thus convey particular views of higher education to students, which may even include 'tastes' for specific institutions" (2012: 265).

As key spheres of influence in the formation of students' aspirations and HE preferences, schools enact their roles through school-based career guidance and advice. Archer, DeWitt and Wong (2014) note that school-based career guidance and advice enable students to form high occupational aspirations and excel in their studies. However, it is important to take into account the actual practices of career guidance and the sort of assumptions that inform these practices. For example, any evaluation of school-based career guidance needs to examine the way practitioners balance the risk of producing 'blighted hope' against conforming to 'conditioned expectations' (Bourdieu 1984).

In addition to career guidance services, the social environment in the school in general also plays an important role in the formation of student choices and aspirations. In other words:

> Perceptions and expectations of choice are constructed over time in relation to
> school friends and teachers' views and advice and learning experiences no less
> than in relationship to the views and expectations of families. (Reay et al. 2001,
> para. 1.3)

2.3.3 Engagement with Higher Education

Connection with the field of HE is also vital for encouraging students to aspire to these destinations. There is evidence in Australia (Bradley et al. 2008; Gale et al. 2010; James et al. 2008) and internationally (Harrison & Shallcross 2010; Reay et al. 2001) that university engagement in secondary schools has a positive impact on aspiration formation and awareness about and eventual participation in HE. As Reay et al. (2001: para. 5.1) note: "The degree of coupling … between schools/colleges and universities is a manifestation of educational status and clearly has a bearing on student choice." The type of universities with which schools choose to engage and the way they 'frame messages' about institutions have direct implications for students' preferences for degrees and where they can undertake them (Donnelly 2014b). Most often, private schools have close relationships with prestigious universities, and this directs students' aspirations to specific types of degrees and universities.

Following the Australian Government's *Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program, HEPPP*[3] (now replaced by the *Higher Education Participation Programme, HEPP*) initiative that aims to widen access to HE for people from low SES backgrounds, most Australian universities have put in place school partnership programs and outreach activities that enable them to engage with schools in their communities. Some of the examples include:

- University of Sydney's *Compass – your way to higher education*[4] program which seeks to build disadvantaged students' "confidence and motivation to succeed through education and make informed decisions about their post-school options." The University organises workshops and other learning events for school students from Year 3 through to Year 12.

- Deakin University runs a number of schools partnership programs to 'encourage achievement and aspirations towards higher education'.[5] The programs include *Deakin Engagement and Access Program* (DEAP), *Access Express*, *Learn Experience Access Professions* (LEAP) and *Deakin Access and Equity Program*. For example, through DEAP, Deakin works with around 30 schools in Victoria. The program uses various learning activities such as mentoring, campus visits, study sessions and careers and pathways advice.

- Through its *Aspire UWA* program, The University of Western Australia works with a number of partner schools in regional Western Australia and in Perth "to raise aspirations for tertiary education".[6] The program employs a range of learning activities to support students in their learning and eventual transition to university. Key learning activities and events include residential camps, university visits, school visits, leadership programs, The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) revision classes for Year 12 students, and professional development programs for school staff.

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[3] See https://education.gov.au/higher-education-participation-and-partnerships-programme-heppp
[4] http://sydney.edu.au/compass/
[5] http://www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/administrative-divisions/equity-diversity/student-access
[6] http://www.studyat.uwa.edu.au/aspire-uwa

Active engagement with universities coupled with quality school-based career advice can enable students from disadvantaged backgrounds to navigate options carefully, negotiate choices and make informed decisions regarding what degree they should aim for and in which institution. However, university engagement and school-based interventions need to be aware of the undesirable impact of the "implicit acceptance of 'deficit models'" that understands underrepresentation of equity groups in terms of what they are not able to do rather than institutional and systemic issues that impede their participation (Gale et al. 2010).

2.4 Conclusion

It is challenging to empirically show the extent to which we can attribute differences in preferences for degrees and institutions among students of different backgrounds to between-school variations of curricular selection, career advice and engagement with higher education institutions. For example, it is worth noting that the nature and functioning of these three sources of influence vary depending on the type, size, location and population of the school. In public schools, redirecting student aspirations through career advice, strong school-university engagement and balanced subjects of study requires a considerable level of political and financial commitment towards low SES and regional/remote schools.

Further, even if students from disadvantaged backgrounds were to benefit from enrolling in privileged schools (see Lim et al. 2014; Smyth & Hannan 2007; Thrupp 1999; Reay et al. 2001), they may still face the challenge of conforming to the values and norms of the school, including its aspirations and notions of success. This suggests the importance of a closer analysis of the way students from disadvantaged backgrounds deal with expectations and norms in the new field, in order to succeed in advantaged schools. Relatedly, it is important to recognise that there is always a possibility to 'play the game' differently, overcome constraints or transform the conditions of interaction. Individuals do not always conform to values and assumptions of the school nor does the school merely reproduce what exists.

Finally, in assessing the educational and occupational aspirations and preferences of individuals, the focus should be not only on the actual choice but also the processes and context in which students make those choices (Mills 2000 [1959]). That is, it is important to bear in mind what opportunities people have in making choices related to their education or career.

3| Approach

The research informing this project was conducted in two stages: (1) data sourcing and preparation/processing and (2) data analysis. An overview of these research activities follows, including a brief account of the discrepancies between the approach initially proposed and the changes that occurred throughout the research process.

3.1 *Data sourcing and preparation/processing*

Data for the research were obtained from both the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) and the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC).[7] The data recorded the applications of qualified prospective students to undertake a *bachelor degree* at a public higher education (HE) institution (including Technical and Further Education (TAFE) providers of HE) in each state, with the following restrictions:

- The data set covered the period 2009 to 2013 in Victoria and 2009-2012 in South Australia. No TAFE data on bachelor degrees were available from SATAC for 2013;
- Applicants in the data set were confined to students in their final year of secondary school (Year 12) – with each applicant's school identified in the data – and to students in one state applying to HE institutions in the same state.
- Applications in the data set were distinguishable by a unique student identifier and included up to twelve course preferences per application, listed in priority order with the most preferred course listed first;
- Applications were only included in the data set if at least one preference was for a bachelor degree offered by a TAFE provider of HE.
- VTAC data included two sets of applications per applicant, pre- and post-ATAR: (1) the first application submitted *before* ATAR scores were known to applicants and (2) the second (potentially adjusted) application submitted *after* ATAR scores were known to applicants. While SATAC permits students to alter their preferences as many times as they wish until the final round of offers is made, it does not maintain a 'snapshot' record of this pre- and post-ATAR application data.

VTAC was able to provide data within these parameters in a single database, given that it manages applications to both universities and TAFEs in Victoria. SATAC also processes applications to both universities and TAFEs in South Australia, although it manages these in separate databases. The two databases received from SATAC were able to be combined using the applicants' unique student identifying numbers.

The original intention was to source the above data from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria (Australia's eastern seaboard). However:

- Queensland TAFE does not as yet offer bachelor degrees. In addition, the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) does not manage applications to TAFE and there is no alternative central admissions agency;
- While TAFE in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory do offer bachelor degrees, albeit in small numbers (see Gale et al. 2013), applications are not managed by the NSW University Admissions Centre (UAC) but by the state

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[7] SATAC also manages tertiary admissions processes for institutions in the Northern Territory, although the specific data request for this project did not encompass Northern Territory data.

government department, TAFE NSW.[8] However, these data are not distinguishable by a unique student identifying number common to UAC, thus discounting comparisons, and do not carry information about applicants' secondary schools.

- Bachelor degrees are not available from TAFEs in Western Australia, Tasmania or the Northern Territory.

The Victorian and South Australian data informing this report are thus the most comprehensive in the nation on applications for bachelor degrees by TAFE providers.

Specific details about how the data were prepared for analysis can be found in Appendix 2. This includes work undertaken to remove applications from the database that did not meet the above criteria (e.g. adult, interstate and international applications and other miscellaneous inclusions). In the resulting data set, applicants' schools were coded according to their socioeconomic status, their geographical location and their school sector. Students' preferences for bachelor degrees were also coded by field of study and by institutional grouping (including Go8, RUN, IRU, ATN, non-aligned and TAFE).

3.2 *Data analysis*

Analysis of the above data is provided in the following chapter (Chapter 4). This involved statistical, descriptive and content analysis of the data, informed by concepts drawn from the research literature (see Chapter 2).

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[8] From 2015, students seeking to study at TAFE can apply through UAC.

4| Data Analysis

This chapter provides an analysis of secondary school student (or school leaver) preferences for bachelor degrees offered by Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions in Australia. The analysis covers a five-year period (2009-2013) and is based on data supplied by the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC), 2009-2013 and the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC), 2009-2012. That is, the data set does not include students who apply directly to a TAFE institution. The report assumes that most school leavers apply for TAFE bachelor degrees through VTAC and SATAC and thus their data tend to be representative of all school leaver preferences. Further parameters for the data set are detailed in Chapter 3 and in Appendix 2.

VTAC and SATAC data provide the most comprehensive picture in Australia of school student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees. SATAC data represents about 8 per cent of the data available from VTAC and only records students' preferences for bachelor degrees after Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) results are known, immediately prior to offers made to students. VTAC data on student preferences for bachelor degrees are available both pre- and post-ATAR. In this chapter, comparisons between Victoria and South Australia are based on post-ATAR data.

The chapter reports on these data in the following sections: (1) student numbers and preference rates; (2) student numbers by school type; (3) student preferences by field of study; and (4) between field of study/type of institution comparisons.

4.1 *Student numbers and preference rates for TAFE bachelor degrees*

The current data suggest that secondary school students see TAFE bachelor degrees as a marginal higher education option. In 2013, 54,510 school leavers lodged preferences with VTAC to undertake a bachelor degree course.[9] Only 1,903 (3.5%) of these students included a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree (see Table 4.2). Table 4.1 below shows that of those secondary students who included a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree, most did so only once. Over the 2009-2013 period, 6,124 Victorian school leavers included a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree: 5,073 (82.8%) of these students recorded only one TAFE bachelor degree preference; 845 (13.8%) students recorded two. Over a similar period (2009-2012), 645 South Australian school leavers recorded at total of 690 preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees. Again, most (94.1%) indicated only one preference for a TAFE bachelor degree.

Table 4.1: School Leaver TAFE bachelor degree preferences, 2009-2013

	Victoria				South Australia	
Number of Preferences	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
2009-2013*	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
1	5,073	82.8%	6,435	83.1%	607	94.1%
2	845	13.8%	1,050	13.6%	34	5.3%
3	162	2.6%	209	2.7%	1	0.2%
4	35	0.6%	44	0.6%	3	0.5%
5	6	0.1%	7	0.1%	-	-
6	2	0.0%	1	0.0%	-	-
7	1	0.0%	1	0.0%	-	-
Students	**6,124**	**100.0%**	**7,747**	**100.0%**	**645**	**100.0%**
Preferences	**7,437**		**9,386**		**690**	

*NB All tables with Vic and SA data indicating the year span 2009-2013 only include SATAC data from 2009-2012.

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[9] http://www.vtac.edu.au/pdf/stats/2013-2014/A-Section-13-14.pdf

The data in Table 4.1 above and Table 4.2 below indicate a small but growing interest in TAFE degrees over the 2009-2013 period. Table 4.2 shows that from 2009 to 2012, student preference rates for TAFE degrees in Victoria fluctuated, ranging between 1,509 and 1,977 preferences per annum, but rose significantly in 2013 to 2,330 preferences. By comparison, student preferences for TAFE degrees in South Australia steadily declined from 264 in 2009 to 95 in 2012. (SATAC did not record student preferences for TAFE degrees in 2013.)

Table 4.2: Students and TAFE bachelor degree preferences pre- and post-ATAR, 2009-2013

| Year | Victoria | | | | South Australia | |
| | Pre ATAR | | Post ATAR | | | |
	Students	Preferences	Students	Preferences	Students	Preferences
2009	1,130	1,279	1,344	1,509	247	264
2010	1,159	1,394	1,444	1,747	150	161
2011	1,254	1,577	1,589	1,977	162	170
2012	1,128	1,434	1,463	1,823	86	95
2013	1,453	1,753	1,903	2,330	-	-
Totals	**6,124**	**7,437**	**7,747**	**9,386**	**645**	**690**

Note: There are 50 students who do not have pre-ATAR selections.

Table 4.2 also shows that in each year, more school leavers in Victoria recorded a TAFE bachelor degree preference post-ATAR than pre-ATAR. The proportion of these students who included a TAFE bachelor degree preference post-ATAR increased steadily over the reporting period, from an increase of less than 20 per cent in 2009 to over 30 per cent in 2013. The overall increase for the period was 26.5 per cent. The higher number of post-ATAR respondents may suggest that students who receive lower ATAR results than anticipated, adjust their preferences (down) to match their known ATAR.

4.2 *Student numbers by school type*

Most students who include a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree tend to come from government secondary schools in metropolitan and high SES areas.

Table 4.3 below shows that 58.3 per cent of school leavers in Victoria who nominate a TAFE bachelor degree preference are from government schools. Given that government secondary schools in Victoria constitute 55.2 per cent of the state's secondary schools (DEECD 2014), these students are slightly over-represented. Similarly, 24.7 per cent of students who nominate a TAFE bachelor degree preference are from catholic secondary schools in Victoria, which is an over-representation of the 17.1 per cent of the state's catholic secondary schools. Students from independent schools who nominate a TAFE bachelor degree (17%) are under-represented in absolute terms and in proportion to the state representation of independent schools (27.6%). Little change in these distributions is evident pre- and post-ATAR.

Table 4.3: Students pre/post-ATAR by school sector, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

| 2009-2013 | Victoria | | | | South Australia | |
| Sector | Pre ATAR | | Post ATAR | | | |
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Government	3,548	57.9%	4,519	58.3%	321	49.8%
Independent	1,064	17.4%	1318	17.0%	180	27.9%
Catholic	1,512	24.7%	1910	24.7%	144	22.3%
Total	**6,124**	**100.0%**	**7,747**	**100.0%**	**645**	**1.0%**

In Table 4.4 below, the Australian Standard Geographical Classification for Remoteness Areas (ASGC-RA) is used to categorize the secondary schools of students who include a

preference for a TAFE bachelor degree, into one of four geographical locations: major cities (i.e. metropolitan), inner regional, outer regional, and remote (Pink 2011).[10] As the data indicate, the vast majority of students (86.6%) are from schools in Victorian metropolitan areas. A small numerical and proportional increase is evident pre- and post-ATAR for students from these schools. There are very few Victorian students from schools in outer regional and remote areas who nominate a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree. This is understandable given that very few geographical areas in Victoria are classified as outer regional or remote. The higher proportion of South Australian students from schools in outer regional and remote locations reflects the greater number of areas in South Australia so classified.

Table 4.4: Students pre/post-ATAR by school geographical location, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
ASGC Code	**Pre ATAR**		**Post ATAR**			
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**
Metropolitan	5,237	85.5%	6,709	86.6%	549	85.1
Inner Regional	752	12.3%	879	11.3%	59	9.2
Outer Regional	128	2.1%	151	1.9%	19	3.0
Remote	7	0.1%	8	0.1%	18	2.8
Total	**6,124**	**100.0%**	**7,747**	**100.0%**	**645**	**100.0**

Table 4.5 below indicates the socioeconomic status (SES) of the schools for students who indicate a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree. In Victoria, the largest group of students (47.1%) is from high SES schools; the smallest (14.9%) is from low SES schools. These are gross over- and under-representations respectively compared to their representations within the general population. They are also inconsistent with preferences for higher education more broadly (see Gale & Parker 2011). The proportion of students from low SES schools in Victoria applying for TAFE bachelor degrees is lower than the proportion of low SES students applying for university through Tertiary Admissions Centres nationwide (DoE 2014a). It is also lower than the participation rate of low SES students in Australian university bachelor degrees (17.4%; DoE 2014c). In South Australia, the spread across SES groups is more even, although students from high SES schools (39.2%) remain over-represented and students from mid (38.3%) and low (22.5%) SES schools are under-represented.

Table 4.5: Students pre/post-ATAR by school SES and ATAR mean, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria						South Australia	
SES Quartile	**Pre ATAR**		**Post ATAR**		**Students with ATAR**			
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**Mean**	**N°**	**%**
Low (25%)	886	14.5%	1,157	14.9%	904	46.24	145	22.5%
Medium (50%)	2,394	39.1%	2,938	37.9%	2,362	53.69	247	38.3%
High (25%)	2,844	46.4%	3,652	47.1%	2,940	56.93	253	39.2%
Total	**6,124**	**100.0%**	**7,747**	**100.0%**	**6,206**	**54.14**	**645**	**100.0%**

In Victoria, each SES group recorded more TAFE bachelor degree preferences in absolute terms after ATARs were awarded. However, the proportional representation remained largely

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[10] Applicants' school postcodes were converted to ASGC-RA using the Department of Health interactive website http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/Publishing.nsf/Content/locator. As the ABS states "the Department of Health have coded the Remoteness Areas differently to the ABS coding structure, however the regions and the Remoteness Area names are the same". See http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/remoteness+structure.

the same, albeit with a very small increase in the proportion of students from high SES schools and a very small decrease in the proportion of students from mid SES schools.

Students from high SES schools who included a preference for TAFE bachelor degrees achieved higher average ATARs (56.93) than students from mid SES schools (53.69), who in turn achieved higher ATARs than students from low SES schools (46.24). These are relatively low ATARs compared with those typically achieved by students who gain entry to university bachelor degrees (Hobsons 2014).

4.3 *Student preferences by field of study*

This section reports on students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees by their fields of study. Table 4.6 below shows that most TAFE bachelor degree preferences were in the field of Creative Arts. In Victoria, pre-ATAR preferences for bachelor degrees in Creative Arts accounted for approximately one-third of all preferences, ranging from a low of 32.8 per cent in 2009 to a high of 36.5 per cent in 2011. The second most popular pre-ATAR preference was in the field of Management and Commerce.

The absolute number of preferences in each field of study increased in Victoria after students received their ATARs, although this was unevenly distributed. Post-ATAR preferences for bachelor degrees in Creative Arts constituted a smaller proportion of all preferences, although that field of study remained the most common. Most other fields of study maintained their share of preferences, with the exception of Health and Education, both of which increased in proportional terms pre- to post-ATAR.

Table 4.6: Preferences by field of study, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
Fields of Study	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	79	1.1%	159	1.7%	0	0.0%
Information Technology	86	1.2%	119	1.3%	0	0.0%
Engineering and Related Technologies	66	0.9%	88	0.9%	0	0.0%
Architecture and Building	294	4.0%	382	4.1%	0	0.0%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	128	1.7%	150	1.6%	0	0.0%
Health	1,252	16.8%	1,729	18.4%	0	0.0%
Education	966	13.0%	1,456	15.5%	0	0.0%
Management and Commerce	1,731	23.3%	2,228	23.7%	228	33.0%
Society and Culture	55	0.7%	116	1.2%	0	0.0%
Creative Arts	2,605	35.0%	2,782	29.6%	462	67.0%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	175	2.4%	177	1.9%	0	0.0%
Total	7,437	100.0%	9,386	100.0%	690	100.0%

In South Australia, students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees fall into one of two fields of study: Management and Commerce (33%), and Creative Arts (67%).

Tables 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9 (see below) disaggregate the above field-of-study data by the three key dimensions of schools' influence on school leaver preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees: school sector; school geographical location and school socioeconomic status.

School sector

In both Victoria and South Australia, government school student preferences dominated all TAFE bachelor degree fields of study. Table 4.7 shows that in Victoria two fields of study stand out as being particularly dominated by government school student preferences: Natural and Physical Sciences (79.7% pre-ATAR, 77.4% post-ATAR) and Information Technology

(81.4%, 79%). No other field of study approached this level of over-representation,[11] although government school students' preferences for the field of Society and Culture at 62.5 per cent (post-ATAR) are also very high.

Table 4.7: Preferences by field-of-study/school sector, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences						
Government	63	79.7%	123	77.4%	-	-
Independent	4	5.1%	7	4.4%	-	-
Catholic	12	15.2%	29	18.2%	-	-
Total	**79**	**100.0%**	**159**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Information Technology						
Government	70	81.4%	94	79.0%	-	-
Independent	7	8.1%	11	9.2%	-	-
Catholic	9	10.5%	14	11.8%	-	-
Total	**86**	**100.0%**	**119**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Engineering and Related Technologies						
Government	37	56.1%	51	58.0%	-	-
Independent	13	19.7%	16	18.2%	-	-
Catholic	16	24.2%	21	23.9%	-	-
Total	**66**	**100.0%**	**88**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Architecture and Building						
Government	127	43.2%	155	40.6%	-	-
Independent	92	31.3%	126	33.0%	-	-
Catholic	75	25.5%	101	26.4%	-	-
Total	**294**	**100.0%**	**382**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies						
Government	57	44.5%	68	45.3%	-	-
Independent	37	28.9%	47	31.3%	-	-
Catholic	34	26.6%	35	23.3%	-	-
Total	**128**	**100.0%**	**150**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Health						
Government	765	61.1%	1,054	61.0%	-	-
Independent	184	14.7%	263	15.2%	-	-
Catholic	303	24.2%	412	23.8%	-	-
Total	**1,252**	**100.0%**	**1,729**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Education						
Government	602	62.3%	910	62.5%	-	-
Independent	113	11.7%	187	12.8%	-	-
Catholic	251	26.0%	359	24.7%	-	-
Total	**966**	**100.0%**	**1,456**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Management and Commerce						
Government	936	54.1%	1,235	55.4%	114	59.4%
Independent	324	18.7%	372	16.7%	66	34.4%
Catholic	471	27.2%	621	27.9%	12	6.3%
Total	**1,731**	**100.0%**	**2,228**	**100.0%**	**192**	**100.0%**
Society and Culture						
Government	34	61.8%	75	64.7%	-	-
Independent	5	9.1%	12	10.3%	-	-
Catholic	16	29.1%	29	25.0%	-	-
Total	**55**	**100.0%**	**116**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Creative Arts						
Government	1,484	57.0%	1,602	57.6%	231	62.8%
Independent	531	20.4%	550	19.8%	128	34.8%
Catholic	590	22.6%	630	22.6%	9	2.4%
Total	**2,605**	**100.0%**	**2,782**	**100.0%**	**368**	**100.0%**
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services						
Government	76	43.4%	77	43.5%	-	-
Independent	40	22.9%	43	24.3%	-	-
Catholic	59	33.7%	57	32.2%	-	-
Total	**175**	**100.0%**	**177**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
All Fields of Study						
Government	4,251	57.2%	5,444	58.0%	345	61.6%
Independent	1,350	18.2%	1,634	17.4%	194	34.6%
Catholic	1,836	24.7%	2,308	24.6%	21	3.8%
Total	**7,437**	**100.0%**	**9,386**	**100.0%**	**560**	**100.0%**

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[11] cf. government schools constitute 55% of all Victorian secondary schools.

At 55 per cent, government school student preferences for Management and Commerce bachelor degrees mirror the proportion of government secondary schools in Victoria. However, preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees in the field of Architecture and Building are under-represented by Victorian government school students (43.2% of pre-ATAR preferences and 40.6% of post-ATAR preferences), as is the field of Food, Hospitality and Personal Services (43.5%).

Table 4.7 also indicates that independent school student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees in Victoria are under-represented overall,[12] but particularly in the fields of Natural and Physical Sciences (4% pre-ATAR, 5% post-ATAR) and IT (8.1% and 9.2%). However, the preferences of students from independent schools are over-represented in the fields of Architecture and Building (33% post-ATAR) and Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (31.3%). Catholic schools make up only 17% of secondary schools in Victoria (DEECD 2014) but students from these schools recorded a greater proportional share of preferences in all but one field of study: Information Technology. The highest catholic school student preference in Victoria was in the field of Food, Hospitality and Personal Services, at 32% of all preferences in this field.

School geographical location

In both Victoria and South Australia, metropolitan school student preferences dominated TAFE bachelor degree fields of study. Table 4.8 below shows that in South Australia, 84 per cent of preferences for the field of Creative Arts and 88.6 per cent of preferences for the field of Management and Commerce were from students from metropolitan schools. In Victoria, five fields of study recorded more than 90 per cent of preferences from metropolitan school students, the top three fields being: Information Technology (97.5% of post-ATAR applications); Natural and Physical Sciences (93.1%); and Education (91.8%). Six further fields of study received 80-90 per cent of post-ATAR preferences from Victorian students in metropolitan schools. Only one field of study – Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies – showed a significantly lower proportion of Victorian metropolitan school student preferences, although they remained the largest group. In this field, 30 per cent of preferences were from inner regional students and 12.7 per cent from outer regional students.

There was little variation between pre- and post-ATAR preferences in each field of study, and almost no students from remote Victoria submitted preferences. Whereas in South Australia, a small number of students from remote areas (18 across the years 2009-2012) recorded preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees, most of whom preferred Creative Arts degrees. This is also the field of study for which the seven of the nine remote Victorian students recorded preferences post-ATAR. Together these suggest that there is some tendency for students from schools in outer regional and remote areas to prefer the field of Creative Arts over the field of Management and Commerce, particularly in South Australia.

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[12] cf. independent schools constitute 27.6% of all Victorian secondary schools

Table 4.8: Preferences by field of study/school geographical location, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences						
Metropolitan	73	92.4%	148	93.1%	-	-
Inner Regional	5	6.3%	10	6.3%	-	-
Outer Regional	1	1.3%	1	0.6%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**79**	**100.0%**	**159**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Information Technology						
Metropolitan	83	96.5%	116	97.5%	-	-
Inner Regional	3	3.5%	3	2.5%	-	-
Outer Regional	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**86**	**100.0%**	**119**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Engineering and Related Technologies						
Metropolitan	58	87.9%	79	89.8%	-	-
Inner Regional	8	12.1%	8	9.1%	-	-
Outer Regional	0	0.0%	1	1.1%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**66**	**100.0%**	**88**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Architecture and Building						
Metropolitan	267	90.8%	349	91.4%	-	-
Inner Regional	22	7.5%	28	7.3%	-	-
Outer Regional	5	1.7%	5	1.3%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**294**	**100.0%**	**382**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies						
Metropolitan	72	56.3%	85	56.7%	-	-
Inner Regional	39	30.5%	46	30.7%	-	-
Outer Regional	17	13.3%	19	12.7%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**128**	**100.0%**	**150**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Health						
Metropolitan	1,143	91.3%	1,581	91.4%	-	-
Inner Regional	86	6.9%	122	7.1%	-	-
Outer Regional	23	1.8%	26	1.5%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**1,252**	**100.0%**	**1,729**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Education						
Metropolitan	896	92.8%	1,336	91.8%	-	-
Inner Regional	59	6.1%	95	6.5%	-	-
Outer Regional	11	1.1%	24	1.6%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	-	-
Total	**966**	**100.0%**	**1,456**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Management and Commerce						
Metropolitan	1,459	84.3%	1,920	86.2%	202	88.6%
Inner Regional	237	13.7%	268	12.0%	19	8.3%
Outer Regional	34	2.0%	39	1.8%	4	1.8%
Remote	1	0.1%	1	0.0%	3	1.3%
Total	**1,731**	**100.0%**	**2,228**	**100.0%**	**228**	**100.0%**
Society and Culture						
Metropolitan	49	89.1%	100	86.2%	-	-
Inner Regional	6	10.9%	13	11.2%	-	-
Outer Regional	0	0.0%	3	2.6%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**55**	**100.0%**	**116**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Creative Arts						
Metropolitan	2,116	81.2%	2,273	81.7%	388	84.0%
Inner Regional	424	16.3%	439	15.8%	44	9.5%
Outer Regional	58	2.2%	63	2.3%	15	3.2%
Remote	7	0.3%	7	0.3%	15	3.2%
Total	**2,605**	**100.0%**	**2,782**	**100.0%**	**462**	**100.0%**
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services						
Metropolitan	151	86.3%	151	85.3%	-	-
Inner Regional	21	12.0%	23	13.0%	-	-
Outer Regional	3	1.7%	3	1.7%	-	-
Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	**175**	**100.0%**	**177**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
All Fields of Study						
Metropolitan	6,367	85.6%	8,138	86.7%	590	85.5%
Inner Regional	910	12.2%	1,055	11.2%	63	9.1%
Outer Regional	152	2.0%	184	2.0%	19	2.8%
Remote	8	0.1%	9	0.1%	18	2.6%
Total	**7,437**	**100.0%**	**9,386**	**100.0%**	**690**	**100.0%**

School socioeconomic status

The preferences of students from high SES schools dominated most fields of study.

Table 4.9: Preferences by field of study/school socioeconomic status, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences						
Low SES	11	13.9%	22	13.8%	-	-
Med SES	32	40.5%	67	42.1%	-	-
High SES	36	45.6%	70	44.0%	-	-
Total	**79**	**100.0%**	**159**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Information Technology						
Low SES	7	8.1%	10	8.4%	-	-
Med SES	34	39.5%	41	34.5%	-	-
High SES	45	52.3%	68	57.1%	-	-
Total	**86**	**100.0%**	**119**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Engineering and Related Technologies						
Low SES	16	24.2%	21	23.9%	-	-
Med SES	37	56.1%	49	55.7%	-	-
High SES	13	19.7%	18	20.5%	-	-
Total	**66**	**100.0%**	**88**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Architecture and Building						
Low SES	31	10.5%	46	12.0%	-	-
Med SES	90	30.6%	112	29.3%	-	-
High SES	173	58.8%	224	58.6%	-	-
Total	**294**	**100.0%**	**382**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies						
Low SES	20	15.6%	24	16.0%	-	-
Med SES	69	53.9%	82	54.7%	-	-
High SES	39	30.5%	44	29.3%	-	-
Total	**128**	**100.0%**	**150**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Health						
Low SES	236	18.8%	325	18.8%	-	-
Med SES	458	36.6%	625	36.1%	-	-
High SES	558	44.6%	779	45.1%	-	-
Total	**1,252**	**100.0%**	**1,729**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Education						-
Low SES	146	15.1%	238	16.3%	-	-
Med SES	371	38.4%	536	36.8%	-	-
High SES	449	46.5%	682	46.8%	-	-
Total	**966**	**100.0%**	**1,456**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Management and Commerce						
Low SES	238	13.7%	330	14.8%	43	18.9%
Med SES	687	39.7%	829	37.2%	92	40.4%
High SES	806	46.6%	1,069	48.0%	93	40.8%
Total	**1,731**	**100.0%**	**2,228**	**100.0%**	**228**	**100.0%**
Society and Culture						
Low SES	10	18.2%	24	20.7%	-	-
Med SES	24	43.6%	47	40.5%	-	-
High SES	21	38.2%	45	38.8%	-	-
Total	**55**	**100.0%**	**116**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
Creative Arts						
Low SES	312	12.0%	327	11.8%	108	23.4%
Med SES	1,041	40.0%	1,102	39.6%	175	37.9%
High SES	1,252	48.1%	1,353	48.6%	179	38.7%
Total	**2,605**	**100.0%**	**2,782**	**100.0%**	**462**	**100.0%**
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services						-
Low SES	26	14.9%	27	15.3%	-	-
Med SES	57	32.6%	57	32.2%	-	-
High SES	92	52.6%	93	52.5%	-	-
Total	**175**	**100.0%**	**177**	**100.0%**	**-**	**-**
All Fields of Study						
Low SES	1,053	14.2%	1,394	14.9%	151	21.9%
Med SES	2,900	39.0%	3,547	37.8%	267	38.7%
High SES	3,484	46.8%	4,445	47.4%	272	39.4%
Total	**7,437**	**100.0%**	**9,386**	**100.0%**	**690**	**100.0%**

Table 4.9 above shows that in Victoria, the fields of Architecture and Building (58.6%) and Information Technology (57.1%) attracted the most preferences from students from high SES schools. However, in the field of Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies, students from high SES schools in Victoria represented only 23.9 per cent of post-ATAR preferences. This field of study was popular among Victorian students from mid SES schools (54.7%), second only to their preference for bachelor degrees in the field of Engineering and Related Technologies (55.7%). Preferences from students in Victoria from low SES schools were most common in the field of Society and Culture (43.6% of pre-ATAR preferences, 40.5% of post-ATAR) but only slightly more popular for them than for students from high SES schools (38.8%). TAFE bachelor degrees in the field of Information Technology attracted the lowest proportion of preferences from students in Victoria at low SES schools, at 8.4 per cent (post-ATAR). After ATARs were released there was very little change in the proportional representation of Victorian students according to the SES of their schools.

Table 4.9 above also shows that students from low SES schools in South Australia tend to favour the field of Creative Arts. Their representation in this field is approaching parity (i.e. 25%) with 23.4 per cent of preferences. South Australian students from medium and high SES schools each constitute approximately 40 per cent in the fields of Creative Arts and Management and Commerce, indicating that students from high SES schools are over-represented in the state, as they are in Victoria (parity is 25%), but students from medium SES schools are under-represented (parity of 50%).

The Creative Arts field of study

As indicated above, the largest group of school leavers declaring a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree selected a degree in the field of Creative Arts. In Victoria, 2,048 students recorded a total of 2,605 pre-ATAR preferences for Creative Arts degrees while 2,224 students recorded 2,782 post-ATAR preferences for Creative Arts degrees.

Table 4.10 below shows that in Victoria, 58.5 per cent of preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees in the Creative Arts field came from students in government schools.

Table 4.10: Creative Arts students by sector, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
Sector	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Government	1,189	58.1%	1,301	58.5%	225	50.2%
Independent	396	19.3%	416	18.7%	124	27.7%
Catholic	463	22.6%	507	22.8%	99	22.1%
Total	2,048	100.0%	2,224	100.0%	448	100.0%

Table 4.11 shows that 81.1 per cent of Victorian preferences came from students in metropolitan schools.

Table 4.11: Creative Arts students by geographical location, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
Geographical location	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Metropolitan	1,650	80.6%	1,803	81.1%	375	83.7%
Inner Regional	342	16.7%	359	16.1%	43	9.6%
Outer Regional	50	2.4%	56	2.5%	15	3.3%
Remote	6	0.3%	6	0.3%	15	3.3%
Total	2,048	100.0%	2,224	100.0%	448	100.0%

Table 4.12 shows that 48.7 per cent of Victorian preferences came from students in high SES schools.

Table 4.12: Creative Arts students by socioeconomic status, Victoria/South Australia, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
SES Quartile	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Low	244	11.9%	261	11.7%	105	23.4%
Medium	817	39.9%	881	39.6%	169	37.7%
High	987	48.2%	1,083	48.7%	174	38.8%
Total	**2,048**	**100.0%**	**2,224**	**100.0%**	**448**	**100.0%**

All of these preference distributions marginally increased from pre-ATAR to post-ATAR. Similar post-ATAR distributions are evident in South Australia, although the proportion of students from high SES schools was lower that Victoria but still greater than students from medium and low SES schools. The distributions reflect students' TAFE bachelor degree preferences as a whole.

The Health and Education fields of study (Victoria only)

The fields of study with the largest increase in Victorian student preferences post-ATAR were Health and Education.

The increase in Victorian student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees in the field of Health included 503 students who did not record a pre-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preference and only included one post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preference (i.e. Health). Table 4.13 below shows that of these 92.2 per cent came from metropolitan schools, compared with the 86.6 per cent of all post-ATAR applicants who came from metropolitan schools. These students also came from government schools at a slightly higher rate (61%) than for all post-ATAR preferences (58.3%). The proportion of students from low SES schools was higher for post-ATAR Health applicants (19.1%) than for all post-ATAR students (14.9%) but not as high as the proportion of students from high SES schools (46.5%).

In short, students who indicated a once-only post-ATAR preference for TAFE bachelor degrees in the field of Health (46.5%) tended to come from government schools and high SES schools in metropolitan areas.

Table 4.13: Students post-ATAR only preferences for Health and Education, Victoria, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Health		Education	
	N°	%	N°	%
School geographical location				
Metropolitan	464	92.2%	374	90.6%
Inner Regional	37	7.4%	30	7.3%
Outer Regional	2	0.4%	8	1.9%
Remote	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
Total	**503**	**100.0%**	**413**	**100.0%**
School socioeconomic status				
Low	96	19.1%	73	17.7%
Med	173	34.4%	134	32.4%
High	234	46.5%	206	49.9%
Total	**503**	**100.0%**	**413**	**100.0%**
School Sector				
Government	307	61.0%	262	63.4%
Independent	83	16.5%	65	15.7%
Catholic	113	22.5%	86	20.8%
Total	**503**	**100.0%**	**413**	**100.0%**

The increase in Victorian student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees in the field of Education included 413 students who did not record a pre-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preference but recorded 577 post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences in the field of Education. Table 4.13 above shows that these students tended to come from metropolitan schools (90.6%) and at a much higher rate than for all post-ATAR preferences. Students from high SES schools remain over-represented among this group at half (49.9%) of all applicants. Students from mid (32.4%) and low SES (17.7%) schools account for proportionately fewer applicants for the field of Education than for Health, but are still represented at higher rates than the post-ATAR applicant cohort overall.

In short, those who only indicated a post-ATAR preference for a TAFE bachelor degree in the field of Education increased the field's over-representation of students from government and high SES schools located in metropolitan areas.

4.4 *Between field of study/type of institution comparisons*

Data was also generated on the university bachelor degree preferences of students who also indicated a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree. These data were used to make comparisons between students' TAFE and university preferences according to their field of study and type of institution.

Field of study

Compared to their TAFE bachelor degree preferences in which the fields of Creative Arts and Management and Commerce were most popular, Table 4.14 below shows that these students' university bachelor degree preferences were most commonly in the field of Health (representing 28.3 per cent of pre- and post-ATAR preferences over the 2009-2013 period). This is broadly comparable with applications to the higher education sector nationwide where selections for bachelor degrees in Health represent about 26 per cent of students' highest preferences (DoE 2014a). Pre-ATAR, university degrees in the field of Creative Arts were the next most common at 16.2 per cent but this dropped to 13.1 per cent post-ATAR, falling behind preferences for the fields of Management and Commerce (17.8%) and Education (17.3%).

Table 4.14: University bachelor degree preferences of students who select a TAFE bachelor degree, pre/post-ATAR, by field of study, 2009-2013

Primary Field of Study, 2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	1,372	4.59%	1,845	5.07%	42	2.4%
Information Technology	502	1.68%	712	1.96%	12	0.7%
Engineering and Related Technologies	517	1.73%	627	1.72%	25	1.4%
Architecture and Building	543	1.81%	559	1.54%	102	5.8%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	260	0.87%	319	0.88%	15	0.9%
Health	8,465	28.29%	10,296	28.30%	186	10.6%
Education	4,838	16.17%	6,298	17.31%	218	12.4%
Management and Commerce	5,305	17.73%	6,467	17.78%	379	21.5%
Society and Culture	3,270	10.93%	4,371	12.01%	359	20.4%
Creative Arts	4,845	16.19%	4,879	13.41%	416	23.6%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	5	0.02%	8	0.02%	-	-
Mixed Field Programs	-		-	-	6	0.3%
All Groups	31,483	100.00%	36,381	100.00%	1,760	100.0%

Type of institution

Table 4.15 below shows that among students who indicated a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree, the largest proportion of their other preferences were for university degrees offered by non-aligned universities (45.6% pre-ATAR, 48.5% post). While this 'group' of universities has more 'members' than any other group,[13] they attract far more preferences from students who also select TAFE bachelor degrees than their proportional representation (33% of all Australian universities) would suggest. ATN universities also received student preferences from the target group (17.6% per-ATAR; 16.3% post-ATAR) in proportions greater than their representation among all Australian universities (12.8%). These two results suggest a relatively strong alignment in the minds of students between bachelor degrees at TAFE and bachelor degrees at non-aligned and ATN universities.

The eight Go8 universities attracted the second largest proportion of preferences from the target student group, roughly in line with their representation among all Australian universities (20.5%): 21.6 per cent of pre-ATAR preferences but falling to 19 per cent of post-ATAR preferences. This decrease (2.6 percentage points, the largest decrease of any institution group) is understandable given the comparatively high ATARs required for entry into their degrees and the comparatively low ATARs of students who indicate a preference for a TAFE bachelor degree (see Table 4.5 above). Both IRU (17.9%) and RUN (15%) universities received preferences for their degrees in lower proportions than their representation among all Australian universities: at 13.4% and 1.7% of student pre-ATAR preferences respectively. The representation of RUN universities is particularly low but understandable given that most students indicating a preference for TAFE bachelor degrees are from metropolitan schools. Still both of these universities became slightly more attractive to students post-ATAR.

Table 4.15: University bachelor degree preferences of students who select a TAFE bachelor degree, pre/post-ATAR, by institutional group, 2009-2013

2009-2013	Victoria				South Australia	
Institution grouping	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Go8	6,460	21.6%	6,925	19.0%	263	14.9%
Non-Aligned	13,659	45.6%	17,654	48.5%	-	-
ATN	5,280	17.6%	5,933	16.3%	1,047	59.5%
IRU	4,024	13.4%	5,050	13.9%	450	25.6%
RUN	499	1.7%	819	2.3%	-	-
Total	31,483	100.0%	36,381	100.0%	1,760	100.0%

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[13] There are 13 non-aligned universities in Australia. The Go8 consists of 8 universities, the IRU consists of 7 universities, the RUN consists of 6 universities and the ATN consists of 5 universities.

5| Conclusion

A clear conclusion from the research detailed in this report is that TAFE bachelor degrees do not feature strongly in the preferences of secondary school students for Australian higher education. In 2013, only 3.5 per cent of secondary school students who lodged preferences for bachelor degrees with VTAC nominated a TAFE bachelor degree. Even then, in a list of up to twelve preferences, students who nominate only one TAFE bachelor degree account for 83 per cent of cases in Victoria and 94 per cent in South Australia. That is, secondary school students overwhelmingly prefer to undertake bachelor degrees offered by universities.

It is possible that this low level of interest in TAFE bachelor degrees will change in the future if the Australian Government's current plan to extend Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) to non-university providers of higher education, including TAFEs, is implemented. Even without this policy shift, the 2013 data analysed in this report show a 30 per cent increase in student preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees on the previous four-year period.

Current low levels of secondary student interest are not simply because there are less TAFE degrees from which to choose. While there are fewer TAFEs than universities offering bachelor degrees, the availability of TAFE bachelor degrees is quite extensive: 44 TAFE bachelor degrees in Victoria; two in South Australia and 55 Australia wide (Gale, Hodge et al. 2013: 114-115), which are offered in two fields of study in South Australia but in eleven fields of study in Victoria. (The remaining nine TAFE bachelor degrees are offered in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory; Gale, Hodge et al. 2013.) The cost to students in undertaking TAFE bachelor degrees is also unlikely to be a simple deterrent to student preferences, given that they have access to the Australian Government's FEE-HELP loan scheme (for details, see Gale, Hodge et al. 2013).[14]

One possible reason for students' low preference rates for TAFE bachelor degrees could be the absence of more widespread appreciation for them. The group of students with the highest preference rates for TAFE degrees is students from schools in high SES areas who constitute 47 per cent of all preferences in Victoria and 39 per cent in South Australia; both well above the 25 per cent representation of high SES in the general population.

These students' higher preference rates for TAFE bachelor degrees suggest their greater access to what Ball and Vincent (1998) describe as 'hot knowledge'. Hot knowledge is "socially embedded in networks and localities and is unevenly distributed across and used differently by social-class groups" (Ball & Vincent 1998: 377). One reading of the data, then, is that students from high SES schools act on their hot knowledge of TAFE bachelor degrees when their ATARs are below expected cut offs for entry into university bachelor degrees.[15] Students from high SES schools are also more likely to alter their preferences to include a TAFE bachelor degree, after their ATAR results are known. Elster (1983) describes such adjustments in terms of 'adaptive preferences': that is, retrospectively changing the record of one's past preferences to match one's current circumstances ('this is what I intended all along'). They could also be described in terms of the 'navigational capacities' (Appadurai

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[14] Also see http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helppayingmyfees/fee-help/ for details of this Australian Government loan scheme for post-secondary students.
[15] The average ATAR of students from high SES schools is 56.9.

2004) of students from high SES schools to find alternative routes to their preferred destinations (see also Gale and Parker in press).

Regarding the issue of the socio-spatial influence of schools on students' preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees, the research offers three main findings.

(1) The most significant is that students from schools in high SES areas are more likely to indicate a preference for TAFE bachelor degrees than students from schools in mid and low SES areas. It is not the influence commonly expected, given that TAFE is often regarded as a second chance institution for students from low SES backgrounds. Instead, TAFE bachelor degrees are a second chance option for students from high SES backgrounds with low ATARs.

(2) The research also suggests that students from metropolitan schools are more likely to indicate a preference for TAFE bachelor degrees, although this could be a function of the metropolitan location of TAFEs that offer bachelor degrees.

(3) Finally, the research suggests that more students from government schools indicate a preference for a TAFE degree than from catholic or independent schools.

In summary, the most prominent finding from the research is that the student who includes a preference for a TAFE degree on VTAC or SATAC forms is most likely to have a relatively low ATAR, come from a high SES school and government school, in a metropolitan area.

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Appendix 1 | List of abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ASCED	Australian Standard Classification of Education
ASGC	Australian Standard Geographical Classification
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank
ATN	Australian Technology Network
CPS	Commonwealth Supported Places
CREFI	Centre for Research in Educational Futures and Innovation
FOE	Field of Education
Go8	Group of Eight
HE	Higher Education
ICSEA	Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage
IRU	Innovative Research Universities
NCSEHE	National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education
QTAC	Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre
POA	Postal Area
RUN	Regional Universities Network
SATAC	South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre
SEIFA	Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas
SES	Socioeconomic Status
TAC	Tertiary Admissions Centre
TER	Tertiary Education Rank
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
UAC	University Admissions Centre
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTAC	Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre

Appendix 2 | Data preparation and processing

VTAC and SATAC data on student preferences for higher education (HE) were prepared for analysis as per the following process:

(1) Data relating to adult, interstate and international students were deleted from the data set. Also deleted were applications in which vital data fields were missing, such as the school postcode and the course or institution name.

(2) The socioeconomic status (SES) quartile ranking for each school was added to the data set based on the school's postcode and derived from the *Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2033.055.001 – Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Data Cube only, 2011. Table 5: Postal Area (POA) Indexes of Education and Occupation, 2011* data. Percentile rankings were allocated to each school as per the following: 0-25 = Low; 25-75 = Medium; and 75-100 = High.

(3) Each school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was also recorded in the data set, as an alternative measure of SES. ICSEA reflects the social standing of the parents of children at the school. These codes were derived from the MySchool website.[16]

(4) The geographical classification for each school was added to the data set, based on the school's postcode and derived from the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Remoteness Area classification (2006).[17] The schools were coded as one of: RA1, major cities; RA2, inner regional; RA3, outer regional; RA4, remote and RA5, very remote were conflated and listed as remote.

(5) Each student's HE preference was coded in the data set to a Field of Study, as defined in ***Table 4.11: Student applications for university places, by field of study*** (Gale & Hodge et al. 2013: 37), adapted from the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) Field of Education Codes (FOE).

(6) Each student's preferred universities and TAFE Institutions were coded in the data set by their institutional groupings, with universities coded as: Non-aligned, Group of Eight (Go8), Regional Universities Network (RUN), Innovative Research Universities (IRU), and Australian Technology Network (ATN), and TAFE Institutions simply as TAFE.

   NB: (1) The University of Ballarat and Federation University were treated in the study as the same institution; (2) although the Australian Government regards TAFE institutions as private providers, TAFE providers are state owned and, for the purposes of this report, were regarded as public institutions.

(7) Some alterations were made to SATAC data to aid in VTAC data comparisons. These included the addition to SATAC data of school sector categories (i.e. government, catholic, private) derived from the MySchool website. SATAC course codes were also re-coded to conform with VTAC course codes.

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[16] See http://www.myschool.edu.au/
[17] See http://www.health.gov.au/internet/otd/Publishing.nsf/Content/locator

Appendix 3 | Institutional Groupings

Table A3.1: Institutional grouping of universities and TAFEs providing bachelor degrees

Institution	Institutional Grouping
Australian Catholic University	Non-Aligned
Advance TAFE	TAFE
Australian National University	Go8
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	Non-Aligned
Box Hill Institute of TAFE	TAFE
Central Queensland University	RUN
Charles Darwin University	IRU
Charles Sturt University	Non-Aligned
Chisholm Institute	TAFE
Curtin University of Technology	ATN
Deakin University	Non-Aligned
Edith Cowan University	Non-Aligned
Flinders University	IRU
GippsTAFE	TAFE
Goulbourn Ovens Institute of TAFE	TAFE
Griffith University	IRU
Holmesglen	TAFE
James Cook University	IRU
La Trobe University	IRU
Macquarie University	Non-Aligned
Monash University	Go8
Murdoch University	IRU
Northern Institute of TAFE	TAFE
Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE	TAFE
Queensland University of Technology	ATN
RMIT University	ATN
Southern Cross University	RUN
Sunraysia Institute of TAFE	TAFE
Swinburne University of Technology	Non-Aligned
The Gordon	TAFE
The Kangan Institute	TAFE
University of Adelaide	Go8
University of Ballarat / Federation University Australia	RUN
University of Canberra	Non-Aligned
University of Melbourne	Go8
University of New England	RUN
University of New South Wales	Go8
University of Newcastle	IRU *
University of Queensland	Go8
University of South Australia	ATN
University of Southern Queensland	RUN
University of Sydney	Go8
University of Tasmania	Non-Aligned
University of Technology Sydney	ATN
University of the Sunshine Coast	RUN
University of Western Australia	Go8
University of Western Sydney	Non-Aligned
University of Wollongong	Non-Aligned
Victoria University	Non-Aligned
Victoria University	TAFE
William Angliss Institute of TAFE	TAFE
Wodonga Institute of TAFE	TAFE

* The University of Newcastle ceded from the IRU in December 2014, after data analysis was completed.

Appendix 4 | Student numbers by school type

Table A4.1: Number of Students' pre/post-ATAR by Year by School Sector, Victoria

Year	Sector	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR	
		N°.	%	N°.	%
2009	Government	647	57.3%	760	56.5%
	Independent	209	18.5%	249	18.5%
	Catholic	274	24.2%	335	24.9%
Total		**1,130**	**100.0%**	**1,344**	**100.0%**
2010	Government	663	57.2%	827	57.3%
	Independent	224	19.3%	271	18.8%
	Catholic	272	23.5%	346	24.0%
Total		**1,159**	**100.0%**	**1,444**	**100.0%**
2011	Government	732	58.4%	935	58.8%
	Independent	213	17.0%	268	16.9%
	Catholic	309	24.6%	386	24.3%
Total		**1,254**	**100.0%**	**1,589**	**100.0%**
2012	Government	665	59.0%	879	60.1%
	Independent	189	16.8%	241	16.5%
	Catholic	274	24.3%	343	23.4%
Total		**1,128**	**100.0%**	**1,463**	**100.0%**
2013	Government	841	57.9%	1,118	58.6%
	Independent	229	15.8%	289	15.2%
	Catholic	383	26.4%	500	26.2%
Total		**1,453**	**100.0%**	**1,907**	**100.0%**
2009-2013	Government	3548	57.9%	4,519	58.3%
	Independent	1064	17.4%	1318	17.0%
	Catholic	1512	24.7%	1910	24.7%
Total		**6,124**	**100.0%**	**7,747**	**100.0%**

Table A4.2: Number of Students by Year by School Sector, South Australia

Year	Sector	N°.	%
2010	Government	124	50.20
	Independent	55	22.27
	Catholic	58	23.48
	Catholic Independent	10	4.05
Total		**247**	**100.00**
2011	Government	78	52.00
	Independent	44	29.33
	Catholic	25	16.67
	Catholic Independent	3	2.00
Total		**150**	**100.00**
2012	Government	76	46.92
	Independent	58	35.80
	Catholic	22	13.58
	Catholic Independent	6	3.70
Total		**162**	**100.00**
2013	Government	43	50.00
	Independent	23	26.74
	Catholic	19	22.10
	Catholic Independent	1	1.16
Total		**86**	**100.00**
2010-2013	Government	321	49.77
	Independent	180	27.91
	Catholic	124	19.22
	Catholic Independent	20	3.10
Total		**645**	**100.00**

Appendix 5 | Student numbers by ASGC

Table A5.1: Number of Students by Selection Status pre/post-ATAR by Year by ASGC, Victoria

Year	ASGC Remoteness Code	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR	
		N°·	%	N°·	%
2009	Metropolitan	942	83.4%	1,139	84.7%
	Inner Regional	144	12.7%	160	11.9%
	Outer Regional	41	3.6%	42	3.1%
	Remote	3	0.3%	3	0.2%
Total		**1,130**	**100.0%**	**1,344**	**100.0%**
2010	Metropolitan	970	83.7%	1,229	85.1%
	Inner Regional	169	14.6%	189	13.1%
	Outer Regional	20	1.7%	26	1.8%
	Remote	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total		**1,159**	**100.0%**	**1,444**	**100.0%**
2011	Metropolitan	1,088	86.8%	1,385	87.2%
	Inner Regional	147	11.7%	178	11.2%
	Outer Regional	18	1.4%	24	1.5%
	Remote	1	0.1%	2	0.1%
Total		**1,254**	**100.0%**	**1,589**	**100.0%**
2012	Metropolitan	990	87.8%	1,298	88.7%
	Inner Regional	114	10.1%	138	9.4%
	Outer Regional	23	2.0%	26	1.8%
	Remote	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
Total		**1,128**	**100.0%**	**1,463**	**100.0%**
2013	Metropolitan	1,247	85.8%	1,658	86.9%
	Inner Regional	178	12.3%	214	11.2%
	Outer Regional	26	1.8%	33	1.7%
	Remote	2	0.1%	2	0.1%
Total		**1,453**	**100.0%**	**1,907**	**100.0%**
2009-2013	Metropolitan	5,237	85.5%	6,709	86.6%
	Inner Regional	752	12.3%	879	11.3%
	Outer Regional	128	2.1%	151	1.9%
	Remote	7	0.1%	8	0.1%
Total		**6,124**	**100.0%**	**7,747**	**100.0%**

Table A5.2: Number of Students by Year by ASGC Classification, South Australia

Year	ASGC	N°·	%
2010	Metropolitan	211	85.42
	Inner Regional	26	10.53
	Outer Regional	6	2.43
	Remote	4	1.62
Total		**247**	**100.00**
2011	Metropolitan	123	82.00
	Inner Regional	13	8.67
	Outer Regional	6	4.00
	Remote	8	5.33
Total		**150**	**100.00**
2012	Metropolitan	139	85.80
	Inner Regional	17	10.49
	Outer Regional	4	2.47
	Remote	2	1.24
Total		**162**	**100.00**
2013	Metropolitan	76	88.37
	Inner Regional	3	3.49
	Outer Regional	3	3.49
	Remote	4	4.65
Total		**86**	**100.00**
2010-2013	Metropolitan	549	85.11
	Inner Regional	59	9.15
	Outer Regional	19	2.95
	Remote	18	2.79
Total		**645**	**100.00**

Appendix 6 | Student numbers by SES

Table A6.1: Number of Students pre/post-ATAR by Year by SES, Victoria

Year	SES Quartile	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR	
		N°·	%	N°·	%
2009	Low	168	14.9%	209	15.6%
	Medium	441	39.0%	498	37.1%
	High	521	46.1%	637	47.4%
Total		**1,130**	**100.0%**	**1,344**	**100.0%**
2010	Low	181	15.6%	225	15.6%
	Medium	428	36.9%	519	35.9%
	High	550	47.5%	700	48.5%
Total		**1,159**	**100.0%**	**1,444**	**100.0%**
2011	Low	162	12.9%	232	14.6%
	Medium	485	38.7%	590	37.1%
	High	607	48.4%	767	48.3%
Total		**1,254**	**100.0%**	**1,589**	**100.0%**
2012	Low	148	13.1%	193	13.2%
	Medium	462	41.0%	582	39.8%
	High	518	45.9%	688	47.0%
Total		**1,128**	**100.0%**	**1,463**	**100.0%**
2013	Low	227	15.6%	298	15.6%
	Medium	578	39.8%	749	39.3%
	High	648	44.6%	860	45.1%
Total		**1,453**	**100.0%**	**1,907**	**100.0%**
2009-2013	Low	886	14.5%	1,157	14.9%
	Medium	2,394	39.1%	2,938	37.9%
	High	2,844	46.4%	3,652	47.1%
Total		**6,124**	**100.0%**	**7,747**	**100.0%**

Table A6.2: Number of Students by Year by SES Quartile, South Australia

Year	SES Quartile	N°·	%
2010	Low	48	19.43
	Medium	105	42.51
	High	94	38.06
Total		**247**	**100.00**
2011	Low	38	25.33
	Medium	57	38.00
	High	55	36.67
Total		**150**	**100.00**
2012	Low	40	24.69
	Medium	57	35.19
	High	65	40.12
Total		**162**	**100.00**
2013	Low	19	22.09
	Medium	28	32.56
	High	39	45.35
Total		**86**	**100.00**
2010-2013	Low	145	22.48
	Medium	247	38.30
	High	253	39.22
Total		**645**	**100.00**

Appendix 7 | Student preferences by field of study

Table A7.1: TAFE bachelor degree pre/post-ATAR preferences by field of study, Victoria, 2009-2013 (1)

	Pre-ATAR					Post-ATAR				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Natural and Physical Sciences	13	12	8	15	31	22	18	15	46	58
Information Technology	18	23	16	8	21	24	33	18	11	33
Engineering and Related Technologies	0	0	0	29	37	0	0	0	36	52
Architecture and Building	26	74	64	75	55	38	94	90	90	70
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	33	35	26	12	22	36	38	34	15	27
Health	249	227	283	239	254	333	327	352	340	377
Education	146	127	254	230	209	180	192	391	357	336
Management and Commerce	343	338	306	287	457	393	441	397	362	635
Society and Culture	0	13	11	15	16	0	30	30	25	31
Creative Arts	420	501	575	490	619	451	530	616	509	676
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	31	44	34	34	32	32	44	34	32	35
Total	**1,279**	**1,394**	**1,577**	**1,434**	**1,753**	**1,509**	**1,747**	**1,977**	**1,823**	**2,330**

Table A7.2: TAFE bachelor degree pre/post-ATAR preferences by field of study, Victoria, 2009-2013 (2)

Year	Primary Field of Study	Pre-ATAR		Post-ATAR	
		N°	%	N°	%
2009	Natural and Physical Sciences	13	1.0%	22	1.5%
	Information Technology	18	1.4%	24	1.6%
	Engineering and Related Technologies	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Architecture and Building	26	2.0%	38	2.5%
	Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	33	2.6%	36	2.4%
	Health	249	19.5%	333	22.1%
	Education	146	11.4%	180	11.9%
	Management and Commerce	343	26.8%	393	26.0%
	Society and Culture	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Creative Arts	420	32.8%	451	29.9%
	Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	31	2.4%	32	2.1%
Total		**1,279**	**100.0%**	**1,509**	**100.0%**
2010	Natural and Physical Sciences	12	0.9%	18	1.0%
	Information Technology	23	1.6%	33	1.9%
	Engineering and Related Technologies	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Architecture and Building	74	5.3%	94	5.4%
	Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	35	2.5%	38	2.2%
	Health	227	16.3%	327	18.7%
	Education	127	9.1%	192	11.0%
	Management and Commerce	338	24.2%	441	25.2%
	Society and Culture	13	0.9%	30	1.7%
	Creative Arts	501	35.9%	530	30.3%
	Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	44	3.2%	44	2.5%
Total		**1,394**	**100.0%**	**1,747**	**100.0%**
2011	Natural and Physical Sciences	8	0.5%	15	0.8%
	Information Technology	16	1.0%	18	0.9%
	Engineering and Related Technologies	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Architecture and Building	64	4.1%	90	4.6%
	Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	26	1.6%	34	1.7%
	Health	283	17.9%	352	17.8%
	Education	254	16.1%	391	19.8%
	Management and Commerce	306	19.4%	397	20.1%
	Society and Culture	11	0.7%	30	1.5%
	Creative Arts	575	36.5%	616	31.2%
	Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	34	2.2%	34	1.7%
Total		**1,577**	**100.0%**	**1,977**	**100.0%**

Year	Primary Field of Study	N°.	%	N°.	%
2012	**Natural and Physical Sciences**	**15**	**1.0%**	**46**	**2.5%**
	Information Technology	8	0.6%	11	0.6%
	Engineering and Related Technologies	29	2.0%	36	2.0%
	Architecture and Building	75	5.2%	90	4.9%
	Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	12	0.8%	15	0.8%
	Health	239	16.7%	340	18.7%
	Education	230	16.0%	351	19.3%
	Management and Commerce	287	20.0%	362	19.9%
	Society and Culture	15	1.0%	25	1.4%
	Creative Arts	490	34.2%	509	28.0%
	Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	34	2.4%	35	1.9%
Total		**1,434**	**100.0%**	**1,820**	**100.0%**
2013	Natural and Physical Sciences	31	1.8%	58	2.5%
	Information Technology	21	1.2%	33	1.4%
	Engineering and Related Technologies	37	2.1%	52	2.2%
	Architecture and Building	55	3.1%	70	3.0%
	Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	22	1.3%	27	1.2%
	Health	254	14.5%	377	16.2%
	Education	209	11.9%	336	14.4%
	Management and Commerce	457	26.1%	635	27.3%
	Society and Culture	16	0.9%	31	1.3%
	Creative Arts	619	35.3%	676	29.0%
	Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	32	1.8%	35	1.5%
Total		**1,753**	**100.0%**	**2,330**	**100.0%**
2009-2013	Natural and Physical Sciences	79	1.1%	159	1.7%
	Information Technology	86	1.2%	119	1.3%
	Engineering and Related Technologies	66	0.9%	88	0.9%
	Architecture and Building	294	4.0%	382	4.1%
	Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	128	1.7%	150	1.6%
	Health	1,252	16.8%	1,729	18.4%
	Education	966	13.0%	1,450	15.5%
	Management and Commerce	1,731	23.3%	2,228	23.7%
	Society and Culture	55	0.7%	116	1.2%
	Creative Arts	2,605	35.0%	2,782	29.6%
	Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	175	2.4%	180	1.9%
Total		**7,437**	**100.0%**	**9,383**	**100.0%**

Table A7.3: TAFE-HE preferences for Primary Field of Study Choice, South Australia

Year	Primary Field of Study	N°.	%
2010	Management and Commerce	120	45.5%
	Creative Arts	144	54.6%
Total		**264**	**100.0%**
2011	Management and Commerce	52	32.3%
	Creative Arts	109	67.7%
Total		**161**	**100.0%**
2012	Management and Commerce	56	32.9%
	Creative Arts	114	67.1%
Total		**170**	**100.0%**
2013	Management and Commerce	0	0.0%
	Creative Arts	95	100.0%
Total		**95**	**100.0%**
2010-2013	Management and Commerce	228	33.0%
	Creative Arts	462	67.0%
Total		**690**	**100.0%**

Appendix 8 | Student preferences by field of study and school sector

Table A8.1: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by government school and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Government	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	**Pre ATAR**		**Post ATAR**			
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**
Natural and Physical Sciences	63	1.5%	123	2.3%	-	-
Information Technology	70	1.6%	94	1.7%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	37	0.9%	51	0.9%	-	-
Architecture and Building	127	3.0%	155	2.8%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	57	1.3%	68	1.2%	-	-
Health	765	18.0%	1,054	19.4%	-	-
Education	602	14.2%	910	16.7%	-	-
Management and Commerce	936	22.0%	1,235	22.7%	114	33.0%
Society and Culture	34	0.8%	75	1.4%	-	-
Creative Arts	1,484	34.9%	1,602	29.4%	231	67.0%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	76	1.8%	77	1.4%	-	-
Total	**4,251**	**100.0%**	**5,444**	**100.0%**	**345**	**100.0%**

Table A8.2: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by independent school and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Independent	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	**Pre ATAR**		**Post ATAR**			
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**
Natural and Physical Sciences	4	0.3%	7	0.4%	-	-
Information Technology	7	0.5%	11	0.7%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	13	1.0%	16	1.0%	-	-
Architecture and Building	92	6.8%	126	7.7%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	37	2.7%	47	2.9%	-	-
Health	184	13.6%	263	16.1%	-	-
Education	113	8.4%	187	11.4%	-	-
Management and Commerce	324	24.0%	372	22.8%	66	34.0%
Society and Culture	5	0.4%	12	0.7%	-	-
Creative Arts	531	39.3%	550	33.7%	128	66.0%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	40	3.0%	43	2.6%	-	-
Total	**1,350**	**100.0%**	**1,634**	**100.0%**	**194**	**100.0%**

Table A8.3: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by catholic school and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Catholic	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	**Pre ATAR**		**Post ATAR**			
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**
Natural and Physical Sciences	12	0.7%	29	1.3%	-	-
Information Technology	9	0.5%	14	0.6%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	16	0.9%	21	0.9%	-	-
Architecture and Building	75	4.1%	101	4.4%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	34	1.9%	35	1.5%	-	-
Health	303	16.5%	412	17.9%	-	-
Education	251	13.7%	359	15.6%	-	-
Management and Commerce	471	25.7%	621	26.9%	12	57.1%
Society and Culture	16	0.9%	29	1.3%	-	-
Creative Arts	590	32.1%	630	27.3%	9	42.9%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	59	3.2%	57	2.5%	-	-
Total	**1,836**	**100.0%**	**2,308**	**100.0%**	**21**	**100.0%**

Appendix 9 | Student preferences by field of study and ASGC

Table A9.1: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by metropolitan schools and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Metropolitan	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	73	1.1%	148	1.8%	-	-
Information Technology	83	1.3%	116	1.4%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	58	0.9%	79	1.0%	-	-
Architecture and Building	267	4.2%	349	4.3%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	72	1.1%	85	1.0%	-	-
Health	1,143	18.0%	1,581	19.4%	-	-
Education	896	14.1%	1,336	16.4%	-	-
Management and Commerce	1,459	22.9%	1,920	23.6%	202	34.2%
Society and Culture	49	0.8%	100	1.2%	-	-
Creative Arts	2,116	33.2%	2,273	27.9%	388	65.8%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	151	2.4%	151	1.9%	-	-
Total	6,367	100.0%	8,138	100.0%	590	100.0%

Table A9.2: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by inner regional schools and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Inner Regional	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	5	0.5%	10	0.9%	-	-
Information Technology	3	0.3%	3	0.3%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	8	0.9%	8	0.8%	-	-
Architecture and Building	22	2.4%	28	2.7%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	39	4.3%	46	4.4%	-	-
Health	86	9.5%	122	11.6%	-	-
Education	59	6.5%	95	9.0%	-	-
Management and Commerce	237	26.0%	268	25.4%	19	30.2%
Society and Culture	6	0.7%	13	1.2%	-	-
Creative Arts	424	46.6%	439	41.6%	44	69.8%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	21	2.3%	23	2.2%	-	-
Total	910	100.0%	1,055	100.0%	63	100.0%

Table A9.3: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by outer regional schools and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Outer Regional	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	1	0.7%	1	0.5%	-	-
Information Technology	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	-	-
Architecture and Building	5	3.3%	5	2.7%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	17	11.2%	19	10.3%	-	-
Health	23	15.1%	26	14.1%	-	-
Education	11	7.2%	24	13.0%	-	-
Management and Commerce	34	22.4%	39	21.2%	4	21.1%
Society and Culture	0	0.0%	3	1.6%	-	-
Creative Arts	58	38.2%	63	34.2%	15	78.9%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	3	2.0%	3	1.6%	-	-
Total	152	100.0%	184	100.0%	19	100.0%

Table A9.4: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by remote schools and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Remote	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Information Technology	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Architecture and Building	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Health	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Education	0	0.0%	1	11.1%	-	-
Management and Commerce	1	12.5%	1	11.1%	3	16.7%
Society and Culture	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Creative Arts	7	87.5%	7	77.8%	15	83.3%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	-
Total	8	100.0%	9	100.0%	18	100.0%

Appendix 10 | Student preferences by field of study and SES

Table A10.1: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by high SES and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

High SES	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	36	1.0%	70	1.6%	-	-
Information Technology	45	1.3%	68	1.5%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	13	0.4%	18	0.4%	-	-
Architecture and Building	173	5.0%	224	5.0%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	39	1.1%	44	1.0%	-	-
Health	558	16.0%	779	17.5%	-	-
Education	449	12.9%	682	15.3%	-	-
Management and Commerce	806	23.1%	1,069	24.0%	93	34.2%
Society and Culture	21	0.6%	45	1.0%	-	-
Creative Arts	1,252	35.9%	1,353	30.4%	179	65.8%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	92	2.6%	93	2.1%	-	-
Total	3,484	100.0%	4,445	100.0%	272	

Table A10.2: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by medium SES and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Med SES	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	32	1.1%	67	1.9%	-	-
Information Technology	34	1.2%	41	1.2%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	37	1.3%	49	1.4%	-	-
Architecture and Building	90	3.1%	112	3.2%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	69	2.4%	82	2.3%	-	-
Health	458	15.8%	625	17.6%	-	-
Education	371	12.8%	536	15.1%	-	-
Management and Commerce	687	23.7%	829	23.4%	92	34.5%
Society and Culture	24	0.8%	47	1.3%	-	-
Creative Arts	1,041	35.9%	1,102	31.1%	175	65.5%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	57	2.0%	57	1.6%	-	-
Total	2,900	100.0%	3,547	100.0%	267	100.0%

Table A10.1: Pre/post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences, by low SES and field of study, Victoria and South Australia

Low SES	Victoria				South Australia	
2009-2013	Pre ATAR		Post ATAR			
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	11	1.0%	22	1.6%	-	-
Information Technology	7	0.7%	10	0.7%	-	-
Engineering and Related Technologies	16	1.5%	21	1.5%	-	-
Architecture and Building	31	2.9%	46	3.3%	-	-
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	20	1.9%	24	1.7%	-	-
Health	236	22.4%	325	23.3%	-	-
Education	146	13.9%	238	17.1%	-	-
Management and Commerce	238	22.6%	330	23.7%	43	28.5%
Society and Culture	10	0.9%	24	1.7%	-	-
Creative Arts	312	29.6%	327	23.5%	108	71.5%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	26	2.5%	27	1.9%	-	-
Total	1,053	100.0%	1,394	100.0%	151	100.0%

Appendix 11 | The Creative Arts field of study

Table A11.1: TAFE bachelor degree Creative Arts preferences, by school sector, South Australia, 2009-2012

	Government		Independent		Catholic		Totals	
2009	75	52.4%	29	20.3%	39	27.3%	100.0%	**143**
2010	56	52.3%	32	29.9%	19	17.8%	100.0%	**107**
2011	51	45.5%	40	35.7%	21	18.8%	100.0%	**112**
2012	43	50.0%	23	26.7%	20	23.3%	100.0%	**86**
Total	**225**	**50.2%**	**124**	**27.7%**	**99**	**22.1%**	**100.0%**	**448**

Table A11.2: Pre-ATAR Creative Arts TAFE bachelor degree preferences by SES, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Low		Medium		High		Totals	
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**
2009	48	13.4%	140	39.1%	170	47.5%	358	100.0%
2010	53	12.7%	165	39.6%	199	47.7%	417	100.0%
2011	49	11.6%	168	39.7%	206	48.7%	423	100.0%
2012	35	9.8%	147	41.3%	174	48.9%	356	100.0%
2013	59	11.9%	196	39.5%	241	48.6%	496	100.0%
Totals	**244**	**11.9%**	**817**	**39.9%**	**987**	**48.2%**	**2,048**	**100.0%**

Table A11.3: Post-ATAR Creative Arts TAFE bachelor degree preferences by SES, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Low		Medium		High		Totals	
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**
2009	49	12.6%	150	38.6%	190	48.8%	389	100.0%
2010	55	12.4%	175	39.4%	214	48.2%	444	100.0%
2011	54	11.7%	177	38.2%	232	50.1%	463	100.0%
2012	36	9.4%	162	42.4%	184	48.2%	382	100.0%
2013	67	12.2%	216	39.3%	266	48.5%	549	100.0%
Totals	**261**	**11.7%**	**881**	**39.6%**	**1,083**	**48.7%**	**2,224**	**100.0%**

Table A11.4: Creative Arts TAFE bachelor degree preferences by SES, South Australia, 2009-2012

	Low		Medium		High		Totals	
	N°	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**	**N°**	**%**
2009	30	21.0%	59	41.3%	54	37.8%	143	100.0%
2010	31	29.0%	41	38.3%	35	32.7%	107	100.0%
2011	25	22.3%	41	36.6%	46	41.1%	112	100.0%
2012	19	22.1%	28	32.6%	39	45.3%	86	100.0%
Totals	**105**	**23.4%**	**169**	**37.7%**	**174**	**38.8%**	**448**	**100.0%**

Appendix 12 | The Health and Education fields of study (Victoria only)

Table A12.1: Post-ATAR only Health students by ASGC, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Metropolitan		Inner Regional		Outer Regional		Remote		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	75	90.4%	8	9.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	83	100.0%
2010	94	92.2%	8	7.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	102	100.0%
2011	73	88.0%	9	10.8%	1	1.2%	0	0.0%	83	100.0%
2012	105	97.2%	3	2.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	108	100.0%
2013	117	92.1%	9	7.1%	1	0.8%	0	0.0%	127	100.0%
Totals	**464**	**92.2%**	**37**	**7.4%**	**2**	**0.4%**	**0**	**0.0%**	**503**	**100.0%**

Table A12.2: Post-ATAR only Health students by SES, Victoria, 2009-2013

	High		Medium		Low		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	33	39.8%	25	30.1%	25	30.1%	83	100.0%
2010	54	52.9%	34	33.3%	14	13.7%	102	100.0%
2011	35	42.2%	26	31.3%	22	26.5%	83	100.0%
2012	53	49.1%	39	36.1%	16	14.8%	108	100.0%
2013	59	46.5%	49	38.6%	19	15.0%	127	100.0%
Totals	**234**	**46.5%**	**173**	**34.4%**	**96**	**19.1%**	**503**	**100.0%**

Table A12.3: Post-ATAR only Health students by school sector, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Government		Independent		Catholic		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	42	50.6%	20	24.1%	21	25.3%	83	100.0%
2010	67	65.7%	15	14.7%	20	19.6%	102	100.0%
2011	46	55.4%	15	18.1%	22	26.5%	83	100.0%
2012	76	70.4%	14	13.0%	18	16.7%	108	100.0%
2013	76	59.8%	19	15.0%	32	25.2%	127	100.0%
Totals	**307**	**61.0%**	**83**	**16.5%**	**113**	**22.5%**	**503**	**100.0%**

Table A12.4: Post-ATAR only Education students by ASGC, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Metropolitan		Inner Regional		Outer Regional		Remote		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	36	97.3%	1	2.7%	0	0.0%	0		37	100.0%
2010	40	83.3%	5	10.4%	3	6.3%	0		48	100.0%
2011	102	88.7%	10	8.7%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%	115	100.0%
2012	99	90.8%	8	7.3%	2	1.8%	0		109	100.0%
2013	97	93.3%	6	5.8%	1	1.0%	0		104	100.0%
Totals	**374**	**90.6%**	**30**	**7.3%**	**8**	**1.9%**	**1**	**0.2%**	**413**	**100.0%**

Table A12.5: Post-ATAR only Education students by SES, Victoria, 2009-2013

	High		Medium		Low		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	22	59.5%	8	21.6%	7	18.9%	37	100.0%
2010	24	50.0%	14	29.2%	10	20.8%	48	100.0%
2011	53	46.1%	38	33.0%	24	20.9%	115	100.0%
2012	56	51.4%	37	33.9%	16	14.7%	109	100.0%
2013	51	49.0%	37	35.6%	16	15.4%	104	100.0%
Totals	**206**	**49.9%**	**134**	**32.4%**	**73**	**17.7%**	**413**	**100.0%**

Table A12.6: Post-ATAR only Education students by school sector, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Government		Independent		Catholic		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	20	54.1%	5	13.5%	12	32.4%	37	100.0%
2010	27	56.3%	10	20.8%	11	22.9%	48	100.0%
2011	71	61.7%	24	20.9%	20	17.4%	115	100.0%
2012	68	62.4%	19	17.4%	22	20.2%	109	100.0%
2013	76	73.1%	7	6.7%	21	20.2%	104	100.0%
Totals	**262**	**63.4%**	**65**	**15.7%**	**86**	**20.8%**	**413**	**100.0%**

Appendix 13 | Between field of study/type of institution comparisons

Table A13.1: University bachelor degree preferences of students who select a TAFE bachelor degree, pre/post-ATAR, by institutional grouping, 2009-2013

Year	Institution grouping	Pre-ATAR	Post-ATAR
2009	Go8	1,106	1,062
	Non-Aligned	2,651	3,126
	ATN	760	825
	IRU	586	687
	RUN	95	150
Total		**5,198**	**5,850**
2010	Go8	1,106	1,124
	Non-Aligned	2,333	2,846
	ATN	958	1,059
	IRU	700	877
	RUN	99	143
Total		**5,196**	**6,049**
2011	Go8	1,304	1,415
	Non-Aligned	2,669	3,407
	ATN	1,137	1,238
	IRU	924	1,158
	RUN	117	171
Total		**6,151**	**7,389**
2012	Go8	1,284	1,412
	Non-Aligned	2,623	3,461
	ATN	1,040	1,203
	IRU	784	975
	RUN	69	137
Total		**5,800**	**7,188**
2013	Go8	1,660	1,912
	Non-Aligned	3,383	4,814
	ATN	1,385	1,608
	IRU	1,030	1,353
	RUN	119	218
Total		**7,577**	**9,905**
2009-2013	Go8	6,460	6,925
	Non-Aligned	13,659	17,654
	ATN	5,280	5,933
	IRU	4,024	5,050
	RUN	499	819
Total		**29,922**	**36,381**

Table A13.2: Pre-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences by SES, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Low		Medium		High		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	48	13.4%	140	39.1%	170	47.5%	100.0%	358
2010	53	12.7%	165	39.6%	199	47.7%	100.0%	417
2011	49	11.6%	168	39.7%	206	48.7%	100.0%	423
2012	35	9.8%	147	41.3%	174	48.9%	100.0%	356
2013	59	11.9%	196	39.5%	241	48.6%	100.0%	496
Totals	**244**	**11.9%**	**817**	**39.9%**	**987**	**48.2%**	**100.0%**	**2,048**

Table A13.3: Post-ATAR TAFE bachelor degree preferences by SES, Victoria, 2009-2013

	Low		Medium		High		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	49	12.6%	150	38.6%	190	48.8%	100.0%	389
2010	55	12.4%	175	39.4%	214	48.2%	100.0%	444
2011	54	11.7%	177	38.2%	232	50.1%	100.0%	463
2012	36	9.4%	162	42.4%	184	48.2%	100.0%	382
2013	67	12.2%	216	39.3%	266	48.5%	100.0%	549
Totals	**261**	**11.7%**	**881**	**39.6%**	**1,083**	**48.7%**	**100.0%**	**2,224**

Table A13.4: TAFE bachelor degree preferences by SES, South Australia, 2009-2012

	Low		Medium		High		Totals	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
2009	30	21.0%	59	41.3%	54	37.8%	100.0%	143
2010	31	29.0%	41	38.3%	35	32.7%	100.0%	107
2011	25	22.3%	41	36.6%	46	41.1%	100.0%	112
2012	19	22.1%	28	32.6%	39	45.3%	100.0%	86
Totals	**105**	**23.4%**	**169**	**37.7%**	**174**	**38.8%**	**100.0%**	**448**

Appendix 14 | School ICSEA

Table A14.1: The number of students pre/post-ATAR by Year by ICSEA – ICSEA was not available for all schools.

Year	ICSEA	Pre ATAR	Post ATAR	Totals
2009	860 to 930	66	64	130
2009	931 to 1,000	385	391	776
2009	1,001 to 1,070	445	447	892
2009	1,071 to 1,140	318	321	639
2009	1,141 to 1,212	134	136	270
Total		**1,348**	**1,359**	**2,707**
2010	860 to 930	61	61	122
2010	931 to 1,000	387	387	774
2010	1,001 to 1,070	545	545	1,090
2010	1,071 to 1,140	322	322	644
2010	1,141 to 1,212	135	135	270
Total		**1,450**	**1,450**	**2,900**
2011	860 to 930	106	107	213
2011	931 to 1,000	423	428	851
2011	1,001 to 1,070	562	563	1,125
2011	1,071 to 1,140	369	371	740
2011	1,141 to 1,212	141	142	283
Total		**1,601**	**1,611**	**3,212**
2012	860 to 930	97	98	195
2012	931 to 1,000	410	410	820
2012	1,001 to 1,070	529	532	1,061
2012	1,071 to 1,140	321	323	644
2012	1,141 to 1,212	110	110	220
Total		**1,467**	**1,473**	**2,940**
2013	860 to 930	150	150	300
2013	931 to 1,000	534	535	1,069
2013	1,001 to 1,070	730	731	1,461
2013	1,071 to 1,140	358	358	716
2013	1,141 to 1,212	155	155	310
Total		**1,927**	**1,929**	**3,856**
Column Total		**7,793**	**7,822**	**15,615**