

Year 12 outcomes report

Information sheet

Frequently asked questions about Year 12 outcomes data

Why are we publishing schools' Year 12 outcomes data?

The Queensland Government believes that parents and the wider community are entitled to know what students are learning and achieving at school.

The 2011 Year 12 outcomes data provide a range of information about the programs schools offer and what students are achieving at the end of Year 12.

Note: Care should be taken in trying to construct time-series comparisons between the 2011 Year 12 outcomes information and information obtained from earlier reports. The 2011 report contains several new categories of information.

The Queensland Government changed the format of the Year 12 outcomes report with the introduction of the Queensland Certificate of Education in 2008. Data was time-series consistent between the 2005 and 2007 reports. The items in the 2008 and 2009 Year 12 outcomes report are time-series consistent with the same items in the 2010 report.

Since the 2008 Year 12 outcomes report, items are time-series consistent with the same items in this year's report.

Do we need to publish so much information?

Extensive information on student outcomes is published to give an accurate account of the range of education options being provided by schools for students.

Many students follow a traditional Year 12 range of courses leading to university. For others, vocational education and training qualifications lead to skilled work in industry. Some Year 12 graduates have successfully combined a range of academic courses and vocational qualifications that provide options for further education, training and work. For some students, completing Year 12 is a major achievement — one that was possibly not enjoyed by their parents or grandparents.

Isn't this another way to rank schools?

No. The outcomes report is not a league table.

Schools have been listed in alphabetical order because no single measure can ever capture the range of successes that occur across schools.

Different schools draw their students from different populations. Some Queensland schools are selective. Other schools take all students without regard to their ability or aspirations, while others target particular groups of students, such as students with a disability, Indigenous students and students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Couldn't rankings be calculated from the Year 12 outcomes data?

Yes, they could, but a league table based on any single outcome measure would tell very little about the effectiveness of a school program or what students really get out of their 12 years at school.

Such lists fail to recognise that a good education is more than just preparation for exams. Schools design their curriculum to meet the particular needs of their students and help them to reach their potential.

Can parents use the outcomes data to find the best school?

There may be a number of different schools that meet the needs of parents and their children. The Year 12 outcomes data provides a good starting point for discussions with schools in your community about what is important for your child's education.

Use the information in the table to identify schools in your area that have the characteristics that you value most. Parents can get further information by visiting schools.

Our school performed poorly on some of the outcomes measures. Should I send my child to another school?

No. The presentation of a single school outcomes measure hides the range of individual student outcomes. If your son or daughter is achieving well at their school, there is no reason to contemplate changing schools — no matter what the outcomes data shows.

There are many factors that affect students' achievement, and changing schools is a serious step. If you are concerned about your child's achievements, you should talk to your school. Your child could equally achieve below your expectations in a school that has reported high-level outcomes in many of the measures.

If you would like to obtain more information about the specific outcomes of a school, you should contact that school directly.

How can parents and the community use the 2011 Year 12 outcomes data?

Parents and the community can get a range of information from the Year 12 outcomes data. But it is important to remember that the published data tells us about the outcomes of one particular year group only. While this is useful, it is just one piece of information that parents can use to help inform their decision about a school for their child.

Parents can use the data in conjunction with other information that schools provide to help choose a secondary school that meets their child's individual needs.

Families moving to a new area can use the information about locality to identify local schools for their children.

An indication of whether a school has high or low enrolments can be gained from the Senior Education Profile data. The QCE data shows the number of students who were awarded the Queensland Certificate of Education. Note that students can continue to work towards a QCE after they leave school.

The VET qualifications, SAT and OP data indicate whether a school focuses on academic or vocational pathways or a combination of these.