

OUTCOMES FROM ENABLING COURSES

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In the VET sector, students of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, students from a non-English-speaking background and those with a disability were at least three times more likely to enrol in lower-level preparatory and pre-vocational courses known as enabling courses than other Australians. Students from other 'disadvantaged' groups such as those who were unemployed prior to the commencement of their VET program, or students whose highest level of secondary schooling was below Year 12 were also more inclined to undertake studies in these lower-level courses.

This paper provides information on the progression of enabling course students within the VET sector. In particular, the paper examines the factors which influence the likelihood of an enabling course student enrolling in a course at a higher level of qualification.

The study found that enabling courses in fact do produce positive outcomes for many people. Nevertheless, while not all enabling course students are moving from one enabling course to another, the tendency for some students to enrol in the same level of qualification in the following year raises some concern. Moreover, those who decided to enrol in the same level of qualification in the following year were usually enrolled in the same enabling course. These students were more likely to be women, students with a disability, students from a non-English-speaking background and students whose highest level of secondary schooling was Year 9 or below.