

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

Undertaken by the Australian Constructors Association

The Australian Constructors Association (ACA) set out to understand students' thoughts surrounding careers in the construction industry.

The ACA partnered with Colmar Brunton, an independent Australian-owned market research agency specialising in social research, who interviewed students from years 9, 10, 11 and 12, as well as apprentices and university students from across Australia via face to face focus groups and online forums.

These students and apprentices viewed the construction industry as involving building, creation and design activities. A sense of pride was noted in being able to contribute to something physical that is being built.

The research found that perceptions of the construction industry are positive, with the vast majority of participants readily able to list the positive aspects of the industry, whilst many struggled to identify any negatives.

Across all groups, parents, careers advisers and teachers played a key role in influencing and shaping career decisions.

Students are looking for information about construction careers including:

- Accurate facts and figures
- Real stories of people who are already working in the construction industry
- Examples of pathways into the industry
- Advice on where to find a job
- Clear and accessible information on who the major players of the industry are

The most appealing factors of the construction industry were:

- Building, designing and creating
- Ability to earn good money
- Working outdoors (even for those wanting office jobs)
- Opportunity to start their own business
- Physical work
- Continuity of the industry
- Working with mates



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Concerns mentioned about further education were:

- The cost of education
- Time to complete further education
- Making the wrong course choice and potentially wasting time and money
- Potential financial struggles of starting an apprenticeship or first job

Most respondents started thinking about their career options when:

- School subject selection occurs– for some this was in year 9 and 10, for others it was in year 11 and 12
- They undertook a curriculum based personality test
- Organising and undertaking high school work experience
- Parents started talking about career choices
- A career or apprenticeship opportunity arose

Factors taken into consideration when choosing a course:

- That the course matches personal interests, skills and personality
- The desire to work with a particular potential employer and the ability to meet the requirements set by that employer

University or TAFE?

- Most knew whether attending University or TAFE was the right decision for them, those who were undecided were influenced by school results
- TAFE students enjoyed practical lessons and putting learnings into practice immediately

Factors considered when choosing a University or TAFE provider:

- Location of the provider
- Whether friends or siblings are or have attended
- The cost and duration of the course
- The reputation of the provider

Who are the key influencers on students when they are making career decisions?

- Parents, teachers and career advisers
- Experts and individuals with personal experience in the industry
- Family and friends
- Internet research: university and TAFE websites
- Marketing via television, Facebook and other media outlets were also considered as general influencers in their life

In response, Build Your Career was created by the ACA to assist young Australians, parents and career advisers through providing access to information on why and how to start a career in construction.



WWW.BUILDYOURCAREER.COM.AU