



## Introduction

We would like you to take part in an important survey about subject selections at school. Ipsos – a social and market research company – has been commissioned to undertake this research.

The survey asks about your experiences and decision-making around subject selection for the Higher School Certificate (HSC). The answers we get will help to inform how teachers and students, like yourself, can be better supported in part of the subject selection process.

Completing the survey will take around 10-12 minutes.

Survey responses are anonymous, and end-users of the research will not be able to identify you in the data.

If you have any further questions about the survey, please ask your teacher.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. If you are not willing to participate in this survey, simply leave the survey blank and hand back to your teacher when they collect the surveys from students in your class. You do not need to provide a reason for not participating.

If you are willing to assist us with this research, please continue below. More information about the study is also located below.

## About the research project

Ipsos is inviting you to participate in a research project about student subject selection. We want to understand the factors that influence students' subject choices. We are conducting this research on behalf of a Government body which has an education program. We will disclose which Government body the research is for at the end of the survey. This research will help the Government body to better support teachers and students.

### What will be involved?

We would like you to complete a survey about your decisions around subject selection for Years 11 and 12 (for the HSC). It will take around 10-12 minutes.

### Why have I been selected to participate in this research?

Schools across NSW have been randomly selected to participate in this research. Your school has been selected at random and has agreed to participate. All Year 10-12 students at participating schools will be invited to complete the survey.

### Can I be identified as a participant?

No. You will be asked your year level and gender, but we will not ask you for your name when you complete the survey. You will not be identified through the research project and nobody will be able to identify you in any results.

### Is there anything that might make me upset if I take part?

The topic is not likely to be upsetting or uncomfortable for you. However, if anything in the survey does make you feel upset, you can stop taking part at any time. If you would like, your school can assist you to obtain help by contacting a teacher, counsellor or your parent/s. Your school can also give you the names of other people to talk to, such as Kids Helpline.



#### **What will happen to the information collected?**

The data is being collected solely for research purposes and will be stored securely by Ipsos for two years from the end of the project. Only anonymised responses to the survey will be shared with the Government body. A summary of the results from the survey will be shared with the NSW Department of Education and other education bodies. Overall results will also be made available publicly through research publications. Again, no one will be able to identify you in any way.

#### **Has this research been approved?**

Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) – incorporating all updates. This Statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies. Should you wish to discuss the study or view a copy of the complaint procedure with someone not directly involved, particularly in relation to matters concerning policies, information or complaints about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Operations Manager, Bellberry Limited on (08) 8361 3222.

The research has also been approved by the relevant bodies for Government, Independent and Catholic schools across NSW.

#### **Who is Ipsos?**

Ipsos is an independent research agency, established in 1975. Ipsos is a member of the Association of Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO) and all Ipsos Public Affairs consultants are current members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS). Ipsos Public Affairs adheres to all standards of conduct as indicated by the AMSRS Code of Professional Behaviour. If you wish to verify the legitimate nature of this research project, you can visit the Australian Market and Social Research Society website and look up Ipsos in the AMSRS Research Company Directory to verify that we are a legitimate market and social research company. This can be found at [www.amsrs.com.au/research-company-directory](http://www.amsrs.com.au/research-company-directory).

#### **What if I don't want to participate?**

That's OK, it is not compulsory. If you would not like to take part in the survey, you don't need to do anything, simply hand the survey back to your teacher when they collect the surveys from students in your class. You do not need to provide a reason.

#### **I want to participate, what do I do now?**

If you would like to participate in this research, simply turn the page over. If you have any questions about the project, please consult your teacher.



## High school students' subject selection

### General Instructions

To fill out or correct an answer please follow the below instructions:

Please mark your answers with a tick	✓
If you make a mistake in a box fill it in like this	
Or cross out your answer like this	<del>✓</del>

If you feel uncomfortable answering a question, simply leave it blank. If you have any other questions about the survey, please ask your teacher.

### Section A: Basic information – Year 12 HSC

- Are you currently enrolled as an HSC or IB student?

Please ✓ *one only*.

I'm an HSC student	
I'm an IB student	

- How many subjects are you currently studying?

***If you are studying an Extension unit:*** Please treat an Extension unit as a 'subject' for the purpose of this question. For example, if you are studying 3-unit Mathematics and Biology – this would be three subjects (2-unit Mathematics, Mathematics Extension 1 and Biology).

***If you are studying a 2-unit language:*** Please treat this as one subject. This includes any Beginners, Continuers, Literature and Context subjects. For example: French Beginners, Italian Continuers, Korean and Literature, Indonesian in Context.

***If you are studying any TAFE/VET courses:*** These do not need to be included.

Number of subjects:
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3. What subjects are you studying?

*If you are studying a language Extension, please write 'Any foreign language Extension unit'. If you are studying any TAFE/VET courses, these do not need to be included.*

*Please refer to the subject list found on the back page of this survey.*

Subject 1:
Subject 2:
Subject 3:
Subject 4:
Subject 5:
Subject 6:
Subject 7:
Subject 8:

4. Did you drop any subjects going from Year 11 into Year 12?

*If you dropped an Extension unit, please treat this as a 'subject' for the purpose of this question. Please ✓ one only.*

Yes – one subject	
Yes – two subjects	
Yes – three subjects	
Yes – four subjects	
No <a href="#">[GO TO Q6]</a>	

5. What subject(s) did you drop?

*If you dropped more than one subject, please write each subject on a separate line.*




## High school students' subject selection

### Section B: Subject selection

For the remainder of the survey, we will use the term 'subject selection'. When you see the term 'subject selection', please think of HSC school subject selection – that is, the subjects you pick for Years 11 and 12.

6. Everyone has different views about the importance of subject selection. For each of the statements below, *please indicate how much you agree or disagree by placing a ✓ in the corresponding box.*

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Subject selection is important to me for the near future (Years 11 and 12)						
Subject selection is important for further study after the end of Years 11 and 12 (for example, for university, TAFE)						
Subject selection is important because the subjects I study will help me develop skills I can use in everyday life						
Subject selection is important for my future career						



## High school students' subject selection

7. Below is a list of things that some students think about when picking their HSC subjects. Which of these did you think about when you picked your subjects for Years 11 and 12?

*Please consider each item carefully and ✓ all that apply in the first column.*

*Please then rank these factors in order of how important they were to your final decision, where 1 means most important in the second column. If you have selected more than 5 factors, please just rank the 5 factors that are most important.*

	✓	Rank 1-5
How interested I was in a subject		
How well I thought a subject scaled for the ATAR		
How good I thought I would be in a subject		
The workload for a subject		
Whether it would help with further study I was considering (university, TAFE etc.)		
If a subject would teach me any skills and tools for my everyday life		
The teacher responsible for teaching a subject		
Whether the content of a subject fitted well with other subjects I wanted to pick		
The opinions of my teachers at school (including current class teachers, year advisors, careers advisor etc.)		
The opinions of my parent(s)/guardian(s)		
The opinions of my siblings and other family (for example cousins, uncles, grandparents etc.)		
The opinions of those who were in Year 11, 12 or had recently graduated high school		
What I'd like to do for work in the future		
The timetabling of subjects at school		
The number of major works or assessments involved		
Other (please write in):		



8. In Year 10, students are usually provided with information and advice to help them pick their subjects. Thinking back to Year 10, which of the following types of information and advice do you remember receiving?

Please ✓ all that apply.

Information about what subjects are offered by your school and what will be studied in each (for example, the syllabus for a subject)	
Workload associated with subjects (for example detail around assessment tasks, major works, exams)	
Whether a subject scales well for the ATAR	
How subject selection can affect further study options (such as knowledge needed for entry to university, TAFE etc.)	
Guidance on the jobs or careers associated with different subjects	
An appointment with a career advisor/year advisor to discuss subject selection	
An open day/evening at my school to hear about different subjects	
Other (please write in):	
None of these	
I don't know/don't remember	

9. Thinking back to Year 10, do you feel that you had enough information and advice from your school to pick your HSC subjects for Years 11 and 12?

Yes	
No	
I'm not sure/don't remember	



10. The following list of topics can be studied in some subjects in Years 11 and 12.

Please ✓ the top **two** topics that sound most interesting to you.

The impact of households and businesses' activities on the environment	
Understanding the share market	
The reasons why Government may create regulations	
Identifying problems in society, like youth unemployment, and strategies to solve them	
What determines how much people earn	
Understanding currency exchange rates	
How businesses decide what goods and services to produce	
Investigating how evenly income and wealth is spread across people	
How individuals and society make decisions on what goods and services to consume	
How the world is becoming more globalised (countries becoming more connected through trade, politics and culture) and what this means for our society	
None of these	



**Section C: Currently studying or previously studied Economics**

Please only answer Section C if you are currently studying Economics or have studied it in the past.

11. If you are currently studying or previously studied Economics, for which of the following reasons did you pick Economics?

Please ✓ all that apply.

I thought it would be an interesting topic to study	
I'm considering working in this field in the future	
I'm considering studying something similar at university	
It was recommended to me by a friend/family member/teacher	
It's a subject that I thought would scale well	
I thought that it would teach me skills and tools for my everyday life	
I thought I would be good at it	
I thought it would look good on my CV/resume	
I thought it would work well with the other subjects I picked	
Other (please write in):	
None of these	
I don't know/don't remember	
I am not currently studying Economics, nor have I studied it before <a href="#">[GO TO Q13]</a>	



12. If you mentioned earlier that you were studying Economics in Year 11 but dropped it in Year 12, what were your main reasons for this?

Please ✓ all that apply.

I thought it would be an interesting topic to study	
I'm considering working in this field in the future	
I'm considering studying something similar at university	
It was recommended to me by a friend/family member/teacher	
It's a subject that I thought would scale well	
I thought that it would teach me skills and tools for my everyday life	
I thought I would be good at it	
I thought it would look good on my CV/resume	
I thought it would work well with the other subjects I picked	
Other (please write in):	
None of these	
I don't know/don't remember	
I am still studying Economics and did not drop this subject in Year 12	
I have never studied Economics	



## High school students' subject selection

### Section D: Economics

13. Below is a series of statements relating to the study of **HSC Economics**.

For each statement, please indicate how much you agree or disagree by placing a ✓ in the corresponding box.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I have a good understanding of what Economics is						
I find Economics interesting as a subject						
Economics is a subject that scales well for the ATAR						
I have a clear idea of whether I would be good at Economics						
I would prefer to study Business Studies over Economics because I think it's easier						
It's a risk to study Economics because I don't know what it's about						
I want to know more about Economics						
You need to be intelligent to study Economics						
You need to be good at Maths to study Economics						
I would prefer to study Business Studies over Economics because I think it will be more useful for my future						
Economics is a subject that has a heavier workload in comparison to most other HSC subjects						
It's important to know about Economics in today's society						
Studying Economics will teach me skills and tools I can use in my everyday life						
I have a clear idea of the careers available to me if I were to study Economics						
I think I could do well in Economics if I put my mind to it						
There are teachers at my school who promote the study of Economics						
I would prefer to study Business Studies over Economics because I think it's more interesting						



14. Below is a list of statements relating to **Economics in general**.

For each statement, please indicate how much you agree or disagree by placing a ✓ in the corresponding box.

I think...

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Economics is not all about money						
Economics is a career option for men more than women						
An economics degree leads to a wide range of career options						
Economics can be used for social good						

**Please only answer this question if you are currently studying Economics or if you studied Economics in Year 11**

15. Thinking back to Year 10, before choosing to study Economics, which of the following types of information do you remember receiving about Economics?

Please ✓ all that apply.

Information about what will be studied in Economics (the subject syllabus)	
The workload involved (for example assessment tasks and the HSC exam)	
Information on what the study of Economics is about	
Whether it is a subject that scales well for the ATAR	
Information on how studying Economics can affect further study options	
Information on the benefits of studying Economics for everyday life	
Information on whether studying Economics could help with my future career	
Information on the types of jobs I could go into after studying Economics	
The skills needed to study Economics (for example, subjects it might be similar to)	
Advice from teachers about whether I would be good at it	
Other (please write in):	
None of these	
I don't know/don't remember	



**Section E: Demographics**

We're now going to ask you a few questions about your background that will help us analyse the survey results.

16. Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

Male	
Female	
Other	
Prefer not to say	

17. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about what you want to do for work in the future?

I have a clear idea of what I want to do	
I have some idea of what I want to do	
I have very little idea of what I want to do	
I have no idea what I want to do	

18. Do you usually speak a language other than English at home?

Yes	
No <a href="#">[GO TO Q20]</a>	
Prefer not to say <a href="#">[GO TO Q20]</a>	

19. Please write in which language(s), other than English, you usually speak at home



20. Do you have any other comments about the survey?

**Section F: Survey close**

*We would like to thank you for taking the time to complete the survey, your opinions and responses are extremely important to us.*

*This survey was conducted by Ipsos on behalf of The Reserve Bank of Australia.*



## High school students' subject selection

### ***List of subjects:***

Any foreign language	Modern History
Any foreign language Extension unit	Music 1
Aboriginal Studies	Music 2
Agriculture	Music Extension
Ancient History	Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
Biology	Photography, Video and Digital Imaging
Business Studies	Physics
Ceramics	Science Extension
Chemistry	Society and Culture
Community and Family Studies	Software Design and Development
Computing Applications	Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation Studies
Dance	Studies of Religion I
Design and Technology	Studies of Religion II
Drama	Textiles and Design
Earth and Environmental Science	Visual Arts
Economics	Visual Design
Engineering Studies	Work Studies
English Advanced	
English Standard	
English Extension	
English EAL/D	
English Studies	
Exploring Early Childhood	
Food Technology	
Geography	
History Extension	
Industrial Technology	
Information Processes and Technology	
Investigating Science	
Legal Studies	
Marine Studies	
Mathematics	
Mathematics Advanced	
Mathematics Standard	
Mathematics Extension 1	
Mathematics Extension 2	