

Student Counsellor	Australian Capital Territory (ACT)
ASCO Code: 2513-19	June 2007
Labour market rating	Shortage
Comment	

Occupational demand

The ACT Department of Education and Training, School Census February 2007 states there are 59 970 students attending schools in the ACT. Government and non government schools in Canberra employ student counsellors. Catholic Systemic Schools contract student counsellors from the catholic organisation Centacare, while some other non government schools employ teachers with postgraduate counselling qualifications.

Occupational supply

School counsellors employed by ACT Department of Education and Training must have teaching and psychology qualifications and be eligible for registration with the ACT Psychology Board. Student counsellors employed by the ACT Department of Education and Training are often recruited as part of the department's annual recruitment round. Selection is based on merit considering the applicant's qualifications, response to the selection criteria, interview and referee checks, however the process for student counsellors is currently under review by the department.

Centacare is the primary employer of student counsellors for Catholic schools in the ACT. Counsellors at Catholic schools are not required to be qualified teachers but must be either qualified psychologists or social workers. Centacare currently employs about 20 student counsellors usually on a part time basis working up to a maximum of 60 hours per fortnight.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market.

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for student counsellors was undertaken for this report. As only a small number of vacancies were identified during the survey period, employers in non government schools were cold canvassed. Recent vacancies advertised did not attract any response from qualified student counsellors or psychologists. Employers noted that vacancies can be difficult to fill when the positions are part time, although part time working hours appeal to some women with childcare responsibilities.

Employers commented that positions for student counsellors are rarely advertised as most counsellors are valued long term members of staff and so turnover is low. Some employers also noted the majority of student counsellors are in their 50s and many are approaching retirement. The ACT Department of Education and Training currently has vacancies for between six to eight student counsellors.

Labour market outlook

It is unlikely that the labour market for student counsellors will change significantly over the next six months.