Education and further training support economic growth and productivity, with skilled workers better resourced to access opportunities, which can lead to greater control over aspects of their lives such as income and job security. Conversely, those with low levels of education are at risk of unemployment and social exclusion. Societies that tend to be less equal in terms of access to education and learning outcomes also tend to be less equal in terms of income distribution.1

Educational qualifications
Residents of the City of Playford had a lower level of school achievement compared to Greater Adelaide. In 2011, almost 19,000 City of Playford residents aged over 15 years had completed Year 12 or equivalent (24%), compared to almost 475,000 in Greater Adelaide (39%). The highest schooling completed was Year 10 for 36% of City of Playford residents. In contrast almost half (47%) of Greater Adelaide residents had completed Year 12.

It should be acknowledged that educational attainment is strongly influenced by age and government policy. In 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a Compact with Young Australians.2 Under this compact, from January 2010, young people must remain in school to Year 10, with the added requirement that they must participate in education, training, employment or a combination of these until the age of 17 (noting that this had been a requirement in South Australia since 2006). In the City of Playford, almost half of eligible 20-29 year olds had completed Year 12 or equivalent, reducing steadily to plateau at around 20% of residents aged over 50 years.

Almost one-quarter of City of Playford residents (24%) reported having achieved a non-school qualification, compared with 36% of Greater Adelaide residents. Where post-school qualifications had been achieved by City of Playford residents, two-thirds had received a Certificate level qualification. Residents from Greater Adelaide on the other hand were more likely to have attained a Bachelor qualification.

Slightly less than half of the City of Playford residents have qualifications (47%), compared to around 60% in Greater Adelaide, which may be due, in part, to the nature of the employment in the City of Playford region.

Around half (49%) of City of Playford residents who were in full-time employment had a post school qualification. This declined markedly with 39% of residents in part-time employment having a post school qualification. Almost 30% of unemployed residents had a qualification, while only 21% of those not engaged in the labour force were qualified.
Training & apprenticeships

In 2011, 1,329 (1.7%) City of Playford residents had commenced an apprenticeship or traineeship, a marginally higher proportion than in South Australia (1.5%). Apprenticeships and traineeships in the manufacturing industry were most common with 218 City of Playford residents commencing in 2011 – representing 17% of local apprenticeships and traineeships. In addition, around 150 City of Playford residents commenced apprenticeships or traineeships in each of the following industries - administrative and support services, retail trade, and transport, postal and warehousing.

Apprenticeships & traineeships by industry, 2011

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is primarily concerned with developing skills, knowledge and abilities required for work. This type of training can be delivered through both Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and through the secondary school system in Years 11 and 12. Almost 5,800 individuals undertook VET within the City of Playford in 2011 (7% of the population). In South Australia, over 122,000 (8% of the population) were enrolled in VET. Most VET students were aged between 15 and 24 years of age – with 42% of City of Playford VET students in this age range.

VET students by field of education, 2011

The VET fields of education chosen by the City of Playford residents align closely with the fields of study chosen across South Australia. Management & Commerce (19% in the City of Playford), Engineering & Related Technologies (18%), Mixed Field Programs (14%) and Society & Culture (12%) were the top four fields of education chosen by VET students in both the City of Playford and South Australia.

VET students by level of study, 2011

Almost one quarter (23%) of VET students in the City of Playford studied either a Certificate I or II in 2011. This level of education focuses on basic knowledge and skill development. Certificate III and IV aim to develop these skills as well as leadership abilities – almost half of City of Playford VET students (46%) were engaged in this level of training, similar to the 45% of Greater Adelaide VET students.