

Summary of Students 2007 [first half year]: selected higher education statistics

- For 2007, the number of students reported by Private Providers has increased sharply. However, this increase does not reflect a real increase in student numbers at Private Providers but is due to two factors. From 2007 onwards, all accredited Private Providers are required to report on all of their students – not just those receiving FEE-HELP, as was previously the requirement in 2005 and 2006. In addition, the number of accredited Private Providers continues to increase, resulting in the total number of Higher Education Providers increasing from 92 in 2006 to 100 in the first half of 2007.
- For these reasons, the attached analysis of changes between the first half of 2006 and the first half of 2007 includes a separate discussion for Public Universities (Table A). The analysis for Public Universities provides a more accurate measure of changes in student enrolments between the two half years than comparisons which include Private Provider numbers. Public Universities represented 860,338 students, 95.7% of the higher education student population for the first half of 2007. Private Providers and Other Higher Education Providers reported 38,683 students, 4.3 % of the higher education student population.

Student numbers:

- The total number of students reached 899,021 in the first half of 2007, having increased by 5.5% from 851,906 in the first half of 2006. The number of students undertaking study with Public Universities increased by 3.6%, from 830,196 in the first half of 2006 to 860,338 in the first half of 2007.
- In the first half of 2007, 76.2% of reported students were domestic students and the remaining 23.8% were overseas students. The number of domestic students in the first half of 2007 was 684,848, up 4.4% from 656,047 in the first half of 2006. The number of overseas students increased by 9.4% from 195,859 to 214,173 over the same period.
- The number of domestic students undertaking study with Public Universities increased by 3.1%, from 636,959 in the first half of 2006 to 656,656 in the first half of 2007. The number of overseas students increased by 5.4%, from 193,237 in the first half of 2006 to 203,682 in the first half of 2007.

Commencing student numbers:

- The number of commencing students in the first half of 2007 was 304,117, having increased by 7.5% from 282,892 in the first half of 2006. The number of commencing students undertaking study with Public Universities increased by 5.2% from 272,814 in the first half of 2006 to 286,883 in the first half of 2007.
- Of the 304,117 commencing students in the first half of 2007, 76.7% were domestic students and 23.3% were overseas students.
- The number of commencing domestic students increased by 5.5% from 221,260 in the first half of 2006 to 233,365 in the first half of 2007. The number of commencing overseas students increased by 14.8% from 61,632 to 70,752, over the same period. The number of commencing domestic students undertaking study with Public Universities increased by 4.0% from 212,426 in the first half of 2006 to 220,898 in the first half of 2007, while commencing overseas student numbers increased by 9.3% across the same period (from 60,388 to 65,985).

- Males represented 43.3% (131,605) of all commencing students in the first half of 2007, while 56.7% were females (172,512).

Indigenous student numbers:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students represented just less than one percent (0.9%) (8,108) of all students in the first half of 2007. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reported by Public Universities increased by 6.6% from 7,499 in the first half of 2006 to 7,994 in the first half of 2007. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students commencing at Public Universities increased by 5.6% from 2,993 to 3,162 for the same period.

National Priority Areas and medicine:

- The number of students commencing courses leading to Provisional Registration as a Medical Practitioner increased substantially by 17.4%, from 2,453 in the first half of 2006 to 2,880 in the first half of 2007. There was also a strong increase of 11.1% in the number of students commencing courses leading to Initial Registration as a Nurse, from 10,466 to 11,623 over the same period, and a small increase of 0.9% in the number of students commencing courses providing Initial Teacher Training, from 22,925 to 23,135.
- Over the same period, the number of commencing students at Public Universities undertaking courses leading to Provisional Registration as a Medical Practitioner increased substantially by 18.3%. Students commencing in courses leading to Initial Registration as a Nurse also increased strongly, by 10.6%, while students commencing in courses providing Initial Teacher Training increased slightly, by 0.6%.

Field of Education:

- A comparison of commencing students at Public Universities by field of education shows strong increases between the first half of 2006 and the first half of 2007 in Engineering and Related Technologies (up 11.1%), Health (up 11.0%), Architecture and Building (up 8.7%) and Management and Commerce (up 6.1%). There were also modest increases in the fields of Creative Arts (4.0%), Society and Culture (3.8%), Natural and Physical Sciences (3.6%) and Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (2.4%). The number of commencing students in the field of Information Technologies declined by 3.9%, a much smaller decrease than in the period between 2004 and 2006 when the decreases were between 10 and 20%.
- The substantial increase in the number of commencements in the field of Engineering and Related Technology is a change from previous years – between 2005 and 2006 there was a small increase of 1.4% in the number of commencements while between 2003 and 2005 the numbers declined each year. The increase in the first half of 2007 is due partly to an extra 510 Commonwealth supported places offered in 2007. An extra 560 places will be offered in 2008.