

Summary of the 2014 full year higher education student statistics

Student numbers

1. A total of 1 373 230 domestic and international students enrolled at higher education institutions in 2014, an increase of 4.5 per cent from 2013.
2. There were 1 025 670 domestic students in 2014 (74.7 per cent of all students), an increase of 4.1 per cent from 2013. Overseas student enrolments increased by 5.8 per cent over the same period to 347 560.
3. Postgraduate students increased by 8.4 per cent to 376 055 while undergraduate students increased by 2.9 per cent to 952 280.
4. More than half of all students enrolled were female (55.4 per cent).
5. Over seventy per cent of students (70.8 per cent) were studying full-time.
6. Over ninety per cent of students were enrolled at Public Universities (92.0 per cent). Public University enrolments increased 4.0 per cent in 2014 (1 263 669 students, up from 1 215 367 students in 2013), while Private University and Non-University Higher Education Institutions increased by 11.3 per cent (from 98 409 students in 2013 to 109 561 students in 2014). In 2014, there were 101 institutions classified as Private Universities or Non-University Higher Education Institutions.

Commencing student numbers

7. Commencements provide an early indicator of how the higher education system evolves over time.
8. The total number of commencing students increased by 5.8 per cent to 569 064 in 2014 compared with 2013. Domestic commencements accounted for 71.6 per cent of all commencements (407 522 students), an increase of 4.4 per cent from 2013, while overseas commencements increased by 9.6 per cent to 161 542 students over the same period.
9. Commencing students in enabling courses¹ increased by 5.2 per cent between 2013 and 2014 (19 089 to 20 087), while commencements in non-award courses² increased by 13.3 per cent (16 512 to 18 703) over the same period. Commencements in postgraduate courses increased by 9.6 per cent to 176 985, while undergraduate commencements increased by 3.7 per cent to 353 289.
10. More than half of all commencing students were female (55.7 per cent).
11. Commencements in full-time study increased by 6.4 per cent in 2014 compared with 2013 (399 174 to 424 876 students).

Indigenous student numbers

12. Students who self identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander comprised 1.1 per cent of all enrolments in 2014 (up 9.7 per cent from 2013 to 15 112 students) and 1.2 per cent of commencements (up 9.4 per cent from 2013 to 6 865).
13. Increases in Indigenous student numbers were recorded across all broad fields of education, (excluding a decrease of 8.0 per cent for *Architecture and Building*). The largest increase was for *Management and Commerce* (up 18.7 per cent to 1 664 students). An increase of 25.2 per cent was observed for non-award courses between 2013 and 2014.
14. The main fields of education in which Indigenous students were enrolled were *Society and Culture* (4 912 students, or 32.5 per cent of all Indigenous students); followed by *Health* (2 946 students or 19.5 per cent); and *Education* (2 494 students or 16.5 per cent).

¹ A course of instruction that enables a person to undertake a course leading to a higher education award. Enabling courses do not include a course leading to a higher education award or any course that the Minister determines is not an enabling course under the *HESA Act Schedule 1*.

² A program of study which does not lead to an award and which comprises a unit or units of study which: is a unit or units of study from an award course or courses at the higher education institution; and is able to be counted as a credit towards some award course at the higher education institution by all students who complete the unit or units of study.

National priority areas and courses of special interest

15. Commencements in priority area courses in 2014 increased in courses providing initial registration as nurses (up 6.7 per cent to 20 266 students); in courses for initial registration in teacher training (up 3.1 per cent to 30 506 students); in courses leading to registration as a medical practitioner (up 6.4 per cent to 3 842 students); and in courses in clinical psychology (up 3.6 per cent to 888 students).
16. In 2014 there was a decrease in commencing students undertaking courses leading to registration as a veterinary practitioner (down 9.7 per cent to 622 students).
17. The number of students in courses leading to registration as a dental practitioner remained static between 2013 and 2014 (668 and 670 respectively).

Low SES^{3,4}

18. The number of Low SES commencing students in 2014 increased by 6.7 per cent compared with 2013 (from 66 150 to 70 598 students). Commencing Low SES students increased from 17.1 per cent to 17.5 per cent of all commencing domestic onshore students.
19. The total number of Low SES students increased by 5.4 per cent between 2013 and 2014 (from 156 977 to 165 517 students).

Regional and remote^{3,5}

20. The number of commencing students in regional areas increased by 5.9 per cent between 2013 and 2014 (from 78 374 to 83 002 students), while commencing students in remote areas increased by 8.0 per cent (from 3 717 students in 2013 to 4 016 students in 2014).

Field of Education

21. Increases in the number of commencing students were recorded across most broad fields of education in 2014 compared with 2013, with *Food, Hospitality and Personal Services* up 31.7 per cent; *Non-award courses*² up 13.3 per cent; *Information Technology* up 12.3 per cent; *Education* up 8.0 per cent; *Management and Commerce* up 7.8 per cent; *Mixed Field Programs*⁶ up 7.4 per cent; *Health* up 7.2 per cent; *Engineering and Related Technologies* up 4.9 per cent; *Natural and Physical Sciences* up 3.8 per cent; *Society and Culture* up 3.7 per cent and *Architecture and Building* up 0.5 per cent.
22. Decreases in the number of commencing students were recorded for *Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies* (down 5.8 per cent) and *Creative Arts* (down 1.2 per cent).
23. The largest increase in overseas student numbers was in *Food, Hospitality and Personal Services*, with commencements up 43.2 per cent to 159 students and all enrolments up 17.7 per cent to 272 students. *Management and Commerce* comprised over half of all overseas commencements (81 608 out of 161 542), as well as almost half of all overseas enrolments (172 969 students out of 347 560).

³ Excludes overseas students and domestic students where permanent home address is overseas.

⁴ Low SES postcode measure is based on the students' postcode of permanent home residence, with the SES value derived from the 2011 SEIFA Education and Occupation Index for postal areas, where postal areas in the bottom 25% of the population aged 15-64 being classified as Low SES.

⁵ Regional and remote categories are derived from ASGS classifications.

⁶ *Mixed Field Programs* provider general and personal development education.