



Australian Government  
Department of Education and Training

# 2016 VET FEE-HELP Statistical Report

*Opportunity through learning*

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The document must be attributed as the 2016 VET FEE-HELP Statistical Report.

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## Overview

This section provides a summary of key VET FEE-HELP (VFH) statistics. Each point is accompanied by a reference to a table number for easy reference. A summary of the 2016 VET FEE-HELP Statistical Report tables is provided in the Appendix.

Note that throughout this summary, and the statistical tables, we use the term “eligible student” to refer to any student who was eligible to access VFH, and who was studying in a VFH eligible course in 2016 at a VFH provider, regardless of whether they accessed a VFH loan in 2016, or at any other time. We use the term “assisted student” to refer to any student who accessed a VFH loan for their studies during 2016. Further explanation is provided in the notes to each of the 2016 VFH Statistical Report tables.

In 2015 the Australian Government introduced a number of reforms to the VFH scheme. The reforms were designed to curb unsustainable growth, address unscrupulous behaviour, and to protect and better inform students ahead of a redesigned program. Taking effect in 2015 and 2016, the data in this report is evidence of the impact of these reforms.

- From a whole-of-scheme perspective, the total amount of loans for 2016 was almost halved, decreasing by more than \$1.4 billion compared to 2015, from \$2.92 billion to \$1.47 billion.
- Student numbers also decreased, in terms of both number of individual students accessing a VFH loan and the number of course enrolments utilising VFH.
- The proportion of course completions in 2016 of total student enrolments has increased compared to 2015.

- The proportion of female students with VFH assistance marginally increased compared to 2015.
- 2016 saw a reduction in the proportion of VFH assisted students at private providers.
- The proportion of VFH assisted students who identify as Indigenous or with low-socioeconomic status has decreased since 2015, as has the proportion of VFH assisted students who reported having a disability.
- There were significantly fewer VFH assisted students in 2016 who were living in regional and remote areas.
- While still the most popular field of education, Management and Commerce courses saw a significant decrease in the proportion of VFH assisted students compared with 2015.

## Student numbers

1. In 2016, 235,236 VFH eligible students were enrolled in a VFH eligible course, a decrease of 24.1 per cent from 2015. Of these students, 193,868 accessed a VFH loan in 2016, a decrease of 28.7 per cent from 2015. (Table 1.1)
2. Eligible students undertook study with an Equivalent Full-Time Student Load (EFTSL) of 140,351, down 35.4 per cent from 2015. EFTSL associated with VFH assisted students decreased by 41.3 per cent in 2016, compared with 2015, to 115,068. (Table 1.1)
3. Around two thirds of both eligible and assisted students in 2016 were female (66.1 and 67.7 per cent respectively). (Table 1.1)
4. Almost 70 per cent (69.9 per cent) of eligible students studied full-time, compared with 76.1 per cent of assisted students. (Table 2.2)
5. More than half of all eligible students (59.3 per cent) studied at a private provider, 35.0 per cent studied at a TAFE, and 6.3 per cent at an 'other public' provider<sup>1</sup>. This compares to 66.4, 28.7 and 5.5 per cent of assisted students who studied at private providers, TAFEs and 'other public' providers, respectively. (Table 3.1)
6. In 2016, VFH eligible students were enrolled in 264,418 courses, a decrease of 27.0 per cent from 2015. Students received VFH assistance for 218,619 of those course enrolments, a decrease of 31.8 per cent from 2015. (Table 3.4)

## Student characteristics

7. Eligible students who self-identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander comprised 6.3 per cent of all VFH eligible students, down from 8.6 per cent in 2015. Of VFH assisted students, 6.5 per cent self-identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander compared with 9.4 per cent in 2015. (Table 1.2)
8. The proportion of eligible students from outside of major cities decreased from 30.4 per cent in 2015 to 28.4% in 2016. The proportion of assisted students from outside major cities also decreased, from 30.7 per cent in 2015 to 28.4% in 2016. (Table 1.2)
9. In 2016, 7.0 per cent of eligible students and 6.9 per cent of assisted students reported having a disability. This compares with 7.6 per cent of eligible students and 7.8 per cent of assisted students in 2015. (Table 1.2)

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<sup>1</sup> Students are counted once for each provider type category in which they are enrolled. This means students may be counted more than once if they are enrolled in more than one course and enrolled at providers in different provider type categories. For this reason the sum of the provider type proportions exceed 100 per cent.

10. In 2016, 22.4 per cent of eligible students and 23.4 per cent of assisted students were from a Low Socioeconomic (SES) background<sup>2</sup>. These proportions decreased from 26.1 per cent and 27.2 per cent respectively in 2015. (Table 1.2)
11. The proportion of students, both eligible and assisted, from non-English speaking backgrounds decreased marginally in 2016 to 9.9 per cent, from 10.3 per cent in 2015. (Table 1.2)

## Field of education

12. Management and Commerce was the most popular field of education in 2016, accounting for 30.3 per cent of VFH eligible students and 30.0 per cent of VFH assisted students. However, while it was the most popular field of education in 2016, the overall proportion of Management and Commerce students had dropped significantly from 2015 where the proportion was 40.9 per cent for eligible students and 42.5 per cent for assisted students. (Table 2.2)
13. The next most popular field of education in 2016 was Society and Culture with 21.3 per cent of eligible students and 23.1 per cent of assisted students. This was followed by Health with 14.5 per cent of both eligible and assisted students. (Table 2.2)

## Completions

14. In 2016, VFH eligible students achieved 41,797 course completions. Students who received VFH assistance in 2016 completed 31,612 of those courses. (Tables 1.13a and 1.13b)
15. Unit of Study Completions Rates<sup>3</sup> for eligible and assisted students were 68.1 per cent and 65.3 per cent respectively in 2016.
16. The 4 Year Cohort Completion Rates<sup>4</sup> for eligible students fell from 36.0 per cent for the 2011 commencing cohort to 33.4 per cent for the 2012 cohort and 31.9 per cent for the 2013 cohort. The proportion of eligible students still enrolled at the end of each four year period was 5.0 per cent for the 2011 cohort, 5.8 per cent for the 2012 cohort and 5.9 per cent for the 2013 cohort. (Table 1.14a)
17. The 4 Year Cohort Completion Rate for assisted students fell from 32.4 per cent for the 2011 commencing cohort to 30.7 per cent for the 2012 cohort and 30.1 per cent for the 2013 cohort. The proportion of assisted students still enrolled at the end of each four year period was 6.9 per cent for the 2011 cohort, 8.0 per cent for the 2012 cohort and 6.1 per cent for the 2013 cohort. The 4 Year Cohort Completion Rates for assisted students are slightly lower than those for eligible students. (Table 1.14b)
18. For the 2011 commencing cohort, the 6 Year Cohort Completion rate<sup>5</sup> is 37.7 per cent for eligible students (1.7 percentage points above the 4 Year Cohort Completion Rate for this cohort) and 34.7 per cent for assisted students (2.3 percentage points above the 4 Year Cohort Completion Rate for this cohort). (Tables 1.14e and 1.14f)

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<sup>2</sup> The Low SES measure is based on students' postcodes, with the SES value derived from the 2011 SEIFA Index of Economic Resources for postal areas, where postal areas in the bottom 20 per cent of the population aged 15-64 being classified as Low SES.

<sup>3</sup> Unit of Study Completion Rate is the *Units of Study Passed* as a proportion of the Units of Study Undertaken, measured in Equivalent Full-Time Student Load (EFTSL). Units of Study Undertaken includes *Units of Study Withdrawn Without Penalty, Units of Study Failed, Units of Study Passed* and *Completion Status Not Reported*.

<sup>4</sup> The 4 Year Cohort Completion Rate is the proportion of students who commenced a course in the 'cohort year' that successfully completed a course within a four year period.

<sup>5</sup> The 6 Year Cohort Completion Rate is the proportion of students who commenced a course in the 'cohort year' that successfully completed a course within a six year period.

## **VET FEE-HELP loans**

19. In 2016, VFH assisted students took out \$1.470 billion in VFH loans. Of this, \$1.298 billion was for full-fee courses and \$0.172 billion was for state-subsidised courses. (Tables 1.10 and 1.11b)
20. The amount of VFH Loans in 2016 (\$1.470 billion) was \$1.445 billion or 49.6 per cent less than the \$2.915 billion borrowed by students in 2015. (Table 1.10)

## **Providers**

21. There were 271 providers offering courses to VFH students in 2016. (Table 4.1)
22. Of these providers, 39 were TAFEs, 12 were 'Other Public', and 220 were Private. (Table 4.1)

## Summary of Statistical Tables

(Numbers in the body of the table indicate table number for the corresponding section.)

Table categories	Table characteristics	Student counts: # Students, Enrolments, EFTSL		Student counts: - time series 2009-2016		EFTSL - time series 2009-2016		Enrolments - time series 2009-2016		Qualification level enrolments	Prior Education Attainment enrolments	Field of Education enrolments	Mode of Attendance enrolments	Student Home State enrolments	Top 20 courses enrolments	EFTSL, Fees, Payments and Loans	EFTSL, Fees, Payments and Loans for Full-fee and State-subsidised (eligible students)	EFTSL, Fees, Payments and Loans for Full-fee and State-subsidised (assisted students)	Loans - time series 2009-2016	Unit and course completions (eligible students)	Unit and course completions (assisted students)	4-year cohort course completion rates 2011, 2012, 2013 (eligible students)	4-year cohort course completion rates 2011, 2012, 2013 (assisted students)	5-year cohort course completion rates 2011, 2012 (eligible students)	5-year cohort course completion rates 2011, 2012 (assisted students)	6-year cohort course completion rates 2011 (eligible students)	6-year cohort course completion rates 2011 (assisted students)	3-year cohort course completion rates 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 (eligible students)	3-year cohort course completion rates 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 (assisted students)
		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8																				
<b>Student Tables</b>	<b>Student Characteristics:</b> Gender, Age, Citizenship, Indigenous Status, Disability Status, Remoteness, Socioeconomic Status, Employment Status, Main Language Spoken at Home, Prior Educational Attainment	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9					1.10	1.11(a)	1.11(b)	1.12	1.13(a)	1.13(b)	1.14(a)	1.14(b)	1.14(c)	1.14(d)	1.14(e)	1.14(f)	1.14(g)	1.14(h)	
<b>Study Tables</b>	<b>Study Characteristics:</b> Qualification level, Broad Field of Education, Campus State, Reasons for Studying, Mode of Attendance, Type of Attendance	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9					2.11	2.12(a)	2.12(b)	2.13	2.14(a)	2.14(b)	2.15(a)	2.15(b)	2.15(c)	2.15(d)	2.15(e)	2.15(f)	2.15(g)	2.15(h)	
	<b>Top 20 courses (Australia-wide):</b> enrolments by Gender, Age, Mode of Attendance										2.10																		
	<b>Time Series 2009-2016</b>														2.11(a)	2.12(c)	2.12(d)												
<b>Provider Type Tables</b>	<b>Provider Characteristics:</b> HQ State, Provider Type (TAFE, Other Public, Private), Tuition Type (Full-Fee Paying, State Subsidised)	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9					3.10			3.11	3.12(a)	3.12(b)	3.13(a)	3.13(b)	3.13(c)	3.13(d)	3.13(e)	3.13(f)	3.13(g)	3.13(h)	
<b>Individual Provider Tables</b>	<b>Individual Providers:</b> Name, ID, Type, HQ State	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9					4.10	4.11(a)	4.11(b)	4.12	4.13(a)	4.13(b)	4.14(a)	4.14(b)	4.14(c)	4.14(d)	4.14(e)	4.14(f)	4.14(g)	4.14(h)	