



Australian Government

Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education

The demand driven system: Undergraduate Applications and Offers, February 2012

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1. Introduction

The Australian Government announced its response to the Bradley Review of Higher Education in March 2009. The Government adopted ambitious targets and a range of measures to support increased participation. In particular, targets for increased higher education attainment and increased participation by under-represented groups, together with the introduction of a demand driven funding system from 2012, are having an impact on the demand for and supply of university places.

In the transition to a demand driven funding system, the cap on over enrolments was lifted from 5% in 2009 to 10% in 2010 and 2011. The demand driven system enables a closer match between demand and supply and a more flexible and responsive allocation of university places.

This report aims to shed light on the progress of the demand driven system in 2012. It is an interim report based on applications and offers data received from the Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs) as of 22 February 2012. This is an update of preliminary data received from the TACs in early February 2012. The report includes comparisons between the 2011 third round submission data (23 February 2011) and the 2012 third round submission data (22 February 2012).

The report looks at domestic undergraduate highest preference applications and total offers processed by TACs for Table A institutions. More comprehensive applications and offers data including direct applications and offers data will be available and analysed by the Department between April 2012 and June 2012. Interim figures included in this report are subject to change following subsequent submissions of applications and offers data. A final report is scheduled for publication by the Department in August 2012.

2. Highlights

Highest preference applications

- As of 22 February 2012, there were 272 414 applications made through Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs), an increase of 2.7% compared with the same time in 2011. All states and territories recorded increases except WA (-6.0%).
- Nationally, Year 12 applications increased by 4.0% while non-Year 12 applications increased by 1.1% in 2012.

Offers

- During the same period, there were 221 765 offers made, an increase of 5.5% compared with the same time in 2011. Offers increased in all states and territories except WA (-2.3%).
- Nationally, Year 12 offers increased by 6.0% in 2012. All states and territories recorded increases in offers to Year 12 applicants.
- Offers to non-Year 12 applicants rose by 4.8% nationally. WA was the only state that recorded a decrease in offers to non-Year 12 applicants (-9.8%).
- Applications from Year 12 students were more likely to receive an offer than applications from non-Year 12 students. As of 22 February 2012, the Year 12 offer rate was 83.1% compared with the non-Year 12 offer rate of 79.4%. Offer rates for both Year 12 students and non-Year 12 students have increased since 2010 (Year 12 offer rate - 80.3% and non-Year 12 offer rate - 72.9% in 2010).
- Above-average Year 12 offer rates were recorded in WA (86.8%), NSW/ACT (85.3%) and Queensland (84.4%) in 2012.

Field of Education

- Health received the largest number of applications (68 930 or 25.3% of all applications).
- Natural and Physical Sciences recorded the largest increase in applications (10.9%). This was followed by Engineering (6.7%).
- Society and Culture received the largest number of offers (51 221 or 23.1% of total offers).
- Health recorded the largest increase in offers (10.2%). This was followed by Engineering (7.8%) and Natural and Physical Sciences (7.0%).
- Applications for Natural and Physical Sciences, and Agriculture are most likely to get an offer (offer rates of 100.0% and 99.4% respectively).

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank

- In 2012, 71.6% of all offers made to Year 12 applicants were for those with an ATAR above 70. Offers to Year 12 applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90 accounted for 27.8% of all offers.
- The share of offers has shifted from applicants with high ATAR scores to applicants with lower ATAR scores over the last three years. During this time, the likelihood of an applicant with a low ATAR score receiving an offer has recorded a greater increase than an applicant with a higher ATAR score, which has remained steady.

Socioeconomic status

- Applications from applicants from low SES backgrounds have shown the largest increase (3.4%) compared with those from medium SES backgrounds (2.8%) and high SES backgrounds (2.0%).
- Offers to applicants from low SES backgrounds have also shown the largest increase (5.8%) compared with offers to applicants from medium SES backgrounds (5.7%) and high SES backgrounds (4.9%).
- However, applications by applicants from low SES backgrounds were less likely to result in an offer. Their offer rate was 79.4% compared with 81.3% for medium SES applications and 83.5% for high SES applications in 2012.

Regional

- Offers to metropolitan applicants grew by 5.9% compared with 3.9% for non-metropolitan applicants.
- Applications from metropolitan applicants were slightly more likely to result in an offer compared with non-metropolitan applicants (80.9% compared with 79.9%).

Indigenous status

- As of 22 February 2012, around three quarters (74.7%) of applications from Indigenous applicants had attracted an offer, compared with 81.5% for non-Indigenous applicants.

University group

- Applications increased for all university groups in 2012, with the Regional Universities Network (RUN) recording the largest increase (5.9%).
- Over the same period, all university groups have recorded growth in offers with the Australian Technology Network (ATN) universities recording the largest increase (7.2%) followed by the Group of Eight (Go8) (5.3%).
- Applications to Go8 and ATN universities were less likely to receive an offer in 2012 (offer rates of 69.6% and 73.5% respectively), reflecting the high entry requirements at these universities.

3. Highest Preference Applications

Overall trends

- As of 22 February 2012, there were 272 414 applications made through TACs, an increase of 2.7% compared with the same time in 2011. This follows an increase of 1.5% between 2010 and 2011¹.
- All states and territories recorded growth in applications except for WA (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Highest preference applications by state and territory, February 2011 and February 2012

State/Territory	2011	2012	% Change
NSW/ACT	84,423	87,009	3.1%
Vic.	70,966	72,274	1.8%
Qld	55,412	56,912	2.7%
WA	20,532	19,304	-6.0%
SA/NT	24,692	26,384	6.9%
Tas.	9,324	10,531	12.9%
Australia	265,349	272,414	2.7%

Year 12 status

- Nationally Year 12 applications increased by 4.0% in 2012, following an increase of 4.6% in 2011.
- All states and territories recorded increases in Year 12 applications except WA where a slight decrease occurred (-0.4%). SA/NT (7.9%) and Victoria (4.7%) recorded above-average increases in Year 12 applications.
- Non-Year 12 applications rose by 1.1% in 2012, following a decrease of 1.7% in 2011. WA recorded a decrease of 14.4% in non-Year 12 applications, following a decrease of 9.6% in 2011. This decline in non-Year 12 applications coincides with the relatively strong labour market conditions experienced in that state.

¹ This comparison is based on final 2010 and 2011 applications data.

Table 2: Highest preference applications by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2011 and February 2012

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	% Change
NSW/ACT	46,885	48,671	3.8%	37,538	38,338	2.1%
Vic.	41,450	43,398	4.7%	29,516	28,876	-2.2%
Qld	26,557	27,628	4.0%	28,855	29,284	1.5%
WA	12,365	12,312	-0.4%	8,167	6,992	-14.4%
SA/NT	11,388	12,285	7.9%	13,304	14,099	6.0%
Tas.	3,389	3,433	1.3%	5,935	7,098	19.6%
Australia	142,034	147,727	4.0%	123,315	124,687	1.1%

- Nationally Year 12 applications represented 54.2% of total applications, an increase of 0.7 percentage points compared with 2011.
- Although Year 12 applications dropped slightly in WA, it recorded the highest proportion of Year 12 applications (63.8%), an increase of 3.6 percentage points compared with 2011.

Table 3: Proportion of Year 12 highest preferences applications by state and territory, February 2011 and February 2012

State/Territory	2011	2012	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	55.5%	55.9%	0.4
Vic.	58.4%	60.0%	1.6
Qld	47.9%	48.5%	0.6
WA	60.2%	63.8%	3.6
SA/NT	46.1%	46.6%	0.4
Tas.	36.3%	32.6%	-3.7
Australia	53.5%	54.2%	0.7

4. Offers

Overall trends

- As of 22 February 2012, there were 221 765 offers made, an increase of 5.5% compared with the same time in 2011. This follows an increase of 3.3% between 2010 and 2011².
- Offers increased in all states and territories except WA (-2.3%). The largest growth was recorded in Tasmania (11.3%), followed by Victoria (8.4%).
- More than four-fifths of applications (81.4%) have attracted an offer in 2012, an increase of 2.2 percentage points. This follows an increase of 1.4 percentage points in 2011.

Table 4: Offers and offer rates by state and territory, February 2011 and February 2012

State/Territory	Offers			Offer rates		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	69,150	72,006	4.1%	81.9%	82.8%	0.8
Vic.	54,711	59,311	8.4%	77.1%	82.1%	5.0
Qld	43,234	46,037	6.5%	78.0%	80.9%	2.9
WA	16,807	16,422	-2.3%	81.9%	85.1%	3.2
SA/NT	19,470	20,353	4.5%	78.9%	77.1%	-1.7
Tas.	6,858	7,636	11.3%	73.6%	72.5%	-1.0
Australia	210,230	221,765	5.5%	79.2%	81.4%	2.2

Year 12 status

- Nationally offers to Year 12 applicants increased by 6.0% in 2012. This follows an increase of 4.8% in 2011.
- All states and territories recorded increases in offers to Year 12 applicants. Growth in offers to Year 12 applicants was strongest in Victoria (9.4%). This was followed by Queensland (7.2%) and SA/NT (5.4%).
- Offers to non-Year 12 applicants rose by 4.8% nationally. WA was the only state that recorded a decrease in offers to non-Year 12 applicants (-9.8%).

² This comparison is based on final 2010 and 2011 offers data.

Table 5: Offers by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2011 and February 2012

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	% Change
NSW/ACT	39,827	41,505	4.2%	29,323	30,501	4.0%
Vic.	32,025	35,027	9.4%	22,686	24,284	7.0%
Qld	21,757	23,319	7.2%	21,477	22,718	5.8%
WA	10,452	10,691	2.3%	6,355	5,731	-9.8%
SA/NT	9,271	9,771	5.4%	10,199	10,582	3.8%
Tas.	2,470	2,493	0.9%	4,388	5,143	17.2%
Australia	115,802	122,806	6.0%	94,428	98,959	4.8%

- Nationally applications from Year 12 students were more likely to receive an offer than non-Year 12 students. In 2012, the Year 12 offer rate was 83.1% compared with the non-Year 12 offer rate of 79.4%.
- Offer rates for both Year 12 students and non-Year 12 students have increased since 2010. Offer rates for Year 12 students increased by 1.6 percentage points in 2012 following an increase of 0.1 percentage points in 2011. Offer rates for non-Year 12 students increased by 2.8 percentage points in 2012 following an increase of 2.5 percentage points in 2011.
- In 2012, Year 12 offer rates were higher than the non-Year 12 offer rates in all states and territories except Victoria.
- Above-average offer rates to Year 12 applicants were recorded in WA (86.8%), NSW/ACT (85.3%) and Queensland (84.4%) in 2012.

Table 6: Offer rates by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2011 and February 2012

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2011	2012	Change (p.p)	2011	2012	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	84.9%	85.3%	0.3	78.1%	79.6%	1.4
Vic.	77.3%	80.7%	3.4	76.9%	84.1%	7.2
Qld	81.9%	84.4%	2.5	74.4%	77.6%	3.1
WA	84.5%	86.8%	2.3	77.8%	82.0%	4.2
SA/NT	81.4%	79.5%	-1.9	76.7%	75.1%	-1.6
Tas.	72.9%	72.6%	-0.3	73.9%	72.5%	-1.5
Australia	81.5%	83.1%	1.6	76.6%	79.4%	2.8

- In 2012 offers to Year 12 applicants represented 55.4% of total offers, an increase of 0.3 percentage points from 2011.
- WA recorded the highest proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants (65.1%) as well as the largest increase (2.9 percentage points) compared with 2011.

Table 7: Proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants by state and territory, February 2011 and February 2012

State/Territory	2011	2012	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	57.6%	57.6%	0.0
Vic.	58.5%	59.1%	0.5
Qld	50.3%	50.7%	0.3
WA	62.2%	65.1%	2.9
SA/NT	47.6%	48.0%	0.4
Tas.	36.0%	32.6%	-3.4
Australia	55.1%	55.4%	0.3

5. Field of Education

Highest preference applications

- The most popular broad field of education (in terms of number of applications) in 2012 was Health (68 930 highest preference applications or 25.3% of all applications). This was followed by Society and Culture (54 850 applications or 20.1% of all applications) and Management and Commerce (35 152 applications or 12.9% of all applications).
- Out of all broad fields of education, Natural and Physical Sciences recorded the largest increase in applications (10.9%). This was followed by Engineering (6.7%) and Health (4.3%).
- The largest decrease in applications was recorded in Creative Arts (-3.2%), followed by Architecture (-2.3%).

Offers

- Society and Culture received the largest number of offers (51 221 or 23.1% of total offers). This was followed by Health (44 250 or 20.0% of total offers).
- Offers increased for all broad fields of education. Health recorded the largest increase in offers (10.2%). This was followed by Engineering (7.8%) and Natural and Physical Sciences (7.0%).

Table 8: Highest preference applications and offers by field of education, February 2011 and February 2012

Field of education	Highest Preference Applications			Offers		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	% Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	20,873	23,150	10.9%	21,651	23,161	7.0%
Information Technology	6,692	6,885	2.9%	6,003	6,077	1.2%
Engineering	17,084	18,228	6.7%	14,425	15,553	7.8%
Architecture	9,364	9,148	-2.3%	6,328	6,459	2.1%
Agriculture	4,198	4,165	-0.8%	4,092	4,138	1.1%
Health	66,087	68,930	4.3%	40,164	44,250	10.2%
Education	23,210	23,508	1.3%	18,234	18,931	3.8%
Management and Commerce	34,430	35,152	2.1%	30,028	30,905	2.9%
Society and Culture	54,441	54,850	0.8%	49,031	51,221	4.5%
Creative Arts	27,035	26,165	-3.2%	18,666	18,839	0.9%
Australia	265,349	272,414	2.7%	210,230	221,765	5.5%

Note: Hospitality and Mixed Field Programs are not shown due to the small number of applications/offers, hence the total number of applications/offers does not equal the sum of applications/offers by broad field of education in the above table.

Offer rate

- Out of all broad fields of education, Natural and Physical Sciences recorded the largest offer rate (100.0%), followed by Agriculture (99.4%).
- Health (64.2%), Architecture (70.6%) and Creative Arts (72.0%) recorded the lowest offer rates in 2012.

Table 9: Offer rates by field of education, February 2011 and February 2012

Field of education	Offer Rate		
	2011	2012	Change (p.p)
Natural and Physical Sciences	103.7%	100.0%	-3.7
Information Technology	89.7%	88.3%	-1.4
Engineering	84.4%	85.3%	0.9
Architecture	67.6%	70.6%	3.0
Agriculture	97.5%	99.4%	1.9
Health	60.8%	64.2%	3.4
Education	78.6%	80.5%	2.0
Management and Commerce	87.2%	87.9%	0.7
Society and Culture	90.1%	93.4%	3.3
Creative Arts	69.0%	72.0%	3.0
Australia	79.2%	81.4%	2.2

Note: Offer rates are expressed as the number of offers as a percentage of first preference applications. Given that offers may result from lower order preferences, offer rates for fields of education may exceed 100%.

6. Australian Tertiary Admission Rank

- In 2012, 71.6% of all offers made to Year 12 applicants were for those with an ATAR of at least 70.05. Offers to Year 12 applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90 accounted for 27.8%.
- Over the last three years, the share of offers has shifted from applicants with high ATAR scores to applicants with lower ATAR scores. The share of offers for applicants in the ATAR band “50.00 or less” has increased from 2.1% in 2011 to 3.2% in 2012.

Table 10: Share of Year 12 offers by ATAR band, February 2011 and February 2012

ATAR band	2011	2012
50.00 or less	2.1%	3.2%
50.05-60.00	8.4%	8.6%
60.05-70.00	16.3%	16.7%
70.05-80.00	20.5%	20.2%
80.05-90.00	24.2%	23.6%
90.05 or more	28.5%	27.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

- The likelihood of an applicant with a low ATAR score receiving an offer has recorded a greater increase than an applicant with a higher ATAR score. Offer rates for Year 12 applicants in the ATAR band “50.00 or less” have recorded the largest increase from 18.2% in 2011 to 24.8% in 2012. The offer rates for the top two ATAR bands have remained steady.

Table 11: Year 12 offer rates by ATAR band, February 2011 and February 2012

ATAR band	2011	2012
50.00 or less	18.2%	24.8%
50.05-60.00	64.7%	71.9%
60.05-70.00	87.0%	90.5%
70.05-80.00	95.0%	96.3%
80.05-90.00	96.8%	97.1%
90.05 or more	90.5%	91.2%

- Natural and Physical Sciences (41.4%) and Engineering (40.1%) recorded a large share of offers made to applicants who achieved an ATAR in the highest band (90.05 or more). This was followed by Health (31.4%). This reflects the relatively high ATAR entry requirements for courses in these fields.

Table 12: Share of Year 12 offers by ATAR band for each field of education, February 2012

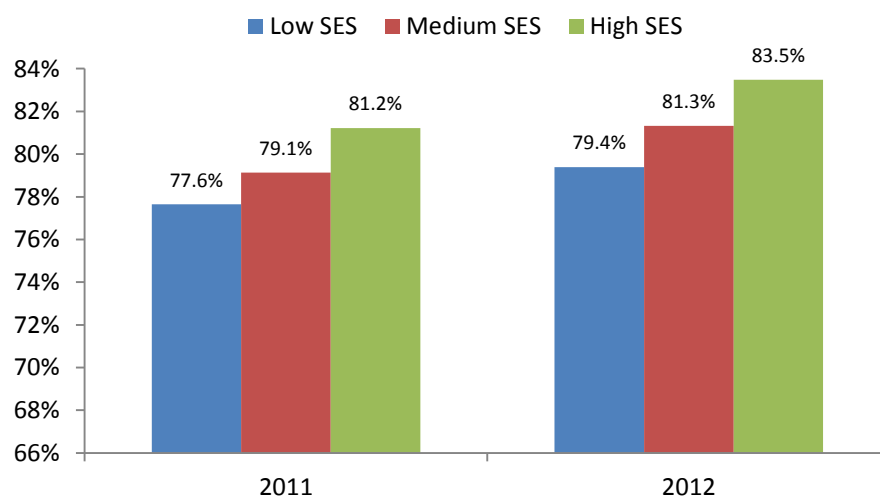
	50.00 or less	50.05-60.00	60.05-70.00	70.05-80.00	80.05-90.00	90.05 or more	Total
Natural and Physical Sciences	1.3%	5.1%	11.0%	16.8%	24.4%	41.4%	100.0%
Information Technology	5.9%	17.8%	27.3%	23.3%	18.4%	7.3%	100.0%
Engineering	1.0%	3.1%	9.4%	17.6%	28.9%	40.1%	100.0%
Architecture	2.3%	5.9%	14.9%	25.7%	31.4%	19.8%	100.0%
Agriculture	4.1%	7.5%	17.5%	22.1%	28.6%	20.2%	100.0%
Health	3.1%	7.5%	16.0%	19.3%	22.7%	31.4%	100.0%
Education	6.5%	15.1%	30.2%	26.4%	16.8%	5.0%	100.0%
Management and Commerce	3.2%	9.9%	18.9%	20.1%	22.1%	25.8%	100.0%
Society and Culture	3.3%	10.1%	16.3%	18.4%	23.3%	28.7%	100.0%
Creative Arts	3.4%	8.8%	17.8%	22.8%	27.1%	20.2%	100.0%
Australia	3.2%	8.6%	16.7%	20.2%	23.6%	27.8%	100.0%

7. Under-Represented Groups

Socioeconomic status

- In February 2012, 18.6% of total applications were from applicants from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds, compared with 49.1% from applicants from medium SES backgrounds and 30.5% from applicants from high SES backgrounds (based on the postcode measure of SES).³ To be represented in proportion to their share in the population, applications from low and high SES applicants would each constitute 25% of the pool of applications with applications from medium SES applicants constituting the remaining 50%.
- In 2012, applications from applicants from low SES backgrounds have shown the largest increase (3.4%) compared with those from medium SES backgrounds (2.8%) and high SES backgrounds (2.0%).
- Since 2011, offers to applicants from low SES backgrounds have also shown the largest increase (5.8%) compared with offers to applicants from medium SES backgrounds (5.7%) and high SES backgrounds (4.9%).
- However, applications by applicants from low SES backgrounds were less likely to result in an offer. Their offer rate was 79.4% compared with 81.3% for medium SES applications and 83.5% for high SES applications in 2012. This pattern has been evident since 2010.

Figure 1: Offer rates by socioeconomic status, February 2011 and February 2012



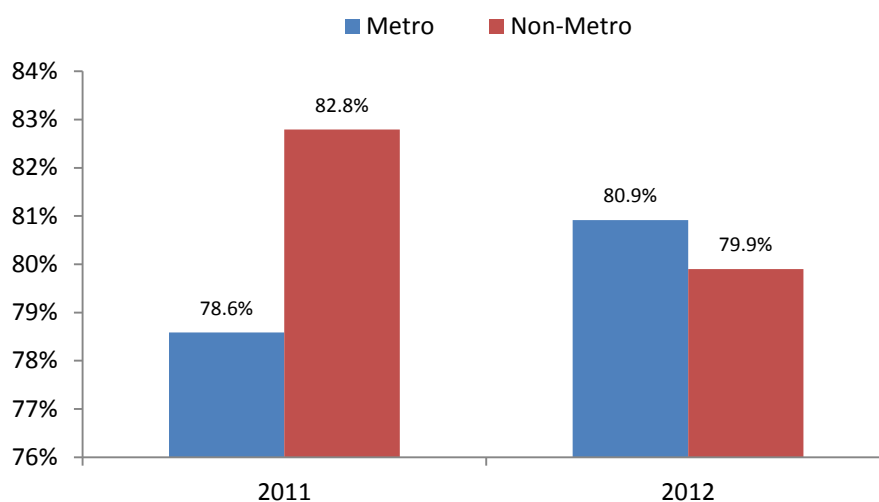
³ The Department uses two indicators of SES:

- (1) The postcode measure: SES is based on the students' postcode of permanent home residence, with the SES value derived from the 2006 ABS Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation (IEO). The postcodes that comprise the bottom 25% of the population aged between 15 to 64 years are considered low SES postcodes. Students with home address in these postcodes are classified as students from low SES backgrounds. The historical postcode measure is used in both *applications* and *enrolment* data.
- (2) The interim indicator of SES: In 2010, the Department in consultation with the sector developed an interim indicator of SES for student *enrolment* data based on a combination of an ABS SEIFA IEO component measure at the Census Collection District (CD) level and a Centrelink student payments component measure. To derive the CD SEIFA component, undergraduate students' full home addresses are geocoded to identify the CD associated with the home address and CDs are ranked by the ABS SEIFA IEO scores. Students whose home addresses are geocoded to CDs in the bottom 25% of the population aged 15 to 64 years are considered to be from low SES backgrounds. Where the full address could not be geocoded the SES status associated with the postcode of the student is used. The Centrelink component is derived from the number of domestic undergraduate students who meet relevant eligibility criteria and are recipients of selected Centrelink student income support payments

Regional status⁴

- Over three quarters of applications (76.8%) were from applicants living in metropolitan areas in 2012.
- In 2012, applications from metropolitan residents and non-metropolitan residents increased (2.8% and 2.2% respectively).
- Offers made to applications from metropolitan applicants increased by 5.9% compared with an increase of 3.9% in offers made to applications from non-metropolitan applicants.
- Applications from metropolitan applicants were slightly more likely to result in an offer compared with applications from non-metropolitan applicants (80.9% compared with 79.9% respectively).
- Offer rates for non-metropolitan applicants decreased from 82.8% in 2011 to 79.9% in 2012 while offer rates for metropolitan applicants increased from 78.6% to 80.9%.

Figure 2: Offer rates by region, February 2011 and February 2012

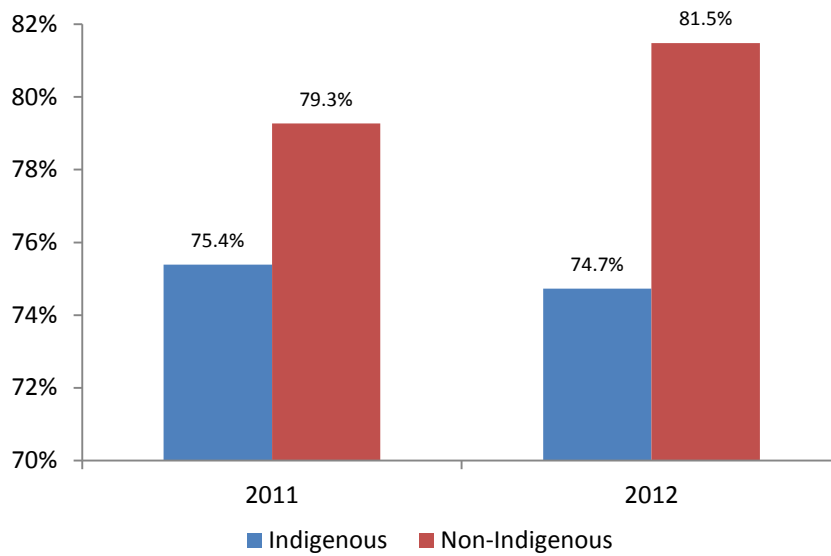


⁴ To categorise applicants by regionality, postcodes are coded into three groups (metropolitan, regional, remote) based on the Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) classification of regions. The MCEETYA Classification of Geographical Location incorporates the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) and maintains comparability with the Rural, Remote and Metropolitan areas Classification (Department of Primary Industries and Energy/Department of Human Affairs and Health, 1994), which uses Census data to identify statistical local areas of population density. In this report, “regional” and “remote” categories have been amalgamated as “non-metropolitan”.

Indigenous status

- Nationally there are 3320 applications from applicants who identified as Indigenous (Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both). This represents 1.2% of all applications received by the TACs.
- Nationally 2481 offers have resulted from applications from Indigenous applicants.
- As of 22 February 2012, around three quarters (74.7%) of Indigenous applications had attracted an offer. This is a decrease of 0.7 percentage points compared with the same period last year. The offer rate for non-Indigenous applicants was 81.5% in 2012.

Figure 3: Offer rates by Indigenous status, February 2011 and February 2012



8. University Group

Highest preference applications

- Applications increased for all university groups in 2012, with the Regional Universities Network (RUN) recording the largest increase (5.9%).

Offers

- As of 22 February 2012, all university groups had increased the number of offers made through TACs compared with the same time in 2011. The Australian Technology Network (ATN) and the Group of Eight (Go8) recorded the largest increases (7.2% and 5.3% respectively).

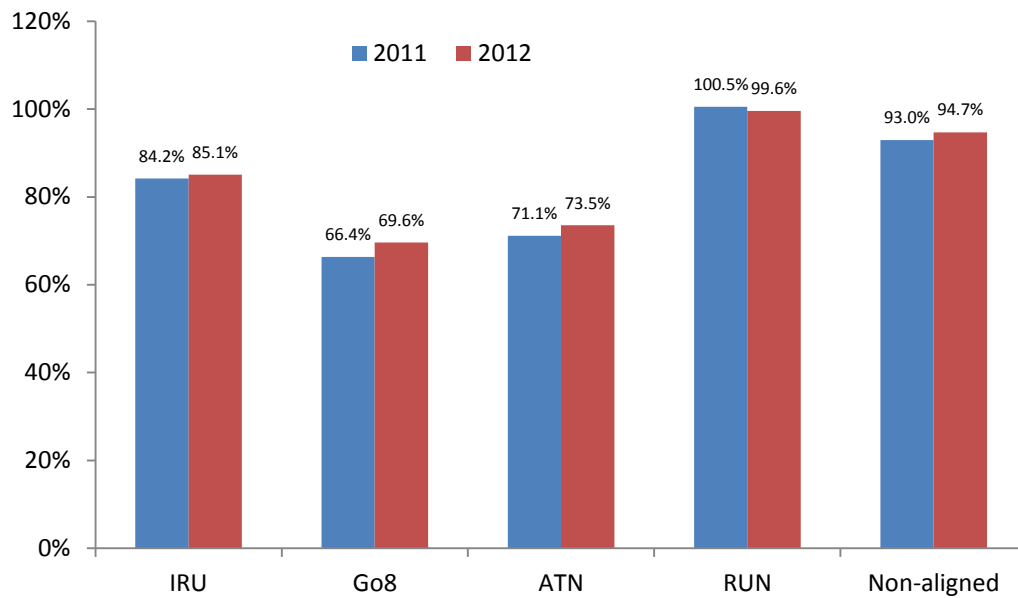
Table 13: Highest preference applications and offers by university group, February 2011 and February 2012

Type of university	Highest Preference Applications			Offers		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	% Change
Innovative Research Universities	47,010	47,890	1.9%	39,572	40,734	2.9%
Group of Eight	82,442	82,791	0.4%	54,710	57,634	5.3%
Australian Technology Network	52,630	54,611	3.8%	37,437	40,150	7.2%
Regional Universities Network	14,546	15,402	5.9%	14,618	15,335	4.9%
Australia	265,349	272,414	2.7%	210,230	221,765	5.5%

Offer rates

- Applications to Go8 and ATN universities were less likely to receive an offer (offer rates of 69.6% and 73.5% respectively), reflecting the high entry requirements at these universities.
- On the other hand, applications made to RUN (99.6%) were more likely to receive an offer.

Figure 4: Offer rates by university group, February 2011 and February 2012

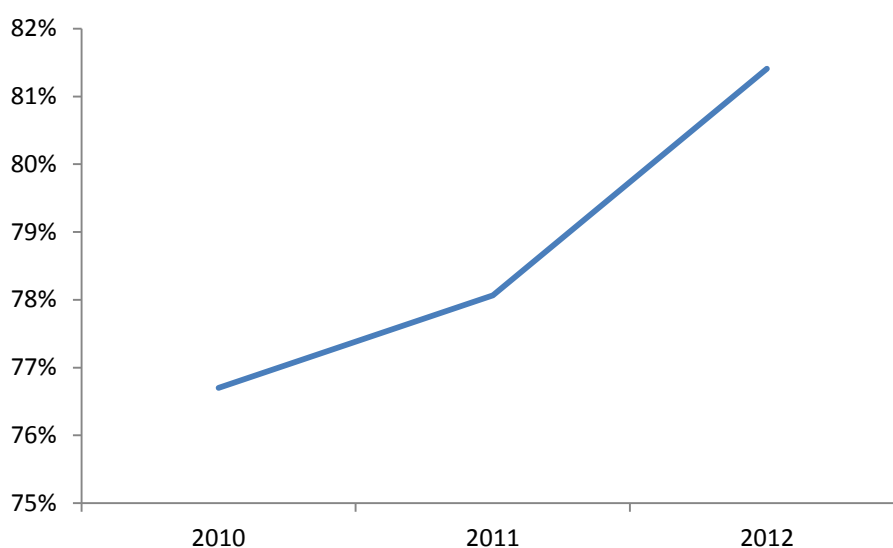


Note: Offer rates are expressed as the number of offers as a percentage of first preference applications. Given that offers may result from lower order preferences, offer rates for university groups may exceed 100%.

9. Transition to the demand driven system

The transition to a demand driven system has seen a year on year increase in applications and offers since 2010. During this period, highest preference TAC applications have grown by 4.2%, compared with a much higher growth in TAC offers of 9.0%⁵. The primary reason for higher growth in offers has been the transition to the demand driven system. Whilst the demand driven system has not materially changed factors affecting student demand (applications), the lifting of caps on places has meant that more students are being given the opportunity of a university place. Higher growth in offers relative to applications indicates a reduction in the levels of unmet demand. This is illustrated by the growth in offer rates (the percentage of all offers relative to highest preference applications). Offer rates increased from 76.7% in 2010 (final data) to 81.4% in 2012 (third round data).

Figure 5: TAC Offer rates, 2010 – 2011 (final data) and 2012 (third round data)



The increased availability of university places has led to an increase in the proportion of students with lower ATARs receiving offers. ATAR scores have traditionally been used as a proxy for a student's capability and preparedness for university study and are often used to set minimum requirements for a course. However where demand for places outstrips supply, ATARs have been used to ration places based on merit, meaning that many students who meet the minimum requirements still miss out. The demand driven system is enabling many more of these students to take up a university place.

Applicants from low SES backgrounds are likely to benefit most from the demand driven system. In each of the past three years, applications from low SES applicants has increased at a greater rate than applications from applicants with medium and high SES backgrounds. By providing more places, the demand driven system has assisted many low SES applicants who would otherwise have missed out on the opportunity of a university education. Offers to low SES applicants were up 5.8% in 2012, following strong growth in the preceding two years (4.5% in 2011 and 8.8% in 2010).

⁵ This compares the 2010 final TAC data and the estimated TAC total for 2012 (derived by applying the growth in third round data between 2011 and 2012, on the 2011 final data).

The demand driven system has increased competition across the higher education system. Table A universities are now no longer limited in the number and type of bachelor degree places they offer and are able to compete for students. Concerns about the ability of smaller regional universities to compete have been raised in the context of the transition to the demand driven system. The 2012 applications and offers data suggests that regional universities are competing well with the Regional Universities Network (RUN) showing the largest annual increase in first preference applications (5.9%) in 2012.

More comprehensive applications and offers data will be available and analysed by the Department between April 2012 and June 2012. A final report is scheduled for publication by the Department in August 2012.

10. Data Qualifications

The data referred to in this report are for highest preference applications and offers for domestic undergraduate university places through TACs as at 22 February 2012. This data represents approximately 97.9% of final highest preference applications data and 99.6% of final offers data (based on analysis of 2011 third round submissions data).

It should be noted that:

- A small proportion of applicants make applications to more than one TAC resulting in some double counting of applicants.
- Applications and offers data in this report refer to TAC data only. More comprehensive comparisons including direct applications and offers will be included in the final report.
- The data does not include applications from overseas students.
- Only applications made to [Table A institutions](#) are included in the analysis.
- “State and territory” in this report refers to state and territory of the Tertiary Admissions Centre.
- Unless otherwise specified, all references to “2011” in this report relate to the 2011 third round submission reference date of 23 February 2011.
- All references to “2012” in this report relate to the 2012 third round submission reference date of 22 February 2012.
- All references to “applications” in this report relate to highest preference applications.
- All references to “Year 12” applicants in this report relate to applicants who attempted an ACACA Year 12 program or the International Baccalaureate in the year of application.
- While completing Year 12 and gaining a tertiary entrance score is the most common way to gain entry to university, TACs and universities take a number of other qualifications into consideration, particularly for adults applying who have not recently completed Year 12. Some pathways to gaining entry to a university degree include sitting the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT), articulating from certificate and/or diploma level studies in vocational education and training (VET), university bridging or foundation programs and previous higher education (completed or commenced).

11. Glossary

Australasian Curriculum Assessment Certification Authorities (ACACA) Year 12 programs: Each State has its own approved Year 12 program. ACACA is the national body responsible for monitoring senior secondary curricula and certification in Australia and New Zealand. The current programs by State are: NSW Higher School Certificate, ACT Year 12 Certificate, Queensland Certificate of Education, Queensland Senior Certificate, South Australian Certificate of Education, Northern Territory Certificate of Education, Tasmanian Certificate of Education, Victorian Certificate of Education, Western Australian Certificate of Education. ACACA Year 12 programs may be undertaken in schools, VET institutions or higher education providers.

Current Year 12 applicant: An applicant who attempted an ACACA Year 12 program or the International Baccalaureate in the year of application.

Offer rate: The offer rate is a percentage calculated as the number of valid offers made to applicants with at least one valid preference divided by the number of applicants with at least one valid preference.

University Group

<p>Group of Eight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monash University The Australian National University The University of Adelaide The University of Melbourne The University of New South Wales The University of Queensland The University of Sydney The University of Western Australia <p>Innovative Research Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charles Darwin University Flinders University of South Australia Griffith University James Cook University La Trobe University Murdoch University The University of Newcastle 	<p>Australian Technology Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curtin University of Technology Queensland University of Technology RMIT University University of South Australia University of Technology, Sydney <p>Regional Universities Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Queensland University Southern Cross University University of Ballarat University of New England University of Southern Queensland University of the Sunshine Coast
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Note: The following Table A universities are not aligned to a university group: Australian Catholic University; Charles Sturt University; Deakin University; Edith Cowan University; Macquarie University; Swinburne University of Technology; University of Canberra; University of Tasmania; University of Western Sydney; University of Wollongong; and Victoria University