

Summary of the 2009 Higher Education Student Statistics

Student numbers

1. The number of domestic plus international students enrolled at all higher education providers (HEPs) reached 1,134,866 in 2009, an increase of 6.5% from 2008.
2. There were 813,896 domestic students in 2009 - comprising 71.7% of all students - an increase of 5.4% from 2008. Overseas student enrolments increased by 9.1% to 320,970 in 2009.
3. Postgraduate students increased 6.5% to 307,973 while undergraduate students increased 6.3% to 790,810.
4. More than half of all students enrolled were female (55.4%).
5. More than two-thirds (70.0%) of students were studying full time.
6. The majority of students were enrolled at public universities. Public university enrolments increased by 5.6% in 2009 (1,058,399 students in 2009, up from 1,002,003 students in 2008), while private provider enrolments increased 19.3% (76,467 students at 77 providers in 2009, up from 64,092 students at 73 providers in 2008).

Commencing student numbers

7. Commencements provide an early indicator of growth and decline.
8. The total number of commencing student enrolments increased by 9.6% to 470,537 in 2009. This increase was evenly spread between domestic (up 9.6%) and overseas (up 9.5%) students.
9. There was a large increase in commencing students in enabling courses¹ (up 30.4% to 12,663), while commencements in non-award courses² declined (down 2.7% to 19,460). Commencements in postgraduate courses increased by 9.3% to 148,491, and undergraduate commencements increased by 9.9% to 289,923.
10. More than half (56.0%) of all commencing students were female.

Indigenous student numbers

11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students comprised less than one per cent (10,465) of all enrolments in 2009, and 1.0% (4,832) of commencements. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increased by 9.8% for all students and 11.8% for commencing students between 2008 and 2009.
12. Increases in Indigenous student numbers were recorded across all broad fields of education, with the largest increase being in *Mixed Field Programs*³ (up 45.6% to 753 students) and *Engineering and Related Technologies* (up 29.9% to 243 students).
13. The main fields of education in which Indigenous students were enrolled were *Society and Culture* (3406 students, or 32.5% of the total Indigenous students), followed by *Education* (2017 students) and *Health* (1802 students).

National Priority Areas and courses of special interest

14. The number of students commencing in Priority Area courses increased markedly in courses for provisional registration as a dentist (up 22.6% to 635 in 2009), and in *Clinical Psychology* courses (up 14.7% to 686)
15. Modest increases were seen in students commencing courses for initial registration as nurses (up 12.0% to 15,232), courses leading to provisional registration as a medical practitioner (up 4.3% to 3,781 in 2009), and courses providing initial teacher training (up 5.9% to 26,290).
16. There was a decrease in commencing students undertaking courses leading to a registration as a veterinary practitioner (down 5.8% to 469 students).

Field of Education

17. Increases in the number of commencing students were recorded across most broad fields of education, the largest being in *Mixed Field Programs* (up 45.9% to 5985) and *Food, Hospitality and Personal Services* (up 40.4% to 768), while the smallest change was in *Architecture and Building* (up 1.8% to 9857). This compares to *Management and Commerce* (135,962

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 ACT HESA 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 provider; and is able to be counted as a credit towards some award course at the higher education provider by all students who complete the unit or units of study.

³ Mixed Field Programmes are programs providing general and personal development education.

commencements, up 7.0%), *Society and Culture* (94,398, up 11.6%), *Health* (58,845, up 9.2%), *Education* (44,052, up 9.0%), *Creative Arts* (34,129, up 16.7%), *Natural and Physical Sciences* (29,370, up 13.5%), *Engineering and Related Technologies* (27,508, up 14.5%) and *Agriculture, Environment and Related Sciences* (6613, up 5.4%).

18. *Management and Commerce* comprised over half of all overseas enrolments (167,161 students out of 320,970) and commencements (78,640 out of 154,569). Overseas commencements in this field were up 10.2% in 2009. The largest increase in commencing overseas students was in the *Mixed Field Programs* (285 new overseas students, up 54.9%) and *Food, Hospitality and Personal Services* (701, up 44.8%), with quite significant increases in *Architecture and Building* (2303, up 23.0%), *Engineering and Related Technologies* (10,514, up 22.4%) and *Creative Arts* (7012, up 22.2%).