

Attachment A - Summary of the 2008 Higher Education Student Statistics

Student numbers

1. The number of student enrolments at all Higher Education Providers reached 1,066,095 in 2008, an increase of 3.5% from 2007.
2. There were 771,932 domestic students in 2008—comprising 72.4% of all enrolments—an increase of 2.0% from 2007. Overseas student enrolments increased 7.7% over the same period to 294,163 in 2008.
3. More than half the student enrolments were for females (55.2%).
4. More than two-thirds (68.8%) of students were studying full-time.
5. The majority (94.0%) of students were enrolled at public universities (Table A providers)—enrolments reached 1,002,003 (up 2.6%).

Commencing student numbers

6. The total number of commencing student enrolments increased 5.1% to 429,359 in 2008.
7. Three-quarters (67.1%) of commencements were for domestic students (288,228). Domestic commencements increased 2.3% between 2007 and 2008, while overseas commencements increased 11.4% to 141,131 over the same period.
8. More than half (55.8%) of all commencing student enrolments were for females.

Indigenous student numbers

9. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students comprised less than one per cent (9,529) of all enrolments in 2008, and 1.0% (4,321) of commencements. Enrolments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increased 7.1% for commencing students and 1.7% for all students between 2007 and 2008.
10. Indigenous Access and Enabling Scholarships (IAS and IES) were introduced in 2008 and may have had some effect on increasing Indigenous access and participation in 2008. From 2008, up to 1,000 IAS are available to eligible Indigenous students annually. 700 IES Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships and 210 IES Commonwealth Access Scholarships are available to Indigenous Australians undertaking eligible higher education enabling programs.

National Priority Areas and courses of special interest

11. Commencing student enrolments in courses leading to provisional registration as a medical practitioner increased 16.1% from 3,124 in 2007 to 3,626 in 2008. Over the same period, commencements in courses leading to provisional registration as a dental practitioner increased 27.6% from 406 to 518, and commencements in courses leading to provisional registration as a veterinary practitioner increased 16.6% from 427 to 498.
12. A modest increase was seen in commencing students undertaking courses for initial registration as nurses—up 1.2% from 13,434 in 2007 to 13,598 in 2008.
13. There was a decrease of 5.1% in the number of commencing students undertaking courses providing initial teacher training—down from 26,159 in 2007 to 24,825 in 2008.
14. Student enrolments in courses in clinical psychology (as defined by the Commonwealth Grants Scheme guidelines) were reported for the first time in 2008.
15. The number of overseas students commencing in Priority Area courses was highest in courses for provisional registration as a dentist (increasing 13.6% to 125 or 25.1% of all commencing students these courses). There were also significant proportions of overseas students commencing courses leading to provisional registration as a medical practitioner (up 18.7% to 704 or 19.4% of students commencing these courses); courses leading to initial registration as a nurse (up 6.2% to 2,485 or 18.3% of students commencing in these courses); and courses leading to provisional registration as a dental practitioner (up 4.2% to 74 or 14.3% of students commencing in these courses).

Field of Education

16. Increases in commencing student enrolments were seen for most broad fields of education between 2007 and 2008—Architecture and Building (up 15.6%), Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (up 8.2%), Management and Commerce (up 7.2%), Health (up 5.7%), Information Technology (up 6.3%), Creative Arts (up 5.1%), Society and Culture (up 3.3%), Engineering and Related Technologies (up 2.7%) and Natural and Physical Sciences (up 0.3%).
17. The increase in commencing student enrolments in Information Technology reverses the trend in declining enrolments seen in recent years. However, the increase was for overseas students only; commencements for overseas students increased 14.8% while those for domestic students decreased 2.6% (consistent with a decline in applications, offers and acceptances for information technology courses in 2008, which reflects trends in the domestic student market).
18. Large percentage increases were also seen in commencements for Mixed Field Programmes (47.0%) and Food, Hospitality and Personal Services (56.3%).
19. Decreases in commencements were seen in Education (down 4.0%).
20. The number of commencing overseas students was highest in the broad fields of Information technology, where the number of commencing overseas students increased 14.8% to 11,826 (or 63.1% of all students commencing in this field), Management and Commerce (up 14.5% to 71,024 or 57.6% of all students commencing in this field), Engineering and Related Technologies (up 2.4% to 8,571 or 36.1% of all students commencing in this field), Creative Arts (up 7.3% to 5,706 or 20.0% of all commencing students in these courses), Architecture and Building (up 15.0% to 1,872 or 19.4% of all commencing students in these courses), Health (up 15.3% to 9,060 or 16.9% of all commencing students in these courses), Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (up 35.2% to 990 or 16.0% of all commencing students in these courses), Society and Culture (up 8.9% to 9,632 or 12.3% of all commencing students in these courses), Education (up .05% to 4,088 or 10.4% of all commencing students in these courses), and Non-award courses (up 0.9% to 12,825 or 64.4% of all students commencing in these courses).