



Australian Government

Department of Education and Training

**Undergraduate Applications and Offers,
February 2015**

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The document must be attributed as the Undergraduate Applications and Offers, February 2015 report.

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the Report

This report looks at the third round data submission on applications and offers processed through Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs) and the first round data submission on applications made directly to universities for the first semester of the 2015 academic year. It provides trends in the number of applications, offers and characteristics of applicants. As such, these trends are leading indicators of the response of universities to the demand for higher education in 2015.

Overview of the Data

Data in this report are derived from the University Applications and Offers Data Collection. The data refer to domestic undergraduate student applications and offers as of 27 February 2015. While over 99% of all first semester TAC applications are received by this date, applicants can make decisions on their offers until the close of the application process.

The report looks at domestic undergraduate highest preference applications and total offers processed by TACs and universities. More comprehensive applications and offers data will be available and analysed by the department between April 2015 and June 2015. 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 September 2015.

One particular issue has affected the reporting of 2015 applications data. It relates to the effect of the 'half-year' Year 12 cohort in Western Australia (WA). The 'half-year' cohort arose due to the Western Australian State Government changing the starting age for school children in 2003. The change was legislated by the WA School Education Act of 1999. Until 2003, children began Year 1 at the beginning of the calendar year when they turned six. From 2003, children began Year 1 if they turned six between 1 July of the previous year and 30 June of the year they started school. This policy change was introduced as a one-off. That is, there was no staggered implementation across years, which meant that in 2003 only children born between 1 January 1997 and 30 June 1997 started school. This small cohort has been working its way through the school system reaching Year 12 in 2014. The Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC – the TAC in WA) estimates that it is more likely that the number of students with an ATAR will be around 60% of the size of a normal cohort of students. This has considerably impacted WA's university application numbers for the 2015

academic year. Given that much of this report provides time series data and makes year on year comparisons, many figures and tables are reported with and without Western Australia data.

Applications and offers reports are published on the department's website:

www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics.

Acknowledgements

The department would like to thank all officers of TACs and universities for submitting high quality applications and offers data for the 2015 academic year.

2. Highlights

Total Applications and Offers - TAC and Direct

- As of 27 February 2015, 314 198 applicants had applied for a university place, either through a TAC (excluding WA) or directly to a university (including WA). This is 1.0% above the number of applicants as of May 2014.
- There were 264 680 applicants who received an offer, either through a TAC (excluding WA) or directly to a university (including WA), 0.9% above the number of applicants who received offers as of May 2014.

TAC Applications and Offers

Highest Preference Applications

- As of 27 February 2015, there were 268 704 applications made through TACs. Excluding WA, there were 255 221 applications. This is a decrease of 449 applications, or 0.2%, compared with the same time in 2014. This follows a decrease of 0.05% at the same point in time between 2013 and 2014.
- Nationally (excluding WA), Year 12 applications increased by 1.3% while non-Year 12 applications decreased by 1.9% in 2015.

Offers

- During the same period, there were 218 517 offers made. Excluding WA there were 207 473 offers made, a decrease of 1.0% compared with the same time in 2014.
- Nationally (excluding WA), Year 12 offers increased by 0.6% in 2015. Victoria, Queensland and the South Australia(SA)/Northern Territory (NT) recorded increases in offers to Year 12 applicants.
- Offers to non-Year 12 applicants fell by 3.5% nationally and 3.0% nationally excluding WA.
- Applications from Year 12 students were more likely to receive an offer than applications from non-Year 12 students. As of 27 February 2015, the Year 12 offer rate (percentage of applicants who received an offer) was 83.7% compared with the non-Year 12 offer rate of 78.3%. Offer rates for both Year 12 students and non-Year 12 students decreased in 2015, down from 84.4% and 79.2% respectively in 2014.
- Above-average Year 12 offer rates were recorded in Queensland (87.3%) and New South Wales (NSW)/the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) (85.5%) in 2015.

Field of Education

- Nationally (excluding WA), Health received the largest number of applications (73 766 or 28.9% of all applications).
- Health also recorded the largest increase in applications (7.5%). This was followed by Information Technology (3.3%) and Management and Commerce (2.2%).
- Nationally (excluding WA), Health received the largest number of offers (48 643 or 23.4% of total offers).
- Health also recorded the largest increase in offers (7.4%). This was followed by Information Technology (4.9%).
- Applications for Natural and Physical Sciences and Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies are most likely to receive an offer (offer rates of 103.1% and 92.8% respectively).

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

- In 2015, 68.5% 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 26.5% of all offers.
- The share of Year 12 offers for applicants with a low ATAR score (50 or less) increased from 2.1% in 2011 to 5.8% in 2015. Offers for applicants with low ATAR scores (50 or less) accounted for 7 071 out of 122 962 Year 12 TAC offers in 2015.
- Over the past five years, the likelihood of an applicant with a low ATAR score (50 or less) receiving an offer has increased from 18.2% to 38.3%. By comparison, over the same period, the likelihood of an applicant with a high ATAR score (above 90) receiving an offer has remained steady (90.5% to 89.9%).

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

- Applicants from a low SES background (excluding WA) have shown the largest increase (0.5%) compared with those from a medium SES background (0.2%) and a high SES background (-1.0%).
- Offers to applicants from a low SES background (excluding WA) have also shown the smallest decrease (-0.2%) compared with offers to applicants from a medium SES background (-0.7%) and a high SES background (-1.9%).
- However, applicants from a low SES background (excluding WA) were less likely to receive an offer. Their offer rate was 79.9% compared with 81.2% for applicants from a medium SES background and 82.8% for applicants from a high SES background in 2015.

Regional

- Offers to metropolitan residents (excluding WA) decreased by 0.7% with offers to non-metropolitan residents decreasing by 1.7% in 2015.
- Applications from non-metropolitan areas were more likely to receive an offer compared with applicants from metropolitan areas, (84.5% and 80.5% respectively – excluding WA).

Indigenous Status

- As of 27 February 2015, around three quarters, 74.4%, of Indigenous applicants (excluding WA) had attracted an offer, compared with 81.4% for non-Indigenous applicants.

University Group

- Applications to the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) universities (excluding Murdoch University) recorded an increase of 10.2% in 2015. Applications decreased among the other university groups with applications to the Group of Eight (Go8) (excluding The University of Western Australia), Regional Universities Network (RUN) and Australian Technology Network (ATN) (excluding Curtin University of Technology) decreasing by 3.4%, 2.1% and 0.1% respectively.
- The IRU universities (excluding Murdoch University) recorded the largest increase in offers (1.3%) in 2015, followed by ATN (excluding Curtin University of Technology) (1.1%).
- Applications to Go8 universities (excluding The University of Western Australia) and ATN universities (excluding Curtin University of Technology) were less likely to receive an offer in 2015 (offer rates of 68.9% and 74.7% respectively), reflecting the higher entry requirements at these universities.

Direct Applications and offers¹

- As of 27 February 2015, there were 95 819 direct applications made to universities, an increase of 6.8% on the number of direct applications in 2014.
- There were 78 227 direct offers made by universities as of 27 February 2015, an increase of 9.1% on the number of direct offers made in 2014.

¹ Note that comparable 2014 direct applications data (as of 27 February 2014) are not available. Hence comparisons made in this section of the report are made with the 2014 final (May) data.

3. Highest Preference Applications

Overall trends

- As of 27 February 2015, there were 268 704 applications made through TACs. Excluding WA, there were 255 221 applications, a decrease of 449 applications, or 0.2%, compared with the same time in 2014. This follows a decrease of 0.05% between 2013 and 2014 (including WA).

Table 1: Highest preference applications by state and territory, February 2014 and February 2015

State/Territory	2014	2015	% Change
NSW/ACT	88,450	86,704	-2.0%
Vic.	72,239	71,618	-0.9%
Qld	55,044	55,124	0.1%
WA	18,073	13,483	-25.4%
SA/NT	28,206	29,397	4.2%
Tas.	11,731	12,378	5.5%
Australia	273,743	268,704	-1.8%
Australia (excluding WA)	255,670	255,221	-0.2%

Year 12 status

- Nationally, Year 12 applications decreased by 1.3% in 2015, following an increase of 0.8% in 2014. Excluding WA, Year 12 applications increased by 1.3%.
- All states and territories recorded increases in Year 12 applications, except for WA (-30.5%) and Tasmania (-13.2%) which recorded decreases in Year 12 applications.
- Non-Year 12 applications decreased by 2.5% in 2015, following a decrease of 1.1% in 2014.
- This is in line with a broader trend in recent years that has seen non-Year 12 applicants less likely to apply for admission through TACs and more likely to apply directly to universities - see Section 9.
- States and territories that recorded declining non-Year 12 applications in 2015 were WA (-14.5%), NSW/ACT (-6.0%), Victoria (-5.6%) and Queensland (-2.1%).

Table 2: Highest preference applications by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2014 and February 2015

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change
NSW/ACT	49,835	50,402	1.1%	38,615	36,302	-6.0%
Vic.	45,427	46,316	2.0%	26,812	25,302	-5.6%
Qld	28,166	28,803	2.3%	26,878	26,321	-2.1%
WA	12,310	8,558	-30.5%	5,763	4,925	-14.5%
SA/NT	13,004	13,153	1.1%	15,202	16,244	6.9%
Tas.	3,555	3,085	-13.2%	8,176	9,293	13.7%
Australia	152,297	150,317	-1.3%	121,446	118,387	-2.5%
Australia (excluding WA)	139,987	141,759	1.3%	115,683	113,462	-1.9%

- Nationally, Year 12 applications represent 55.9% of total applications, an increase of 0.3 percentage points compared with 2014. Excluding WA, Year 12 applications represent 55.5% of total applications, an increase of 0.8 percentage points.
- Victoria recorded the highest proportion of Year 12 applications (64.7%), an increase of 1.8 percentage points compared with 2014. WA recorded the next highest proportion (63.5%), decreasing by 4.6 percentage points (a decrease attributable to WA's 'half year' Year 12 cohort effect).

Table 3: Proportion of Year 12 highest preference applications by state and territory, February 2014 and February 2015

State/Territory	2014	2015	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	56.3%	58.1%	1.8
Vic.	62.9%	64.7%	1.8
Qld	51.2%	52.3%	1.1
WA	68.1%	63.5%	-4.6
SA/NT	46.1%	44.7%	-1.4
Tas.	30.3%	24.9%	-5.4
Australia	55.6%	55.9%	0.3
Australia (excluding WA)	54.8%	55.5%	0.8

4. Offers

Overall trends

- As of 27 February 2015, there were 218 517 offers made, a decrease of 6146 (-2.7%) compared with the same time in 2014. This follows an increase of 0.7% between 2013 and 2014. Excluding WA, offers decreased by 1.0% in 2015.
- The largest growth was recorded in Tasmania (5.5%), followed by SA/NT (3.0%).
- More than four-fifths of applications (81.3%) attracted an offer in 2015, a decrease of 0.7 percentage points over 2014. This follows an increase of 0.6 percentage points between 2013 and 2014.

Table 4: Offers and offer rates by state and territory, February 2014 and February 2015

State/Territory	Offers			Offer rates		
	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	74,170	72,727	-1.9%	83.9%	83.9%	0.0
Vic.	58,369	56,874	-2.6%	80.8%	79.4%	-1.4
Qld	46,530	46,243	-0.6%	84.5%	83.9%	-0.6
WA	15,120	11,044	-27.0%	83.7%	81.9%	-1.8
SA/NT	21,011	21,641	3.0%	74.5%	73.6%	-0.9
Tas.	9,463	9,988	5.5%	80.7%	80.7%	0.0
Australia	224,663	218,517	-2.7%	82.1%	81.3%	-0.7
Australia (excluding WA)	209,543	207,473	-1.0%	82.0%	81.3%	-0.7

Year 12 status

- Nationally, offers to Year 12 applicants decreased by 2.1% in 2015. This follows an increase of 1.3% in 2014. Excluding WA, offers to Year 12 applicants increased by 0.6% in 2015.
- Offers to Year 12 applicants increased in Victoria, Queensland and SA/NT with offers decreasing in other states and territories.
- Offers to non-Year 12 applicants fell by 3.5% nationally and by 3.0% excluding WA. This follows a fall of 0.2% in 2014.

Table 5: Offers by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2014 and February 2015

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change
NSW/ACT	43,305	43,091	-0.5%	30,865	29,636	-4.0%
Vic.	36,647	37,618	2.6%	21,722	19,256	-11.4%
Qld	24,931	25,131	0.8%	21,599	21,112	-2.3%
WA	10,461	7,024	-32.9%	4,659	4,020	-13.7%
SA/NT	10,393	10,481	0.8%	10,618	11,160	5.1%
Tas.	2,770	2,421	-12.6%	6,693	7,567	13.1%
Australia	128,507	125,766	-2.1%	96,156	92,751	-3.5%
Australia (excluding WA)	118,046	118,742	0.6%	91,497	88,731	-3.0%

- Nationally, applications from Year 12 students were more likely to receive an offer than non-Year 12 students. In 2015, the Year 12 offer rate was 83.7% compared with the non-Year 12 offer rate of 78.3%.
- Offer rates for both Year 12 students and non-Year 12 students decreased in 2015. Offer rates for Year 12 students decreased by 0.7 percentage points in 2015 following an increase of 0.4 percentage points in 2014. Offer rates for non-Year 12 students decreased by 0.8 percentage points in 2015 following an increase of 0.8 percentage point in 2014.
- In 2015, Year 12 offer rates were higher than the non-Year 12 offer rates in all states and territories except Tasmania.
- Above-average offer rates to Year 12 applicants were recorded in Queensland (87.3%) and NSW/ACT (85.5%) in 2015.

Table 6: Offer rates by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2014 and February 2015

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2014	2015	Change (p.p)	2014	2015	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	86.9%	85.5%	-1.4	79.9%	81.6%	1.7
Vic.	80.7%	81.2%	0.5	81.0%	76.1%	-4.9
Qld	88.5%	87.3%	-1.3	80.4%	80.2%	-0.1
WA	85.0%	82.1%	-2.9	80.8%	81.6%	0.8
SA/NT	79.9%	79.7%	-0.2	69.8%	68.7%	-1.1
Tas.	77.9%	78.5%	0.6	81.9%	81.4%	-0.4
Australia	84.4%	83.7%	-0.7	79.2%	78.3%	-0.8

- In 2015, offers to Year 12 applicants represented 57.6% of total offers, an increase of 0.4 percentage points from 2014. Excluding WA, offers to Year 12 applicants represented 57.2% of total offers, an increase of 0.9 percentage points from 2014.
- Despite the 'half year' Year 12 cohort effect, WA recorded the highest proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants (63.6%). WA and Tasmania recorded the largest decreases in the proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants compared with 2014 (5.6 and 5.0 percentage points respectively).

Table 7: Proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants by state and territory, February 2014 and February 2015

State/Territory	2014	2015	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	58.4%	59.3%	0.9
Vic.	62.8%	66.1%	3.4
Qld	53.6%	54.3%	0.8
WA	69.2%	63.6%	-5.6
SA/NT	49.5%	48.4%	-1.0
Tas.	29.3%	24.2%	-5.0
Australia	57.2%	57.6%	0.4
Australia (excluding WA)	56.3%	57.2%	0.9

5. Field of Education

Highest preference applications

- Nationally (excluding WA), the most popular broad field of education (in terms of number of applications) in 2015 was Health (73 766 highest preference applications or 28.9% of all applications). This was followed by Society and Culture (50 706 applications or 19.9% of all applications) and Management and Commerce (33 182 applications or 13.0% of all applications).
- Among all broad fields of education, Health recorded the largest increase in applications (7.5%). This was followed by Information Technology (3.3%) and Management and Commerce (2.2%).
- The largest decrease in applications was recorded in Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (-20.5%), followed by Education (-8.9%).

Offers

- Nationally (excluding WA), Health received the largest number of offers (48 643 or 23.4% of total offers). This was followed by Society and Culture (44 666 or 21.5% of total offers).
- Among all broad fields of education, Health recorded the largest increase in offers (7.4%). This was followed by Information Technology (4.9%).

Table 8: Highest preference applications and offers by field of education (excluding WA), February 2014 and February 2015

Field of education	Highest Preference Applications			Offers		
	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	23,055	22,366	-3.0%	22,295	22,929	2.8%
Information Technology	6,657	6,874	3.3%	5,595	5,871	4.9%
Engineering	15,861	15,397	-2.9%	13,500	13,319	-1.3%
Architecture	7,317	7,128	-2.6%	5,397	5,373	-0.4%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies ²	4,121	3,276	-20.5%	4,054	3,033	-25.2%
Health	68,615	73,766	7.5%	45,294	48,643	7.4%
Education	20,414	18,590	-8.9%	17,403	15,439	-11.3%
Management and Commerce	32,476	33,182	2.2%	30,010	30,136	0.4%
Society and Culture	52,171	50,706	-2.8%	46,899	44,666	-4.8%
Creative Arts	23,492	22,679	-3.5%	17,359	16,520	-4.8%
Australia (excluding WA)	255,670	255,221	-0.2%	209,543	207,473	-1.0%

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

- Among all broad fields of education, Natural and Physical Sciences recorded the highest offer rate (103.1%), followed by Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (92.8%).
- Health (65.8%) and Creative Arts (73.1%) recorded the lowest offer rates in 2015.

² In 2014, one university changed its ASCED coding for courses previously coded under Environmental Studies. Hence, caution is warranted when interpreting the decline in applications in the Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies broad field of education.

- The largest increase in the offer rate between 2014 and 2015 was in Natural and Physical Sciences, up 5.4 percentage points.
- The largest falls in the offer rate were in Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies, down 5.6 percentage points, Education, down 2.0 percentage points and Society and Culture, down 1.8 percentage points.

Table 9: Offer rates by field of education, February 2014 and February 2015

Field of education	Offer Rate		
	2014	2015	Change (p.p)
Natural and Physical Sciences	97.6%	103.1%	5.4
Information Technology	84.2%	85.5%	1.3
Engineering	84.7%	85.8%	1.2
Architecture	74.4%	75.8%	1.3
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	98.4%	92.8%	-5.6
Health	66.0%	65.8%	-0.3
Education	84.9%	82.8%	-2.0
Management and Commerce	92.4%	90.9%	-1.4
Society and Culture	89.6%	87.9%	-1.8
Creative Arts	74.4%	73.1%	-1.2
Australia (excluding WA)	82.1%	81.3%	-0.7

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 (ATAR)

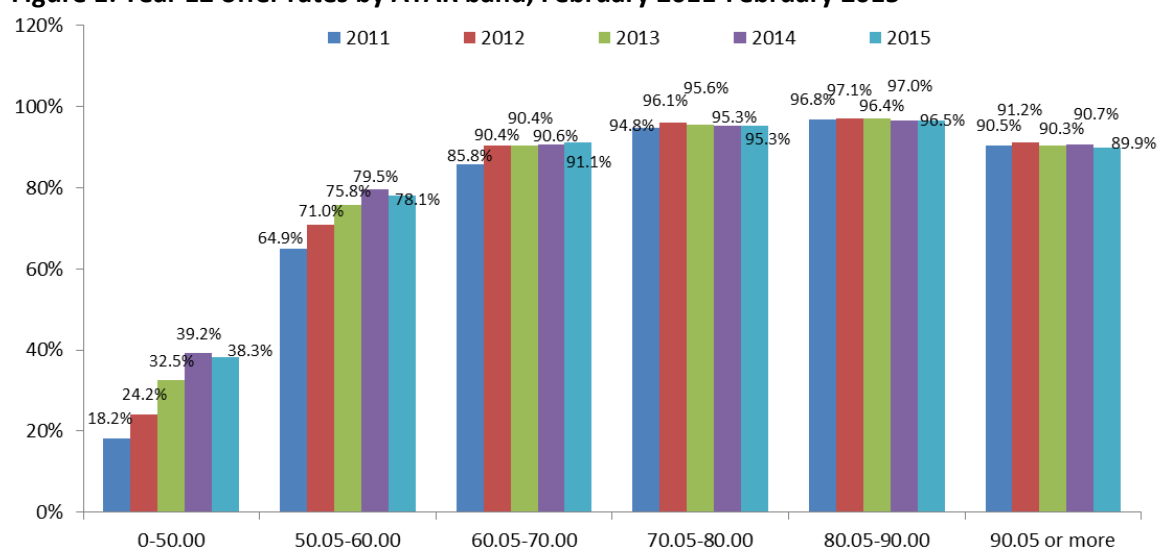
- In 2015, 68.5% of all offers made to Year 12 applicants were for those with an ATAR of at least 70.05. Offers to Year 12 applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90 accounted for 26.5%.
- The share of offers for applicants in the ATAR band “50.00 or less” has increased from 2.1% in 2011 to 5.8% in 2015, or from 2393 to 7071.

Table 10: Share of Year 12 offers by ATAR band, February 2011-February 2015

ATAR band	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
50.00 or less	2,393 (2.1%)	3,607 (3.0%)	5,066 (4.1%)	6,975 (5.5%)	7,071 (5.8%)
50.05-60.00	9,048 (8.0%)	10,511 (8.8%)	11,496 (9.2%)	12,069 (9.6%)	12,399 (10.1%)
60.05-70.00	17,817 (15.7%)	18,797 (15.7%)	18,982 (15.2%)	19,553 (15.5%)	19,312 (15.7%)
70.05-80.00	24,430 (21.5%)	25,407 (21.2%)	25,605 (20.6%)	24,500 (19.4%)	23,411 (19.0%)
80.05-90.00	27,510 (24.2%)	28,361 (23.6%)	29,254 (23.5%)	28,888 (22.9%)	28,163 (22.9%)
90.05 or more	32,410 (28.5%)	33,356 (27.8%)	34,101 (27.4%)	33,985 (27.0%)	32,606 (26.5%)
Total	113,608 (100.0%)	120,039 (100.0%)	124,504 (100.0%)	125,970 (100.0%)	122,962 (100.0%)

- From 2011 to 2015, 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 38.3% in 2015. The offer rates for the top three ATAR bands, while already high, have remained relatively steady.

Figure 1: Year 12 offer rates by ATAR band, February 2011-February 2015



- Natural and Physical Sciences (39.3%) and Engineering (39.0%) 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 Society and Culture (28.8%) and Health (26.6%). This reflects the relatively high ATAR entry requirements for courses in these fields.

Table 11: Share of Year 12 offers by ATAR band for each field of education, February 2015

Field of education	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	622 (3.5%)	1,008 (5.7%)	1,832 (10.4%)	2,779 15.8%	4,441 (25.3%)	6,903 (39.3%)	17,585 (100.0%)
Information Technology	360 (10.1%)	601 (16.8%)	831 (23.3%)	734 (20.6%)	638 (17.9%)	403 (11.3%)	3,567 (100.0%)
Engineering	180 (1.8%)	396 (4.1%)	960 (9.9%)	1,496 (15.4%)	2,910 (29.9%)	3,795 (39.0%)	9,737 (100.0%)
Architecture	115 (4.0%)	238 (8.3%)	448 (15.7%)	797 (27.9%)	808 (28.3%)	449 (15.7%)	2,855 (100.0%)
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	82 (4.5%)	218 (12.0%)	381 (21.0%)	468 (25.7%)	480 (26.4%)	189 (10.4%)	1,818 (100.0%)
Health	1,177 (5.3%)	2,367 (10.7%)	3,694 (16.7%)	4,216 (19.1%)	4,775 (21.6%)	5,888 (26.6%)	22,117 (100.0%)
Education	894 (12.2%)	1,342 (18.3%)	2,009 (27.4%)	1,598 (21.8%)	1,110 (15.1%)	392 (5.3%)	7,345 (100.0%)
Management and Commerce	1,208 (6.3%)	2,172 (11.3%)	3,124 (16.2%)	3,587 (18.6%)	4,220 (21.9%)	4,966 (25.8%)	19,277 (100.0%)
Society and Culture	1,793 (6.6%)	2,854 (10.6%)	3,797 (14.1%)	4,740 (17.6%)	6,027 (22.3%)	7,764 (28.8%)	26,975 (100.0%)
Creative Arts	630 (5.9%)	1,160 (11.0%)	1,926 (18.2%)	2,571 (24.3%)	2,584 (24.4%)	1,721 (16.2%)	10,592 (100.0%)
Australia	7,071 (5.8%)	12,399 (10.1%)	19,312 (15.7%)	23,411 (19.0%)	28,163 (22.9%)	32,606 (26.5%)	122,962 (100.0%)

7. Under-Represented Groups

Socioeconomic status

- In February 2015, 19.1% of total applications (excluding WA) were from applicants from a low socioeconomic status (SES) background, compared with 49.3% for applicants from a medium SES background and 30.0% for applicants from a high SES background (based on the postcode measure of SES³).
- To be represented in proportion to their share in the population, low and high SES applicants would each need to constitute 25.0% of the pool of applicants, with medium SES applicants constituting the remaining 50.0%.
- In 2015, applicants from a low SES background have shown the largest increase (0.5%) compared with those from a medium SES background (0.2%) and a high SES background (-1.0%).

Table 12: Applications and Offers by socioeconomic status (excluding WA), February 2014 and February 2015

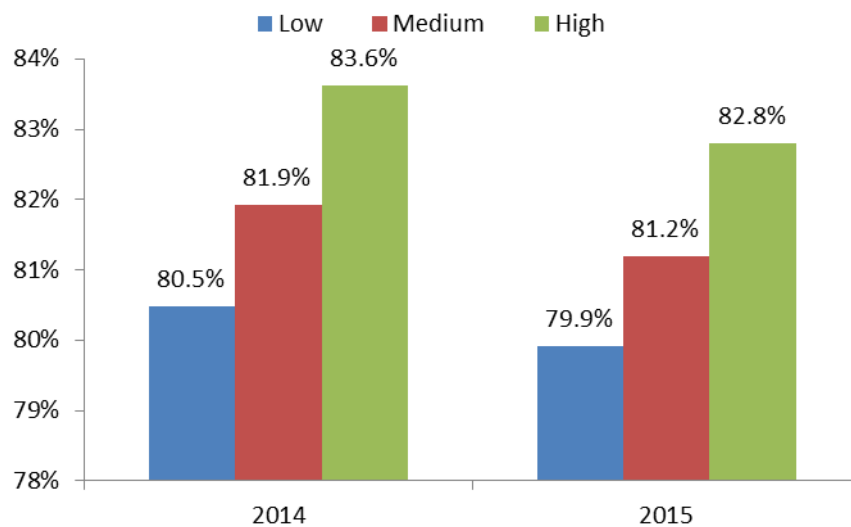
SES	Applications			Offers		
	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change
Low	48,626	48,859	0.5%	39,139	39,048	-0.2%
Medium	125,464	125,709	0.2%	102,787	102,069	-0.7%
High	77,428	76,678	-1.0%	64,746	63,491	-1.9%
Total*	255,670	255,221	-0.2%	209,543	207,473	-1.0%

* The Australia total includes data that could not be coded to an SES value.

- Since 2014, offers to applicants from a low SES background (excluding WA) have shown the smallest decrease (-0.2%) compared with offers to applicants from a medium SES background (-0.7%) and high SES background (-1.9%).
- However, applicants from a low SES background were less likely to receive an offer. Their offer rate was 79.9% compared with 81.2% for applicants from a medium SES background and 82.8% for applicants from a high SES background in 2015.

³ SES in this report is based on the students' postcode of permanent home residence, with the SES value derived from the 2011 ABS Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation (IEO). The postcode measure of SES provides an indication of the level of disadvantage of an applicant by providing data on the disadvantage associated with the geographical area (postcode) of the applicant's home address. The postcode measure uses a population reference point of 25% for low SES. The postcodes that comprise the bottom 25% of the population aged between 15 to 64 years are considered low SES postcodes. Applicants with a home address in a low SES postcode are classified as applicants from a low SES background. Applicants with residential addresses outside Australia, and Australian resident applicants with postcodes that do not have SEIFA values are classified as 'unknown'.

Figure 2: Offer rates by socioeconomic status (excluding WA), February 2014 and February 2015

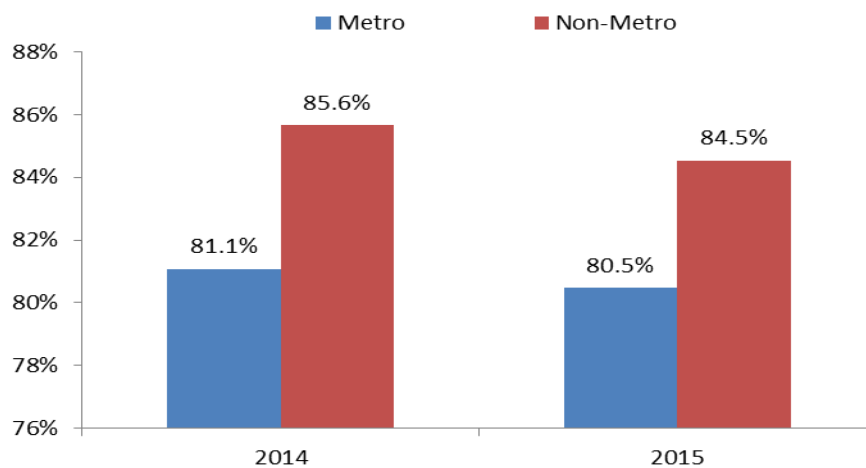


Regional status⁴

- Three quarters of applications (excluding WA) were from applicants living in metropolitan areas in 2015.
- In 2015, applications from metropolitan residents remained steady, while applications from non-metropolitan residents decreased by 0.4%.
- Offers made to metropolitan applicants (excluding WA) decreased by 0.7% compared with a decrease of 1.7% in offers made to non-metropolitan applicants.
- Applications from non-metropolitan residents were more likely to result in an offer compared with applications from metropolitan residents, 84.5% compared with 80.5% respectively.
- In 2015, offer rates for both metropolitan and non-metropolitan applicants decreased from 81.1% to 80.5% and from 85.6% to 84.5% respectively.

⁴ Applicants' postcode of permanent home residence has been used to construct indicators of applicants' geographic region. To categorise applicants, postcodes are assigned to two groups (metropolitan and non-metropolitan) based on the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

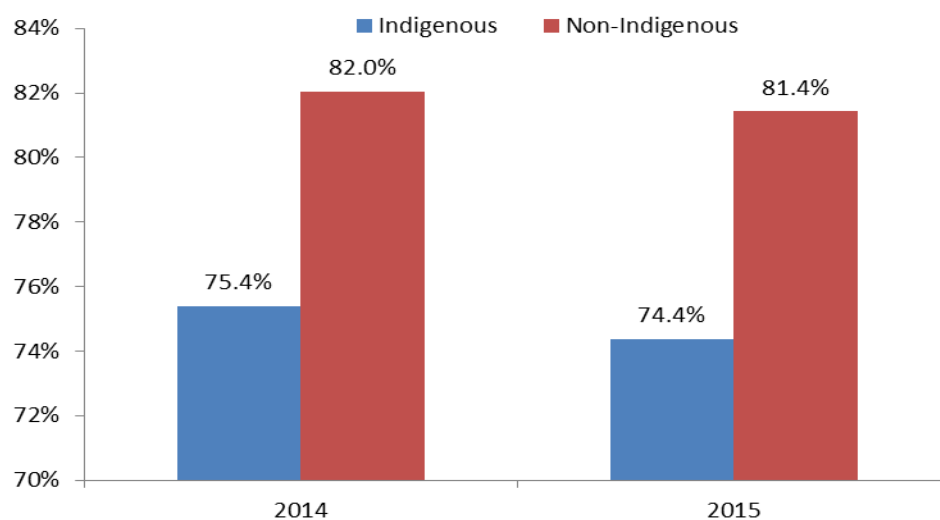
Figure 3: Offer rates by region (excluding WA), February 2014 and February 2015



Indigenous status

- Nationally (excluding WA), there were 3919 applications from applicants who identified as Indigenous (Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both). This represents 1.5% of all applications received by TACs.
- Nationally (excluding WA), 2915 offers were made to Indigenous applicants.
- As of 27 February 2015, just over three quarters (74.4%) of Indigenous applicants had received an offer. This is a decrease of 1.0 percentage point compared with the same period last year. The offer rate for non-Indigenous applicants was 81.4% in 2015, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points over 2014.

Figure 4: Offer rates by Indigenous status (excluding WA), February 2014 and February 2015



8. University Group

Highest preference applications

- Applications to the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) universities (excluding Murdoch University) recorded an increase of 10.2% in 2015.
- Applications decreased among the other university groups with applications to the Group of Eight (Go8) (excluding The University of Western Australia), Regional Universities Network (RUN) and Australian Technology Network (ATN) (excluding Curtin University of Technology) decreasing by 3.4%, 2.1% and 0.1% respectively.

Offers

- The IRU universities (excluding Murdoch University) recorded the largest increase in offers (1.3%) in 2015, followed by ATN (excluding Curtin University of Technology) (1.1%).

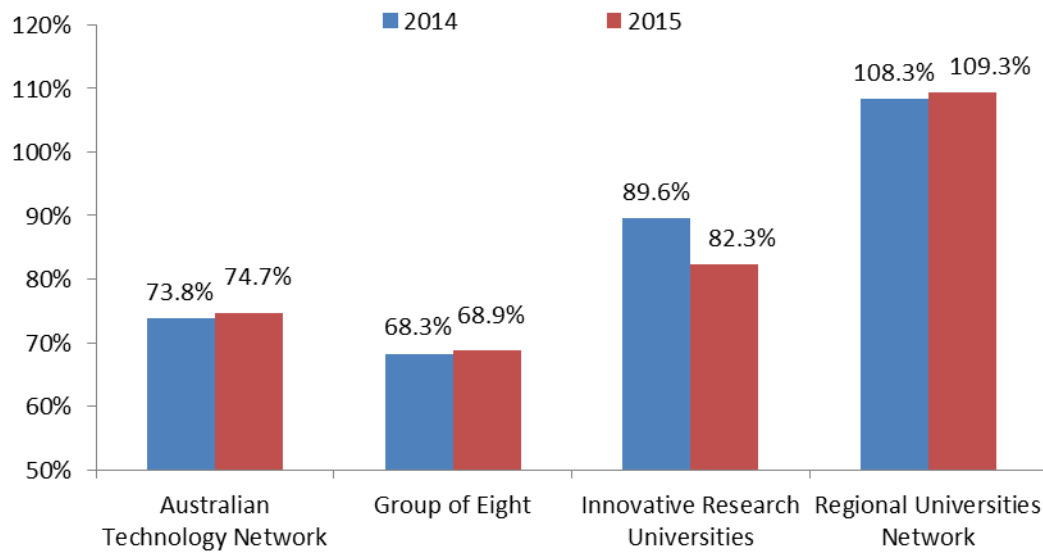
Table 13: Highest preference applications and offers by university group (excluding WA universities), February 2014 and February 2015

Type of university	Highest Preference Applications			Offers		
	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change
Australian Technology Network (ATN)	46,487	46,455	-0.1%	34,328	34,691	1.1%
Group of Eight (Go8)	79,955	77,255	-3.4%	54,584	53,212	-2.5%
Innovative Research Universities (IRU)	33,291	36,696	10.2%	29,830	30,217	1.3%
Regional Universities Network (RUN)	14,099	13,807	-2.1%	15,275	15,094	-1.2%
Australia (excluding WA)	255,670	255,221	-0.2%	209,543	207,473	-1.0%

Offer rates

- Applications to Go8 universities (excluding The University of Western Australia) and ATN universities (excluding Curtin University of Technology) were least likely to receive an offer in 2015 (offer rates of 68.9% and 74.7% respectively), reflecting the higher entry requirements at these universities. Figure 5 shows the offer rates by university group (excluding WA universities).
- Offer rates increased at RUN universities (up 1.0 percentage point to 109.3%), at ATN universities (excluding Curtin University of Technology) (up 0.9 percentage points to 74.7%) and at Go8 universities (excluding The University of Western Australia) (up 0.6 percentage points to 68.9%).
- The offer rate at IRU universities (excluding Murdoch University) decreased 7.3 percentage points to 82.3% in 2015.

Figure 5: Offer rates by university group (excluding WA universities), February 2014 and February 2015



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. Direct Applications⁵

Applications

- As of 27 February 2015, there were 95 819 direct applications made to universities, an increase of 6.8% on the number of direct applications in 2014.
- Non-Year 12 applicants represent the majority of direct applications. Applications from these applicants accounted for 96.4% of applications as of 27 February 2015, the same as the share of applications in 2014.
- The largest increases in direct applications between May 2014 and February 2015 were in Architecture, up 61.0%, Society and Culture, up 11.8% and Information Technology, up 11.6%.
- Direct applications fell in the fields of Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies, and Creative Arts, down 2.8% and 0.6% respectively.
- Note, caution should be exercised in interpretation of direct applications data at disaggregated level, for example, by field of education, since universities' direct admissions processes can vary from year to year. In addition, though there may be large percentage changes in direct applications and offers, this could be from a relatively low base.

Table 14: Direct applications by broad field of education, May 2014 and February 2015

Field of education	2014	2015	% Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	8,066	8,488	5.2%
Information Technology	2,208	2,465	11.6%
Engineering	4,375	4,551	4.0%
Architecture	1,035	1,666	61.0%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	1,638	1,592	-2.8%
Health	17,842	18,306	2.6%
Education	10,922	11,262	3.1%
Management and Commerce	10,790	11,585	7.4%
Society and Culture	26,555	29,698	11.8%
Creative Arts	6,201	6,162	-0.6%
Australia	89,718	95,819	6.8%

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.

Offers

- As of 27 February 2015, there were 78 227 direct offers made by universities, an increase of 9.1% on the number of direct offers made in 2014.
- The largest increases in direct offers between May 2014 and February 2015 were in Architecture, up 51.1%, Management and Commerce, up 11.2%, Society and Culture, up 11.1% and Information Technology, up 10.4%.

⁵ Note that comparable 2014 direct applications data (as of 27 February 2014) are not available. Hence comparisons made in this section of the report are made with the 2014 final (May) data. While such comparisons relate to applications data at different times in the data reporting schedule, it is worth noting that third round (February) applications data represents approximately 99.4% of final applications data (based on analysis of 2014 TAC data).

- The only field of education to see a fall in the number of direct offers was Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies, down 5.3%.

Table 15: Direct offers by broad field of education, May 2014 and February 2015

Field of education	2014	2015	% Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	6,583	7,104	7.9%
Information Technology	1,920	2,120	10.4%
Engineering	3,924	4,156	5.9%
Architecture	936	1,414	51.1%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	1,463	1,386	-5.3%
Health	12,746	14,013	9.9%
Education	9,168	9,636	5.1%
Management and Commerce	9,125	10,149	11.2%
Society and Culture	20,542	22,829	11.1%
Creative Arts	5,245	5,411	3.2%
Australia*	71,682	78,227	9.1%

Note: 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.

Total applications and offers - TAC and direct combined

- As of 27 February 2015, 314 198 applicants had applied for a university place, either through a TAC (excluding WA) or directly to a university (including WA). This is 1.0% above the number of applicants as of May 2014.
- Some applicants make multiple TAC applications (i.e. across different states). Accounting for this, the 255 221 TAC applications (excluding WA) had been made by 233 076 unique applicants.
- The 95 819 direct applications were made by 92 364 unique applicants.
- A comparison of the TAC and direct applications datasets shows that 11 242 applicants applied through a TAC and directly to a university.
- Similar analysis of offers data shows there were 264 680 applicants who received an offer either through a TAC or directly from a university, an increase of 0.9% on 2014.
- There were 194 270 applicants that received an offer through a TAC (excluding WA) and 77 097 (including WA) applicants that received an offer directly from a university with 6687 applicants receiving an offer both directly and through a TAC.

10. Data Qualifications

The data referred to in this report are for highest preference applications and offers for domestic undergraduate university places through TACs and universities as of 27 February 2015. This data represents approximately 99.4% cent of final highest preference applications data and 98.8% of final offers data in 2014 received from TACs (based on analysis of 2014 third round submissions data).

It should be noted that:

- Applications and offers data in this report refer to TAC data and applications made directly to universities. More comprehensive comparisons, including detailed direct applications and offers, will be incorporated in the final report.
- Only applications made to Table A institutions and University of Notre Dame (Table B) are included in the analysis.
- The data does not include applications from overseas students.
- All references to “applications” (in TAC data) in this report relate to highest preference applications.
- A small proportion of applicants make applications to more than one TAC resulting in some double counting of applicants.
- “State and territory” in this report refers to state and territory of the Tertiary Admissions Centre.
- All references to “2015” in this report relate to the 2015 third round submission through TACs and the first round data submission on applications made directly to universities as of 27 February for the first semester of the 2015 academic year .
- Reference dates for Tasmanian applications and offers data may vary from year to year. Hence, data may not be directly comparable across years.
- 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

Australian Technology Network

- Curtin University of Technology
- Queensland University of Technology
- RMIT University
- University of South Australia
- University of Technology, Sydney

Group of Eight

- 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

Innovative Research Universities

- Charles Darwin University
- Flinders University of South Australia
- Griffith University
- James Cook University
- La Trobe University

Murdoch University

Regional Universities Network

Central Queensland University

Southern Cross University

Federation University Australia

University of New England

University of Southern Queensland

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;

The University of Newcastle; University of Tasmania; University of Western Sydney; University of Wollongong; and Victoria University.