



Australian Government

Department of Education and Training

**Undergraduate Applications and Offers,
February 2016**

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The document must be attributed as the Undergraduate Applications and Offers, February 2016 report.

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Department of Education and Training

GPO Box 9880

CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

For questions regarding application data or for further information, please email Applicationdata@Education.gov.au.

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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 2016 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 2016.

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 29 February 2016. 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 2016 and June 2016. 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 2016.

One particular issue has affected the reporting of 2015 and 2016 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 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. This has the effect of leading to an apparent fall in applications in 2015 and conversely an apparent increase in applications in 2016 i.e. in 2016 the reversing of the half-year cohort effect that

occurred in 2015. 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 2016 academic year.

2. Highlights

Total Applications and Offers – TAC and Direct

- The actual number of individuals applying either through a TAC (excluding WA) or directly for a university place in 2016 was 322,014, an increase of 1.9% compared to 2015. Direct applicants made up 30.4% of total applicants in 2016.
- There were 269,731 unique offers made, an increase of 1.2% on 2015. Direct offers accounted for 30.1% of total offers.
- The offer rate in 2016 was 83.8%, a decline of 0.5 percentage points from the previous year.
- Following the introduction of the demand driven system from 2012, the offer rate measures the way in which universities choose to respond to student demand.
- Nationally, Year 12 applicants increased by 2.2% and the number of offers to Year 12 applicants increased by 3.3%. The number of non-Year 12 applicants increased by 1.6% and offers to non-Year 12 applicants decreased by 0.2%. The offer rate for Year 12 applicants was 87.1% which was higher than the offer rate of 81.5% for non-Year 12 applicants.

Field of education

- The most popular broad field of education (in terms of number of applications) in 2016 was Health (81,173 highest preference applications or 25.2% of applications). This was followed by Society and Culture (73,318 highest preference applications or 22.8% of applications) and Management and Commerce (42,098 highest preference applications or 13.1% of applications).
- Fields of education that recorded strongest growth in applications in 2016 were Information Technology (5.4%), followed by Creative Arts (5.2%), Health (5.1%) and Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (5.1%).
- Society and Culture received the largest number of offers (63,538 or 23.6% of total offers), followed by Health (60,768 or 22.5% of total offers).
- Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies recorded the largest increase in offers (5.7%) followed by Health (5.2%) and Creative Arts (5.1%).
- Natural and Physical Sciences had the highest offer rate at 96.2%, but showed a decline in 2016 of 1.7 percentage points. Health had the lowest offer rate of 74.9% in 2016. Education experienced the largest fall in the offer rate in 2016 of 2.1 percentage points.

Underrepresented groups

- Applications from applicants from low SES backgrounds have shown a 2.2% increase compared with those from medium SES backgrounds (2.1%) and high SES backgrounds (1.3%) in 2016.
- From 2015 to 2016, offers to applicants from low SES backgrounds have grown by 2.3%, compared with 1.7% for medium SES applicants and -0.1% for high SES applicants.
- Applicants from low SES backgrounds are less likely to receive an offer compared with medium SES and high SES applicants. Their offer rate was 82.7% compared with 83.9% for medium SES applicants and 84.8% for high SES applicants in 2016.
- In 2016, applications from non-metropolitan and metropolitan residents equally increased by 1.9%.
- Offers to non-metropolitan applicants increased by 1.1% in comparison with 1.3% growth in offers to metropolitan applicants.
- Non-metropolitan applicants are more likely to receive an offer than metropolitan applicants with their offer rates in 2016 being 86.0% and 83.2% respectively.

- Nationally, there were 6603 applicants from an Indigenous background, an increase of 9.6% from 2015 and offers to Indigenous applicants increased by 11.0%.
- The offer rate for Indigenous applicants was 81.1% which was 3.0 percentage points lower than the offer rate for persons who identified as non-Indigenous.

Highest Preference Applications and Offers through TACs

- As of 29 February 2016, there were 272,543 applications made through TACs. Excluding WA, 255,322 applications were made. This is a decrease of 1968 applications, or 0.8%, compared with the same time in 2015. This follows a decrease of 0.2% at the same point in time between 2014 and 2015.
- There were 221,060 offers made, an increase of 637 (0.3%) compared with the same time in 2015. Excluding WA, 206,909 offers were made through TACs in 2016. This is a decrease of 2470 applications, or 1.2% compared with 2015. This follows a decrease of 1.0% between 2014 and 2015.
- The largest growth in offers was recorded in WA (28.1%), followed by Tasmania (13.6%) and Qld (1.8%). SA/NT (-6.4%), NSW/ACT (-2.8%) and Victoria (-2.7%) experienced declines in offers.
- More than four-fifths of applications, 81.0%, attracted an offer in 2016, a decrease of 0.3 percentage points over 2015. This follows a decrease of 0.7 percentage points between 2014 and 2015. Following the introduction of the demand driven system from 2012 the offer rate measures the way in which universities choose to respond to student demand.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

- In 2016, 40.5% of all TAC offers made to applicants were for those with an ATAR of at least 70.05. Offers to applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90 accounted for 15.7% of all TAC offers.
- The share of offers for applicants in the ATAR band 50.00 or less has increased from 1.6% in 2012 to 4.4% in 2016, or from 3607 to 9723.
- During this time, the likelihood of an applicant with a low ATAR receiving an offer has recorded a greater increase than an applicant with a higher ATAR. In part, this is because offer rates for applicants with a higher ATAR are starting from a higher base so there is less scope for an increase in offer rates. Offer rates for Year 12 applicants in the 50.00 or less ATAR band increased from 24.2% (14,910) in 2012 to 48.5% (20,050) in 2016. The offer rates for the top three ATAR bands, while already high, have remained relatively steady.

Direct Applications and offers

- The total number of applications (per person per university) made directly to universities in 2016 was 106,693, an increase of 11.3% when compared with 2015.
- There were 84,768 offers resulting from direct applications, an increase of 8.4% between 2015 and 2016.
- Offer rates in relation to direct applications decreased from 81.6% to 79.5% over the same period.
- Compared to TAC applicants, direct applicants were less likely to be Year 12 students and hence were more likely to be older. Female and Indigenous applicants made up a larger share of direct applicants than TAC applicants.

3. Applications to Tertiary Admissions Centres

Highest Preference Applications - Overall trends

- As of 29 February 2016, there were 272,543 applications made through TACs. Excluding WA, there were 255,322 applications, a decrease of 1968 applications, or 0.8%, compared with the same time in 2015. This follows a decrease of 0.2% between 2014 and 2015 (excluding WA).
- Compared with 2015, WA recorded the largest growth in applications (27.7%, attributable to WA's 'half-year' cohort effect), followed by Tasmania (13.7%) and Queensland (4.8%). Applications in SA/NT declined by 6.5%, followed by NSW/ACT (-4.2%) and Victoria (-1.5%).

Table 1: Highest preference applications by state and territory, February 2015 and February 2016

State/Territory	2015	2016	Change
NSW/ACT	86,704	83,076	-4.2%
Vic.	71,618	70,573	-1.5%
Qld.	55,124	57,766	4.8%
WA	13,483	17,221	27.7%
SA/NT	29,397	27,482	-6.5%
Tas*.	14,447	16,425	13.7%
Australia	270,773	272,543	0.7%
Australia (excluding WA)	257,290	255,322	-0.8%

* See details under Section 11: Data Qualifications.

Year 12 status

- Nationally, Year 12 applications, excluding WA, increased by 1.6% in 2016, following an increase of 1.3% in 2015.
- All states and territories recorded increases in Year 12 applications, except for SA/NT (-0.2%).
- Non-Year 12 applications decreased by 3.9% in 2016, following a decrease of 2.5% in 2015.
- 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.
- Except Tasmania (16.4%) and Queensland (8.1%), all states and territories recorded declines in non-Year 12 applications in 2016: NSW/ACT (-13.0%), SA/NT (-11.6%), WA (-8.2%) and Victoria (-6.5%).

Table 2: Highest preference applications by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2015 and February 2016

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
NSW/ACT	50,402	51,476	2.1%	36,302	31,600	-13.0%
Vic.	46,316	46,908	1.3%	25,302	23,665	-6.5%
Qld.	28,803	29,301	1.7%	26,321	28,465	8.1%
WA	8,558	12,701	48.4%	4,925	4,520	-8.2%
SA/NT	13,153	13,124	-0.2%	16,244	14,358	-11.6%
Tas.	3,145	3,274	4.1%	11,302	13,151	16.4%
Australia	150,377	156,784	4.3%	120,396	115,759	-3.9%
Australia (excluding WA)	141,819	144,083	1.6%	115,471	111,239	-3.7%

- Nationally, Year 12 applications represent 57.5% of total applications, an increase of 2.0 percentage points compared with 2015. Excluding WA, Year 12 applications represent 56.4% of total applications, an increase of 1.3 percentage points.
- WA recorded the highest proportion of Year 12 applications (73.8%). This was an increase of 10.3 percentage points compared with 2015 (attributable to WA's 'half year' Year 12 cohort effect). Victoria recorded the next highest proportion (66.5%), increasing by 1.8 percentage points.

Table 3: Proportion of Year 12 highest preference applications by state and territory, February 2015 and February 2016

State/Territory	2015	2016	Change
NSW/ACT	58.1%	62.0%	3.8 p. p
Vic.	64.7%	66.5%	1.8 p. p
Qld.	52.3%	50.7%	-1.5 p. p
WA	63.5%	73.8%	10.3 p. p
SA/NT	44.7%	47.8%	3.0 p. p
Tas.	21.8%	19.9%	-1.8 p. p
Australia	55.5%	57.5%	2.0 p. p
Australia (excluding WA)	55.1%	56.4%	1.3 p. p

4. Offers through Tertiary Admissions Centres

Overall trends

- As of 29 February 2016, there were 221,060 offers made, an increase of 637 (0.3%) compared with the same time in 2015. Excluding WA, offers decreased by 1.2% in 2016. This follows a decrease of 1.0% between 2014 and 2015.
- The largest growth in offers was recorded in WA (28.1%), followed by Tasmania (13.6%) and Qld (1.8%). SA/NT (-6.4%), NSW/ACT (-2.8%) and Victoria (-2.7%) each experienced a decline in offers.
- More than four-fifths of applications (81.0%) attracted an offer in 2016, a decrease of 0.3 percentage points over 2015. This follows a decrease of 0.7 percentage points between 2014 and 2015.

Table 4: Offers and offer rates by state and territory, February 2015 and February 2016

State/Territory	Offers			Offer rates		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
NSW/ACT	72,727	70,706	-2.8%	83.9%	85.1%	1.2 p. p
Vic.	56,874	55,323	-2.7%	79.4%	78.4%	-1.0 p. p
Qld.	46,243	47,098	1.8%	83.9%	81.5%	-2.4 p. p
WA	11,044	14,151	28.1%	81.9%	82.2%	0.3 p. p
SA/NT	21,641	20,265	-6.4%	73.6%	73.7%	0.1 p. p
Tas.	11,894	13,517	13.6%	82.3%	82.3%	0.0 p. p
Australia	220,423	221,060	0.3%	81.4%	81.1%	-0.3 p. p
Australia (excluding WA)	209,379	206,909	-1.2%	81.4%	81.0%	-0.3 p. p

Year 12 status

- Nationally, offers to Year 12 applicants increased by 5.6% in 2016. Excluding WA, offers to Year 12 applicants increased by 3.0% in 2016. This follows an increase of 0.6% in 2015.
- Offers to Year 12 applicants increased in all states and territories. WA recorded the highest growth (49.7%), followed by NSW/ACT (6.2%) and Tasmania (6.2%). SA/NT recorded the lowest growth (0.2%).
- Offers to non-Year 12 applicants fell by 6.8% nationally. This follows a fall of 3.0% in 2015.

Table 5: Offers by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2015 and February 2016

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
NSW/ACT	43,091	45,781	6.2%	29,636	24,925	-15.9%
Vic.	37,618	37,852	0.6%	19,256	17,471	-9.3%
Qld.	25,131	25,576	1.8%	21,112	21,522	1.9%
WA	7,024	10,515	49.7%	4,020	3,636	-9.6%
SA/NT	10,481	10,504	0.2%	11,160	9,761	-12.5%
Tas.	2,479	2,633	6.2%	9,415	10,884	15.6%
Australia	125,824	132,861	5.6%	94,599	88,199	-6.8%
Australia (excluding WA)	118,800	122,346	3.0%	90,579	84,563	-6.6%

- Nationally, applications from Year 12 students were more likely to receive an offer than non-Year 12 students. In 2016, the Year 12 offer rate was 84.7% compared with the non-Year 12 offer rate of 76.2%. Excluding WA, the Year 12 and non-Year 12 offer rates were 84.9% and 76.0% respectively.
- Offer rates for Year 12 students increased by 1.1 percentage points to 84.7% in 2016 following a decrease of 0.7 percentage points in 2015. Offer rates for non-Year 12 students decreased by 2.4 percentage points in 2016 following a decrease of 0.8 percentage points in 2015.
- In 2016, 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 NSW/ACT (88.9%) and Queensland (87.3%) in 2016.

Table 6: Offer rates by Year 12 status, by state and territory, February 2015 and February 2016

State/Territory	Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
NSW/ACT	85.5%	88.9%	3.4 p. p	81.6%	78.9%	-2.8 p. p
Vic.	81.2%	80.7%	-0.5 p. p	76.1%	73.8%	-2.3 p. p
Qld.	87.3%	87.3%	0.0 p. p	80.2%	75.6%	-4.6 p. p
WA	82.1%	82.8%	0.7 p. p	81.6%	80.4%	-1.2 p. p
SA/NT	79.7%	80.0%	0.4 p. p	68.7%	68.0%	-0.7 p. p
Tas.	78.8%	80.4%	1.6 p. p	83.3%	82.8%	-0.5 p. p
Australia	83.7%	84.7%	1.1 p. p	78.6%	76.2%	-2.4 p. p
Australia (Excluding WA)	83.8%	84.9%	1.1 p. p	78.4%	76.0%	-2.4 p. p

- In 2016, offers to Year 12 applicants represented 60.1% of total offers, an increase of 3.0 percentage points from 2015. Excluding WA, offers to Year 12 applicants represented 59.1% of total offers, an increase of 2.4 percentage points from 2015.
- WA recorded the highest proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants (74.3%). WA recorded the largest increase (10.7 percentage points) in the proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants compared with 2015, followed by NSW/ACT (5.5 percentage points) and SA/NT (3.4 percentage points). Tasmania recorded a 1.4 percentage points fall in the proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants compared with 2015.

Table 7: Proportion of offers to Year 12 applicants by state and territory, February 2015 and February 2016

State/Territory	2015	2016	Change
NSW/ACT	59.3%	64.7%	5.5 p. p
Vic.	66.1%	68.4%	2.3 p. p
Qld.	54.3%	54.3%	0.0 p. p
WA	63.6%	74.3%	10.7 p. p
SA/NT	48.4%	51.8%	3.4 p. p
Tas.	20.8%	19.5%	-1.4 p. p
Australia	57.1%	60.1%	3.0 p. p
Australia (excluding WA)	56.7%	59.1%	2.4 p. p

5. Field of Education

Highest preference applications

- Nationally (excluding WA), the most popular broad field of education (in terms of number of applications) in 2016 was Health (77,114 highest preference applications or 30.2% of all applications). This was followed by Society and Culture (49,573 applications or 19.4% of all applications) and Management and Commerce (31,972 applications or 12.5% of all applications).
- Among all broad fields of education, Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies recorded the largest increase in applications (8.7%). This was followed by Health (2.8%) and Information Technology (1.4%).
- The largest decrease in applications was recorded in Education (-8.3%), followed by Management and Commerce (-3.7%).

Offers

- Nationally (excluding WA), Health received the largest number of offers (51,639 or 25.0% of total offers). This was followed by Society and Culture (44,340 or 21.4% of total offers).
- Among all broad fields of education, Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies recorded the largest increase in offers (7.3%). This was followed Architecture and Building (4.4%).

Table 8: Highest preference applications and offers by field of education (excluding WA), February 2015 and February 2016

Field of education	Highest Preference Applications			Offers		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	22,490	23,049	2.5%	23,044	23,405	1.6%
Information Technology	6,875	6,970	1.4%	5,873	5,844	-0.5%
Engineering and Related Technologies	15,507	15,276	-1.5%	13,417	13,029	-2.9%
Architecture and Building	7,133	7,263	1.8%	5,377	5,613	4.4%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	3,290	3,577	8.7%	3,047	3,270	7.3%
Health	75,022	77,114	2.8%	49,860	51,639	3.6%
Education	18,760	17,204	-8.3%	15,608	13,684	-12.3%
Management and Commerce	33,201	31,972	-3.7%	30,155	28,648	-5.0%
Society and Culture	51,020	49,573	-2.8%	44,885	44,340	-1.2%
Creative Arts	22,735	22,037	-3.1%	16,569	16,011	-3.4%
Australia (excluding WA)	257,290	255,322	-0.8%	209,379	206,909	-1.2%

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 (101.5%), followed by Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (91.4%).
- Health (67.0%) and Creative Arts (72.7%) recorded the lowest offer rates in 2016.
- The largest increase in the offer rate between 2015 and 2016 was in Architecture, up by 1.9 percentage points.
- The largest falls in the offer rate were in Education, down 3.7 percentage points, Information Technology, down 1.6 percentage points, Agriculture, Environmental and

Related Studies, Engineering and Related Technologies and, Management and Commerce, all equally down by 1.2 percentage points.

Table 9: Offer rates by field of education, February 2015 and February 2016

Field of education	Offer Rate		
	2015	2016	Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	102.5%	101.5%	-0.9 p. p
Information Technology	85.4%	83.8%	-1.6 p. p
Engineering and Related Technologies	86.5%	85.3%	-1.2 p. p
Architecture and Building	75.4%	77.3%	1.9 p. p
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	92.6%	91.4%	-1.2 p. p
Health	66.5%	67.0%	0.5 p. p
Education	83.2%	79.5%	-3.7 p. p
Management and Commerce	90.8%	89.6%	-1.2 p. p
Society and Culture	88.0%	89.4%	1.5 p. p
Creative Arts	72.9%	72.7%	-0.2 p. p
Australia (excluding WA)	81.4%	81.0%	-0.3 p. p

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)

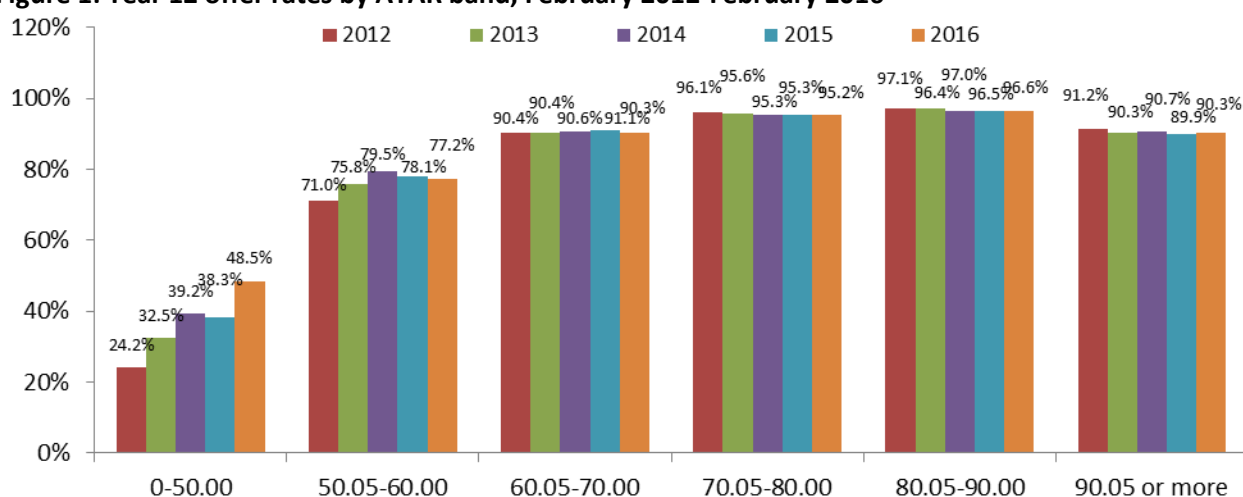
- In 2016, 40.5% of all TAC offers made to applicants were for those with an ATAR of at least 70.05. Offers to applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90 accounted for 15.7% of all TAC offers.
- The share of offers for applicants in the ATAR band 50.00 or less has increased from 1.6% in 2012 to 4.4% in 2016, or from 3607 to 9723.

Table 10: Share of Year 12 offers by ATAR band, February 2012-February 2016

ATAR band	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
50.00 or less	3,607 (1.6%)	5,066 (2.3%)	6,975 (3.1%)	7,071 (3.2%)	9,723 (4.4%)
50.05-60.00	10,511 (4.7%)	11,496 (5.2%)	12,069 (5.4%)	12,399 (5.6%)	11,610 (5.3%)
60.05-70.00	18,797 (8.5%)	18,982 (8.5%)	19,553 (8.7%)	19,312 (8.8%)	18,719 (8.5%)
70.05-80.00	25,407 (11.5%)	25,605 (11.5%)	24,500 (10.9%)	23,411 (10.6%)	25,262 (11.4%)
80.05-90.00	28,361 (12.8%)	29,254 (13.1%)	28,888 (12.9%)	28,163 (12.8%)	29,443 (13.3%)
90.05 or more	33,356 (15.0%)	34,101 (15.3%)	33,985 (15.1%)	32,606 (14.8%)	34,736 (15.7%)
No ATAR/ Non-Yr 12	101,726 (45.9%)	98,696 (44.2%)	98,693 (43.9%)	97,404 (44.2%)	91,567 (41.4%)
Total	221,765 (100.0%)	223,200 (100.0%)	224,663 (100.0%)	220,423 (100.0%)	221,060 (100.0%)

- From 2012 to 2016, offer rates for Year 12 applicants in the ATAR band 50.00 or less increased from 24.2% (of 14,910) in 2012 to 48.5% (of 20,050) in 2016. 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 2012-February 2016



- Engineering (30.0%) and Natural and Physical Sciences (28.4%) recorded the largest share of offers made to applicants who achieved an ATAR in the highest band (90.05 or more). This reflects the relatively high ATAR entry requirements for courses in these fields.
- From 2012 to 2016, the offer rate for non-Year 12 applicants plus Year 12 applicants without an ATAR remained steady at around 76%.

Table 11: Share of Year 12 offers by ATAR band for each field of education, February 2016

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	No ATAR/ Non-Yr 12	Total offers
Natural and Physical Sciences	705 (2.7%)	947 (3.6%)	1,820 (6.9%)	3,001 (11.4%)	5,003 (18.9%)	7,506 (28.4%)	7,434 (28.1%)	26,416 (100.0%)
Information Technology	418 (7.0%)	586 (9.8%)	806 (13.4%)	795 (13.3%)	707 (11.8%)	401 (6.7%)	2,281 (38.1%)	5,994 (100.0%)
Engineering and Related Technologies	289 (2.1%)	417 (3.0%)	889 (6.3%)	1,769 (12.6%)	2,741 (19.5%)	4,203 (30.0%)	3,719 (26.5%)	14,027 (100.0%)
Architecture and Building	316 (5.2%)	282 (4.6%)	496 (8.2%)	937 (15.4%)	862 (14.2%)	544 (9.0%)	2,634 (43.4%)	6,071 (100.0%)
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	98 (2.9%)	176 (5.3%)	301 (9.0%)	529 (15.8%)	609 (18.2%)	366 (10.9%)	1,271 (37.9%)	3,350 (100.0%)
Health	1,568 (2.9%)	2,079 (3.8%)	3,534 (6.5%)	4,634 (8.5%)	5,253 (9.6%)	6,346 (11.6%)	31,341 (57.2%)	54,755 (100.0%)
Education	1,062 (7.3%)	1,135 (7.9%)	1,851 (12.8%)	1,769 (12.2%)	1,130 (7.8%)	431 (3.0%)	7,077 (49.0%)	14,455 (100.0%)
Management and Commerce	1,742 (5.7%)	2,047 (6.7%)	3,109 (10.1%)	3,887 (12.7%)	4,465 (14.6%)	5,059 (16.5%)	10,331 (33.7%)	30,640 (100.0%)
Society and Culture	2,814 (6.0%)	2,807 (6.0%)	3,806 (8.1%)	5,030 (10.7%)	6,043 (12.9%)	8,180 (17.5%)	18,161 (38.8%)	46,841 (100.0%)
Creative Arts	683 (4.0%)	1,083 (6.3%)	1,814 (10.6%)	2,605 (15.3%)	2,514 (14.7%)	1,614 (9.5%)	6,764 (39.6%)	17,077 (100.0%)
Total	9,723 (4.4%)	11,610 (5.3%)	18,719 (8.5%)	25,262 (11.4%)	29,443 (13.3%)	34,736 (15.7%)	91,567 (41.4%)	221,060 (100.0%)

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

7. Under-Represented Groups

Socioeconomic status

- In February 2016, 19.3% of total applications (excluding WA) were from applicants from a low socioeconomic status (SES) background, compared with 49.6% for applicants from a medium SES background and 29.6% for applicants from a high SES background (based on the postcode measure of SES¹).
- 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 2016, applicants from a low SES background remained steady compared with the 2015 applications. On the other hand, applications from medium and high SES backgrounds experienced negative growth -0.2% and -2.3%, respectively.

Table 12: Applications and Offers by socioeconomic status (excluding WA), February 2015 and February 2016

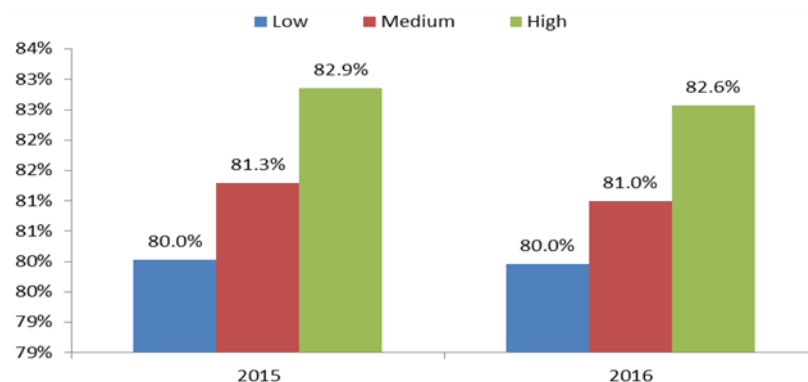
SES	Applications			Offers		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
Low	49,251	49,256	0.0%	39,416	39,383	-0.1%
Medium	126,772	126,578	-0.2%	103,057	102,526	-0.5%
High	77,263	75,453	-2.3%	64,014	62,305	-2.7%
Total*	257,290	255,322	-0.8%	209,379	206,909	-1.2%

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

- Since 2015, offers to applicants from a low SES background (excluding WA) have shown the smallest decrease (-0.1%) compared with offers to applicants from a medium SES background (-0.5%) and high SES background (-2.7%).
- However, applicants from a low SES background were less likely to receive an offer. Their offer rate was 80.0% compared with 81.0% for applicants from a medium SES background and 82.6% for applicants from a high SES background in 2016.

¹ 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 2015 and February 2016



Regional status²

- About 74.3% of applications (excluding WA) were from applicants living in metropolitan areas in 2016.
- In 2016, applications from metropolitan residents decreased by 1.5%, while applications from non-metropolitan residents increased by 1.3%.
- Offers made to metropolitan applicants (excluding WA) decreased by 1.4% compared with a decrease of 0.3% 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, 83.3% compared with 80.6% respectively.

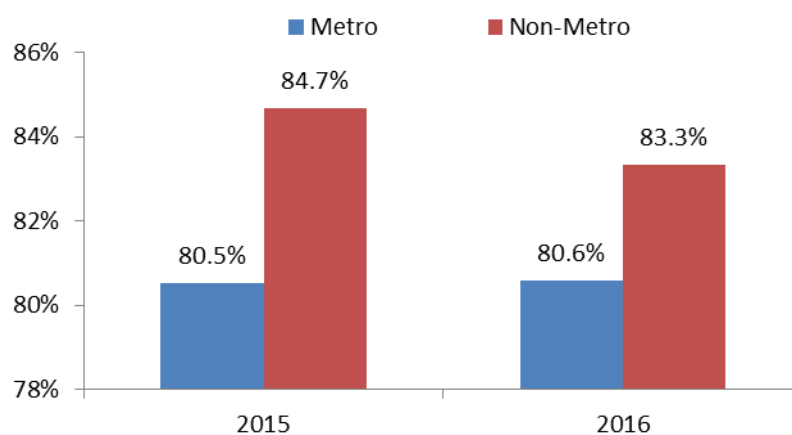
Table 13: Applications and Offers by region (excluding WA), February 2015 and February 2016

SES	Applications			Offers		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
Metro	192,477	189,683	-1.5%	154,987	152,854	-1.4%
Non-Metro	61,073	61,883	1.3%	51,717	51,576	-0.3%
Total*	257,290	255,322	-0.8%	209,379	206,909	-1.2%

*The Australia total includes data that could not be coded to a region.

² 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 2015 and February 2016



Indigenous status

- Nationally (excluding WA), there were 4334 applications made by Indigenous applicants³ in 2016, an increase of 9.7% compared with 2015. This represents 1.5% of all applications received by TACs.
- Nationally (excluding WA), 3245 offers were made to Indigenous applicants, an increase of 10.4%.
- As of 29 February 2016, just under three quarters (74.9%) of Indigenous applicants had received an offer. This is an increase of 0.5 percentage points compared with the same period last year. The offer rate for non-Indigenous applicants was 81.2% in 2016, a decrease of 0.3 percentage points over 2015.

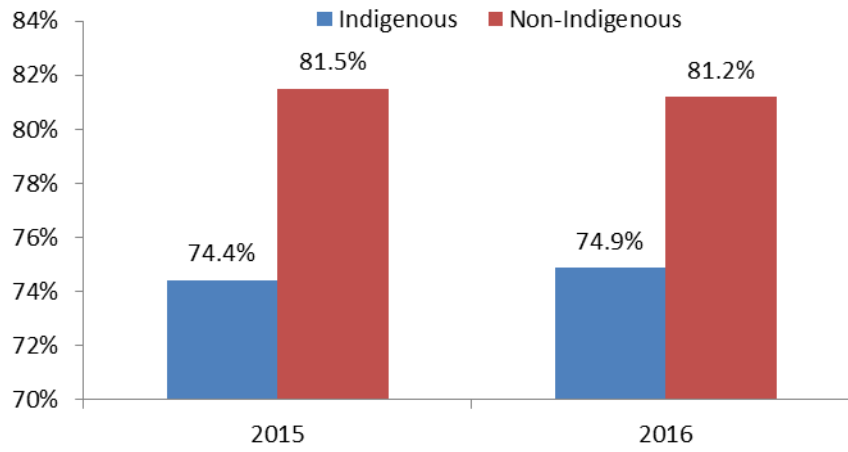
Table 14: Applications and Offers by Indigenous status (excluding WA), February 2015 and February 2016

SES	Applications			Offers		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
Indigenous	3,950	4,334	9.7%	2,940	3,245	10.4%
Non-Indigenous	251,347	248,394	-1.2%	204,826	201,671	-1.5%
Total*	257,290	255,322	-0.8%	209,379	206,909	-1.2%

*The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned to an Indigenous status.

³ Data on Indigenous status (Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both) is based on a self-reported question on TAC applications forms.

Figure 4: Offer rates by Indigenous status (excluding WA), February 2015 and February 2016



8. University Group

Highest preference applications

- The Regional Universities Network (RUN) recorded the largest increase in applications (6.8%), followed by Australian Technology Network (ATN) (1.5%) (excluding Curtin University of Technology) in 2016.
- Applications decreased among the other two university groups with applications to the Group of Eight (Go8) (excluding The University of Western Australia) and Innovative Research Universities (IRU) (excluding Murdoch University) decreasing by 1.4% and 0.9% respectively.

Offers

- The ATN universities recorded the largest increase in offers (2.1%) in 2016. Offers by all other university groups decreased, where the RUN recorded the largest decrease (-5.0%), followed by IRU (-2.3%) and Go8 (-1.0%).

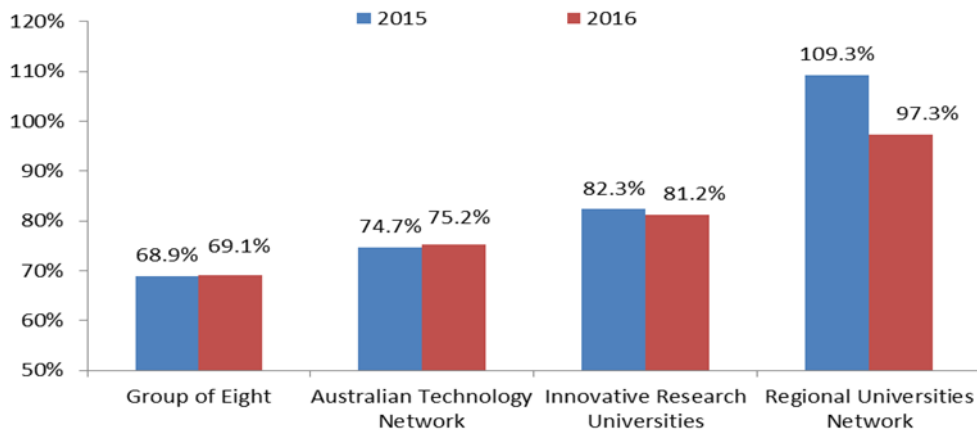
Table 15: Applications and offers by university group (excluding WA universities), February 2015 and February 2016

Type of university	Applications			Offers		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
Group of Eight (Go8)	77,255	76,182	-1.4%	53,212	52,659	-1.0%
Australian Technology Network (ATN)	46,455	47,136	1.5%	34,691	35,436	2.1%
Innovative Research Universities (IRU)	36,696	36,349	-0.9%	30,217	29,515	-2.3%
Regional Universities Network (RUN)	13,807	14,742	6.8%	15,094	14,344	-5.0%
Australia (excluding WA)	174,213	174,409	0.1%	133,214	131,954	-0.9%

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 2016 (offer rates of 69.1% and 75.2% respectively), reflecting the higher entry requirements at these universities.
- The offer rate increased at ATN universities (0.5 percentage points to 75.2%) and at Go8 universities (excluding The University of Western Australia) (up 0.2 percentage points to 69.1%) in 2016.
- Offer rates decreased at RUN universities (12.0 percentage points to 97.3%) and at IRU universities (excluding Murdoch University) (1.1 percentage points to 81.2%).

Figure 5: Offer rates by university group (excluding WA universities), February 2015 and February 2016



- 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 Applications

Applications

- As of 29 February 2016, there were 106,693 direct applications made to universities, an increase of 11.3% on the number of direct applications in 2015.
- Non-Year 12 applicants represent the majority of direct applications. Applications from these applicants accounted for 96.3% of applications as of 29 February 2016, almost the same, 96.4%, as in 2015.
- The largest increases in direct applications were in Creative Arts, up 37.3%, Information Technology, up 19.7% and Health, up 12.2%.
- Direct applications fell in the fields of Architecture and Engineering, down 11.6% and 9.2% 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 16: Direct applications by broad field of education, February 2015 and February 2016

Field of education	2015	2016	Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	8,488	9,437	11.2%
Information Technology	2,465	2,951	19.7%
Engineering and Related Technologies	4,551	4,132	-9.2%
Architecture and Building	1,666	1,473	-11.6%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	1,592	1,711	7.5%
Health	18,306	20,537	12.2%
Education	11,262	12,373	9.9%
Management and Commerce	11,585	12,949	11.8%
Society and Culture	29,698	32,340	8.9%
Creative Arts	6,162	8,462	37.3%
Australia	95,819	106,693	11.3%

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 29 February 2016, there were 84,768 direct offers made by universities, an increase of 8.3% on the number of direct offers made in 2015.
- The largest increases in direct offers between February 2015 and February 2016 were in Creative Arts, up 31.9%, Information Technology, up 15.8% and Management and Commerce, up 11.1%.
- Similar to the decline in number of direct applications, offers made directly to Engineering and Architecture applicants also declined in 2016 (-14.9% and -7.9% respectively).

Table 17: Direct offers by broad field of education, February 2015 and February 2016

Field of education	2015	2016	Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	7,104	7,350	3.5%
Information Technology	2,120	2,454	15.8%
Engineering and Related Technologies	4,156	3,536	-14.9%
Architecture and Building	1,414	1,302	-7.9%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	1,386	1,496	7.9%
Health	14,013	15,352	9.6%
Education	9,636	10,481	8.8%
Management and Commerce	10,149	11,277	11.1%
Society and Culture	22,829	24,305	6.5%
Creative Arts	5,411	7,137	31.9%
Australia*	78,227	84,768	8.3%

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.

10. Total applications and offers - TAC and direct combined

As of 29 February 2016, 255,322 TAC applications (excluding WA) were made, including double counting of applicants who had submitted applications in several states. When unique persons were identified, this number decreased to 233,310. On the other hand, there were 101,678 unique applicants who applied directly to universities (reduced from 106,693 multiple applications). The total number of applicants across Australia by February 2016, therefore, was 334,988 counting both TAC and direct applicants.

Further analysis shows that there was an overlap of 12,974 applicants who applied through TACs as well as directly to universities, hence the number of individuals that applied for a university place in 2016 was 322 014, an increase of 1.9% compared to 2015. Direct applicants made up 30.4% of total applicants in 2016.

Table 18: Unique applicants and offers: TAC and direct combined (excluding WA), February 2015-February 2016

Year	Applicants	Growth rate	Offers	Growth rate	Offer rate	Change
Feb 2015	316,119		266,512		84.3%	
Feb 2016	322,014	1.9%	269,731	1.2%	83.8%	-0.5 p. p

Similar analysis of combined offers made through TACs and offers made directly by universities shows that there were 277,285 offers made in 2016. There were 193,934 unique offers made through TACs (excluding WA) and 83,351 unique offers made directly by universities. Accounting for 7554 applicants who were offered a place both through TACs and directly by universities, the total number of applicants who received an offer across Australia was 269,731 in 2016, an increase of 1.2% on 2015. Offers made to direct applicants accounted for 30.4% of total offers. The offer rate in 2016 was 83.8%, a decline of 0.5 percentage points from the previous year.

Prior Education

Nationally, applications from Year 12 applicants (combined TAC and Direct) increased by 2.2% and non-Year 12 applicants increased by 1.6%. For the same period, offers to Year 12 applicants increased by 3.3% and offers to non-Year 12 applicants decreased by 0.2%. The offer rate for Year 12 applicants was 87.1% which was higher than the offer rate of 81.5% for non-Year 12 applicants.

Table 19. Unique applicants by Current Year 12 status (excluding WA), February 2015-February 2016

	Applications			Offers		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
Year 12	126,784	129,557	2.2%	109,317	112,900	3.3%
Non-Year 12	189,335	192,457	1.6%	157,195	156,831	-0.2%
Total	316,119	322,014	1.9%	266,512	269,731	1.2%

Table 20. Offer rates for unique applicants by Current Year 12 status (excluding WA), February 2015-February 2016

	Offer rates		
	2015	2016	Change
Year 12	86.2%	87.1%	0.9 p. p
Non-Year 12	83.0%	81.5%	-1.5 p. p
Total	84.3%	83.8%	-0.5 p. p

Field of Education

All fields of education recorded positive growth in 2016 except Engineering and Related Technologies, Education, Architecture and Building and Management and Commerce. Information Technology recorded the largest increase (5.4%) in applications, followed by Creative Arts (5.2%), Health and Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (both equally up by 5.1%). Society and Culture received the largest number of offers (63 538 or 23.6% of total offers), followed by Health (60 768 or 22.5% of total offers). Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies recorded the largest increase in offers (5.7%), followed by Health (5.2%), Creative Arts (5.1%) and Information Technology (3.5%). Engineering and Related Technologies (-6.3%), Education (-4.7%) and Management and Commerce recorded declines in offers 2016.

Table 21. Unique applicants and offers by field of education (excluding WA), February 2015-February 2016

Field of education	Applications			Offers		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	27,125	28,392	4.7%	26,539	27,303	2.9%
Information Technology	8,848	9,329	5.4%	7,642	7,910	3.5%
Engineering and Related Technologies	18,550	17,723	-4.5%	16,357	15,333	-6.3%
Architecture and Building	8,332	8,192	-1.7%	6,497	6,538	0.6%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	4,425	4,649	5.1%	4,015	4,243	5.7%
Health	77,233	81,173	5.1%	57,774	60,768	5.2%
Education	28,140	27,477	-2.4%	24,068	22,928	-4.7%
Management and Commerce	42,201	42,098	-0.2%	38,325	37,847	-1.2%
Society and Culture	73,286	73,318	0.0%	62,986	63,538	0.9%
Creative Arts	26,752	28,130	5.2%	20,836	21,894	5.1%
Total	316,119	322,014	1.9%	266,512	269,731	1.2%

In terms of offer rates, Natural and Physical Sciences had the highest offer rate at 96.2%, but showed a decline in 2016 of 1.7 percentage points. Health had the lowest offer rate of 74.9% in 2016. Education experienced the largest fall in the offer rate in 2016 of 2.1 percentage points.

Table 22. Offer rates for Unique applicants by field of education (excluding WA), February 2015-February 2016

Field of education	Offer rates		
	2015	2016	Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	97.8%	96.2%	-1.7 p. p
Information Technology	86.4%	84.8%	-1.6 p. p
Engineering and Related Technologies	88.2%	86.5%	-1.7 p. p
Architecture and Building	78.0%	79.8%	1.8 p. p
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	90.7%	91.3%	0.5 p. p
Health	74.8%	74.9%	0.1 p. p
Education	85.5%	83.4%	-2.1 p. p
Management and Commerce	90.8%	89.9%	-0.9 p. p
Society and Culture	85.9%	86.7%	0.7 p. p
Creative Arts	77.9%	77.8%	-0.1 p. p
Total	84.3%	83.8%	-0.5 p. p

Under-Represented Groups - Socioeconomic status

Applications from applicants from low SES backgrounds have shown a 2.2% increase compared with those from medium SES backgrounds (2.1%) and high SES backgrounds (1.3%) in 2016. During the same period, offers to low SES applicants recorded the highest growth (2.3%), compared with growth in medium SES applicants (1.7%) and high SES applicants (-0.1%). Applicants from low SES backgrounds are less likely to receive an offer compared with medium SES and high SES applicants. Their offer rate was 82.7% compared with 83.9% for medium SES applicants and 84.8% for high SES applicants in 2016.

Table 23. Unique applicants and offers by SES (excluding WA), February 2015-February 2016

	2015	2016	Change
Applications			
Low	62,594	63,954	2.2%
Medium	159,288	162,570	2.1%
High	90,033	91,161	1.3%
Total*	316,119	322,014	1.9%
Offers			
Low	51,681	52,871	2.3%
Medium	134,129	136,353	1.7%
High	77,418	77,342	-0.1%
Total*	266,512	269,731	1.2%
Offer rates			
Low	82.6%	82.7%	0.1 p. p
Medium	84.2%	83.9%	-0.3 p. p
High	86.0%	84.8%	-1.1 p. p
Total*	84.3%	83.8%	-0.5 p. p

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

Under-Represented Groups - Regionality

In 2016, applications from non-metropolitan and metropolitan residents both increased by 1.9%. Offers to non-metropolitan applicants and metropolitan applicants have increased by 1.1% and 1.3% respectively. Non-metropolitan applicants are more likely to receive an offer than are metropolitan applicants with their offer rates in 2016 being 86.0% and 83.2% respectively.

Table 24. Unique applicants and offers by region (excluding WA), February 2015-February 2016

	2015	2016	Change
Applications			
Metro	236,167	240,559	1.9%
Non-Metro	76,091	77,541	1.9%
Total*	316,119	322,014	1.9%
Offers			
Metro	197,588	200,219	1.3%
Non-Metro	65,936	66,678	1.1%
Total*	266,512	269,731	1.2%
Offer rates			
Metro	83.7%	83.2%	-0.4 p. p
Non-Metro	86.7%	86.0%	-0.7 p. p
Total*	84.3%	83.8%	-0.5 p. p

*The Australia total includes data that could not be coded to a region.

Under-Represented Groups - Indigenous Status

Indigenous people are under-represented in the pool of applications. Indigenous people represent around 2.7% of the Australian working age population whereas they constitute only 2.1% of all applications to university in 2016. Nationally, there were 6603 applicants from an Indigenous background, an increase of 9.6% from 2015. For the same period, offers to Indigenous applicants increased by 11.0% in 2016 to 5354. The offer rate for Indigenous applicants was 81.1%, 3.0 percentage points lower than the offer rate for persons who identified as non-Indigenous.

**Table 25. Unique applicants and offers by Indigenous status (excluding WA)
February 2015-February 2016**

	2015	2016	Change
Applications			
Indigenous	6,022	6,603	9.6%
Non-Indigenous	301,853	306,318	1.5%
Total*	316,119	322,014	1.9%
Offers			
Indigenous	4,823	5,354	11.0%
Non-Indigenous	254,989	257,477	1.0%
Total*	266,512	269,731	1.2%
Offer rates			
Indigenous	80.1%	81.1%	1.0 p. p
Non-Indigenous	84.5%	84.1%	-0.4 p. p
Total*	84.3%	83.8%	-0.5 p. p

*The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned to an Indigenous status.

11. 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 29 February 2016. This data represents approximately 99.6% cent of final highest preference applications data and 98.7% of final offers data in 2015 received from TACs (based on analysis of 2015 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 “2016” in this report relate to the 2016 third round submission through TACs and the first round data submission on applications made directly to universities as of 29 February for the first semester of the 2016 academic year.
- Due to changes in administrative arrangements at the University of Tasmania, data for 2015 and 2016 in this report include Bachelor Honours level applicants. Similar data for 2015 published last year did not include Bachelor Honours level applicants.
- 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).

12. 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 of 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; Notre Dame 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.