PART B

EDUCATION

B Education preface

Education is a lifelong activity, delivered both informally (for example, by family, through the community or at work) and formally through the three sectors that comprise Australia's education and training system (school education, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education sectors). Australia's formal system of education and training has a range of objectives, some of which are common across all sectors of education (for example, to increase knowledge) while others are more specific to a particular sector. The objectives of the school education sector, as reflected in the national goals for schooling (box 3.1), include a focus on developing the capacities and talents of all young people so they have the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life. The objectives of the VET sector, as reflected in the National Strategy for VET 1998–2003 (box 4.3), include a focus on equipping Australians for the world of work, enhancing labour mobility and achieving equitable outcomes within VET. The objectives of the higher education sector, as reflected in the *Higher Education Report for the 2003–2005 Triennium*, include advancing and applying knowledge and understanding to benefit the Australian economy and society.

Australian, State and Territory governments provide funding to government and non-government providers to deliver formal education and training services within each of the three education and training sectors. Government providers include government schools (preschool, primary and secondary), technical and further education (TAFE) institutes and universities. Non-government providers include privately operated schools and preschools, and private registered training organisations (RTOs) in the VET sector.

Chapters 3 and 4 cover the performance of the school education and VET sectors. Preschool programs, which provide a variety of educational and developmental experiences for children before full time schooling, are covered in chapter 14. Comparisons between the government and non-government school systems are included.

Areas of government involvement in education that are not covered in the following chapters include:

- universities (although some information is included in this preface)

- the transportation of students
- income support payments for students
- adult community education (except VET programs).

Australia's services provided by other government agencies (such as health, housing and community services) influence education outcomes but are not formally part of Australia's education and training system. These services are not covered in the following chapters on school education and VET chapters, but they are discussed in other chapters of the Report.

Indigenous status, language and cultural background, disability status, socioeconomic status, gender and geographic location are also factors that potentially influence educational outcomes. It is a priority of the Review to improve the reporting of data to better assess the influence of these factors on the educational outputs and outcomes reported.

The remainder of this preface provides an overview of Australia's education and training system and its broad outcomes.

Profile of education

Roles and responsibilities

Different levels of government and non-government authorities and stakeholders carry out the roles and responsibilities of administering, funding and determining the objectives of the school education sector. The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) coordinates strategic policy at the national level, develops national agreements on shared objectives and interests, and negotiates the scope and format of national reporting on the performance of government and non-government schools. Membership of MCEETYA includes Australian, State and Territory ministers and the New Zealand minister with responsibility for education, employment, training and youth affairs.

The Australian National Training Authority Ministerial Council (ANTA MINCO) comprises the Australian, State and Territory ministers with responsibility for VET. The ANTA MINCO determines strategic policy and sets national objectives and priorities for the VET sector. It is also responsible for approving funding for State and Territory training systems based on the performance of the jurisdictions in meeting specific service delivery targets negotiated under the ANTA agreement.

The Australian Government's roles and responsibilities in delivering education services include:

- providing funding to non-government schools and to State and Territory governments for government schools, to support agreed priorities and strategies
- providing funding via the ANTA to States and Territories for the delivery of VET programs and services, and support for VET infrastructure
- being the primary funding source for, and developer of policy related to, the higher education sector
- providing financial assistance for students.

State and Territory governments' roles and responsibilities in providing education services include:

- having constitutional responsibility for the provision of schooling to all children of school age
- having the major financial responsibility for government school education, and contributing funds to non-government schools
- regulating both government and non-government school activities and policies
- determining school curricula, course accreditation, student assessment and student awards for both government and non-government schools
- administering and delivering VET and school education in government schools
- administering and funding TAFE institutes for the delivery of VET programs and services
- funding other RTOs for the delivery of VET programs and services, including community education providers and private providers
- regulating the delivery of VET services, including conducting quality audits, coordinating the registration of training organisations and managing the accreditation of nationally recognised education and training programs
- being responsible for legislation relating to the establishment of universities and the accreditation of higher education courses.

More detailed descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of governments in the school and VET sectors can be found in the respective chapters.

Funding

Education and training is a major area of expenditure and activity for Australian, State and Territory governments. Total government operating expenses for all

governments for the three education and training sectors (school education, VET and higher education) were $37.5 billion (table B.1) in 2001-02, which was equivalent to 5.2 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Private household final consumption expenditure on education in 2001-02 was approximately $10.0 billion, or 1.4 per cent of GDP (ABS 2003a).

Australian Government operating expenses for the three education and training sectors in 2001-02 were $11.7 billion, with $10.6 billion (91.0 per cent) comprising grants to other levels of government. State, Territory and local government operating expenditure was $27.1 billion for the same year. Multijurisdictional (university) operating expenses were $9.8 billion. The inter-sector transfers, such as grants, were $11.1 billion (table B.1).

Table B.1 **Real Australian, State and Territory (including local) government expenditure on education (2001-02 $ million)[a]**

	1999-2000[c]	*2000-01*[c]	*2001-02*	*Average annual real growth (%)*
Transfers to other levels of government[b]	(9 973)	(10 143)	(10 645)	3.3
Australian Government operating expenses	10 739	11 161	11 701	4.4
Australian Government expenses less transfers	766	1 018	1 056	18.4
Transfers to other levels of government[b]	(152)	(123)	(125)	-8.6
State and Territory (including local) operating expenses	25 032	25 789	27 068	4.0
State and territory (including local) expenses less transfers	24 880	25 666	26 943	4.1
Transfers to other levels of government[b]	(269)	(255)	(258)	-2.0
Multijurisdictional (university) operating expenses	9 322	9 427	9 806	2.6
Multijurisdictional (university) expenses less transfers	9 053	9 172	9 548	2.7
Total intra-sector transfers	(10 393)	(10 522)	(11 029)	3.0
Total Australia operating expenses	45 093	46 376	48 578	3.8
Total operating expenses net of transfers	34 698	35 856	37 546	4.0

a Based on accrual operating expenses for education. **b** Payments between levels of government within the public sector. **c** The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provided nominal figures. Real expenditure was calculated from these figures based on the ABS GDP price deflator 2001-02 = 100 (table A.26).

Source: ABS (2003a); ABS Public Finance Statistics (unpublished).

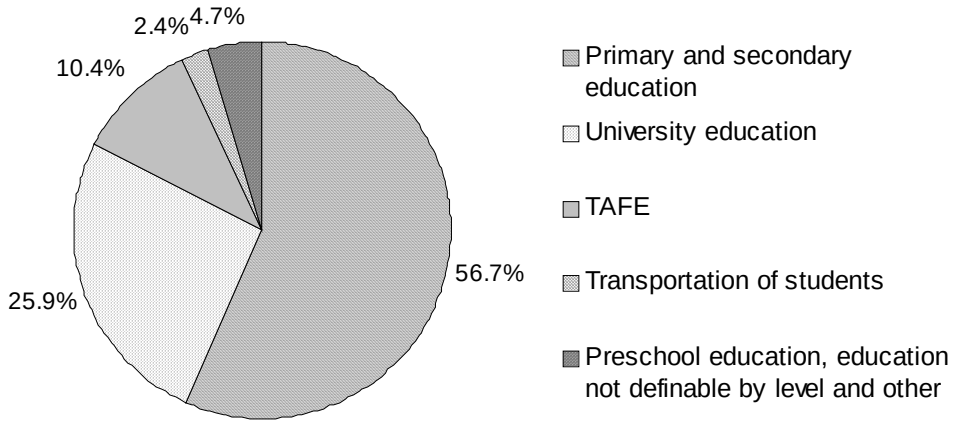
Between 1999-2000 and 2001-02, the average annual real growth rate of total government expenditure on education was 3.8 per cent. With the introduction of

accrual accounting, the education expenditure data between 1999-2000 and earlier years included in previous reports are not comparable.

In 2001-02, schools accounted for the highest proportion of the $37.5 billion government expenditure on education and training (56.7 per cent), followed by universities (25.9 per cent) and TAFE institutes (10.4 per cent) (ABS 2003a, table B.1, figure B.1). Non-government schools received the highest proportion of Australian Government recurrent funding, accounting for 67.0 per cent of total Australian Government specific purpose payments to schools (table 3A.5). State and Territory governments provided 91.2 per cent of recurrent funding for government schools (table 3A.8). The Australian Government spent an average of $3583 per student in non-government schools and an average of $887 per student in government schools in 2001-02 (table 3A.5).

The breakdown of State and Territory government expenditure across the education and training system varied across jurisdictions in 2001-02. The proportion of State, Territory and local government expenditure allocated to total school education (including primary, secondary, preschool and education not definable by level, and other) ranged from 89.1 per cent in Queensland to 78.6 per cent in the NT. The highest proportion of expenditure on TAFE was in the NT (16.7 per cent) and the lowest proportion was in Queensland (10.1 per cent). There was little difference across jurisdictions in the proportion of expenditure on university education, except in the ACT, which had the highest proportion (2.1 per cent) and the NT, which had no expenditure (table B.2).

Figure B.1 **Total government expenditure on education, 2001-02[a, b, c]**



a Totals may not add to 100 as a result of rounding. **b** Based on accrual operating expenses for education. **c** Other includes tertiary other.

Source: ABS (2003a).

Table B.2 **State, Territory and local government expenditure, 2001-02**

	Unit	*NSW*[a]	*Vic*[b]	*Qld*	*WA*[c]	*SA*	*Tas*[d]	*ACT*	*NT*	*Total*
Preschool, not definable by level and other[e]	%	6.4	7.5	11.2	5.9	8.6	3.3	5.3	11.5	7.7
Primary and secondary	%	79.6	76.7	77.9	77.0	76.0	84.1	80.2	67.1	77.9
TAFE	%	14.0	15.3	10.1	16.5	14.8	12.3	12.4	16.7	13.9
University	%	–	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.3	2.1	–	0.4
Other tertiary	%	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4.5	0.1
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	**$m**	**8 643**	**6 747**	**5 054**	**2 743**	**2 226**	**724**	**474**	**462**	**27 070**

[a] Most expenditure for preschools in NSW is contained in other budget areas and not included in this table. NSW 'primary and secondary' expenditure includes: some special education expenditure for preschool students; all special education expenditure for school students; and higher education expenditure. [b] Expenditure for preschools in Victoria is contained in other budget areas and is not included in this table. [c] Special education expenditure for WA is included under 'primary and secondary'. [d] Expenditure for preschools and special education in Tasmania is included under 'primary and secondary'. [e] Except where footnotes indicate otherwise, includes expenditure for preschools, special education and other education not definable by level (including transportation of students and education not elsewhere classified). The latter is defined as: adult education courses that are essentially nonvocational, other than those offered by TAFE institutes; migrant education programs; and other educational programs not definable by level. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: ABS (2003a).

Size and scope

In 2002, 3.3 million full time school students were attending 9632 schools in Australia, including 6969 government schools (ABS 2003b). Over 1.6 million VET students undertook vocational programs delivered by providers in receipt of public funding allocations for VET. These programs were delivered in 85 public training institutions and associated major campuses, 894 training centres by community education providers and 5402 training locations by other registered providers (ANTA 2003; NCVER 2003). There were 896 621 higher education students, whose courses were delivered by 40 universities, four self-accrediting higher education institutions and approximately 120 other higher education providers accredited by State and Territory educational authorities in 2003. Forty-three of these higher education institutions were eligible for Australian operating grants, with 38 being universities. Thirty-nine universities and three other institutions were eligible for research funds through the Department of Education, Science and Training (ABS 2003d; DEST unpublished).

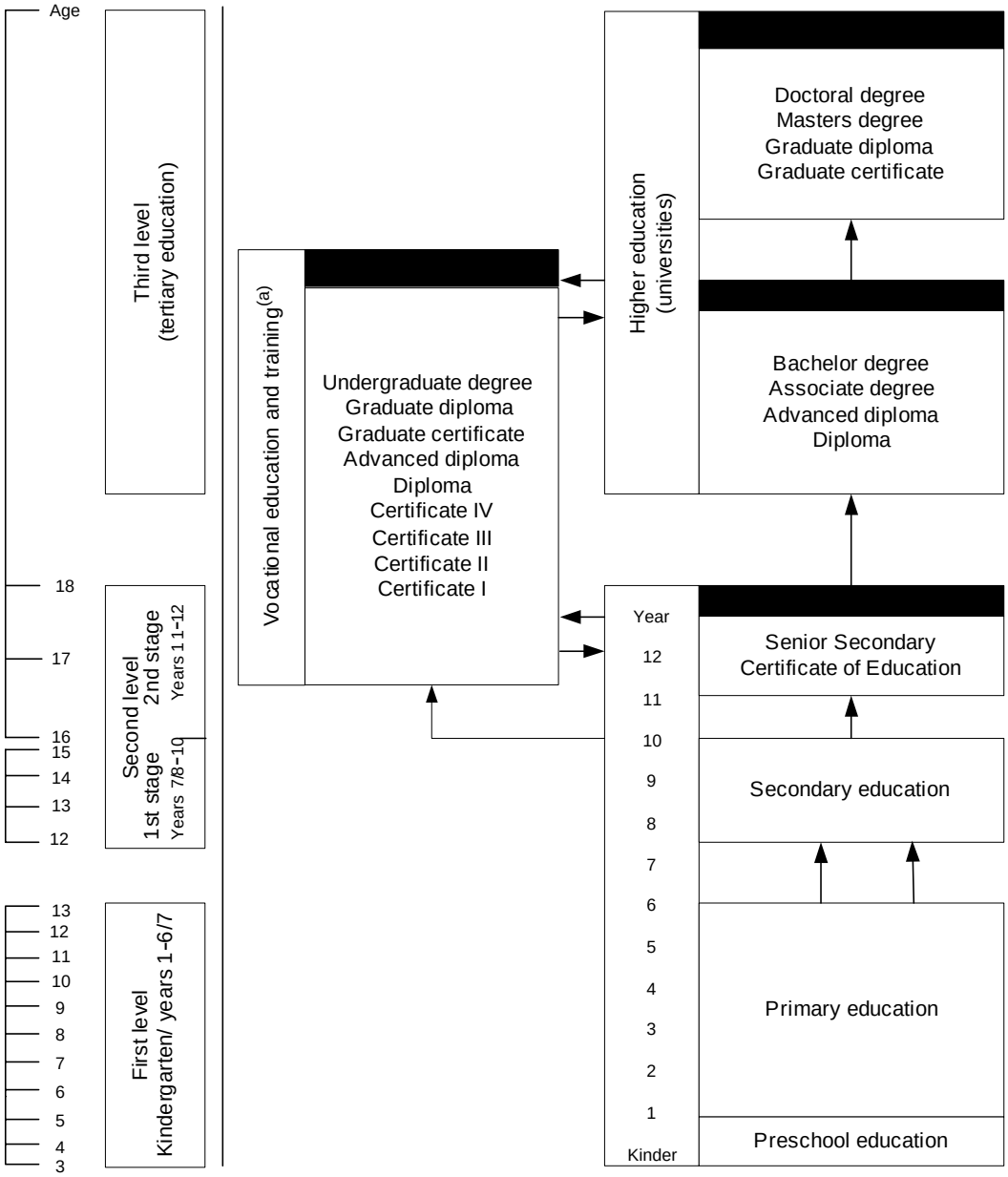
Learning pathways

Box B.1 illustrates the Australian education and training system, indicating the compulsory years of schooling (until 16 years of age in Tasmania and 15 years of age in all other jurisdictions), and the range of pathways and the options available to students in post-compulsory education and training. The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) was developed to provide a comprehensive, nationally consistent framework for all qualifications in post-compulsory education and training. It was introduced in 1995 and fully implemented by the end of 1999. The AQF encourages flexible learning pathways. Modules from VET certificates, for example, can be integrated with senior secondary certificates, and both VET diplomas and higher education diplomas can gain credit towards a bachelors degree. Similarly, the VET sector recognises some higher education qualifications.

Under the AQF, VET certificates (mainly certificates I and II) may be achieved in schools and may contribute towards the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, resulting in a dual qualification. Approximately 185 000 students were enrolled in VET in schools programs in 2002, an increase of 9.3 per cent from 2001. This represents a rise from approximately 16 per cent of senior secondary students undertaking VET within their senior secondary certificate in 1996 to 44 per cent in 2002. These VET programs were offered by 1996 schools, or 95.2 per cent of all schools offering senior secondary programs. Enrolments were highest in tourism and hospitality programs, which accounted for 19.7 per cent of all enrolments (MCEETYA unpublished).

In 2002, 60.6 per cent of students participating in VET in schools programs undertook workplace learning. By the end of 2002, nearly 7639 students were involved in a school-based New Apprenticeship, an increase of approximately 32 per cent from 2001 (MCEETYA unpublished). Care needs to be taken in interpreting these data, because data definitions across States and Territories are not yet consistent.

Box B.1 **Outline of the Australian education and training system[a, b]**



a Undergraduate degrees, graduate diplomas and graduate certificates are not offered within the VET system in all jurisdictions. **b** Providers deliver qualifications in more than one sector. Schools, for example, are delivering certificates I–II, universities are delivering certificates II–IV, and VET providers are delivering graduate certificates and graduate diplomas (higher education qualifications in some jurisdictions, but in others also VET), all subject to meeting the relevant quality assurance requirements.

Source: Based on NOOSR (2000).

Role and purpose of VET

The main focus of the VET system is to provide individuals with skills that are needed for employment. The emphasis is on the development of work-related competencies through training that leads to nationally recognised skills and qualifications. Training is delivered in classrooms, workplaces and online. These skills prepare individuals for employment at the technical, trade and professional level, in addition to providing access to general education and literacy programs.

The Australian VET system includes both publicly and privately funded training, delivered by a wide range of institutions and enterprises that are formally registered and periodically audited against established quality standards. Cooperative arrangements between governments, industry partners, community groups and training providers are fostered and promoted.

Measuring the performance of the education and training system

Measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the Australian education and training system is a complex task. Individual performance indicator frameworks for the school education and VET sectors have been developed for the Review, but there is significant interaction between the two sectors, and between these sectors and the university sector. Socioeconomic factors, geographic location, age, Indigenous status, language background and the performance of other government agencies (particularly health, housing and community services) also influence educational outcomes.

Effectiveness

Participation in education and training

Successive Australian governments have viewed education as a key means to improve economic and social outcomes, as well as to improve the equity of outcomes in society. They have sought, therefore, to increase estimated rates of participation in education and training (estimated participation rates are hereafter referred to as 'participation rates').

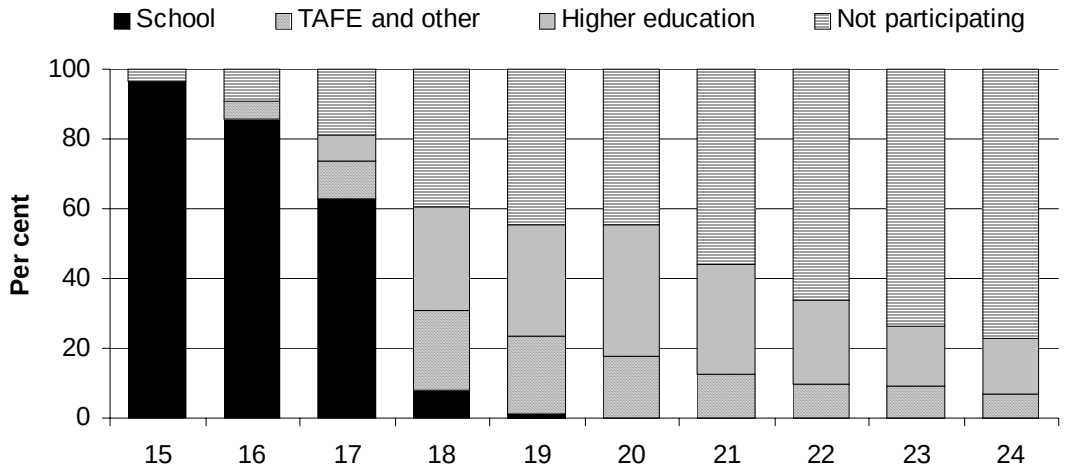
The education and training participation rates quoted in this section are estimates of the proportion of the population in a given age group who were participating in school, TAFE, higher education or some other form of recognised vocational education and training in May each year. These estimates are derived from

unpublished data from the annual Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) survey of Education and Work. The precision of estimates referring to small subgroups of the Australian population are potentially restricted by sample size, so jurisdictional comparisons need to be made with care.

To assist with making comparisons between jurisdictions, 95 per cent confidence intervals are presented below the estimates in each participation rate table. Confidence intervals are a standard way of expressing the degree of sampling and measurement error associated with the survey estimates. An estimate of 80 with a confidence interval of ± 2, for example, means that if the total population had been surveyed rather than a sample, or had another sample been drawn, there is a 95 per cent chance that the result would lie between 78–82. The participation rate for a jurisdiction, therefore, can be thought of in terms of a range. If one jurisdiction's rate ranges from 78–82 and another's from 77–81, then it is not possible to say with confidence that one differs from the other (because there is unlikely to be a statistically significant difference). Where ranges do not overlap, there is a high likelihood that there is a statistically significant difference. To say that there is a statistically significant difference means there is a high probability that there is an actual difference; it does not imply that the difference is necessarily large or important.

Beyond the age of compulsory school education (16 years in Tasmania and 15 years in all other jurisdictions), the percentage of people participating in education and training declines. In 2002, the participation rate was 96.8 for 15 year olds, 80.9 per cent for 17 year olds, 55.5 per cent for 19 year olds and 22.6 per cent for 24 year olds (figure B.2).

Figure B.2 **Participation in education and training by people aged 15–24 years, by sector, 2002[a]**

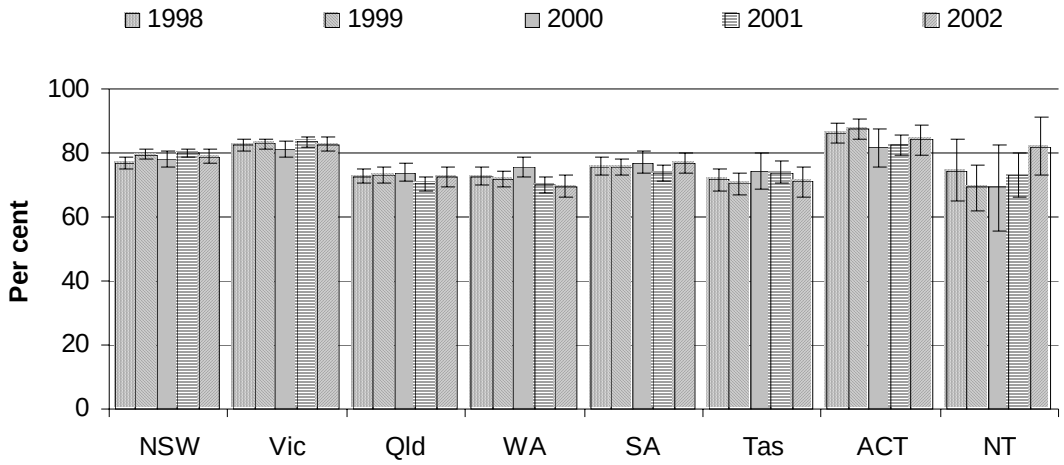


a 'Other' includes all education or training participation at institutions other than schools, higher education institutions and TAFE institutes.

Source: ABS survey of Education and Work (unpublished).

The rate of participation in education and training for 15–19 year olds was highest in the ACT (84.1 per cent) and lowest in WA (69.5 per cent) in 2002. The participation rate for 15–19 year olds over time was relatively constant within jurisdictions, except in the NT, where participation increased (figure B.3). Participation rates for school education are reported in chapter 3.

Figure B.3 **Participation in education and training by people aged 15–19 years[a]**



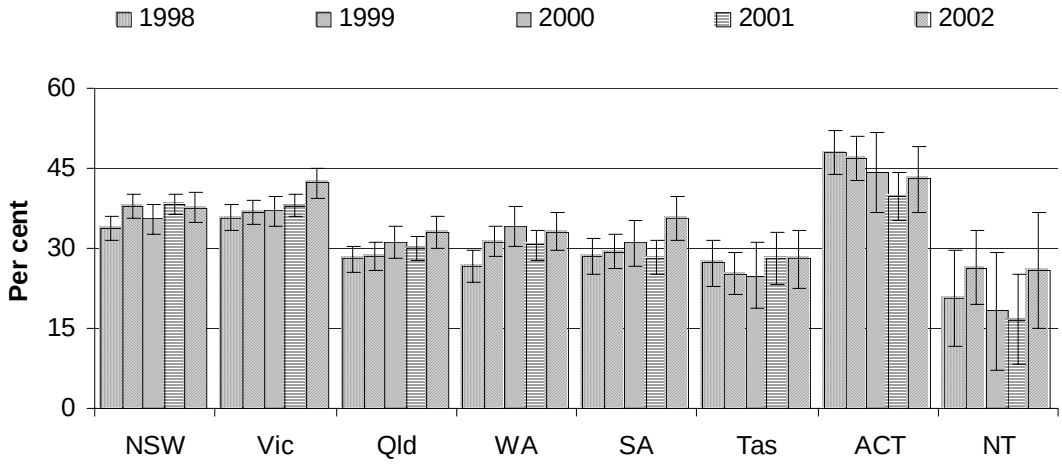
	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*
1998	76.7	82.6	72.7	72.5	75.7	71.6	86.3	74.5
	±1.9	±1.9	±2.3	±2.8	±2.9	±3.7	±3.2	±9.8
1999	79.5	82.8	73.0	71.9	75.9	70.3	87.4	69.2
	±1.6	±1.6	±2.4	±2.6	±2.6	±3.4	±3.0	±7.1
2000	78.1	81.3	74.0	75.5	77.1	74.2	81.6	69.1
	±2.4	±2.3	±2.8	±3.3	±3.4	±5.7	±6.1	±13.6
2001	80.1	83.5	70.4	70.0	73.7	73.9	82.4	73.2
	±1.4	±1.5	±2.1	±2.4	±2.5	±3.5	±3.3	±6.6
2002	78.9	82.6	72.5	69.5	76.7	71.1	84.1	82.0
	±2.3	±2.2	±2.9	±3.4	±3.2	±4.8	±4.7	±9.0

a Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: ABS survey of Education and Work and survey of Transition from Education and Work (unpublished).

The participation rate for 20–24 year olds was highest in the ACT (43.0 per cent) and lowest in the NT (26.0 per cent) in 2002. The participation rate for 20–24 year olds over time was relatively constant within NSW and Tasmania between 1998 and 2002, and increased in all other jurisdictions (figure B.4).

Figure B.4 **Participation in education and training by people aged 20–24 years[a]**



	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*
1998	33.7	35.7	28.0	26.7	28.6	27.2	48.1	20.6
	±2.3	±2.5	±2.3	±2.9	±3.3	±4.4	±4.2	±8.9
1999	37.9	36.8	28.6	31.2	29.4	25.2	46.9	26.4
	±2.2	±2.2	±2.5	±2.8	±3.1	±3.9	±4.1	±6.8
2000	35.5	37.0	31.2	34.0	31.1	24.9	44.3	18.3
	±2.9	±2.9	±3.1	±3.7	±4.3	±6.1	±7.5	±11
2001	38.2	37.9	30.0	30.6	28.2	28.1	39.8	16.6
	±1.9	±2.1	±2.3	±2.8	±3.2	±4.8	±4.5	±8.4
2002	37.5	42.3	33.0	33.2	35.5	28.0	43.0	26.0
	±2.8	±2.8	±3.1	±3.6	±4.1	±5.4	±6.2	±10.8

a Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: ABS survey of Education and Work and survey of Transition from Education and Work (unpublished).

Participation in education, training and work

Research undertaken by bodies such as the Dusseldorp Skills Forum and the Australian Council for Educational Research has indicated that young people who are not participating full time in education, training, work or some combination of these activities are more likely to have difficulty in making a transition to full time employment by their mid-twenties. A full time participation measure has been developed to monitor the proportion of the population that is at risk of marginal participation (or nonparticipation) in the labour market. Young people are counted as participating full time if they are engaged in full time education or training, full time work, or a combination of both part time education or training and part time work.

Table B.3 shows that full time participation rates decline from age 15 years through to age 18 years in most jurisdictions, and remain stable from age 18 years through

to age 24 years. The full time participation rate for 15–24 year olds in 2002 was highest in the ACT (87.9 per cent) and lowest in Tasmania (73.4 per cent).

Table B.3 **Full time participation rates, 2002 (per cent)[a, b]**

Age (years)	*NSW*	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
15	98.4	98.4	95.6	97.6	97.2	98.9	100.0	100.0	97.7
95 per cent CI	±1.7	±1.8	±3.1	±2.8	±3.4	±2.7	..	..	±1.0
16	95.0	96.8	92.9	87.8	91.0	93.0	98.3	94.4	93.9
95 per cent CI	±2.8	±2.6	±4.2	±6.0	±5.9	±6.7	±3.2	±8.8	±1.6
17	89.9	94.0	78.0	82.9	93.2	88.0	93.3	81.0	88.0
95 per cent CI	±4.0	±3.6	±6.4	±6.7	±5.2	±8.3	±6.2	±16.9	±2.2
18	75.8	79.4	80.3	73.3	73.2	67.8	81.2	93.6	77.1
95 per cent CI	±5.7	±6.0	±6.2	±8.5	±8.9	±13.3	±9.6	±14.6	±2.9
19	81.5	83.1	76.3	73.4	70.7	75.2	87.9	91.2	79.2
95 per cent CI	±5.1	±5.2	±6.5	±8.1	±9.3	±12.3	±8.1	±18.9	±2.7
20	81.4	85.2	79.2	73.8	71.5	64.4	84.1	58.8	80.0
95 per cent CI	±4.9	±5.2	±6.3	±8.0	±9.3	±14.9	±9.8	±36.2	±2.7
21	77.5	82.7	74.6	77.5	75.4	56.2	89.9	78.6	77.9
95 per cent CI	±5.3	±5.3	±6.8	±8.0	±9.0	±14.7	±8.9	±17.3	±2.8
22	79.9	79.0	76.9	74.6	79.9	67.9	86.0	89.0	78.5
95 per cent CI	±5.3	±5.6	±6.7	±7.9	±8.4	±14.6	±9.7	±17.8	±2.8
23	74.7	83.5	73.2	77.4	76.3	58.2	85.2	91.9	77.1
95 per cent CI	±5.7	±5.3	±6.9	±7.6	±8.9	±15.0	±10.7	±12.8	±2.9
24	75.7	73.5	67.5	71.8	67.5	54.3	77.1	74.3	72.2
95 per cent CI	±5.8	±6.1	±7.4	±8.6	±10.0	±15.3	±11.4	±17.9	±3.1
15–24	**82.9**	**85.2**	**79.4**	**78.9**	**79.6**	**73.4**	**87.9**	**86.1**	**82.1**
95 per cent CI	**±1.3**	**±1.3**	**±1.7**	**±2.0**	**±2.1**	**±3.2**	**±2.6**	**±5.1**	**±0.7**

a 95 per cent confidence interval (CI) refers to the 95 per cent CI associated with each point estimate. **b** Full time participation is defined as participation in full time education or training or full time work, or a combination of both part time education or training and part time work. .. Not applicable.

Source: ABS survey of Education and Work (unpublished).

School leaver destinations

Approximately 290 600 students left school in the year to May 2002 to work, attend university or VET institutions, or undertake combinations of work and education. Of these students, 28.4 per cent were early school leavers. Males were more likely to be early school leavers, making up 57.9 per cent of the total. Higher education institutions attracted around 94 100 school leavers in 2002, or 32.4 per cent of all school leavers. Institutes of TAFE attracted 61 300 school leavers (21.1 per cent). While 67.8 per cent of year 12 leavers went on to post-school education and training, only 31.0 per cent of early school leavers undertook any further study (table B.4).

Table B.4 **School leaver destination (15–24 year olds), 2002[a]**

Type of institution attended in May 2002	*Unit*	*Year 12 leavers*			*Early school leavers[b]*			*All school leavers*		
		Male	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Higher education[c]	%	45.3	44.8	45.0	0.6	0.3	0.5	31.2	33.7	32.4
TAFE institutes	%	20.0	17.6	18.8	34.5	16.4	26.9	24.6	17.3	21.1
Other study[d, e]	%	2.0	5.9	4.0	2.3	5.5	3.6	2.1	5.8	3.9
Not attending	%	32.6	31.7	32.2	62.3	78.2	69.0	42.1	43.2	42.6
Total[f]	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	**'000**	**103.6**	**104.4**	**208.0**	**47.8**	**34.8**	**82.6**	**151.3**	**139.2**	**290.6**

[a] Data for people who attended school in 2001 and were not attending school in May 2002. [b] Those who left school earlier than year 12. [c] The estimates for male and female early school leavers have a relative standard error of greater than 50 per cent and are considered too unreliable for general use. [d] Includes business colleges, industry skills centres and other educational institutions. [e] The estimates of male and female year 12 leavers, and male, female and total early school leavers have relative standard errors of 25–50 per cent and need to be used with caution. [f] Totals may not add as a result of rounding.

Source: ABS survey of Education and Work (unpublished).

Education enrolment experience

Nationally, approximately 2.6 million people aged 15–64 years applied to enrol in an educational institution in 2002. Of the people who applied to enrol, 2.4 million (91.8 per cent) were studying in 2002, while 5.1 per cent deferred study and 3.0 per cent were unable to gain placement (table B.5).

Table B.5 **Applications to enrol in an educational institution, by people aged 15–64 years**

	Unit	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Applied to enrol						
Studying in May	%	89.2	89.0	89.3	90.5	91.8
Gained placement but deferred study	%	7.3	7.4	7.3	6.4	5.1
Unable to gain placement[a]	%	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.1	3.0
Study would lead to an educational qualification	%	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.7
TAFE	%	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.5
Other[b]	%	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3
Higher education	%	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.9
Study would not lead to a recognised qualification	%	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3
Total applied to enrol	'000	2 402.8	2 537.5	2 527.8	2 552.9	2 603.2
Did not apply to enrol	'000	9 938.1	9 945.1	10 124.9	10 235.4	10 323.6
Total[c]	**'000**	**12 340.9**	**12 482.6**	**12 652.7**	**12 788.3**	**12 926.8**

[a] Reasons included: the course was full; the course was cancelled; the applicant was not eligible/entry score was too low; the applicant applied too late; or other reasons. [b] Includes other educational institutions not separately listed. [c] Totals may not add as a result of rounding.

Source: ABS (1999, 2000a, 2001b, 2002b, 2003c).

Educational attainment in Australia

An important objective of the education system is to improve the skill base of the population, with the benefit of improving worker productivity and facilitating economic growth and employment. Educational attainment of the labour force is used as a proxy indicator for the stock of skills. It understates the skill base, however, because it does not capture skills acquired through partially completed courses or courses not leading to a formal qualification.

There were 5.3 million people aged 15–64 years whose level of highest educational attainment was a nonschool qualification in 2002. Of this group, 43.4 per cent had a postgraduate degree, graduate diploma/graduate certificate or bachelor degree as their highest level of educational attainment. Of the 7.5 million people in this age group without nonschool qualifications, 34.1 per cent had completed the highest level of secondary school (ABS 2003c).

There were 4.4 million employed people whose level of highest educational attainment was a nonschool qualification in 2002, representing 48.3 per cent of employed people aged 15–64 years (ABS 2003c). People with a bachelor or higher degree were more likely to be employed (85.5 per cent), while people who did not complete secondary school were the least likely (56.5 per cent) (table B.6).

Table B.6 **Level of highest educational attainment of people aged 15-64 years, by labour force status, 2002[a, b]**

Labour force status	*Unit*	*Bachelor degree or higher*	*Advanced diploma/ diploma*	*Certificate III or IV*	*Certificate I, II or NFD*	*Year 12*	*Year 11 or below*	*Total[c]*
Employed	%	85.5	78.5	83.1	61.8	71.1	56.5	70.3
Unemployed	%	2.4	4.0	3.6	8.4	5.4	6.2	4.8
Not in labour force	%	12.1	17.6	13.3	29.8	23.6	37.3	24.9
Total[d]	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	**'000**	**2 296.1**	**949.4**	**1 911.1**	**129.7**	**2 565.7**	**4 954.0**	**12 806.0**

NFD = not further defined. **a** At May. **b** School year level estimates include some people with certificate I and II qualifications. **c** Includes people who never attended school and people whose level of highest educational attainment could not be determined. **d** Totals may not add as a result of rounding.

Source: ABS (2003c); ABS survey of Education and Work (unpublished).

People employed as professionals were most likely to have completed a bachelor or higher degree as their level of highest educational attainment in 2002 (69.7 per cent), while the level of highest educational attainment for the majority of tradespeople and related workers was a certificate III or IV (56.1 per cent). People employed as clerical sales and service workers, intermediate production and transport workers, and labourers and related workers were most likely to have year 12 or below as their highest level of educational attainment (table B.7).

Table B.7 **Level of highest educational attainment of employed persons aged 15–64 years, by occupation, 2002[a, b]**

Occupation in current job	*Bachelor degree or higher*	*Advanced diploma/ diploma*	*Certificate III or IV*	*Certificate I, II or NFD*	*Year 12*	*Year 11 or below*	*Total*	*Total* [c]
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	'000
Managers and administrators	31.4	10.1	16.6	0.7	15.7	25.6	100.0	660.6
Professionals	69.7	13.0	4.6	0.1	7.8	4.8	100.0	1699.5
Associate professionals	20.7	12.7	18.4	0.9	23.3	24.0	100.0	1065.4
Trades people and related workers	2.8	4.1	56.1	0.8	12.1	24.2	100.0	1162.6
Advanced clerical, sales and service workers	11.9	10.6	8.9	1.1	26.6	40.8	100.0	394.9
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	10.9	8.9	12.3	1.5	30.6	35.8	100.0	1557.9
Intermediate production and transport workers	2.6	3.0	19.0	0.9	19.0	55.5	100.0	775.8
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	5.8	5.0	7.9	1.2	32.9	47.3	100.0	916.0
Labourers and related workers	3.4	3.2	12.7	1.1	20.2	59.5	100.0	833.0
Total	**21.7**	**8.2**	**17.5**	**0.9**	**20.1**	**31.6**	**100.0**	**9065.7**

NFD = not further defined. [a] At May. [b] School year level estimates include some people with Certificate I and II qualifications. [c] Includes people who never attended school and people whose level of highest educational attainment could not be determined.

Source: ABS (2003c); ABS survey of Education and Work (unpublished).

Efficiency

Comparing unit costs across jurisdictions

Comparing the unit costs of providing a particular service across jurisdictions can help to identify whether States or Territories have scope to improve their efficiency. Special characteristics within jurisdictions, however, mean it would be difficult for all jurisdictions to attain the same level of unit costs while achieving similar outcomes. One way of better understanding how special characteristics may affect costs is to compare the variations in the unit costs across jurisdictions for services that aim to achieve similar outcomes, such as government school education and VET (table B.8). The greater jurisdictional variation in the unit costs of VET

compared with those in schools raises questions about the likely causes. Further analysis would be necessary to identify, for example, whether the effects of scale or dispersion are greater for VET than for schools, or whether the quality of the services or the efficiency of service provision differs more.

Table B.8 **Education institution recurrent unit costs, 2001-02[a, b, c]**

	Unit	*NSW*	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Government primary schools										
In-school cost per FTE student[d]	$	7 857	6 835	7 418	7 651	7 695	7 763	7 545	12 492	7 561
Difference from national average	%	3.9	-9.6	-1.9	1.2	1.8	2.7	-0.2	65.2	–
Government secondary schools										
In-school cost per FTE student[d]	$	10 199	9 174	9 330	10 307	10 134	9 497	10 775	17 770	9 856
Difference from national average	%	3.5	-6.9	-5.3	4.6	2.8	-3.6	9.3	80.3	–
VET[e]										
Cost per adjusted annual curriculum hour	$	13.57	11.16	13.77	14.31	13.89	14.00	13.69	22.59	13.14
Difference from national average	%	3.3	-15.1	4.8	8.9	5.7	6.6	4.2	71.9	–

FTE = Full time equivalent. [a] Based on accrual data. [b] A notional user cost of capital based on 8 per cent of 'total written down value of capital assets as at 30 June 2002' is applied to all jurisdictions. [c] Schools data include payroll tax estimates for WA and the ACT; VET data include payroll tax estimates for the ACT to achieve greater comparability across jurisdictions. [d] Schools data are total government expenditure on government schools divided by average FTE student population in 2001 and 2002. [e] VET data are based on the 2002 calendar year. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: tables 3A.7 and 4A.18.

Unit cost differences across education sectors should be used as a starting point for further analysis, rather than interpreted in isolation from the outcomes and outputs of the service areas (see chapters 3 and 4). Further, comparing the performance of education sectors requires a cross-sectoral approach to measuring and classifying educational participation and attainment. Considerable attention is being given to cross-sectoral measurement issues, with the establishment of the National Centre for Education and Training Statistics (within the ABS) and the introduction of the Australian Standard Classification of Education.

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3 School education

This chapter focuses on performance information — equity, effectiveness and efficiency — for government funded school education in Australia. Reporting relates to government funding only, not to the full cost to the community of providing school education. Descriptive information and performance indicators are generally available for:

- government primary and secondary schools
- non-government primary and secondary schools
- school education as a whole (government and non-government primary and secondary schools).

Schooling aims to provide education for all young people. The main purposes of school education are to assist students in:

- attaining knowledge, skills and understanding in key learning areas
- developing their talents, capacities, self-confidence, self-esteem and respect for others
- developing their capacity to contribute to Australia's social, cultural and economic development.

This year, the chapter has been enhanced by:

- including nationally comparable school education learning outcomes for writing (additional to reading and numeracy)
- including medium socioeconomic deciles for year 12 estimated completion rates (additional to high and low deciles)
- improving the comparability of per person expenditure data by including a notional user cost of capital as a component of unit costs for all jurisdictions.

Section 3.1 contains a profile of school education in Australia, while recent policy developments are outlined in section 3.2. These two sections provide the context for assessing performance indicators in the subsequent sections. Section 3.3 includes the framework of performance indicators for school education, and section 3.4 presents and discusses the available data relating to this framework. In section 3.5, future directions in the development and reporting of performance indicators for

school education are discussed. The chapter concludes with jurisdictions' comments in section 3.6 and definitions of terms in section 3.7.

Supporting tables

Supporting tables for chapter 3 are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report. The files are provided in Microsoft Excel 97 format as \Publications\Reports\2004\Attach3A.xls and in Adobe PDF format as \Publications\Reports\2004\Attach3A.pdf.

Supporting tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 3A.3 is table 3 in the electronic files). These files can be found on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp/2004/index.htm/). Users without Internet access can contact the Secretariat to obtain these tables (see details inside the front cover of the Report).

3.1 Profile of school education

Service overview

Schools are the institutions within which organised school education takes place. They are differentiated by the type and level of education they provide, their ownership and management, and the characteristics of their student body. The formal statistical definition of schools used for this chapter is:

> … an establishment that satisfies all of the following criteria:
>
> - its major activity is the provision of full time day primary, secondary or special school education or primary or secondary distance education
> - it is headed by a principal (or equivalent) responsible for its internal operation
> - it is possible for students to enrol and be active in a course of study for a minimum of four continuous weeks (excluding breaks for school vacations). (ABS 2003a)

Student performance can be affected by factors that may be partly or totally outside the influence of the school system, such as student commitment, family environment (including wealth, parents' educational attainment and support for the child) and the proximity of the school to other educational facilities. It is beyond the scope of this Report to consider the effect of all factors, but this section provides some context for the performance information presented later in the chapter. Further information is provided in appendix A.

Roles and responsibilities

The State and Territory governments have constitutional responsibility to ensure the delivery of schooling to all children of school age. They determine curricula, regulate school activities and provide most of the funding. State and Territory governments are directly responsible for the administration of government schools, for which they provide the majority of government expenditure. Non-government schools operate under conditions determined by State and Territory government registration authorities and receive significant Australian, State and Territory government funding.

The Australian Government funds government and non-government schools through specific purpose payments. The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) — comprising Australian, State and Territory, and New Zealand education ministers — is the principal forum for developing national priorities and strategies for schooling.

Funding

Australian, State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on school education was $25.3 billion in 2001-02 (table 3.1). Expenditure on government schools was $20.2 billion, or 80.1 per cent of the total. Government schools account for most of the expenditure by State and Territory governments, but these governments also contribute to the funding of non-government schools and provide services used by both government and non-government schools. More information, including on Australian Government spending on Indigenous specific programs, can be found in tables 3A.5 and 3A.6.

Nationally, State and Territory governments provided 91.2 per cent of total government recurrent expenditure on government schools in 2001-02, and the Australian Government provided 8.8 per cent. In contrast, government expenditure on non-government schools in that year was mainly provided by the Australian Government (71.8 per cent), with States and Territories providing 28.2 per cent (table 3.1).

The expenditure in this Report is based on accrual accounting and is not comparable with expenditure in reports up to and including the 2001 Report (in which expenditure was based on cash accounting). Further, the expenditure reported in table 3.1 is recurrent expenditure, which cannot be compared to the expenditure reported in the 2003 Report, which included capital for the Australian Government and excluded notional user cost of capital for States and Territories (that is, not truly recurrent expenditure). (For comparative purposes, table 3A.8 includes expenditure

for 2001-02 calculated on the previous basis.) These changes mean that the reported expenditure by the Australian Government on both government schools and all schools will be lower than in previous years and expenditure by State and Territory governments on government schools and all schools will be higher.

Some data are presented on government funding of non-government schools. Caution needs to be taken in comparing data on the relative efficiency of government and non-government schools because governments provide only part of the funding for non-government schools. Governments provided 57 per cent of non-government school funding in 2000, with the remaining 43 per cent sourced from private fees and fundraising (MCEETYA 2002a, p. 181).

Table 3.1 **Government recurrent expenditure on school education, 2001-02 ($ million)[a, b]**

	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Government schools									
Australian	590	404	354	182	135	49	26	35	1 776
States and Territories	6 331	4 014	3 430	1 950	1 460	525	336	413	18 460
Total	6 921	4 418	3 784	2 132	1 595	574	362	449	20 235
Non-government schools									
Australian	1 201	938	654	359	271	72	75	43	3 612
States and Territories	511	283	279	169	93	31	30	25	1 422
Total	1 712	1 221	934	528	364	103	105	68	5 034
All schools									
Australian	1 790	1 342	1 009	541	406	121	101	78	5 388
States and Territories	6 843	4 298	3 709	2 119	1 553	556	366	438	19 882
Total	8 633	5 639	4 718	2 660	1 959	677	466	516	25 270

a See notes to table 3A.8 for definitions and other data caveats. Data presented here are expenditure, including notional user cost of capital and excluding capital grants (which equates to recurrent expenditure). Table 3A.8 provides expenditure excluding notional user cost of capital and including capital grants (which equates to expenditure that is not truly recurrent), consistent with previous years' reporting, for comparative purposes. **b** Based on accrual accounting.

Source: MCEETYA (2003b) (unpublished); Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); Australian, State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.8.

Size and scope

Descriptive information on the numbers of students, staff and schools can be found in tables 3A.1–3A.4.

Structure

The structure of school education varies across States and Territories. These differences can influence the interpretation of data presented under common classifications. Formal schooling consists of six to seven years of primary school education followed by five to six years of secondary school education, depending on the State or Territory (figure 3.1). All States and Territories divide school education into compulsory and noncompulsory components based on age, not grade. School education is compulsory in all States and Territories for people between 6 and 15 years of age (16 years of age in Tasmania).

Figure 3.1 **Structure of primary and secondary schooling, 2002**

<table>
<tr><th>Level</th><th>NSW, Vic, Tas, ACT</th><th>WA, SA, NT[a]</th><th>Qld[b]</th></tr>
<tr><td>Year 12</td><td rowspan="6">SECONDARY</td><td rowspan="6">SECONDARY</td><td rowspan="6">SECONDARY</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 11</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 10</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 9</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 8</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 7</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 6</td><td rowspan="6">PRIMARY</td><td rowspan="7">PRIMARY</td><td rowspan="7">PRIMARY</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pre-year 1</td><td>Kindergarten (NSW, ACT)
Preparatory (Vic, Tas)</td><td>Pre-primary (WA)
Reception (SA)[c]
Transition (NT)[d]</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

[a] In some places in the NT, secondary schooling begins at year 7. [b] Pre-year 1 is not included in the pattern of study in Queensland. In 2003-04, Queensland will be conducting a trial to consider alternative approaches to school starting ages. [c] SA has an intake for each term. [d] The NT has an intake for terms 1–3.

Source: Adapted from MCEETYA (unpublished).

Schools

At the beginning of August 2002, there were 9632 schools in Australia. The majority of schools were government owned and managed (72.4 per cent) (table 3.2). Settlement patterns (population dispersion), the age distribution of the population, and educational policy influence the distribution of schools by size and level in different jurisdictions. For school education as a whole in 2002, the NT had

the highest proportion of very small primary schools (those with 20 or fewer students) (18.1 per cent) and the highest proportion of secondary schools with 300 or fewer students (31.6 per cent). Nationally, 61.5 per cent of all secondary schools enrolled over 600 students (table 3A.11). A breakdown of primary and secondary schools by size for government, non-government and all schools is reported in tables 3A.9, 3A.10 and 3A.11 respectively.

Table 3.2 **Summary of school characteristics, August 2002**

	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Government schools (no.)									
Primary	1 650	1 230	976	519	438	141	66	89	5 109
Combined[a]	64	53	81	90	79	26	3	45	441
Secondary	393	261	186	96	73	39	22	11	1 081
Special schools[b]	104	79	48	70	20	8	4	5	338
Total	**2 211**	**1 623**	**1 291**	**775**	**610**	**214**	**95**	**150**	**6 969**
Non-government schools (no.)									
Primary	522	446	243	154	117	32	27	16	1 557
Combined[a]	206	134	113	89	58	26	9	9	644
Secondary	145	101	77	40	22	7	6	8	406
Special schools[b]	31	16	2	2	3	1	1	0	56
Total	**904**	**697**	**435**	**285**	**200**	**66**	**43**	**33**	**2 663**
All schools (no.)									
Primary	2 172	1 676	1 219	673	555	173	93	105	6 666
Combined[a]	270	187	194	179	137	52	12	54	1 085
Secondary	538	362	263	136	95	46	28	19	1 487
Special schools[b]	135	95	50	72	23	9	5	5	394
Total	**3 115**	**2 320**	**1 726**	**1 060**	**810**	**280**	**138**	**183**	**9 632**
Proportion of schools that are government schools (%)									
Primary	76.0	73.4	80.1	77.1	78.9	81.5	71.0	84.8	76.6
Combined[a]	23.7	28.3	41.8	50.3	57.7	50.0	25.0	83.3	40.6
Secondary	73.0	72.1	70.7	70.6	76.8	84.8	78.6	57.9	72.7
Special schools[b]	77.0	83.2	96.0	97.2	87.0	88.9	80.0	100.0	85.8
All schools	71.0	70.0	74.8	73.1	75.3	76.4	68.8	82.0	72.4
Proportion of primary schools (%)									
Government	74.6	75.8	75.6	67.0	71.8	65.9	69.5	59.3	73.3
Non-government	57.7	64.0	55.9	54.0	58.5	48.5	62.8	48.5	58.5
All schools	69.7	72.2	70.6	63.5	68.5	61.8	67.4	57.4	69.2

[a] Combined primary and secondary schools. [b] Special schools provide special instruction for students with physical or intellectual disabilities and students with social problems.

Source: ABS (2003a); tables 3A.1, 3A.2 and 3A.3.

Student body

There were 3.3 million full time equivalent student enrolments in primary and secondary schools in August 2002 (table 3.3). The proportion of full time equivalent

students enrolled in government schools was greater in primary schools (72.0 per cent) than in secondary schools (63.4 per cent). The proportion of full time equivalent students in government schools was highest in the NT (77.1 per cent) and lowest in the ACT (61.5 per cent).

Differences in schooling structures influence enrolment patterns. Primary school education in Queensland, WA, SA and the NT, for example, includes year 7 whereas all other jurisdictions include year 7 in secondary school. As a result, the proportion of students enrolled in primary school education would be expected to be higher in the former jurisdictions than in others (table 3.3).

Table 3.3 **Full time equivalent student enrolments, August 2002[a]**

	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Total full time equivalent student enrolments at level of education ('000)									
Primary schools	629.5	457.1	377.1	206.2	158.6	46.7	32.3	25.2	1 932.6
Secondary schools	476.7	359.6	244.5	130.2	93.8	37.2	28.3	12.0	1 382.3
All schools	1 106.3	816.6	621.5	336.4	252.4	83.9	60.7	37.2	3 314.9
Proportion of full time equivalent students who were enrolled in government schools (%)									
Primary schools	71.4	69.4	75.5	73.5	70.7	77.8	64.8	80.4	72.0
Secondary schools	64.0	60.7	64.4	63.7	65.3	71.6	57.7	70.1	63.4
All schools	68.2	65.5	71.1	69.7	68.7	75.0	61.5	77.1	68.4
Proportion of full time equivalent students who were female (all schools) (%)									
Primary schools	48.6	48.6	48.7	48.4	48.6	48.7	48.7	48.8	48.6
Secondary schools	49.7	49.9	49.6	49.4	50.0	50.4	49.1	49.3	49.7
All schools	49.1	49.2	49.0	48.8	49.1	49.5	48.9	49.0	49.1
Proportion of full time equivalent students who were enrolled in primary education (%)									
Government schools	59.5	59.2	64.4	64.6	64.7	57.7	56.1	70.7	61.4
Non-government schools	51.2	49.7	51.5	53.6	58.8	49.5	48.7	57.9	51.6
All schools	56.9	56.0	60.7	61.3	62.8	55.6	53.3	67.8	58.3

a Students enrolled in special schools are included in this table, with special school students of primary school age included in the primary figures and those of secondary school age included in the secondary figures.

Source: ABS (2003a); tables 3A.1, 3A.2 and 3A.3.

Total full time student enrolments in schools in Australia were relatively stable over the five years to 2002 — up by about 0.8 per cent each year between August 1998 and August 2002. Enrolments in individual jurisdictions grew at different rates, with total enrolments increasing by 1.6 per cent each year in WA and declining by 0.5 per cent each year in Tasmania (table 3A.13).

The proportion of full time students enrolled in non-government schools increased between 1998 and 2002 in all States and Territories except Tasmania. Total non-government school enrolments expanded by an average of 2.2 per cent per year, while the expansion in full time government school enrolments was 0.2 per cent per year (table 3A.13). The expansion of full time enrolments in

non-government schools, however, was from a lower base than that for government schools. In absolute terms, full time students in government schools increased from 2 239 375 in 1998 to 2 257 337 in 2002. Full time students in non-government schools increased from 959 280 in 1998 to 1 044 439 in 2002 (table 3A.12).

Part time secondary students form a significant proportion of enrolments in some jurisdictions. Part time courses are available to secondary students, including mature age students attending colleges and those studying years 11 or 12 short courses (lasting five to 22 weeks).

The proportion of secondary school students who were enrolled part time in 2002 varied considerably across jurisdictions, partly because jurisdictions' education authorities have different policy and organisational arrangements for part time study. The number of part time courses available also varied considerably across jurisdictions. In 2002, the NT had the highest proportion of part time government secondary school students (12.5 per cent) and the ACT had the lowest (0.1 per cent) in 2002 (table 3.4).

Table 3.4 **Part time secondary school students in government schools**

	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Part time secondary school students in government schools (no.)[a]									
1998	3 029	2 044	4 276	4 157	5 909	2 607	10	961	22 993
1999	3 323	2 495	4 063	4 199	6 545	3 203	6	1 032	24 866
2000	3 638	2 489	3 868	4 154	7 015	3 538	7	977	25 686
2001	2 809	2 827	3 930	4 948	6 932	2 853	3	1 006	25 308
2002	2 455	3 029	4 096	4 880	7 099	2 684	10	1 052	25 305
Proportion of secondary school students in government schools who were part time students (%)									
1998	1.0	0.9	2.8	4.8	9.2	8.7	0.1	10.9	2.6
1999	1.1	1.1	2.6	4.8	9.9	10.7	–	11.6	2.8
2000	1.2	1.1	2.5	4.8	10.7	12.0	–	10.9	2.9
2001	0.9	1.3	2.5	5.7	10.6	10.0	–	11.3	2.8
2002	0.8	1.4	2.6	5.9	11.6	10.1	0.1	12.5	2.9

a Absolute number of part time secondary students (not full time equivalent). – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: ABS (2003a); table 3A.1.

Special needs groups

Certain groups of students in school education have been identified as having special needs. These special needs groups include:

- Indigenous students
- students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE)
- students with disabilities

- geographically remote students
- students from families of low socioeconomic status.

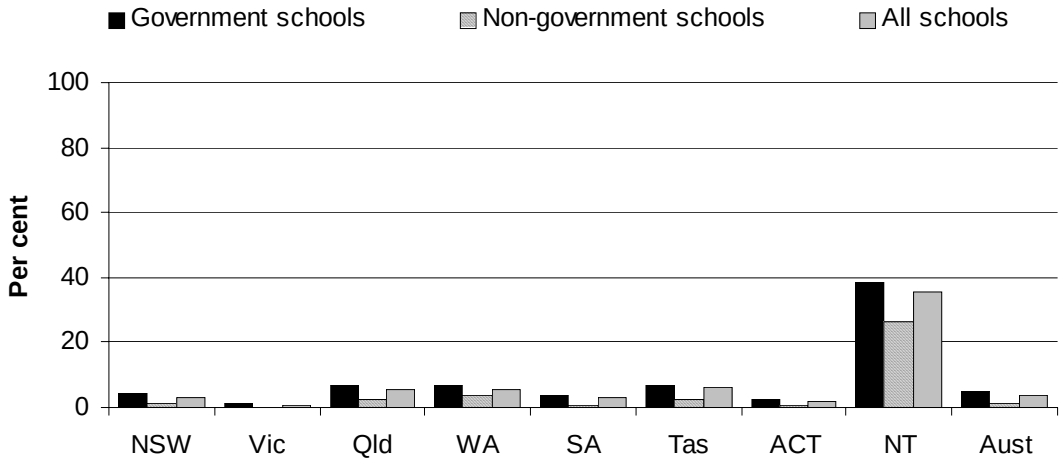
Government schools provide education for a high proportion of students from special needs groups. In 2002, 87.5 per cent of Indigenous students and 82.0 per cent of students with disabilities, for example, attended government schools (tables 3A.14 and 3A.16). This chapter reports on the proportions of Indigenous students, LBOTE students, students with disabilities and students who are geographically remote. Care needs to be taken in interpreting this information because some definitions of 'special needs' students differ across States and Territories.

Indigenous students

The proportion of full time Indigenous students in NT schools was 35.8 per cent in 2002, far higher than the proportion in any other jurisdiction. The jurisdictions with the next highest proportions of full time Indigenous students were Tasmania and WA (5.9 per cent and 5.8 per cent respectively) (figure 3.2). In absolute terms, NSW (36 161) and Queensland (33 501) had the largest numbers of full time Indigenous students, together accounting for 57.3 per cent of all Indigenous students enrolled in Australian schools (table 3A.14). Table 3A.14 provides additional information on Indigenous enrolments.

In all jurisdictions, the proportion of Indigenous students was higher in government schools than in non-government schools. Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous students was 4.7 per cent for government schools and 1.5 per cent for non-government schools (figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 **Indigenous students as a proportion of all students, 2002[a]**



	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Government schools	4.4	1.1	6.6	6.9	3.8	7.0	2.3	38.5	4.7
Non-government schools	0.9	0.2	2.4	3.4	0.8	2.5	0.8	26.6	1.5
All schools	3.3	0.8	5.4	5.8	2.8	5.9	1.7	35.8	3.7

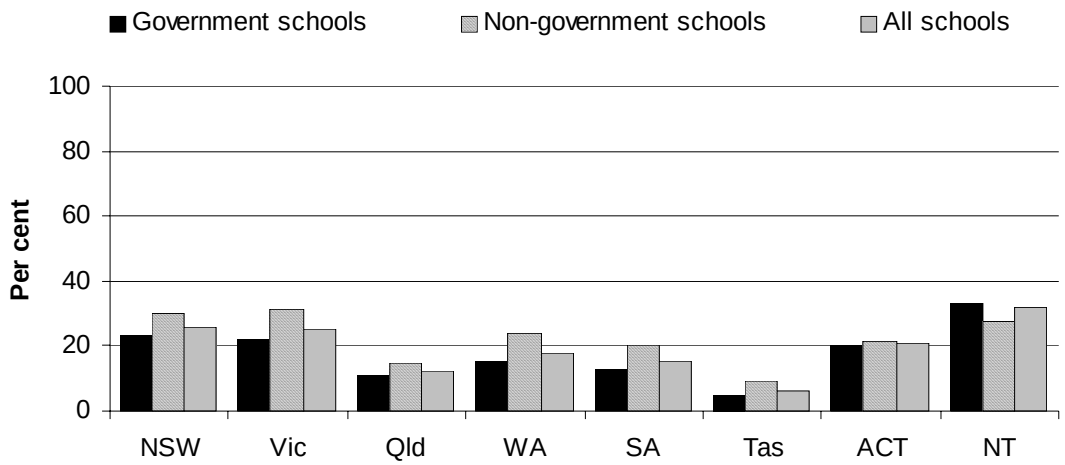
a Full time students.

Source: ABS (2003a); table 3A.14.

LBOTE students

Figure 3.3 shows proportions of LBOTE students based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2001 Census of Population and Housing. In figure 3.3, students are counted as having a language background other than English if their home language is not English or if they (or at least one parent) were born in a non-English speaking country. Non-government schools had a higher proportion of LBOTE students than government schools in all jurisdictions except the NT. Across school education as a whole, the NT had the highest proportion of LBOTE students (31.8 per cent) in 2001 (which is influenced by the inclusion of Indigenous students whose home language is not English in the definition of LBOTE students). New South Wales and Victoria also had relatively high proportions of LBOTE students (25.6 per cent and 25.3 per cent respectively), while Tasmania had the lowest proportion (5.9 per cent) (figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 **Students from language background other than English as a proportion of all students, 2001**



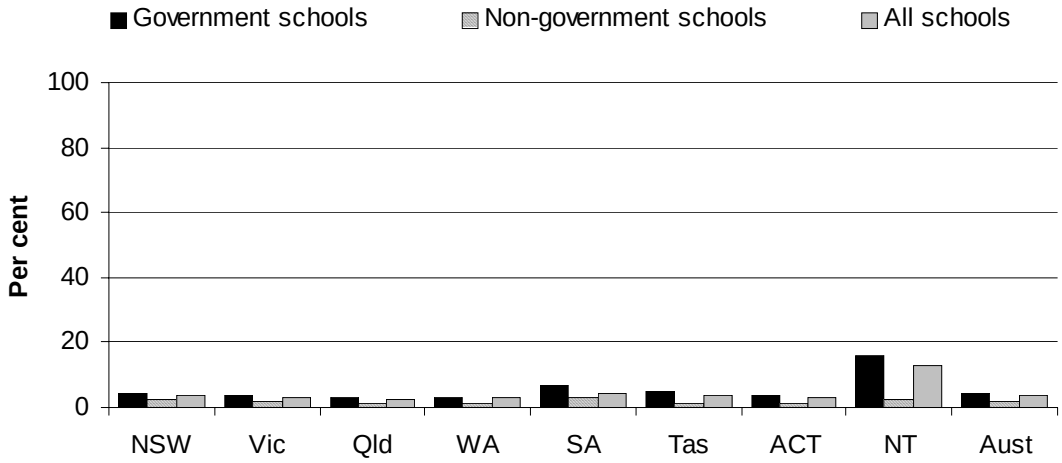
Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished) based on the ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing; table 3A.15.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities are educated in both mainstream and special schools. In figure 3.4, students with disabilities were those students who satisfied the criteria for enrolment in special education services provided in the State or Territory in which they were enrolled. These criteria vary across jurisdictions. Criteria relating to social or emotional impairment, for example, exist in some jurisdictions (such as NSW) but not others (such as the ACT). The NT had the highest proportion (13.0 per cent) of students with disabilities in 2002, while Queensland had the lowest proportion (2.6 per cent) (figure 3.4).

Nationally, the proportion of students with disabilities was around twice as high in government schools compared with non-government schools. The proportion of students with disabilities was around three times as high in government schools compared with non-government schools in the ACT, and around six times as high in government schools compared with non-government schools in the NT.

Figure 3.4 **Students with disabilities as a proportion of all students, 2002**



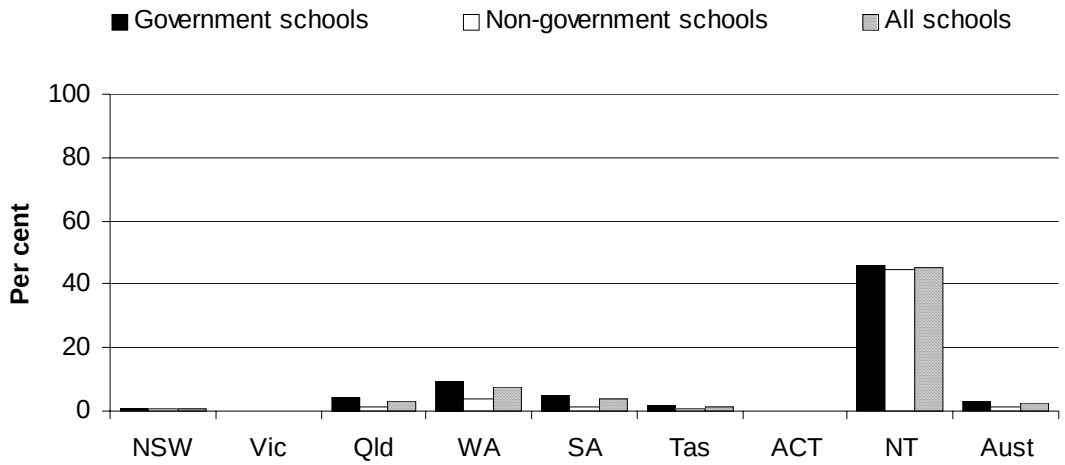
Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); table 3A.16.

Geographically remote students[1]

Data on geographically remote students are calculated using the Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas (RRMA) classification, which is consistent with that agreed in principle by education ministers for nationally comparable reporting of the outcomes of schooling. The NT had by far the highest proportion (45.5 per cent) of students attending schools in remote areas in 2002, while WA had the next highest proportion (7.7 per cent) for all schools. Victoria had the lowest proportion (0.1 per cent) for all schools (figure 3.5). (The ACT has no remote areas.) Nationally, the proportion of students enrolled in schools in remote areas was more than twice as high in government schools compared with non-government schools. Table 3A.17 includes data relating to metropolitan and provincial areas, as well as remote areas (see section 3.7 for definitions of remoteness and other geographic classifications).

[1] To investigate the possibility that these data may understate the proportion of students in remote areas as a result of relying on school location rather than students' home location, the 2001 data were compared with data derived from the 2001 Census. The two data sets were found to be similar, except that Tasmania had about one third more remote area students in the Census data. This result may be indicative for the 2003 data.

Figure 3.5 **Students attending schools in remote areas as a proportion of all students, 2002**



	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Government schools	0.8	0.2	4.2	9.3	5.2	1.7	..	45.8	3.1
Non-government schools	0.4	–	1.3	3.9	1.3	0.6	..	44.5	1.2
All schools	0.7	0.1	3.4	7.7	4.0	1.4	..	45.5	2.5

.. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); table 3A.17.

3.2 Policy developments in school education

State/Territory grants funding arrangements

The next schools funding quadrennium is due to commence in 2005. Ministers agreed that negotiations on the next funding quadrennium will commence as soon as possible. Negotiations will relate to:

- the new States grants legislation and the Associated States Grants Agreement
- the new Indigenous education targeted assistance legislation and associated Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program Agreement
- the administrative guidelines associated with the new States grants legislation and the new Indigenous education targeted assistance legislation.

3.3 Framework of performance indicators

This chapter provides performance indicators on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of government expenditure on all schools in Australia. It does not compare the efficiency of government and non-government schools. Governments own and operate government schools, and have a direct interest in the equity, efficiency and effectiveness of their operation. In addition, governments are committed to providing access to education for all students. Box 3.1 shows the national goals for schooling, as endorsed by MCEETYA.

Box 3.1 **National goals for schooling in the 21st century**

The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs endorsed in April 1999 the following set of national goals for school education.

Preamble

Australia's future depends upon each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society. High quality schooling is central to achieving this vision.

This statement of national goals for schooling provides broad directions to guide schools and education authorities in securing these outcomes for students.

It acknowledges the capacity of all young people to learn, and the role of schooling in developing that capacity. It also acknowledges the role of parents as the first educators of their children and the central role of teachers in the learning process.

Schooling provides a foundation for young Australians' intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development. By providing a supportive and nurturing environment, schooling contributes to the development of students' sense of self-worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future.

Governments set the public policies that foster the pursuit of excellence, enable a diverse range of educational choices and aspirations, safeguard the entitlement of all young people to high quality schooling, promote the economic use of public resources, and uphold the contribution of schooling to a socially cohesive and culturally rich society.

Common and agreed goals for schooling establish a foundation for action among State and Territory governments with their constitutional responsibility for schooling, the Australian Government, non-government school authorities and all those who seek the best possible educational outcomes for young Australians, to improve the quality of schooling nationally.

The achievement of these common and agreed national goals entails a commitment to collaboration for the purposes of:

- further strengthening schools as learning communities where teachers, students and their families work in partnership with business, industry and the wider community;

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.1 **(Continued)**

- enhancing the status and quality of the teaching profession;
- continuing to develop curriculum and related systems of assessment, accreditation and credentialling that promote quality and are nationally recognised and valued; and
- increasing public confidence in school education through explicit and defensible standards that guide improvement in students' levels of educational achievement and through which the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of schooling can be measured and evaluated.

These national goals provide a basis for investment in schooling to enable all young people to engage effectively with an increasingly complex world. This world will be characterised by advances in information and communication technologies, population diversity arising from international mobility and migration, and complex environmental and social challenges.

The achievement of the national goals for schooling will assist young people to contribute to Australia's social, cultural and economic development in local and global contexts. Their achievement will also assist young people to develop a disposition towards learning throughout their lives so that they can exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens of Australia.

Goals

1. Schooling should develop fully the talents and capacities of all students. In particular, when students leave schools they should:

1.1 have the capacity for, and skills in, analysis and problem solving and the ability to communicate ideas and information, to plan and organise activities and to collaborate with others;

1.2 have qualities of self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, and a commitment to personal excellence as a basis for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members;

1.3 have the capacity to exercise judgment and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice, and the capacity to make sense of their world, to think about how things got to be the way they are, to make rational and informed decisions about their own lives and to accept responsibility for their own actions;

1.4 be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life;

1.5 have employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, vocational education and training, further education, employment and life-long learning;

1.6 be confident, creative and productive users of new technologies, particularly information and communication technologies, and understand the impact of those technologies on society;

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.1 **(Continued)**

1.7 have an understanding of, and concern for, stewardship of the natural environment, and the knowledge and skills to contribute to ecologically sustainable development; and

1.8 have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to establish and maintain a healthy lifestyle, and for the creative and satisfying use of leisure time.

2. In terms of curriculum, students should have:

2.1 attained high standards of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the compulsory years of schooling encompassing the agreed eight key learning areas:

- the arts
- English
- health and physical education
- languages other than English
- mathematics
- science
- studies of society and environment
- technology

and the interrelationships between them;

2.2 attained the skills of numeracy and English literacy, such that every student should be numerate, able to read, write, spell and communicate at an appropriate level;

2.3 participated in programs of vocational learning during the compulsory years and have had access to vocational education and training programs as part of their senior secondary studies; and

2.4 participated in programs and activities which foster and develop enterprise skills, including those skills which will allow them maximum flexibility and adaptability in the future.

3. Schooling should be socially just, so that:

3.1 students' outcomes from schooling are free from the effects of negative forms of discrimination based on sex, language, culture and ethnicity, religion or disability; and of differences arising from students' socioeconomic background or geographic location;

3.2 the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students improve and, over time, match those of other students;

3.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have equitable access to, and opportunities in, schooling so that their learning outcomes improve and, over time, match those of other students;

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.1 **(Continued)**

3.4 all students understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian society and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians;

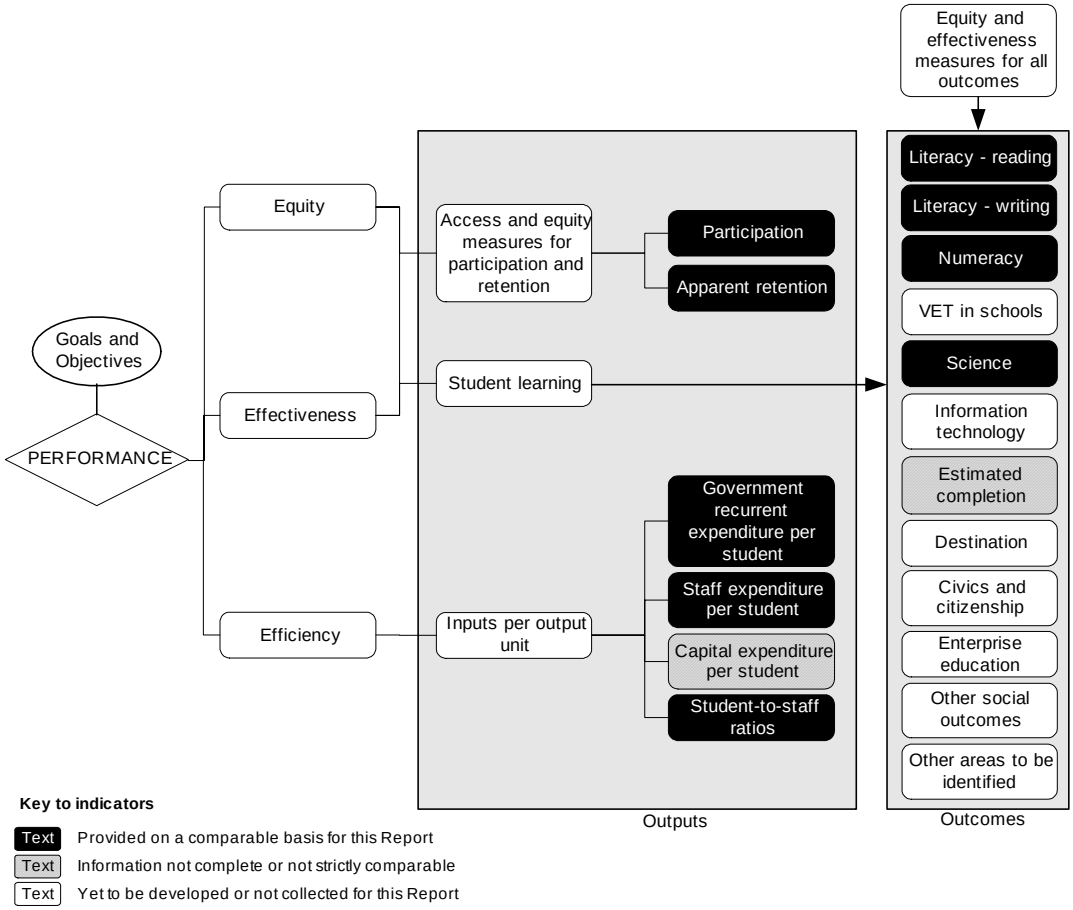
3.5 all students understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and internationally; and

3.6 all students have access to the high quality education necessary to enable the completion of school education to year 12 or its vocational equivalent and that provides clear and recognised pathways to employment and further education and training.

Source: Adapted from MCEETYA (1999).

The performance of school education is reported against the indicator framework in figure 3.6. This framework is consistent with the national goals for schooling (box 3.1). For the 2004 Report, the framework has been revised to provide information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and to distinguish the outputs and outcomes of government services for school education. This approach is consistent with the revised general performance indicator framework and service process diagram in chapter 1 (figures 1.2 and 1.3) that have been agreed by the Steering Committee.

Figure 3.6 **Performance indicators for all schools**



3.4 Key performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts and locations influence the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of school education services. Appendix A contains short statistical profiles on each State and Territory, which may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter.

The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2004 Report (figure 3.6). For data that are not considered strictly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

The effectiveness indicators for school education in this chapter are based on the achievement of the national goals for schooling. Access and equity objectives of school education can be assessed by comparing outcomes for special needs groups, such as Indigenous and LBOTE students, to those for all students through indicators

such as reading and writing literacy, numeracy, completion rates, apparent retention rates and age participation rates. Outcomes are compared for special needs groups for available indicators where possible.

Outputs

Equity and effectiveness

Access and equity measures for school education participation and retention are reported.

Participation

The participation rate of 15–19 year olds measures the number of full time school students in that age group, as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age. Care needs be taken in interpreting participation rates in school education because rates are influenced by jurisdictional differences in:

- compulsory school age, year and age/grade structures
- other options for delivering post-compulsory education and training — for example, work-based training and enrolment in technical and further education (TAFE) delivered programs
- the extent of part time enrolment in schools (table 3.4).

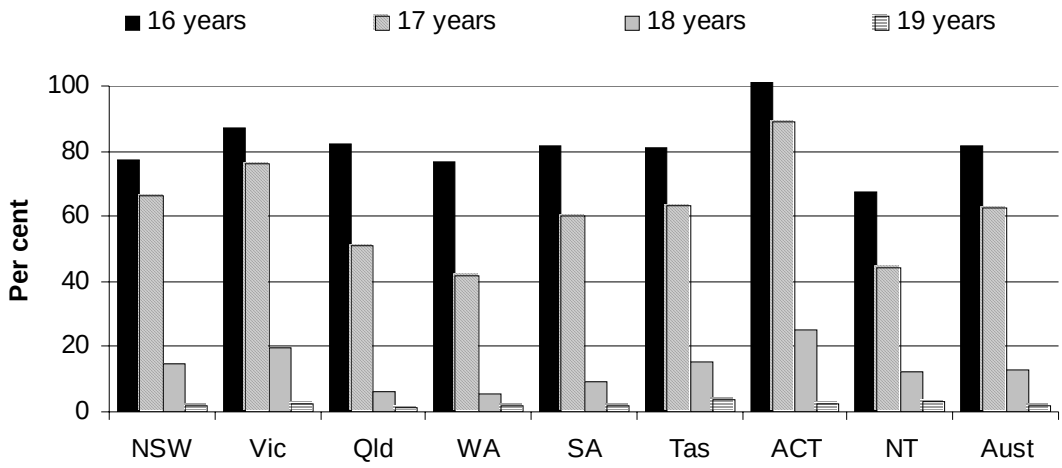
Further, the higher participation rates in the ACT are partly a result of the enrolment in the ACT of NSW residents from surrounding areas. The participation rate in school may understate the extent of participation in post-compulsory education for these reasons. An alternative participation indicator that accounts for some of these factors is reported in the Education preface.

Nationally, 50.0 per cent of 15–19 year olds were enrolled in schools in 2002 (table 3A.30). Participation rates varied by jurisdiction, age and gender.

- The ACT had the highest overall participation rate of 15–19 year olds (61.4 per cent) and the NT had the lowest rate (40.9 per cent).
- Participation rates for females were 0.9–2.5 percentage points higher than those for males in all jurisdictions except the ACT, where male participation was 0.3 percentage points higher than female participation.
- Participation rates declined significantly as students exceeded the maximum compulsory school age (16 years for Tasmania and 15 years for other jurisdictions) (figure 3.7).

Participation rates in the ACT in 2002, as in the past, were higher than those in other jurisdictions for all ages except 19 year olds, for whom Tasmania had the highest rate (3.5 per cent).

Figure 3.7 **School participation rates, by age of students, all schools, 2002[a, b]**



a Proportion of the population who were not of compulsory school age but who were enrolled as full time students in August 2002. **b** School is compulsory for 16 year olds in Tasmania.

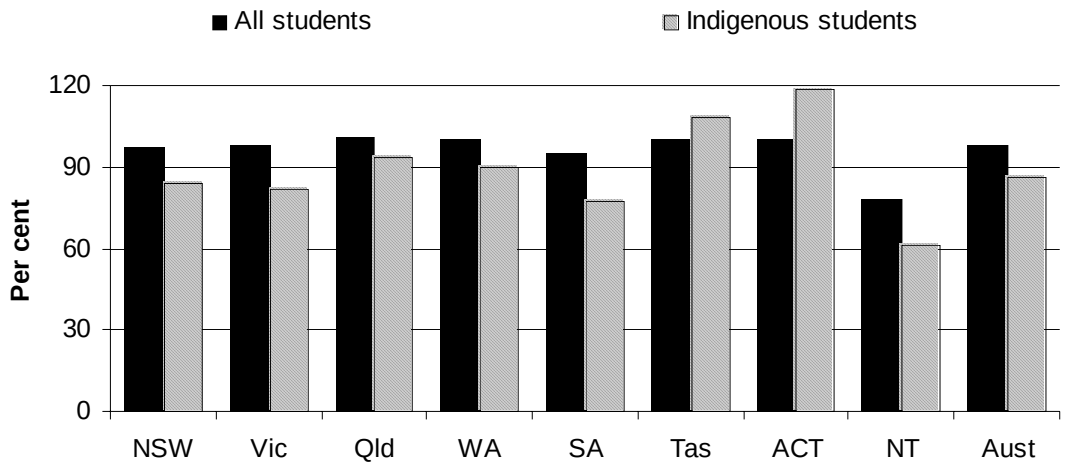
Source: ABS (2003a); table 3A.30.

Apparent retention

Apparent retention rates estimate the percentage of full time students who continue from a specified year level to a higher year level. The term 'apparent' is used because no adjustments are made for migration, student movements between jurisdictions or students repeating year levels. Apparent retention rates from the commencement of secondary school to year 10 and from year 10 to year 12 are shown in figures 3.8 and 3.9 respectively.

Apparent rates of retention from the commencement of secondary school to year 10 provide one measure of the equity of outcomes for Indigenous students. Apparent retention rates for all students were commonly 95–100 per cent in 2002, with a national proportion of 98.1 (figure 3.8). High rates are to be expected because normal year level progression means students in year 10 are generally of an age at which schooling is compulsory. Rates for Indigenous students, however, were considerably lower than those for all students in all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the ACT. The national retention rate for Indigenous students was 86.4 per cent, or 11.7 percentage points lower than that for all students.

Figure 3.8 **Apparent rates of retention from year 7 or 8 to year 10, full time secondary students, all schools, 2002[a, b, c]**



a Apparent retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions. For this reason, variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. Retention rates can exceed 100 per cent for a variety of reasons, including student transfers between jurisdictions after the base year. **b** The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students (table 3.4). **c** Ungraded students are not included in the calculation of apparent retention rates. This exclusion has particular implications for the NT, where around 50 per cent of Indigenous secondary students are ungraded (compared with an average of around 4 per cent for the rest of Australia). As a result, Indigenous apparent retention rates may misrepresent the retention of students in secondary schooling in the NT.

Source: ABS (2003a); table 3A.31.

The apparent rate of retention from year 10 to year 12 has been derived by expressing the number of full time school students enrolled in year 12 in 2002 as a proportion of the number of full time school students enrolled in year 10 in 2000. Progression to final years of schooling is influenced by a wide range of factors, including student perceptions of the benefits of schooling, the availability of employment and further educational alternatives, socioeconomic status and population movements.

Apparent retention to year 12 is a long standing measure that is presented as an indicator of the extent to which students progress to their final year of schooling. It has been consistently reported over time, but does not reflect factors such as:

- students repeating a year of education or returning to education after a period of absence and thus being included in the year 10 cohort in 2000 but not in the year 12 cohort in 2002
- differing enrolment policies across jurisdictions (which contribute to different age/grade structures)

- students enrolled in year 12 on a part time basis (table 3.4)
- interstate movement of students
- movement between the government school sector and the non-government school sector
- impacts of migration and full fee paying overseas students
- varying enrolment patterns in which students choose to complete their secondary schooling in TAFE institutes.

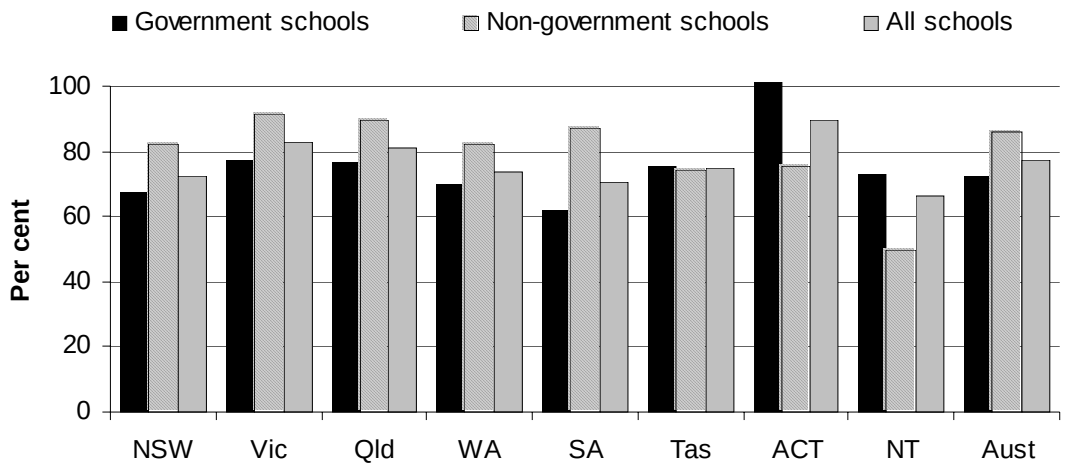
All these factors can combine to result in a year 12 cohort that is significantly different in composition from the corresponding year 10 cohort — for example:

- In SA, if part time students are included in the 2002 year 12 total, then the apparent retention rate becomes 87.9 per cent, compared with 70.6 per cent for full time students only (ABS 2001a, 2003a; table 3A.32).
- In NSW, a significant number of young people choose to complete their post-compulsory education in the TAFE system rather than continue at school. In 2002, 4718 students aged 15–19 years undertook their Higher School Certificate or other tertiary preparation studies in NSW through TAFE institutes (NSW Government, unpublished).

Work being undertaken to improve this measure is discussed in section 3.5.

Apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12 in all schools in 2002 ranged from 89.8 per cent in the ACT to 66.2 per cent in the NT. The apparent retention rates for government schools ranged from 101.1 per cent in the ACT to 61.9 per cent in SA (figure 3.9). One reason for the ACT rate exceeding 100 per cent is that a number of non-government schools in the ACT do not enrol students beyond year 10 and students thus need to change schools for years 11 and 12. This set-up has the effect of reducing the retention rate for non-government schools and increasing the retention rate for government schools.

Figure 3.9 **Apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12, full time secondary students, 2002[a, b]**

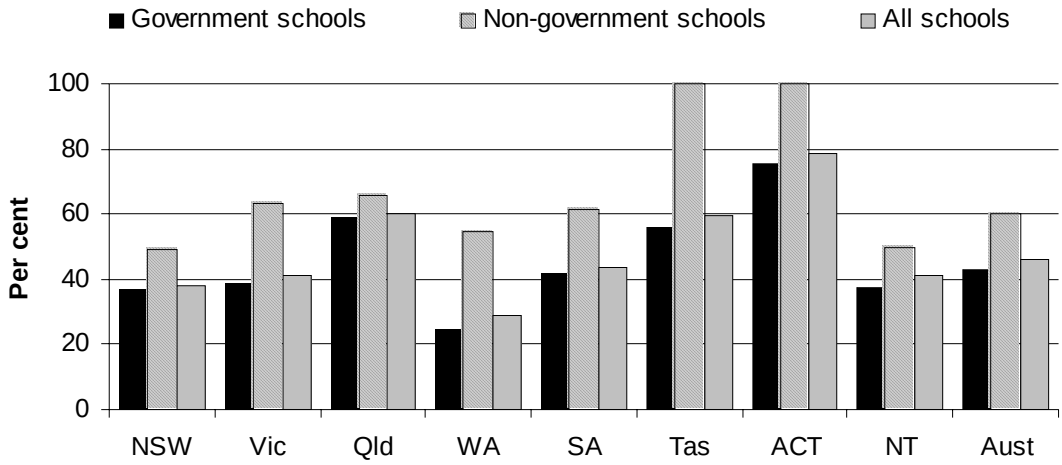


a Apparent retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions. For this reason, variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. Retention rates can exceed 100 per cent for a variety of reasons, including student transfers between government and non-government schools after the base year. **b** The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students (table 3.4).

Source: ABS (2003a); Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); table 3A.32.

For all schools, apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12 for Indigenous students in 2002 ranged from 78.8 per cent in the ACT to 29.0 per cent in WA (figure 3.10). In interpreting this indicator, note that about 10–20 per cent of Indigenous students leave school before year 10 (figure 3.8) so are not included in the base year for retention from year 10 to year 12. Nationally, Indigenous retention from year 10 to year 12 for all schools in 2002 was 45.8 per cent (figure 3.10), or 31.2 percentage points lower than the rate for all students.

Figure 3.10 **Apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12, Indigenous full time secondary students, 2002[a, b, c]**

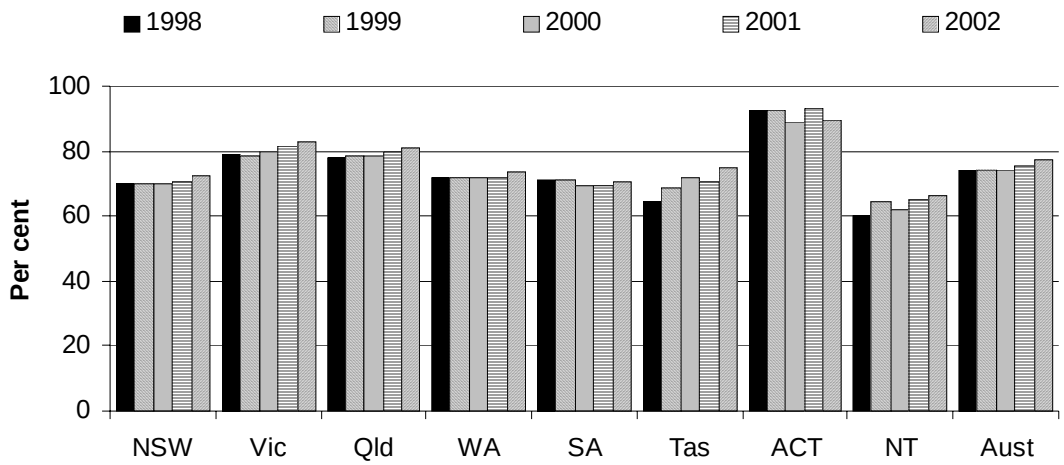


a Apparent retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions. For this reason, variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. **b** The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students (table 3.4). **c** Ungraded students are not included in the calculation of apparent retention rates. This exclusion has particular implications for the NT, where around 50 per cent of Indigenous students are ungraded (compared with an average of around 4 per cent for the rest of Australia). As a result, Indigenous apparent retention rates may misrepresent the retention of students in secondary schooling in the NT.

Source: ABS (2003a); Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); table 3A.32.

Between 1998 and 2002, the apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12 in all schools increased in all jurisdictions except the ACT, where it remained relatively steady (figure 3.11).

Figure 3.11 **Apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12, full time secondary students, all schools — time series**



Source: ABS (2003a); tables 3A.42, 3A.53, 3A.62, 3A.72, 3A.81, 3A.93, 3A.104 and 3A.114.

Efficiency

Governments have an interest in achieving the best results from their expenditure on schooling, both as owners and operators of government schools, and as the major providers of funds to the non-government school sector. An objective for the Review is to publish comparable estimates of costs. Ideally, such comparison includes the full range of costs to government. Where the full costs cannot be measured, cost estimated on a consistent basis is the best approach.

Significant effort has been made to improve the comparability of expenditure data across States and Territories. Table 3.5 shows information on the comparability of the source expenditure data used for this chapter. The main areas of noncomparability for 2001-02 were:

- that the NT used cash accounting (supplemented by selected accrual information), while all other jurisdictions used accrual accounting
- that WA and the ACT were not subject to payroll tax, while all other jurisdictions were.

For the efficiency indicators included in this chapter, however, adjustments were made to improve comparability. These adjustments involved including estimates of payroll tax for WA and the ACT, together with actual amounts for other jurisdictions and excluding the actual notional user cost of capital applied by some

jurisdictions; and applying a consistent user cost of capital of 8 per cent across jurisdictions.

User cost of capital per student

The user cost of capital for government services is the cost of funds tied up in capital used to produce services (for example, land and buildings owned by government schools). The user cost of capital makes explicit the opportunity cost of using the funds to provide services rather than investing elsewhere or retiring debt. When comparing the costs of government services, it is important to account for the user cost of capital because it is:

- often a significant component of the cost of services
- often treated inconsistently (that is, it is included in the costs of services delivered by most non-government service providers, but effectively costed at zero for many government service providers).

An indicative user cost of capital for government schools in 2001-02 was calculated by applying a notional user cost of capital rate of 8 per cent to the value of government assets used in the delivery of education in government schools for all jurisdictions. The user cost of capital per full time equivalent government school student in 2001-02 averaged $1125 nationally. Across jurisdictions, it was highest in the NT ($1722) and lowest in SA ($714) (table 3A.8).

The Steering Committee accepts that the asset valuation data, from which the user cost of capital has been calculated, are not fully comparable across jurisdictions (table 3A.35). It also recognises, however, that the treatment of costs in the past has not fully recognised the cost of public capital used by agencies to deliver services — that is, capital has generally been considered 'free'. This can lead to significant underestimation of costs of those services for which government capital is a major input. Using an imperfect costing of government capital, therefore, is preferable to not costing it at all and also provides an incentive to improve data over time. Changes have been made to the data definitions for asset reporting and valuation methods this year to improve the comparability of asset values data that are used to calculate the user cost of capital.

Government recurrent expenditure per student

A number of factors may influence government recurrent expenditure per student (box 3.2). Table 3.5 provides information on the comparability of expenditure items across jurisdictions.

Box 3.2 **Factors that may influence the level of expenditure per student**

Differences in the costs of educating students can be driven by:

- influences beyond the control of governments, such as a high proportion of geographically remote students and/or a dispersed population, as well as migration between States and Territories
- policy changes in education, such as tradeoffs between reducing costs and improving the quality of education, or between reducing costs and increasing the accessibility of education
- various approaches that education departments and schools apply in managing resources
- economies of scale.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission, when calculating relativities between States and Territories to distribute Australian Government general purpose grants, accounts for influences beyond a jurisdiction's control (called 'disabilities') that affect the jurisdiction's cost of providing services and capacity to raise revenue. In relation to education, the assessment includes 'service delivery scale' disability factors. These factors reflect the higher cost of providing schools in jurisdictions that have a small and dispersed population. This Report does not, however, make any cost adjustments based on any of the above factors. These factors may need to be considered when examining each jurisdiction's expenditure per student.

A proxy indicator of efficiency is the level of government inputs per unit of output (unit cost). Where user cost of capital is excluded, in-school government expenditure per full time equivalent student in government primary schools in 2001-02 ranged from $11 011 in the NT to $6094 in Victoria. In-school government expenditure per full time equivalent student in government secondary schools ranged from $15 461 in the NT to $8189 in Victoria. Out-of-school departmental overheads per full time equivalent student in government schools ranged from $1544 in the NT to $343 in NSW (figure 3.12).

Where user cost of capital is included, in-school government expenditure per full time equivalent student in government primary schools in 2001-02 ranged from $12 492 in the NT to $6835 in Victoria. In-school government expenditure per full time equivalent student in government secondary schools ranged from $17 770 in the NT to $9174 in Victoria. Out-of-school departmental overheads per full time equivalent student in government schools ranged from $1545 in the NT to $356 in NSW (figure 3.12).

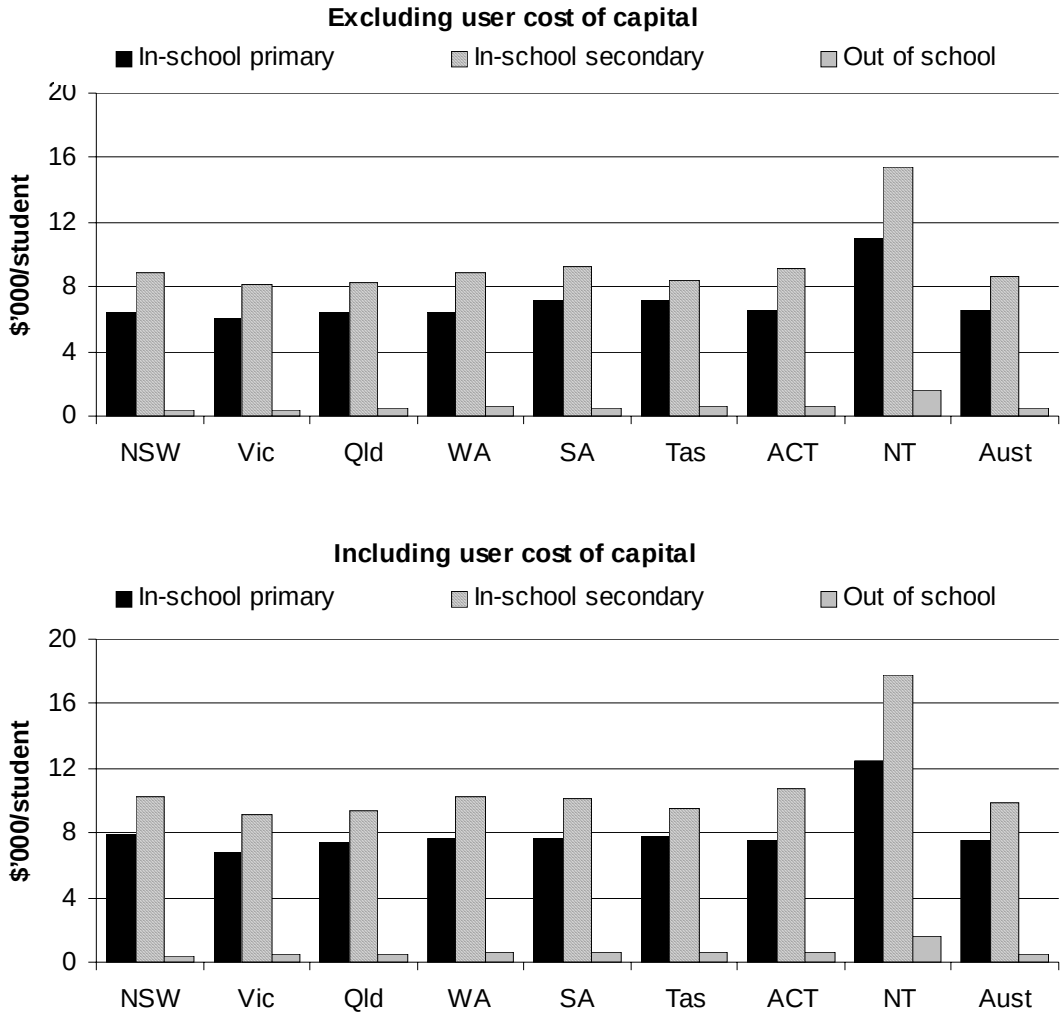
Table 3.5 **Comparability of expenditure — items included, 2001-02**

	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*[a]	*WA*[b]	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*[b]	*NT*
Superannuation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Basis of estimate	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Cash
Workers compensation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Payroll tax[c]	✓	✓	✓	✓ Imputed	✓	✓	✓ Imputed	✓
Basis of estimate	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	..	Accrual	Accrual	..	Cash
Termination and long service leave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Basis of estimate	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Cash
Sick leave	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Depreciation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Rent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	na
Basis of estimate	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	na
Utilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Basis of estimate	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Cash
Umbrella department costs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Basis of apportionment[d]	Actual	Formula	Formula	Formula	Per student	Per FTE student	Formula	Per student
Notional user cost of capital[c]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[a] Sick leave in Queensland is embedded in the salary structure and not separately recorded. [b] Education departments in WA and the ACT are exempt from payroll tax. [c] Efficiency indicators in this chapter are adjusted for differences in payroll tax and notional user cost of capital. [d] Umbrella department costs are apportioned according to: use (including enrolment) in Victoria; cost drivers (mainly student numbers) in Queensland; activity-based costing in the ACT; and pro rata costs based on expenditure in the NT. **na** Not available. .. Not applicable. ✓ Included. ✗ Excluded. FTE = full time equivalent.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

Figure 3.12 **Government recurrent expenditure per full time equivalent student, government schools, 2001-02[a, b]**



a See notes to tables 3A.6 and 3A.7 for definitions and data caveats. **b** Payroll tax estimates have been included for WA and the ACT for comparability reasons.

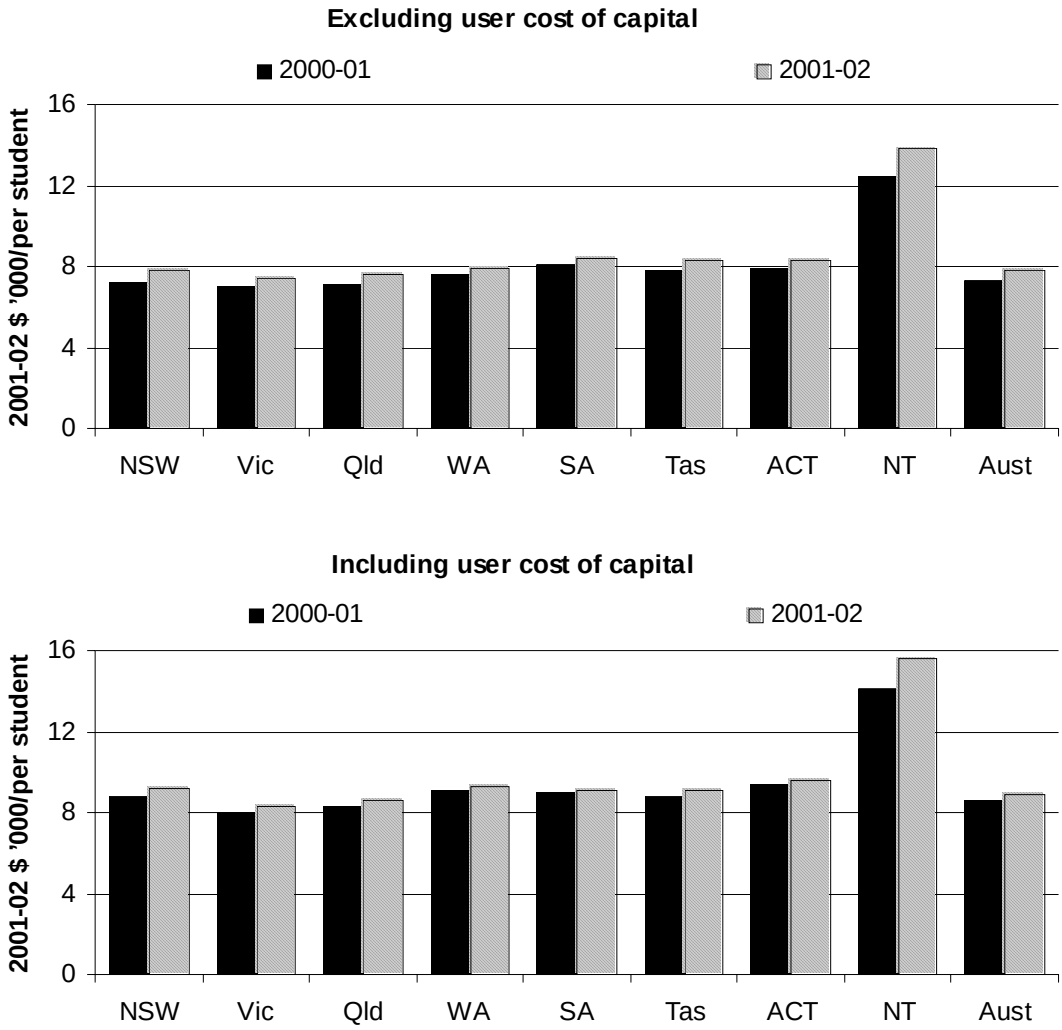
Source: ABS (2003a); MCEETYA (2003b); table 3A.7.

Where user cost of capital is excluded, government expenditure per full time equivalent student in government schools in 2001-02 ranged from $13 850 in the NT to $7371 in Victoria. It increased (in real terms) between 2000-01 and 2001-02 in all jurisdictions (figure 3.13). Nationally, the real increase over this period was 6.4 per cent (table 3A.8).

Where user cost of capital is included, government expenditure per full time equivalent student in government schools in 2001-02 ranged from $15 573 in the NT to $8266 in Victoria. It increased (in real terms) between 2000-01 and 2001-02

in all jurisdictions (figure 3.13). Nationally, the real increase over this period was 3.5 per cent (table 3A.8).

Figure 3.13 **Real government recurrent expenditure per full time equivalent student, government schools (2001-02 dollars)[a, b, c, d]**

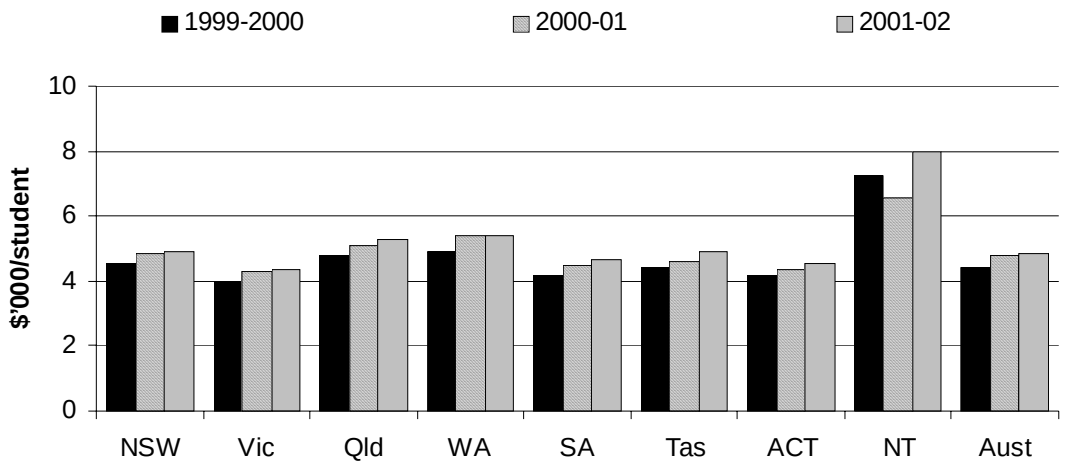


a See notes to tables 3A.6 and 3A.8 for definitions and data caveats. **b** Data for 2000-01 have been adjusted to 2001-02 dollars using the gross domestic product (GDP) price deflator. **c** Payroll tax estimates have been included for WA and the ACT for comparability reasons.

Source: ABS (2003a); MCEETYA (2003b); table 3A.8.

In 2001-02, government expenditure per full time equivalent student in non-government schools ranged from $8003 in the NT to $4371 in Victoria (figure 3.14). It increased (in real terms) between 1999-2000 and 2001-02 in all jurisdictions (figure 3.14). Nationally, the average real increase over this period was 4.8 per cent per year (table 3A.8).

Figure 3.14 **Real government recurrent expenditure per full time equivalent student, non-government schools (2001-02 dollars)[a]**



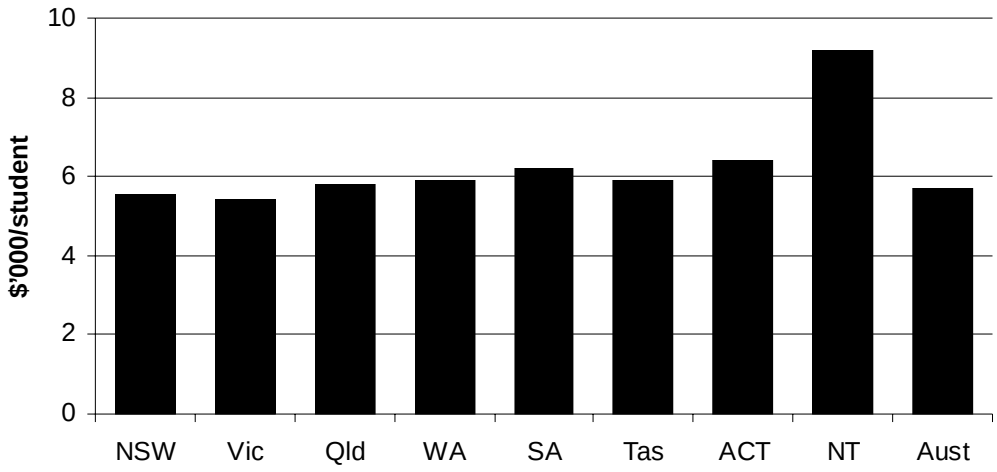
a The sum of Australian Government specific purpose payments for non-government schools, and State and Territory payments to non-government schools. Data on State and Territory payments to non-government schools are not fully comparable across jurisdictions.

Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.8.

Staff expenditure per student

Expenditure on staff is the major component of government recurrent expenditure on government schools, accounting for 64.0 per cent of the total, or $12.9 billion in 2001-02. Of this expenditure on staff in 2001-02, 80.0 per cent was expenditure on in-school teachers (table 3A.6). Government expenditure on staff per full time equivalent student ranged from $9211 in the NT to $5396 in Victoria (figure 3.15).

Figure 3.15 **Government recurrent expenditure on staff per full time equivalent student, government schools, 2001-02**



Source: ABS (2003a); MCEETYA (2003b); table 3A.7.

Capital expenditure per student

The Review has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future. In previous reports, user cost of capital per student (reported earlier in this chapter) was presented here as a proxy for capital expenditure per student.

Student-to-staff ratio

The student-to-teacher ratio presents the number of students per person classified as a teacher[2] in a way that can be compared across jurisdictions. A low ratio means there are a small number of students per teacher. (The ratio is not a measure of class size.) Table 3A.36 contains student-to-staff ratios for 2002.

2 Teaching staff have teaching duties (that is, they are engaged to impart the school curriculum) and spend the majority of their time in contact with students. They support students, either by direct class contact or on an individual basis. Teaching staff include principals, deputy principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administrative duties, but not specialist support staff (who may spend the majority of their time in contact with students but are not engaged to impart the school curriculum) (MCEETYA 2002c).

The ratio needs to be interpreted with care because it can be affected by a number of factors, including:

- the proportion of small rural schools — for example, a large proportion of small rural schools can significantly lower the overall average student-to-teacher ratio, while a large proportion of students in metropolitan schools can raise the ratio;
- the proportions of special needs students — for example, special schools catering for students with disabilities generally have significantly lower student-to-teacher ratios than those of mainstream schools because additional resources are required in mainstream schools for these students
- the degree to which administrative work is undertaken by people classified as teachers (such as principals, deputy principals and senior teachers)
- other inputs to school education (for example, non-teaching staff, computers, books and laboratory equipment).

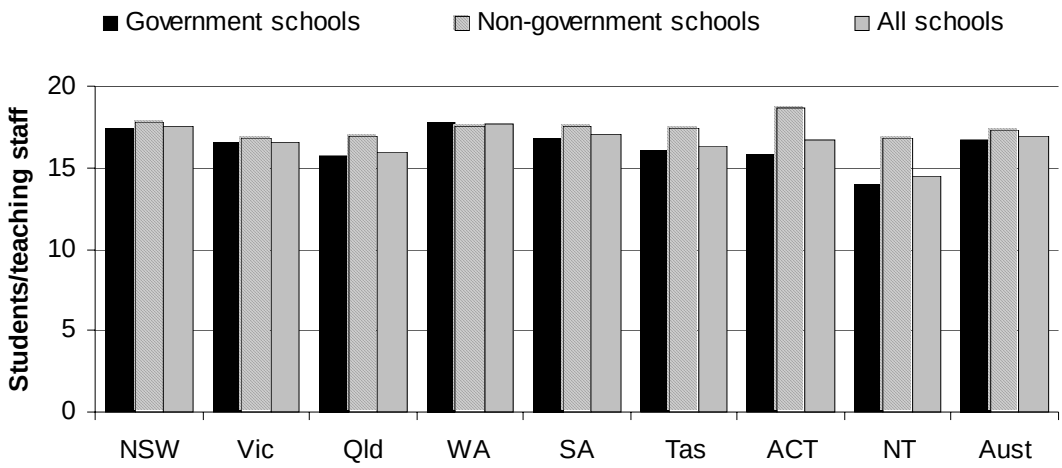
Interpretation of student-to-teacher ratios is usually accompanied by assumptions about efficiency and quality:

- A high ratio could indicate an efficient school system, because desired outputs are produced with a small number of inputs. This indicates efficiency, however, only when output quality and outcomes are the same as (or higher than) those in the other systems being compared.
- A low ratio could indicate a higher quality education system, if it is assumed that teachers have more time for each student and that this results in better student outcomes. There is, however, no clear agreement in international literature that smaller class sizes necessarily improve outcomes.

Interpretation can be enhanced by more comprehensive student outcome data, as well as by information on teacher quality, experience and qualifications. The ratios presented in this Report are aggregated across all subjects and year levels, so they do not reflect the fact that a lower ratio may be more important for certain subjects and/or year levels.

Nationally, for primary schools in government and non-government sectors combined, the student-to-teacher ratio was 16.9 in 2002. WA had the highest student-to-teacher ratio (17.7) and the NT had the lowest (14.5) (figure 3.16).

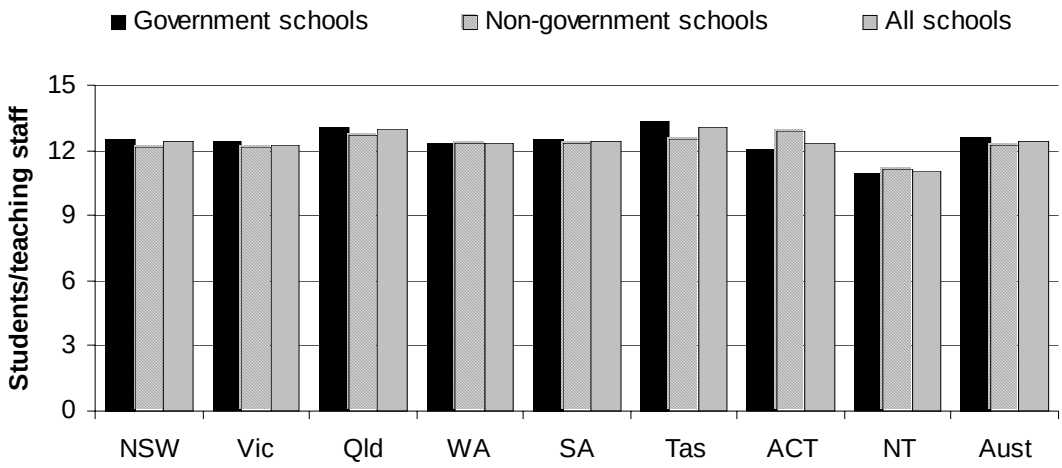
Figure 3.16 **Ratio of full time equivalent students to full time equivalent teaching staff, primary schools, 2002**



Source: ABS (2003a); table 3A.36.

Nationally, for secondary schools in government and non-government sectors combined, the student-to-teacher ratio was 12.5 in 2002. Tasmania had the highest student-to-teacher ratio (13.1) and the NT had the lowest (11.0) in 2002 (figure 3.17).

Figure 3.17 **Ratio of full time equivalent students to full time equivalent teaching staff, secondary schools, 2002**



Source: ABS (2003a); table 3A.36.

The ratio of full time equivalent students to full time equivalent non-teaching in-school staff[3] needs to be interpreted with care because it can be affected by:

- the amount of administrative work undertaken by staff nominally classified as teachers (such as principals, assistant principals and senior teachers)
- the proportion of administrative work undertaken outside the school (because administrative tasks such as personnel management are centralised in some jurisdictions but undertaken at the school level in others)
- the extent to which technology is applied to teaching, learning and school administration
- the extent to which there are support staff in the classroom setting
- the degree to which schools contract out services.

For all schools, the ratio of students to non-teaching, in-school staff in 2002 was 47.1 nationally. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 57.3 in NSW to 31.8 in the NT (table 3A.36).

Outcomes

Nationally comparable learning outcomes

The 2004 Report includes nationally comparable learning outcomes data for 2001 for reading and writing literacy and numeracy. Data for 2002 are not available. Data for years 3 and 5 relate to agreed national benchmarks developed to assess student performance at these year levels. Box 3.3 contains information about the limitations of the learning outcomes data. Learning outcomes data for 2000 science for 15 year olds were reported in the 2003 Report, sourced from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) (tables 3A.27–3A.29). PISA operates on a three year assessment cycle, with the most recent survey undertaken during 2003. Mathematical literacy was the major focus for the 2003 survey and results are expected to be available in late 2004.

3 Non-teaching staff include: administrative and clerical staff (teacher aides and assistants who perform functions that are of benefit to students and teaching staff, including assisting in the development of school curriculum); building operations, general maintenance and other staff; and special support staff. In-school staff include staff who spend more than half their time actively engaged in duties in one or more schools (MCEETYA 2002c).

Box 3.3 **Limitations of learning outcomes data**

As part of their commitment to producing nationally comparable data against the literacy and numeracy benchmarks, ministers have requested further developmental work in the following areas:

- a common equating method to be used by all jurisdictions
- nationally consistent criteria for defining exempt students and an agreed method for collecting information on exemptions and absent students
- a common standardised process for calculating and reporting the accuracy of the student achievement data against the national benchmarks.

While work is underway on the ministers' requests, it was not completed for the publication of the 2001 benchmark results.

While the assessment and equating processes are designed to make the various results comparable across jurisdictions, there have been large variations in the results for some jurisdictions over the three years in which the benchmarks have been reported. The variations in the results will be examined to inform further improvements to the benchmarking process.

Tables 3.6 and 3.7, for example, highlight apparent differences between States and Territories in relation to the proportion of students achieving the benchmark. Caution needs to be applied when considering these differences, however, because large differences remain in the characteristics of the population being assessed in each jurisdiction.

Tables in appendix A attempt to describe and quantify some differences between the States and Territories, including major differences across jurisdictions in school starting arrangements that result in variations in the time students would have spent in schooling before the testing. Readers can refer to tables 3A.18, 3A.21 and 3A.24 for information on the average age of testing in jurisdictions.

Differences across States and Territories also relate to a number of factors known to influence measured literacy and numeracy achievement. Achievement in literacy and numeracy, for example, is strongly correlated to the socioeconomic circumstances of students being assessed (Lokan, Greenwood and Cresswell 2001). As well, students who do not usually speak English, or who have just begun to speak English, would be expected to be at some disadvantage during assessment of aspects of English literacy. Not only are there jurisdictional variations in the proportion of such students, but there are also variations in the policies regarding their inclusion in the testing programs.

Variations also exist in the proportion of government school students and non-government school students included in the results. Readers can refer to tables 3A.19, 3A.22 and 3A.25 for further information. Neither absent nor withdrawn students are included in the benchmark calculations. While the jurisdictional variation the proportion of students absent or withdrawn from testing was reduced between 2000 and 2001, the variation is still large and this may affect the comparability of the results. Readers can refer to tables 3A.20, 3A.23 and 3A.26.

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.3 **(Continued)**

The States and Territories are to undertake further work to maximise the participation of students in the tests.

Differences in students achievement may sometimes be the result of sampling or measurement error. The use of confidence intervals with the benchmark results provides a way of making inferences about the achievement of students that reflects the uncertainty associated with the measurement of student ability. The benchmark achievement percentages reported in the tables include 95 per cent confidence intervals. These confidence intervals are based on three components: (1) the error associated with the location of the benchmark cut score, (2) sampling error and (3) measurement error. The error associated with the location of the benchmark cut score is by far the largest component. In addition, each State and Territory is responsible for equating the appropriate benchmark location onto any new tests used by that State or Territory. This exercise results in a relatively small component of error (known as 'equating error') that is not reflected in the confidence intervals published here. Statistical tests of significance that further assist readers to compare students' achievements are expected to be incorporated in future MCEETYA reports. Until these technical improvements are implemented, readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results.

Source: Adapted from MCEETYA (unpublished).

To assist with making comparisons between jurisdictions, 95 per cent confidence intervals are presented. Confidence intervals are a standard way of expressing the degree of sampling and measurement error associated with the survey estimates. An estimate of 80 with a confidence interval of ± 2, for example, means that if the total population had been surveyed rather than a sample, or had another sample been drawn, there is a 95 per cent chance that the result would lie between 78 and 82. The participation rate for a jurisdiction, therefore, can be thought of in terms of a range. If one jurisdiction's rate ranges from 78–82 and another's from 77–81, then it is not possible to say with confidence that one differs from the other (because there is unlikely to be a statistically significant difference). Where ranges do not overlap, there is a high likelihood that there is a statistically significant difference. To say that there is a statistically significant difference means there is a high probability that there is an actual difference; it does not imply that the difference is necessarily large or important.

The commentary accompanying the learning outcomes data in this chapter compares the results for particular jurisdictions and the overall national result, and draws attention to cases where there is no overlap between confidence intervals. To say there is a statistically significant difference means there is a high probability of an actual difference; it does not imply that the difference is necessarily large or important.

Literacy — reading

An indicator of performance is the proportion of students who reach a benchmark standard. Table 3.6 shows the percentage of assessed year 3 students who achieved the reading benchmark in 2001, reported by gender, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. (For further information and caveats to table 3.6, see tables 3A.18, 3A.19 and 3A.20.) The proportion of assessed students who achieved the year 3 reading benchmark in WA (95.0 per cent) Tasmania and the ACT (both 95.1 per cent) was higher than the national proportion (90.3 per cent), in 2001. The results for the NT (68.0 per cent) were lower than the national proportion (table 3.6). Taking confidence intervals into account, the results for the other jurisdictions were not different from the national proportion.

The proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the year 3 reading benchmark in 2001 was lower than the proportion of all students in all States and Territories, except in Tasmania and the ACT, where there was no difference. Results for LBOTE students were generally similar to those for all students. The greatest difference was in the NT, where a substantial proportion of LBOTE students are Indigenous.

Table 3.7 shows the percentage of assessed year 5 students who achieved the reading benchmark in 2001, reported by gender, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. (For further information and caveats to table 3.7, see tables 3A.18, 3A.19 and 3A.20.) The proportion of assessed students who achieved the year 5 reading benchmark in WA (94.5 per cent), Tasmania (94.4 per cent) and the ACT (94.6 per cent) was higher than the national proportion (89.8 per cent) in 2001. The results for Queensland (83.0 per cent) and the NT (71.5 per cent) were lower than the national proportion. Taking confidence intervals into account, the results for the other jurisdictions were not different from the national proportion (table 3.7).

In 2001, the extent to which reading benchmark results for Indigenous students were lower than those for all assessed students was similar for year 3 (ranging between 2.5 percentage points and 38.8 percentage points) and year 5 (ranging between 3.0 percentage points and 37.0 percentage points). Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the reading benchmark was below the proportion of all students by 18.3 percentage points at year 3 and by 22.9 percentage points at year 5 (tables 3.6 and 3.7).

Results for LBOTE students in 2001 were generally similar to those for all students at both year levels. The greatest difference was in the NT, where a substantial proportion of LBOTE students are Indigenous. A higher proportion of female students than of male students achieved the benchmark standard at both year levels in most jurisdictions.

Table 3.6 **Year 3 students who achieved the reading benchmark, 2001 (per cent)[a, b, c]**

State/Territory *1. Average age*[d] *2. Years of schooling*[e]	*All students*	*Male students*	*Female students*	*Indigenous students*[f]	*LBOTE students*[f]
NSW	91.3	89.7	92.9	79.2	91.4
1. 8 years, 9 months	± 1.8	± 2.4	± 1.6	± 4.5	± 1.9
2. 3 years, 7 months					
Victoria[g]	89.0	86.5	91.4	64.3	86.0
1. 9 years, 0 months	± 2.2	± 2.7	± 2.1	± 5.3	± 2.7
2. 3 years, 7 months					
Queensland	89.0	87.1	91.5	71.6	87.4
1. 8 years, 3 months	± 2.5	± 3.0	± 2.2	± 5.1	± 2.9
2. 2 years, 8 months					
WA	95.0	93.9	96.1	83.5	94.5
1. 8 years, 2 months	± 1.5	± 1.9	± 1.4	± 5.1	± 1.8
2. 2 years, 7 months					
SA	87.7	85.0	90.4	61.7	84.5
1. 8 years, 6 months	± 2.5	± 3.0	± 2.3	± 5.9	± 2.6
2. 3 years, 3 months					
Tasmania	95.1	93.8	96.4	92.6	96.0
1. 9 years, 2 months	± 1.3	± 1.7	± 1.2	± 3.4	± 2.5
2. 3 years, 7 months					
ACT	95.1	93.2	97.1	89.8	92.4
1. 8 years, 8 months	± 0.8	± 1.3	± 0.7	± 4.9	± 2.0
2. 3 years, 6 months					
NT	68.0	64.1	72.3	29.2	34.7
1. 8 years, 10 months	± 2.2	± 2.9	± 2.7	± 3.3	± 3.6
2. 3 years, 6 months					
Australia	90.3	88.4	92.3	72.0	88.6
	± 2.0	± 2.6	± 1.9	± 4.8	± 2.3

a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). Table 3A.19 contains details of test populations in all States and Territories. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in tables 3A.20, 3A.23 and 3A.26. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred as a result of State equating processes and may not reflect improvements in student performance. **d** The typical average age of students at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.18 contains more information. **e** The typical average time that students had spent in schooling at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.18 contains more information. **f** The methods used to identify Indigenous students and LBOTE students varied across jurisdictions. The two categories are not mutually exclusive. Definitions can be found at section 3.7. Table 3A.20 contains more information. **g** Victoria's results have been adjusted based on exempt student data and are not directly comparable to previous years results.

Source: MCEETYA (2003a).

Table 3.7 **Year 5 students who achieved the reading benchmark, 2001 (per cent)[a, b, c]**

State/Territory *1. Average age*[d] *2. Years of schooling*[e]	*All students*	*Male students*	*Female students*	*Indigenous students*[f]	*LBOTE students*[f]
NSW 1. 10 years, 9 months 2. 5 years, 7 months	92.0 ± 1.2	90.5 ± 1.5	93.5 ± 1.1	76.6 ± 3.2	90.6 ± 1.5
Victoria[g] 1. 10 years, 11 months 2. 5 years, 7 months	90.9 ± 1.2	88.7 ± 1.7	93.1 ± 1.1	71.7 ± 4.0	87.8 ± 2.0
Queensland 1. 10 years, 4 months 2. 4 years, 8 months	83.0 ± 1.6	80.1 ± 2.0	86.3 ± 1.5	57.3 ± 3.4	76.0 ± 2.4
WA 1. 10 years, 2 months 2. 4 years, 7 months	94.5 ± 1.0	93.2 ± 1.3	95.9 ± 0.9	77.9 ± 4.3	92.2 ± 1.7
SA 1. 10 years, 6 months 2. 5 years, 3 months	89.0 ± 1.3	86.5 ± 1.7	91.6 ± 1.3	62.9 ± 4.5	87.0 ± 1.8
Tasmania 1. 11 years, 2 months 2. 5 years, 7 months	94.4 ± 0.9	92.2 ± 1.4	96.6 ± 0.8	91.5 ± 2.9	93.5 ± 3.0
ACT 1. 10 years, 8 months 2. 5 years, 6 months	94.6 ± 0.8	92.9 ± 0.8	96.4 ± 0.7	82.3 ± 7.9	91.9 ± 2.4
NT 1. 10 years, 8 months 2. 5 years, 3 months	71.5 ± 2.2	71.0 ± 2.7	72.2 ± 2.7	34.5 ± 3.6	34.4 ± 3.6
Australia	89.8 ± 1.3	87.8 ± 1.6	92.0 ± 1.2	66.9 ± 3.6	87.7 ± 1.8

a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). Table 3A.19 contains details of test populations in all States and Territories. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions as shown in tables 3A.20, 3A.23 and 3A.26. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred as a result of State equating processes and may not reflect improvements in student performance. **d** The typical average age of students at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.18 contains more information. **e** The typical average time that students had spent in schooling at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.18 contains more information. **f** The methods used to identify Indigenous students and LBOTE students varied across jurisdictions. The two categories are not mutually exclusive. Definitions can be found at section 3.7. Table 3A.20 contains more information. **g** Victoria's results have been adjusted based on exempt student data and are not directly comparable to previous years results.

Source: MCEETYA (2003a).

Literacy — writing

Table 3.8 shows the percentage of assessed year 3 students who achieved the writing benchmark in 2001, reported by gender, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. (For further information and caveats to table 3.8, see tables 3A.21, 3A.22 and 3A.23.) The proportion of assessed students who achieved the year 3 writing benchmark was higher than the national proportion in Victoria (94.7 per cent) and the ACT (93.3 per cent) in 2001. The results for the NT (79.1 per cent) were lower than the national proportion (table 3.8). Taking confidence intervals into account, the results for the other jurisdictions were not different from the national proportion.

The proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the year 3 writing benchmark in 2001 was lower than the proportion of all students in all States and Territories except Tasmania and the ACT, where there was no difference. Results for LBOTE students were generally similar to those for all students. The greatest differences were in WA and the NT, where a substantial proportion of LBOTE students are Indigenous.

Table 3.9 shows the percentage of assessed year 5 students who achieved the writing benchmark in 2001, reported by gender, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. (For further information and caveats to table 3.9, see tables 3A.21, 3A.22 and 3A.23.) The proportion of assessed students who achieved the year 5 writing benchmark in Queensland (95.8 per cent) was higher than the national proportion (94.0 per cent) in 2001. The results for WA (89.4 per cent), the ACT (90.6 per cent) and the NT (77.6 per cent) were lower than the national proportion (table 3.9). Taking confidence intervals into account, the results for the other jurisdictions were not different from the national proportion. A higher proportion of female students than of male students achieved the benchmark standard in all jurisdictions at both year levels.

In 2001, the extent to which writing benchmark results for Indigenous students were lower than those for all assessed students was similar for year 3 (ranging between 2.4 percentage points and 30.7 percentage points) and year 5 (ranging between 3.9 percentage points and 36.0 percentage points). Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the writing benchmark was below the proportion of all students by 21.7 percentage points at year 3 and by 14.1 percentage points at year 5 (tables 3.8 and 3.9).

Results for LBOTE students at year 5 in 2001 were generally similar to those for all students. The greatest difference was in the NT, where a substantial proportion of LBOTE students are Indigenous. A higher proportion of female students than of male students achieved the benchmark standard at both year levels for most jurisdictions.

Table 3.8 **Year 3 students who achieved the writing benchmark, 2001 (per cent)[a, b, c]**

State/Territory *1. Average age*[d] *2. Years of schooling*[e]	*All students*	*Male students*	*Female students*	*Indigenous students*[f]	*LBOTE students*[f]
NSW 1. 8 years, 9 months 2. 3 years, 7 months	89.9 ± 2.9	87.0 ± 3.8	92.7 ± 2.4	73.1 ± 6.2	89.3 ± 3.0
Victoria[g] 1. 9 years, 0 months 2. 3 years, 7 months	94.7 ± 1.7	93.1 ± 2.4	96.2 ± 1.4	78.2 ± 4.0	92.9 ± 2.1
Queensland 1. 8 years, 3 months 2. 2 years, 8 months	85.4 ± 1.9	81.1 ± 2.6	90.5 ± 1.6	68.4 ± 3.4	83.8 ± 2.1
WA 1. 8 years, 2 months 2. 2 years, 7 months	84.3 ± 2.5	80.0 ± 3.2	88.8 ± 2.3	54.7 ± 4.9	83.7 ± 2.8
SA 1. 8 years, 6 months 2. 3 years, 3 months	88.4 ± 2.5	84.9 ± 3.3	91.9 ± 2.2	60.5 ± 6.2	84.8 ± 2.9
Tasmania 1. 9 years, 2 months 2. 3 years, 7 months	91.8 ± 1.6	88.7 ± 2.2	94.9 ± 1.4	89.4 ± 3.9	90.2 ± 3.9
ACT[h] 1. 8 years, 10 months 2. 3 years, 6 months	93.3 ± 1.3	90.7 ± 1.9	96.1 ± 1.0	87.4 ± 6.2	90.4 ± 2.5
NT 1. 8 years, 8 months 2. 3 years, 3 months	79.1 ± 2.7	75.8 ± 3.4	82.5 ± 2.7	48.4 ± 4.9	51.1 ± 4.4
Australia	89.5 ± 2.3	86.4 ± 3.0	92.7 ± 1.9	67.8 ± 4.9	88.5 ± 2.7

a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). Table 3A.22 contains details of test populations in all States and Territories. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in tables 3A.20, 3A.23 and 3A.26. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred as a result of State equating processes and may not reflect improvements in student performance. **d** The typical average age of students at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.21 contains more information. **e** The typical average time that students had spent in schooling at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.21 contains more information. **f** The methods used to identify Indigenous students and LBOTE students varied across jurisdictions. The two categories are not mutually exclusive. Definitions can be found at section 3.7. Table 3A.23 contains more information. **g** Victoria's results have been adjusted based on exempt student data and are not directly comparable to previous years results. **h** ACT writing data should be interpreted with some caution as a criterion-referenced assessment process was not used. This will be changed from 2003.

Source: MCEETYA (2003a).

Table 3.9 **Year 5 students who achieved the writing benchmark, 2001 (per cent)[a, b, c]**

State/Territory *1. Average age*[d] *2. Years of schooling*[e]	*All students*	*Male students*	*Female students*	*Indigenous students*[f]	*LBOTE students*[f]
NSW 1. 10 years, 9 months 2. 5 years, 7 months	95.9 ± 0.9	94.6 ± 1.4	97.2 ± 0.7	87.4 ± 3.1	94.6 ± 1.1
Victoria[g] 1. 10 years, 11 months 2. 5 years, 7 months	92.4 ± 0.8	89.6 ± 1.1	95.3 ± 0.6	75.4 ± 3.3	91.4 ± 1.0
Queensland 1. 10 years, 4 months 2. 4 years, 8 months	95.8 ± 0.7	94.5 ± 1.1	97.7 ± 0.4	87.5 ± 2.1	94.3 ± 0.9
WA 1. 10 years, 2 months 2. 4 years, 7 months	89.4 ± 1.9	85.6 ± 2.6	93.2 ± 1.4	63.8 ± 4.9	86.7 ± 2.3
SA 1. 10 years, 6 months 2. 5 years, 3 months	95.0 ± 0.8	93.3 ± 1.2	96.8 ± 0.7	80.0 ± 3.9	93.7 ± 1.1
Tasmania 1. 11 years, 2 months 2. 5 years, 7 months	91.9 ± 1.3	88.4 ± 1.9	95.5 ± 1.1	88.0 ± 3.6	88.7 ± 4.2
ACT[h] 1. 10 years, 8 months 2. 5 years, 6 months	90.6 ± 1.8	87.0 ± 2.5	94.4 ± 1.5	66.9 ± 10.6	88.0 ± 3.4
NT 1. 10 years, 8 months 2. 5 years, 3 months	77.6 ± 2.2	74.3 ± 2.9	80.9 ± 2.4	41.6 ± 4.2	45.8 ± 4.2
Australia	94.0 ± 1.0	91.9 ± 1.4	96.2 ± 0.7	79.9 ± 3.3	92.2 ± 1.2

a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). Table 3A.22 contains details of test populations in all States and Territories. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in tables 3A.20, 3A.23 and 3A.26. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred as a result of State equating processes and may not reflect improvements in student performance. **d** The typical average age of students at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.21 contains more information. **e** The typical average time that students had spent in schooling at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.21 contains more information. **f** The methods used to identify Indigenous students and LBOTE students varied across jurisdictions. The two categories are not mutually exclusive. Definitions can be found at section 3.7. Table 3A.23 contains more information. **g** Victoria's results have been adjusted based on exempt student data and are not directly comparable to previous years results. **h** ACT writing data should be interpreted with some caution as a criterion-referenced assessment process was not used. This will be changed from 2003.

Source: MCEETYA (2003a).

Numeracy

Table 3.10 shows the percentage of assessed year 3 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark in 2001 — reported by gender, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. (For further information and caveats to table 3.10, see tables 3A.24, 3A.25 and 3A.26.) The proportion of assessed students who achieved the year 3 numeracy benchmark in the ACT (97.0 per cent) was higher than the national proportion (93.9 per cent) in 2001. The results for SA (91.1 per cent) and the NT (86.6 per cent) were lower than the national proportion (table 3.10). Taking confidence intervals into account, the results for the other jurisdictions were not different from the national proportion.

The proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the year 3 numeracy benchmark in 2001 was lower than the proportion of all students in all States and Territories. Results for LBOTE students were generally similar to those for all students in most jurisdictions, but different in SA, the ACT and the NT. The greatest difference was in the NT, where a substantial proportion of LBOTE students are Indigenous.

Table 3.11 shows the percentage of assessed year 5 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark in 2001 — reported by gender, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. (For further information and caveats to table 3.11, see tables 3A.24, 3A.25 and 3A.26.) The proportion of assessed students who achieved the year 5 numeracy benchmark in Victoria (94.7 per cent) and the ACT (93.1 per cent) was higher than the national proportion (89.6 per cent) in 2001. The results for Queensland (81.8 per cent), SA (85.9 per cent) and the NT (68.8 per cent) were lower than the national proportion (table 3.11). The proportion of female students achieving the benchmark standard was not different from the proportion of males in all jurisdictions at both year levels.

In 2001, the extent to which numeracy benchmark results for Indigenous students were lower than those for all assessed students changed between year 3 (ranging between 1.5 percentage points and 23.1 percentage points) and year 5 (ranging between 6.7 percentage points and 36.5 percentage points). Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the numeracy benchmark was below the proportion for all students by 13.7 percentage points at year 3 and by 26.4 percentage points at year 5 (tables 3.10 and 3.11).

Results for LBOTE students in year 5 were generally similar to those for all students except in Queensland, the ACT and the NT. The greatest difference was in the NT, where a substantial proportion of LBOTE students are Indigenous.

Table 3.10 Year 3 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark, 2001 (per cent)[a, b, c]

State/Territory *1. Average age*[d] *2. Years of schooling*[e]	*All students*	*Male students*	*Female students*	*Indigenous students*[f]	*LBOTE students*[f]
NSW	95.0	94.9	95.0	86.9	94.7
1. 8 years, 9 months	± 0.9	± 1.0	± 0.9	± 2.8	± 1.0
2. 3 years, 7 months					
Victoria[g]	94.1	93.7	94.5	75.1	91.8
1. 9 years, 0 months	± 1.2	± 1.2	± 1.4	± 4.3	± 1.5
2. 3 years, 7 months					
Queensland	93.4	93.4	94.0	79.0	91.5
1. 8 years, 3 months	± 1.4	± 1.5	± 1.6	± 4.0	± 1.8
2. 2 years, 8 months					
WA	92.9	92.4	93.4	79.2	92.0
1. 8 years, 2 months	± 2.0	± 2.2	± 2.2	± 5.3	± 2.3
2. 2 years, 7 months					
SA	91.1	90.3	91.8	68.0	86.2
1. 8 years, 6 months	± 1.4	± 1.5	± 1.3	± 4.5	± 1.9
2. 3 years, 3 months					
Tasmania	95.6	95.2	95.9	94.1	94.3
1. 9 years, 2 months	± 1.3	± 1.4	± 1.4	± 3.0	± 3.2
2. 3 years, 7 months					
ACT	97.0	96.5	97.4	91.4	94.2
1. 8 years, 8 months	± 0.6	± 0.7	± 0.7	± 4.3	± 1.6
2. 3 years, 6 months					
NT	86.6	84.9	88.4	65.0	64.8
1. 8 years, 8 months	± 2.0	± 2.4	± 2.1	± 4.8	± 4.5
2. 3 years, 3 months					
Australia	93.9	93.7	94.3	80.2	92.5
	± 1.2	± 1.3	± 1.3	± 3.9	± 1.5

a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). Table 3A.25 contains details of test populations in all States and Territories. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in tables 3A.20, 3A.23 and 3A.26. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred as a result of State equating processes and may not reflect improvements in student performance. **d** The typical average age of students at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.24 contains more information. **e** The typical average time that students had spent in schooling at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.24 contains more information. **f** The methods used to identify Indigenous students and LBOTE students varied across jurisdictions. The two categories are not mutually exclusive. Definitions can be found at section 3.7. Table 3A.26 contains more information. **g** Victoria's results have been adjusted based on exempt student data and are not directly comparable to previous years results.

Source: MCEETYA (2003a).

Table 3.11 **Year 5 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark, 2001 (per cent)[a, b, c]**

State/Territory *1. Average age*[d] *2. Years of schooling*[e]	*All students*	*Male students*	*Female students*	*Indigenous students*[f]	*LBOTE students*[f]
NSW	91.7	91.5	91.8	74.6	90.3
1. 10 years, 9 months	± 1.0	± 1.1	± 1.1	± 2.9	± 1.2
2. 5 years, 7 months					
Victoria[g]	94.7	94.4	94.9	80.4	92.4
1. 10 years, 11 months	± 1.0	± 1.0	± 1.1	± 3.3	± 1.3
2. 5 years, 7 months					
Queensland	81.8	82.2	81.9	54.4	75.0
1. 10 years, 4 months	± 1.9	± 2.0	± 2.2	± 3.5	± 2.4
2. 4 years, 8 months					
WA	90.0	89.7	90.3	65.6	87.3
1. 10 years, 2 months	± 1.9	± 2.0	± 2.2	± 5.4	± 2.6
2. 4 years, 7 months					
SA	85.9	85.6	86.2	54.9	82.8
1. 10 years, 6 months	± 1.3	± 1.5	± 1.6	± 4.4	± 1.8
2. 5 years, 3 months					
Tasmania	91.7	91.2	92.2	85.0	89.1
1. 11 years, 2 months	± 1.3	± 1.6	± 1.6	± 4.1	± 4.2
2. 5 years, 7 months					
ACT	93.1	92.2	94.0	71.9	87.4
1. 10 years, 8 months	± 1.1	± 1.4	± 1.3	± 10.1	± 3.2
2. 5 years, 6 months					
NT	68.8	69.2	68.3	32.3	34.0
1. 10 years, 8 months	± 2.8	± 3.0	± 3.4	± 4.1	± 3.8
2. 5 years, 3 months					
Australia	89.6	89.5	89.8	63.2	87.9
	± 1.3	± 1.4	± 1.5	± 3.7	± 1.6

a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). Table 3A.25 contains details of test populations in all States and Territories. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in tables 3A.20, 3A.23 and 3A.26. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred as a result of State equating processes and may not reflect improvements in student performance. **d** The typical average age of students at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.24 contains more information. **e** The typical average time that students had spent in schooling at the time of testing (expressed in years and months). Table 3A.24 contains more information. **f** The methods used to identify Indigenous students and LBOTE students varied across jurisdictions. The two categories are not mutually exclusive. Definitions can be found at section 3.7. Table 3A.26 contains more information. **g** Victoria's results have been adjusted based on exempt student data and are not directly comparable to previous years results.

Source: MCEETYA (2003a).

Other outcomes

Vocational education and training (VET) in schools

Data collections for VET in schools indicators are being developed (see section 3.5 for details).

Science

Data collections for science assessment indicators are being developed (see section 3.5 for details).

Information technology

Data collections for information and communications technology indicators are being developed (see section 3.5 for details).

Estimated completion

The Australian Government developed a method of estimating the proportion of young Australians who complete year 12, disaggregated by locality, socioeconomic background and gender. Under this method, completion rates of secondary schooling are estimated by expressing the number of students who obtain a year 12 (or equivalent) certificate as a percentage of the potential year 12 population. (For the definition of the potential year 12 population, see section 3.7.) The Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce of MCEETYA is reviewing this method, with the aim of improving the national comparability of data.

The Australian Government uses the estimate of completion rates because information on participation and retention rates is generally not available by socioeconomic background or geographic location. Completion rate estimates are primarily used as indicators of trends. Comparisons across jurisdictions are not recommended and need to be made with care, for the following reasons:

- Assessment, reporting and requirements for obtaining year 12 certificates vary across States and Territories — for example, from moderated school-based assessment to a mix including external and internal assessment, and from completion of a pattern of study to a prescribed level of attainment.
- Inaccuracies arise from using both home postal address and school location address in compiling completion rates data. Small changes in population or

completions can affect the estimates of completion rates quite significantly, particularly for smaller States and Territories.

- Students completing their secondary education in TAFE institutes are included in reporting for some jurisdictions and not in others, and the proportion of these students also varies across jurisdictions. In NSW, for example, over 4700 people aged 15–19 years have undertaken studies toward their Higher School Certificate or university entrance in TAFE institutes in each of the past five years.

Geographic isolation is determined using the RRMA classification. Socioeconomic status is determined according to the Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage (IRSED). Low socioeconomic status is the average of the three lowest deciles, medium socioeconomic status is the average of the four medium deciles and high socioeconomic status is the average of the three highest deciles. The aggregation of all postcode locations into three categories — high, medium and low — means there may be significant variation within the categories. Low deciles, for example, will include locations ranging from those of extreme disadvantage to those of moderate disadvantage.

Year 12 estimates of completion rates in 2002 by socioeconomic background, location and gender are provided in tables 3.12 and 3.13. Table 3.12 highlights differences in completion rates on the basis of socioeconomic background. Completion rates for students from low and medium socioeconomic backgrounds were 17 percentage points and 15 percentage points respectively below those for students from a high socioeconomic background in 2002. Completion rates in all socioeconomic categories were higher for female students than for male students, except in the ACT for the medium socioeconomic category.

Table 3.12 also indicates that the 2002 estimated completion rates varied substantially across jurisdictions. Rates for the low socioeconomic status deciles ranged from 71 per cent in Queensland to 18 per cent in the NT. Rates for the medium socioeconomic status deciles ranged from 74 per cent in Tasmania to 40 per cent in the ACT. Rates for the high socioeconomic status deciles ranged from 90 per cent in Tasmania to 77 per cent in NSW.

Table 3.12 **Year 12 estimated completion rates, by socioeconomic status and gender, 2002 (per cent)[a, b, c]**

	NSW[d]	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*[e]	*NT*[f]	*Aust*
Low socioeconomic status deciles									
Male	57	57	65	45	49	55	..	15	56
Female	70	71	77	54	68	75	..	22	69
All students	63	64	71	49	58	65	..	18	63
Medium socioeconomic status deciles									
Male	57	56	68	54	59	64	46	51	59
Female	67	74	74	67	79	85	35	64	71
All students	62	65	71	60	69	74	40	58	65
High socioeconomic status deciles									
Male	74	75	78	78	80	86	76	na	76
Female	80	88	80	84	95	95	83	na	84
All students	77	81	79	81	87	90	79	na	80
Total									
Male	61	64	69	59	60	64	75	36	63
Female	72	79	76	69	79	82	81	47	75
All students	66	71	73	64	69	73	78	41	69

a The ABS IRSED has been used to calculate socioeconomic status on the basis of students' home addresses. Low socioeconomic status is the average of the three lowest deciles, medium socioeconomic status is the average of the four medium deciles and high socioeconomic status is the average of the three highest deciles. **b** Data are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State and Territory education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year. There are variations in assessment, reporting and certification methods for year 12 across States and Territories. **c** Data may vary from the corresponding table in the *2002 National Report on Schooling in Australia*, which uses the new ABS Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas. These indexes were not available when this table was being prepared. **d** Jervis Bay has been included in NSW data. **e** On the basis of this index, the ACT has only medium and high socioeconomic status deciles. **f** Small increases in the estimated resident population can cause significant fluctuations in the data. As a result, high socioeconomic status rates for the NT are unreliable and have been combined with medium socioeconomic status rates. **na** Not available. .. Not applicable.

Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished).

In 2002, estimated completion rates were generally higher in capital cities than other areas, except for Queensland. Gender differences are also evident with completion rates higher for females for all localities in all jurisdictions. Nationally, in other rural and remote areas, female completion rates were 20 percentage points higher than male completion rates; in capital cities, there was a 10 percentage point gender difference (table 3.13). Time series data on completion rates are shown in tables 3A.33 and 3A.34.

Table 3.13 **Year 12 estimated completion rates by locality and gender, 2002 (per cent)[a, b, c]**

	NSW[d]	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*[e]	*SA*[e]	*Tas*[e]	*ACT*[e,f]	*NT*[e,g]	*Aust*
Capital city									
Male	66	66	71	62	64	75	75	59	66
Female	74	79	75	70	79	90	81	72	76
All students	70	73	73	66	71	82	78	66	71
Other metropolitan									
Male	53	60	64	..	..	..	..	..	58
Female	63	72	69	..	..	..	..	..	66
All students	58	66	66	..	..	..	..	..	62
Rural centres									
Male	53	56	71	53	50	60	..	..	59
Female	66	73	77	68	68	76	..	..	72
All students	60	64	74	60	59	68	..	..	65
Other rural and remote centres									
Male	57	61	67	47	51	52	..	19	57
Female	77	85	82	65	81	75	..	27	77
All students	66	72	74	55	65	63	..	23	66
All areas									
Male	61	64	69	59	60	64	75	36	63
Female	72	79	76	69	79	82	81	47	75
All students	66	71	73	64	69	73	78	41	69

a Definitions of capital city, other metropolitan and rural and remote are based on the RRMA classification developed by the former Department of Primary Industries and Energy. **b** Data are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State and Territory education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year. There are variations in assessment, reporting and certification methods for year 12 across States and Territories. **c** Data may vary from the corresponding table in the *2002 National Report on Schooling in Australia*, which uses the agreed MCEETYA classification. **d** Jervis Bay has been included in NSW. **e** There are no other metropolitan Areas in WA, SA, Tasmania, the ACT or the NT. **f** All of the ACT is defined as a capital city. **g** There are no rural centres in the NT. .. Not applicable.

Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished).

Destination

The Education preface of this Report discusses the school leaver destinations of year 12 leavers and early school leavers in 2002 at the national level, and examines the proportions of male and female students attending other educational institutions in 2002 after leaving school in the previous year (table B.4).

Civics and citizenship

Data collections for civics and citizenship assessment indicators are under development (see section 3.5 for details).

Enterprise education

Data collections for enterprise education indicators are under development (see section 3.5 for details).

Other social outcomes

Indicators on social objectives of schooling are yet to be developed.

3.5 Future directions in performance reporting

Revised Measurement Framework for National Key Performance Measures

During 2003, education ministers endorsed a revised Measurement Framework for National Key Performance Measures as the basis for reporting on progress towards the achievement of the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty First Century. The revised framework:

- is streamlined to focus on the assessment cycle
- includes interim science measures for 15 year old students
- includes interim numeracy measures for 15 year old students
- includes revised VET measures for participation and attainment (replacing previously agreed measures) (outlined below).

Participation, retention and completion rates

Significant changes are occurring in State and Territory education and training systems across Australia. Traditional distinctions between schooling and VET are becoming increasingly blurred. Governments in all jurisdictions are now providing young people with access to VET while still at school. Articulation and credit transfer arrangements between schools, TAFE and universities are now available, and schools are increasingly expanding the range of services that they provide to assist young people to move from school to further education, training and employment.

It is important that any new measures developed capture the impact of these changes and monitor student progress in making the transition from school to further education, training and employment. Such measures will better inform

policy makers and guide quality improvement initiatives. The participation, apparent retention and completion rates included in this Report may not reflect the increasing number of students who are enrolling in school part time or choosing to pursue their senior secondary studies or an equivalent VET qualification at TAFE. These measures are under examination, and supplementary participation measures are reported in the Education preface.

Nationally comparable reporting of learning outcomes

The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce is developing performance measures to assess outcomes in a range of learning areas. This work will provide additional nationally comparable data that will populate the Review's performance indicator framework.

Year 7 literacy and numeracy

In July 2003, education ministers directed the MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce to undertake a review of the year 7 reading and numeracy benchmarks. A report on the outcomes of the review and associated advice on the implementation of the revised benchmark descriptions were provided to ministers in December 2003. Year 7 literacy and numeracy data previously collected (and those to be collected annually in the future) are expected to be reported annually from 2004.

Enhanced literacy and numeracy measures

Education ministers agreed to pursue a broadening of the national reporting framework to enhance reporting of literacy and numeracy outcomes at the years 3, 5 and 7 levels. A report was provided to ministers in December 2003.

VET in schools

Education ministers have endorsed two new participation and attainment indicators for VET in schools, replacing five measures previously approved or noted. These new indicators are detailed below. Participation and attainment data for VET in schools are expected to be collected and reported annually from 2004.

Participation

This is a measure of school students undertaking VET (with new apprenticeships and traineeships disaggregated) as part of their senior secondary school certificate in

a calendar year, as a proportion of all school students undertaking a senior secondary school certificate in that year.

Attainment

This is a measure of school students enrolled in a senior secondary school certificate in a calendar year who have completed at least one VET unit of competency/module, as a proportion of all school students undertaking a senior secondary school certificate in that year.

Science

Education ministers have agreed to an approach to measuring students' scientific literacy at year 6. The first assessment was undertaken in October 2003, with further assessments to be undertaken at three year intervals. Year 6 science literacy data are expected to be available in early 2004 and reported triennially.

Information and communication technology

Education ministers have agreed to a national information and communication technology assessment of students at years 6 and 10 every three years. The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce has been developing a definition of information and communication technology literacy, and will develop assessment instruments and key performance measures for consideration by ministers (with a view to the assessment cycle beginning in 2005).

Civics and citizenship

Education ministers have agreed to a national civics and citizenship assessment of students at years 6 and 10 every three years. A trial assessment was conducted in 2003 (with a view to the assessment cycle beginning in 2004). Years 6 and 10 civics and citizenship assessment data are expected to be available in early 2005 and reported triennially.

Enterprise education

The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce is working with the Transition from School Taskforce on developing key performance measures for enterprise education.

Nationally consistent definitions

Collecting nationally comparable data depends on, among other factors, nationally consistent definitions of groups against which educational achievement and outcomes can be reported. National definitions have been developed for gender, Indigenous status, LBOTE students, geographic location and socioeconomic status. (Exceptions are the definition of students with disabilities and some final work on the approach to seeking information on parents' occupations.) With most definitions agreed, the focus is shifting to implementation and reporting issues. National definitions for all items (except students with disabilities) are expected to be applied to data collection instruments in 2005.

3.6 Jurisdictions' comments

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter. Appendix A contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (such as Indigenous and ethnic status).

Australian Government comments

“ The Australian Government's financial support for school education is aimed at enhancing the learning outcomes of all students. As well as the significant support provided to education authorities and individual schools through general recurrent, capital and targeted programs, the Government has nominated four strategic priority areas for attention. Brief descriptions of those priorities follow.

First, nationally comparable standards and reporting to drive improved learning outcomes for all students. The provisions of the States Grants (Primary and Secondary Education Assistance) Act 2000 which covers the 2001-04 funding quadrennium, include stronger reporting and accountability requirements linked to Australian Government funding for schools. All States and Territories have agreed to the development and progressive implementation of nationally agreed performance measures in eight priority areas of schooling for purposes of reporting in the Annual National Report on Schooling in Australia. Significant progress has been made during 2003 on several assessment instruments and on the development of new nationally comparable definitions of student groups.

Second, improved learning outcomes for Indigenous students. The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) has undertaken a series of reviews of the way Australian Government assistance and services are provided to Indigenous students. The aim is to ensure that programs are better focussed on improving educational outcomes for the Indigenous community.

Third, enhanced quality and responsiveness of Australian school education. The Australian Government seeks to enhance learning and leadership in school education through the provision of strategic funding for targeted programs, projects and research. Current priorities are literacy and numeracy skills; assistance for students with special needs; quality teaching, including professional development; quality outcomes and curriculum initiatives; boys' education and safe schools. A major Review of Teaching and Teacher Education was completed in 2003.

Fourth, improved transitions of young people through school to work and/or further education and training, including well informed career choices. The Australian Government is making progress towards an integrated transitions system. Transitions Programs have been streamlined and the functions of the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation have been transferred into the Department. This is enabling DEST to align transitions programs more closely with the broader suite of Australian Government schools and youth focussed programs. ”

New South Wales Government comments

“In 2001-02, the NSW Government continued its significant commitment to public education by spending in excess of $7630 million on school education and Vocational Education and Training Services, an increase of more than $1840 million, or 32 per cent since 1995. This State spent an average of $9157 per student in 2001-02, which is above the Australian average of $8937.

Throughout 2002, the NSW Department of Education and Training continued to improve learning environments in public schools to support and encourage student achievement through the implementation of a $1.2 billion Schools Improvement Package. The Computers in Schools Program also continued to be a high priority and by the end of 2002, there were more than 125 000 computers available for teachers and students in NSW public schools.

NSW continues its commitment to improving the national comparability of school education data and the quality and standard of national reporting. A range of factors have been identified by NSW which impact on the reliability of the national benchmark results and therefore limit the degree to which reliable comparisons between states and territories can be made. NSW welcomes the MCEETYA decision to commission a review to enhance the reporting of literacy and numeracy outcomes at Years 3, 5 and 7.

In 2003, the NSW Government began a $5 million class size pilot in 63 schools. From 2004 Kindergarten class sizes will be reduced to a state-wide average of twenty students in Priority Schools Funding Program schools which serve lower socio-economic communities. The program will be expanded to all Kindergarten classes in 2005. By 2007 class sizes will be reduced to a state-wide average of 20 students in Kindergarten; 22 students in Year 1; and 24 students in Year 2. The state’s investment in the class size reduction program will be $329 million over four years including $107 million in capital funding.

Students in NSW participate in Australia’s most comprehensive program of testing from the Year 3 Basic Skills Test to the Higher School Certificate (HSC). The State Literacy and Numeracy Plan continued to drive improvements in students’ acquisition of the basics of learning. By the end of 2002, specially trained Reading Recovery teachers had assisted nearly 8,000 students.

To ensure that young people in NSW are fully equipped to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing society, the NSW Government is creating one of the most flexible education and training systems in Australia. The new School Certificate and HSC are a result of the most extensive reviews undertaken in the 30 year history of these examinations. In 2002, NSW students in Year 10 sat a compulsory test in Australian History, Geography and Civics and Citizenship. This is the first test of this kind in Australia.”

Victorian Government comments

“ The Victorian Government believes that education is the key to our children’s future and Victoria’s prosperity. Education opens the door to high quality jobs, to a full and creative life and a sense of common citizenship.

The Government has set a number of goals and targets for the education and training system and considerable progress has been made towards achieving these. The targets include improving the standard of literacy and numeracy in primary schooling with 2001 data showing that the percentage of Victorian primary students achieving the national reading and numeracy benchmarks was at or above the Australian average. In 2002, 75.8 per cent of young people completed year 12 or its equivalent, an improvement over 2001 data. Participation in education and training by young people aged 15 to 19 in rural and regional Victoria increased to 93.1 per cent in 2002.

As a result of the Government’s investment in school education, class sizes in prep to year 2 have been reduced from an average of 24.3 students in 1999 to 21.0 students in 2003. Reduced class sizes have increased the effectiveness of key strategies designed to improve the acquisition of foundation skills in literacy and numeracy. $49.5m will be phased in over four years to fund the equivalent of 256 full-time primary school welfare officer positions to provide support to students who are at risk of disconnecting from school.

Two other significant new initiatives were introduced in 2003. Seventy clusters of primary and secondary schools were funded under the Schools for Innovation and Excellence initiative, aimed at increasing the pace of innovation in teaching and learning. Through the Access to Excellence initiative funding for the employment of 300 teachers was provided to 118 secondary schools to improve students’ literacy and numeracy skills, reduce absenteeism, and keep students engaged and stimulated at school.

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) provides an alternative pathway to the Victorian Certificate of Education for students in years 11 and 12. In 2003 the VCAL was implemented on a statewide basis following a successful trial in 2002.

Some 35 000 students who completed year 12 in 2002 were contacted early in 2003 as part of the Government’s new On Track program. The On Track data provides a picture of the destination of students after they leave school and highlights the diversity of options young people pursue, including university, TAFE or other vocational education and training programs, apprenticeships or traineeships, or employment. On Track builds on the Managed Individual Pathways program that assists 15 to 19 year-old students with individual career and education plans and support to implement those plans.

In May 2003, the Minister for Education and Training foreshadowed that further reforms will be made to Victoria’s school education system to ensure that Victoria has an excellent education system that produces better outcomes for all students. ”

Queensland Government comments

“As part of the Queensland Government’s vision for the Smart State, major reforms are under way in Queensland’s education and training system. The changes are creating an innovative and flexible system that will give young people more opportunities to succeed at learning, and go on to succeed in life.

Through the reforms, Queensland is committed to delivering innovative and vibrant education and training opportunities to provide students with an excellent foundation for future successes.

Our commitment starts with better preparation for children before they enter school so they can achieve more in the early years and set the foundations for their successes in school. Preparing for School trials commenced in 39 sites in January 2003 with another 27 state and non-state schools to join the trial in 2004, bringing to 66 the number of schools taking part. The trial will assist the Government to make a decision about how best to convert current preschool provision into a full-time preparatory year.

The government will also strengthen the middle years of schooling by focusing on students’ learning needs and assisting in a smooth transition from years 7-8 and on into the senior years. In August 2003, Education Queensland began implementing a 13-point action plan to provide that support for students during the middle phase from Year 4 to Year 9.

The reforms to senior schooling commenced in 2003, with seven areas across Queensland starting to trial changes to the senior phase of learning. State and non-state schools, TAFE Institutes, employers, youth and parent organisations, community services and government agencies are working together to create new opportunities for young people in these areas.

Historic legislation will allow young people aged 15-17 years to make exciting choices and follow a learning path that meets their needs in innovative and flexible ways. The new laws are contained in two complementary Acts, the Youth Participation in Education and Training Act 2003 and the Training Reform Act 2003.

In 2006 it will be compulsory for young people to stay at school until they complete Year 10 or turn 16, whichever comes first. There will be a requirement that once a person completes Year 10 or turns 16, to participate in education or training for two years beyond Year 10 or turning 16; or until they have gained a Senior Certificate; or until they have gained a Certificate III; or until they turn 17. During this period a young person must enrol in one or more eligible options, and participate full-time.

Through a holistic approach to learning - from preparatory schooling through to middle and senior schooling, further education, training and employment, the reforms offer benefits for the future of every Queenslander and for our shared future in Queensland, the Smart State.”

Western Australian Government comments

“ The Department of Education and the Department of Training amalgamated on 3 February 2003 into the Department of Education and Training. The consolidation of the delivery of education and training into one Department under one Minister is a key strategy in providing a more flexible, coherent and integrated approach to the education and training needs of young people. This is in response to the need to improve the retention and participation rates of 15-19 year olds.

The highly complementary nature of education and training and the greater flexibility in schools, TAFE colleges and universities will enable learners to move more easily between institutions and pursue richer and more varied pathways.

There is a strong emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy standards in Western Australia with a further 70 FTE specialist teachers commencing work in the second year of the Getting it Right strategy.

Standards are being developed for year 3 in aspects of English and Mathematics; for year 5 in aspects of English, Mathematics and Science; for year 7 in aspects of English, Mathematics, Science, and Society and Environment; and for year 9 in aspects of all learning areas. The setting of standards will assist schools to focus on improvement and will clearly describe to parents where their child’s performance sits in relation to the standards.

The Department’s operational plan for Aboriginal education has established long term plans in key priority areas to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students. Aboriginal students attend less, leave earlier and do less well than non-Aboriginal students. The plan has a particular focus on literacy, numeracy and retention rates of Aboriginal students.

There is a comprehensive Departmental initiative that ensures a coordinated approach to the management of students at educational risk. In 2002-03 as part of a focus on the management of student behaviour in lower secondary schools, an extra 60 FTE teachers were appointed to 35 schools to reduce class sizes in years 8 and 9; 30 schools were funded to implement programs, services and strategies to meet the needs of years 8 and 9 students with challenging behaviours; and a teachers consultation program began in 81 schools.

There is a continued focus on improving schools’ access to information and communications technologies and developing teachers’ skills in the use of these technologies. The 100 Schools Project is intended to improve teacher competencies in the use of ICT and enhance student learning opportunities across 100 of the most disadvantaged schools. ”

South Australian Government comments

“A new Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS) was formed during 2002 following a State election in March 2002. Following the formation of the department there were a range of reforms implemented within the South Australian schooling sector with a key focus on improving retention rates across the state. An Absenteeism Task Force was formed in June 2002 with the aim of identifying factors leading to student absenteeism and developing initiatives to reduce the level of absenteeism in areas identified as high risk. The Government amended the Education Act to increase the school leaving age from 15 to 16 years effective from the commencement of the 2003 school year. The Absenteeism Task Force continued to operate throughout 2003 and will continue in 2004, with one its strategies being to include the involvement of a Social Inclusion task force to further investigate the reasons for student absenteeism.

The importance of quality early-years education was supported in 2002 through the planned reduction of class sizes in Reception to Year 2 education in schools identified as being disadvantaged. The reduction in class size, achieved through the creation of 160 new permanent teaching positions from the start of the 2003 school year, aimed to ensure that R-2 class sizes, on average, have no more than 18 students per teacher in the most disadvantaged schools and 21 students per teacher in less needy schools. As well as providing support to early years education, 2002 also saw the announcement of the Futures Connect project, a significant initiative commenced in 2003 to focus on providing assistance to transitioning senior students from school into further education, employment and life beyond school as a whole.

The Cox Review into local school management within the state commenced in 2002 and was released for public comment at the end of October. The South Australian government has since responded to the review, with the central theme of the response being the need for a single system of school governance, particularly in relation to financial management, to replace the existing two-tiered system of school management. With the Cox review’s release in late 2002, it was decided that 2003 would serve as a transition year for the new local management structure. A DECS implementation task force has operated throughout 2003 to plan and implement the changes.

The numbers of permanently employed South Australian educators in both schools and children’s services increased in 2002 by the offer of over 700 permanent places to educators in schools and preschools. This initiative was implemented with the aim of providing improved job security for the state’s educators, allowing a more settled and focussed teaching environment for the state’s children.”

Tasmanian Government comments

“ Development and implementation of a new curriculum covering the years from birth to year 10 continues to be a major priority for Tasmanian Government schools. The Essential Leanings Framework explicitly defines content, teaching methods and the assessment framework as three interdependent, essential elements. During 2002, 42 Government schools were involved in the project and this rose to more than 100 Government schools in 2003.

In the 2003 school year the Tasmanian Government increased financial support for the children of low income families through an allocation of an additional $2 million to allow for major reform of the school levy policy applied in Tasmanian Government schools. This enabled both an increase in the income threshold for eligibility for the Student Assistance Scheme and the abolition of all school levies for students eligible for assistance under the scheme.

The Government continues to make significant investments in ICT infrastructure. ICT infrastructure within schools is helping to ensure that teachers and students gain maximum benefit from ICT capability. The provision of ICT funding to schools over recent years has resulted in a computer to student ratio of 1:4.5 in 2003. The provision of adequate bandwidth for schools is a key priority to lift the effectiveness of use of computers and further improvements in this area are planned.

A new policy on educational provision for students with challenging behaviour was finalised and a strategic plan to implement the policy was completed. The policy and plan recognises that students with challenging behaviour are probably the most demanding group for a school system. The Strategic Plan for dealing with Students with Challenging Behaviour contains a comprehensive range of initiatives. The initiatives are predominantly preventative in nature, without ignoring the need for responsive strategies required in the short term. A multi-levelled approach has been adopted in the plan. Some of the initiatives address requirements for individual students, individual teachers, groups of students or groups of teachers. Many of the initiatives are related to a school level approach while others are state wide.

A policy and strategic plan to improve attendance, participation and retention to schools and colleges has been implemented. This recognises that attendance, participation and retention at school are variables that must be addressed in order to improve outcomes from schooling, increase life chances for young people and address some of Tasmania’s most pressing economic and social issues. These issues have high priority in both Tasmania Together and Learning Together and are a focus for government and wider community action.

The Department conducted a major school maintenance initiative through the provision of a one-off allocation of $10m from the Tasmanian Government’s Social Infrastructure Fund. The aim of the program was to address deferred maintenance in schools with an emphasis on addressing safety and working and learning environment issues. ”

Australian Capital Territory Government comments

“ The Department of Education, Youth and Family Services is responsible for the provision of school and vocational education, family, youth and children’s services.

Four significant planning initiatives were finalised during this year. A new process for assessing the educational needs and allocating resources to students with disabilities was developed. The new approach focused on a student’s educational needs rather than their disability. The Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan 2003-2005 was released this year. It will guide schools in developing coherent literacy and numeracy programs to improve student learning outcomes.

The government developed a plan to address equity and diversity in the department over the next three years to improve work/life balance, diversity and inclusivity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s employment. The plan is linked to the department’s Strategic Plan for 2002-2005. It will promote an environment that accepts cultural and social differences.

The government is continuing to build on current high quality school education by implementing the School Excellence Initiative. The initiative is the overarching framework for achieving high standards in student learning, innovation and best practice in ACT government schools. One component of the initiative will involve schools in assessing their own performance, identifying priorities and strategies, and striving for even higher standards. The initiative will shorten the school planning cycle from 5 to 3 years and introduce external validation.

Future improvements in student outcomes will be achieved through the Curriculum Renewal Project 2003-2007. This budget initiative will determine the principles and framework for school curriculum development.

The Inquiry into ACT Education Funding headed by Lyndsay Connors was presented to the ACT government earlier this year. The Government accepted all but one of the recommendations. The changes to existing funding arrangements will better focus available public funds on achieving the objectives of equity and relative need.

New funding resources have been provided to schools with a high concentration of students from low economic backgrounds and from at risk families through the Schools Equity Fund. ”

Northern Territory Government comments

“ In 2002 the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) continued to place significant emphasis on:

- improved educational outcomes for all students, particularly Indigenous students, in all key areas.
- safe employment, learning and public environments.
- efficient and effective systems to facilitate improvement in the above priority outcomes.

Many long-term initiatives contributing to improved Indigenous student outcomes were progressed, including accountability, data collection, recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff, enrolment and attendance of Indigenous students and a focus on English literacy and numeracy in classrooms.

Multilevel Assessment Program (MAP) testing is now mandatory for all students in Year 3,5 and 7. The concerted effort resulted in:

- increased student participation and benchmark achievement rates;
- improved test delivery and data analysis; and
- greater capacity within schools to use the data to impact on student outcomes.

MAP data for the last two years indicates that in 2002 non-Indigenous students benchmark achievement rates increased from 2001. There was also some demonstrated improvement in the performance of Indigenous students against the National Benchmarks in 2002 compared to 2001. Territory schools have a significantly higher proportion of Indigenous students than any other jurisdiction. In 2002 Indigenous students made up 38 per cent of the NT Government school population.

The Lighthouse Schools Project provided significant opportunities for teachers and principals to enhance their schools’ approach to teaching and learning using technology. This included workshops conducted in Lighthouse Schools, allowing them to see technology effecting innovative change in real classrooms.

A major agreement to deliver interactive learning was signed by NT DEET, Optus and the NSW Department of Employment and Training. The project uses two-way satellite communications between teachers and students through the Interactive Distance Learning Project, with 87 two-way satellite sites in remote Indigenous communities.

Twenty additional teachers were allocated to urban and remote schools as part of a commitment to employ 100 extra teachers over the current NT Government’s first term. ”

3.7 Definitions

Table 3.14 **Terms**

Term	*Definition*
Apparent retention rates	The number of full time students in a designated year of schooling, expressed as a percentage of their respective cohort group at an earlier base year — for example, the percentage of full time students who continued to year 12 in 2001 from respective cohort groups at year 10. In this example, the rate is calculated by dividing the total number of full time students in year 12 in 2001 by the total number of full time students in year 10 in 1999.
Full time equivalent student	The full time equivalent of a full time student is 1.0. The method of converting part time student numbers into full time equivalents should be based on the student's workload compared with the workload usually undertaken by a full time student. Note that the full time equivalent of part time primary students was included for the first time for 2001.
Full time student	A person who satisfies the definition of a student and undertakes a workload equivalent to, or greater than, that usually undertaken by a student of that year level. The definition of full time student varies across jurisdictions.
Geographic classification	The RRMA classification developed by the former Department of Primary Industries and Energy has been adopted for the calculation of students attending schools in metropolitan, provincial and remote zones, and for completion rates by locality. A new classification of geographic location has been adopted for nationally comparable reporting of outcomes of schooling. This classification divides Australia into three zones: metropolitan, provincial and remote. The metropolitan and provincial zones are each subdivided into two categories as outlined below. *Metropolitan zone* 1. Mainland State capital city regions (Statistical Divisions): Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. 2. Major urban statistical districts (population of 100 000 and above). *Provincial zone* 3. Provincial city statistical districts plus Darwin (population of 25 000 to 99 999). 4. Other provincial areas (Census collection districts with an ARIA Plus score less than or equal to 5.92). *Remote zone* 5. Remote zone (Census collection districts with an ARIA Plus score greater than 5.92). 'ARIA Plus' refers to the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ABS 2001). The new classification is yet to be fully implemented and other classifications, based on individual jurisdiction's definitions, are included in this chapter.

(Continued on next page)

Table 3.14 **(Continued)**

Term	*Definition*
Government recurrent expenditure per full time equivalent student	Total government recurrent expenditure divided by the total number of full time equivalent students. Expenditure is based on the National School Statistics Collection (MCEETYA 2002b), with adjustments for notional user cost of capital charges and payroll tax. Notional user cost of capital is included for all jurisdictions and payroll tax estimates are included for those jurisdictions not subject to it (WA and the ACT). Expenditure figures are in financial years and student numbers are in calendar years, so the total number of students is taken as the average of two years. When calculating the 2000-01 average expenditure per student, for example, the total expenditure figure is at 2000-01 but the total student number figure is the average of student numbers from 2000 and 2001.
Indigenous student	A student of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin who identifies as being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. Administrative processes for determining Indigenous status vary across jurisdictions.
In-school costs	Costs relating directly to schools. Staff, for example, are categorised as being either in-school or out-of-school. They are categorised as in-school if they usually spend more than half of their time actively engaged in duties at one or more schools or ancillary education establishments. In-school employee related expenses, for example, represent all salaries, wages awards, allowances and related oncosts paid to in-school staff.
Language background other than English (LBOTE) student	A status that is determined by administrative processes that vary across jurisdictions.
Out-of-school costs	Costs relating indirectly to schools. Staff, for example, are categorised as being either in-school or out-of-school. They are categorised as out-of-school if they do not usually spend more than half of their time actively engaged in duties at one or more schools or ancillary education establishments. Out-of-school employee related expenses, for example, represent all salaries, wages awards, allowances and related oncosts paid to out-of-school staff.
Part time student	A student undertaking a workload that is less than that specified as being full time in their jurisdiction.
Participation rate	The number of full time school students of a particular age, expressed as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age at June (ABS 2002b).
Potential year 12 population	An estimate of a single-year age group that could have participated in year 12 that year, defined as the estimated resident population aged 15–19 years divided by 5.
Real expenditure	Nominal expenditure adjusted for changes in prices, using the GDP price deflator and expressed in terms of final year prices.
Socioeconomic status	As per footnotes to tables 3A.33, which provide definitions specific to each table. Elsewhere in the Report, socioeconomic status data are presented that are not fully comparable across jurisdictions because administrative processes for determining socioeconomic status vary across jurisdictions.

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Table 3.14 **(Continued)**

Source of income	In this chapter, income from either the Australian Government or State and Territory governments. Australian Government expenditure is derived from specific purpose payments (current and capital) for schools. This funding indicates the level of monies allocated, not necessarily the level of expenditure incurred in any given financial year. The data provide, therefore, only a broad indication of the level of Australian Government funding.
Student-to-staff ratios	The number of full time equivalent students per full time equivalent teaching and non-teaching staff. Students at special schools are allocated to primary and secondary. The full time equivalent of staff includes those who are generally active in schools and ancillary education establishments.
Student	A person who is formally (officially) enrolled or registered at a school, and who is also active in a primary, secondary or special education program at that school. Students at special schools are allocated to primary and secondary on the basis of their actual grade (if assigned); whether or not they are receiving primary or secondary curriculum instruction; or, as a last resort, whether they were of primary or secondary school age.
Student, primary	A student in primary education, which covers pre-year 1 to year 6 in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT, pre-year 1 to year 7 in WA, SA and the NT, and year 1 to year 7 in Queensland.
Student, secondary	A student in secondary education, which commences at year 7 in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT, and at year 8 in Queensland, SA, WA and the NT.
Students with disabilities	Students included in the annual system reports to Department of Education, Science and Training. The definitions of students with disabilities are based on individual State and Territory criteria, so data are not comparable across jurisdictions.

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