
Chapter 4: Vocational Education and Training (VT)

The Vocational Education and Training chapter

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) chapter focuses on the education and training system that delivers employment-related skills. The VET system provides Australians with the skills to enter or re-enter the labour force, to retrain for a new job, or to upgrade skills for an existing job. It includes publicly and privately funded VET delivered by a wide range of training institutions and enterprises through a number of delivery methods.

This chapter reports on the VET services delivered by providers receiving public funding allocations for VET. These services include the provision of vocational programs of study in publicly owned technical and further education (TAFE) institutes and universities with TAFE divisions, other government and community institutions, and publicly funded activity by private registered training organisations. The scope of this chapter does not extend to university education or VET services provided in schools (which fall within the scope of the schools chapter).

Indigenous data in the Vocational Education and Training chapter

The vocational education and training chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2003* (ROGS) contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- VET participation by Indigenous status, 2001;
- The load pass rate for Indigenous students relative to other students, 2001; and
- The proportion of Indigenous graduates that indicated their VET course helped them achieve their main reason for doing the course, 2001.

Care needs to be taken in interpreting the participation data presented for Indigenous people, people with a disability and people from a non-English speaking background because the data are dependent on self identification at the time of enrolment, and the number of nonresponses (that is, students who did not indicate whether or not they belonged to these groups) was high and varied across jurisdictions.

Supporting tables

Supporting tables for data within the vocational education and training chapter of the compendium are contained in the attachment to the compendium. Supporting tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by the abbreviated chapter name (for example, table VT.A5 is table 5 in the vocational education and training attachment to the compendium).

As the data are directly sourced from the *Report on Government Services 2003*, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the Report can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to 'ROGS 2003, p. 6.15' this is page 15 of chapter 6 of the Report and 'ROGS 2003, 6A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 6 of the Report.

VET participation by Indigenous status

The proportion of VET students who identified as Indigenous ranged from 41.3 per cent in the NT to 0.9 per cent in Victoria. The proportion of VET students who identified as Indigenous was greater than the proportion of Indigenous people in the population in all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the ACT, where the two rates were similar (table VT.1).

Table VT.1 VET participation by Indigenous status, 2001 (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Students reported as Indigenous	3.0	0.9	4.2	5.9	3.2	3.6	1.4	41.3	3.3
Students reported as non-Indigenous	77.0	85.3	80.5	62.3	78.8	86.4	95.6	55.0	79.1
Indigenous status not reported	20.0	13.8	15.3	31.8	18.0	10.0	3.0	3.7	17.6
Proportion of the Australian population reported as Indigenous ^b	2.1	0.6	3.5	3.5	1.7	3.7	1.3	29.1	2.4

^a In 2001, some jurisdictions introduced a new reporting regime — enrolment activity end date reporting. This may cause a break in the series on student numbers in these jurisdictions. ^b The proportion of the Australian population reported as Indigenous differs from the data in ANTA (2002) because the figures reported here are calculated using ABS estimated residential indigenous population data (table SA.A4).

Source: ANTA (2002); ABS (unpublished); ROGS 2003, p.4.13; table VT.A1.

Load pass rate for target equity groups

Load pass rates report the extent to which students pass assessment in an assessable module or unit of competency. Care needs to be taken in comparing data because average module durations and standard of competencies achieved by students vary across jurisdictions. Load pass rates (the ratio of hours attributed to students who passed assessment in an assessable module or unit of competency to all students

who were assessed and either passed, failed or withdrew) are provided in this section for all students and the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA)-designated equity target groups. The calculation is based on the nominal hours supervised for each assessable module or unit of competency.

The load pass rates for target equity groups, relative to the load pass rates of the general student population, are a measure of the effectiveness of strategies to improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

The load pass rates for students from remote areas (72.3 per cent), Indigenous students (61.5 per cent), students reporting a disability (66.8 per cent) and students born in a non-English speaking country (71.2 per cent) or speaking a language other than English at home (69.8 per cent) were below the national average (75.4 per cent). The load pass rates achieved by female students (76.1 per cent) and students from rural areas (77.5 per cent) were above the national average. The load pass rates for all students were highest in SA, which also reported the highest load pass rates for all the target equity groups except people speaking a language other than English at home (Tasmania) and Indigenous students (the ACT) (table VT.2). Care needs to be taken in making jurisdictional comparisons of load pass rates for Indigenous students, students reporting a disability and students from non-English speaking backgrounds because of the high nonidentification rates for these groups.

Table VT.2 Load pass rates by target groups, 2001 (per cent)^a

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT ^d	NT	Aust
All people	74.2	74.9	75.6	71.5	87.3	79.4	78.3	70.4	75.4
Target groups									
Female students	74.7	76.1	76.5	71.7	87.5	81.0	81.4	69.3	76.1
Rural area students	74.4	78.7	77.8	74.2	91.2	77.8	..	72.4	77.5
Remote area students	74.1	81.9	72.9	69.4	92.0	79.2	..	68.1	72.3
Students who reported being Indigenous	60.0	56.4	64.7	56.1	72.1	69.9	74.1	62.6	61.5
Students who reported having a disability ^b	66.1	65.8	66.4	62.0	81.4	67.3	72.1	70.2	66.8
Students who reported being born in a non-English speaking country ^c	73.0	69.6	65.8	65.8	83.5	79.4	75.0	65.2	71.2
Students who reported speaking a language other than English at home	72.5	68.3	62.7	62.4	80.8	81.2	72.8	59.6	69.8

^a For Victoria in 2001, nominal hours supervised have not been recorded for all units of competency and instead, scheduled hours have been used to calculate load pass rates. ^b Disabilities include visual/sight/seeing; hearing; physical; intellectual; chronic illness; and other disability. ^c All countries other than the main English speaking countries which are Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands, Isle of Man), Ireland, Canada, United States of America and South Africa. ^d For the ACT, the number of students from rural areas is too small to calculate meaningful rates. There are no people in remote areas in the ACT. .. Not applicable.

Source: ANTA (2002); ROGS 2003, p.4.17; table VT.A2.

Student outcomes

The outcomes for VET graduates and module completers are an important indicator of the quality of the VET system. In 2001, ANTA commissioned the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research to undertake the Student Outcomes Survey to ascertain training outcomes for students who completed at least one module of VET at TAFE institutes or universities in Australia in 2000.

The survey targeted students who graduated with a qualification from a course (graduates) and students who had successfully completed some training below the level of full qualification and who were no longer engaged in training at the time the survey was undertaken (module completers).

Data collection for the 2001 survey involved the mailing of questionnaires to a randomly selected sample of graduates and module completers. The sample was stratified by TAFE institute, field of study, gender and age. Responses were received from 39 426 graduates and 30 128 module completers, resulting in national response rates of 52 per cent and 41 per cent respectively. Responses were weighted to population benchmarks to minimise nonresponse bias.

As the Student Outcomes Survey collects the opinions of a sample of students, the results are only estimates of the opinions of the total student population. The precision of estimates based on the survey depend on the survey sample size and the distribution of sample responses. Consequently, jurisdictional comparisons need to be made with care.

Care needs to be taken when comparing State and Territory information, as each jurisdiction has different economic, demographic and social profiles that are likely to have an effect on a range of training-related outcomes. In particular, the indicators of employment outcomes for VET graduates may be affected by economic parameters that are beyond the control of the TAFE system.

The attachment table VT.A3 provides data on ‘whether VET course helped graduates from defined equity groups achieve their main reason for doing the course, 2001’ for Indigenous students and other defined equity groups.