
4 Vocational education and training

This chapter focuses on performance information — equity, effectiveness and efficiency — for government funded vocational education and training (VET) in Australia in 2004. The VET system delivers employment related skills across a wide range of vocations. It provides Australians with the skills to enter or re-enter the labour force, retrain for a new job or upgrade skills for an existing job. The VET system includes government and privately funded VET delivered through a number of methods by a wide range of training institutions and enterprises.

This chapter reports on the VET services delivered by providers receiving government funding allocations. These VET services include the provision of vocational programs of study in government owned technical and further education (TAFE) institutes and universities with TAFE divisions, other government and community institutions, and government funded activity by private registered training organisations (RTOs). The scope of this chapter does not extend to VET services provided in schools (which are within the scope of chapter 3) or university education.

This year, the chapter has been enhanced by developing a stand-alone indicator for Indigenous people participating in VET.

Indigenous data in the vocational education and training chapter

The vocational education and training chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2006* (2006 Report) contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- VET participation, 2004
- load pass rate, 2004
- qualifications completed, 2003
- units of competency and modules, 2004
- proportion of graduates who were satisfied with the quality of their completed VET course, 2004
- proportion of graduates who were satisfied with the quality of their VET course, by purpose of study, 2004

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- proportion of graduates who were in employment and/or continued on to further study after completing a VET course, 2004
 - proportion of graduates who continued on to further study after completing a VET course, by institution, 2004.

Care needs to be taken in interpreting the participation data presented for Indigenous people because the data are dependent on self identification at the time of enrolment, and the number of non-responses (that is, students who did not indicate whether or not they were Indigenous) was high and varied across jurisdictions.

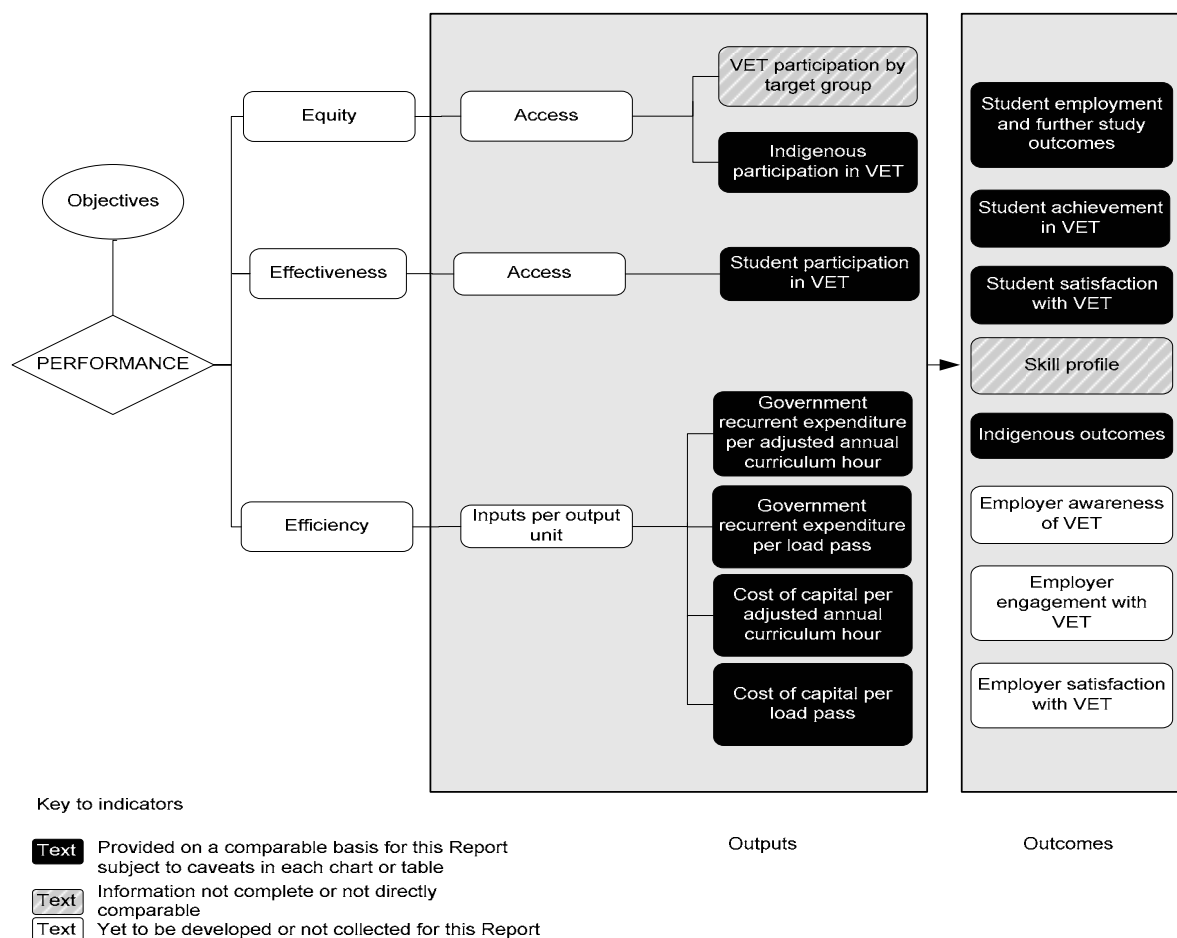
Supporting tables

Supporting tables for data within the VET chapter of this compendium are contained in attachment 4A of the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 4A.3 is table 3 in the VET attachment). As the data are directly sourced from the 2006 Report, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2006 Report can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to '2006 Report, p. 4.15' this is page 15 of chapter 4 of the 2006 Report, and '2006 Report, table 4A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 4 of the 2006 Report.

Framework of performance indicators

Data for Indigenous people are reported for a subset of the performance indicators for VET services in the 2006 Report. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework outlined in figure 4.1. The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2006 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

Figure 4.1 Performance indicators for VET services



Source: 2006 Report, p. 4.11, figure 4.3.

VET participation by target equity group — Indigenous people

A key national goal of the VET system is to increase opportunities and outcomes for disadvantaged groups including Indigenous people. The Steering Committee has identified ‘VET participation by target equity group’ as an indicator of the equity of access to VET services (box 4.1).

Box 4.1 VET participation by target equity group

'VET participation by target equity group' (Indigenous Australians) is an indicator of the target group's access to the VET system, compared with that of the general population, and reflects performance against the objective of achieving equitable outcomes in VET.

'VET participation by target equity group' is defined as the number of government funded participants in the VET system who self-identified that they are from a target group, as a proportion of the total number of people in the population in that group aged 15–64 years.

It is desirable that the 'VET participation by target equity group' is comparable to that for all students. A lower participation rate means the target equity group is under-represented in VET; a higher participation rate means the group is over-represented in VET.

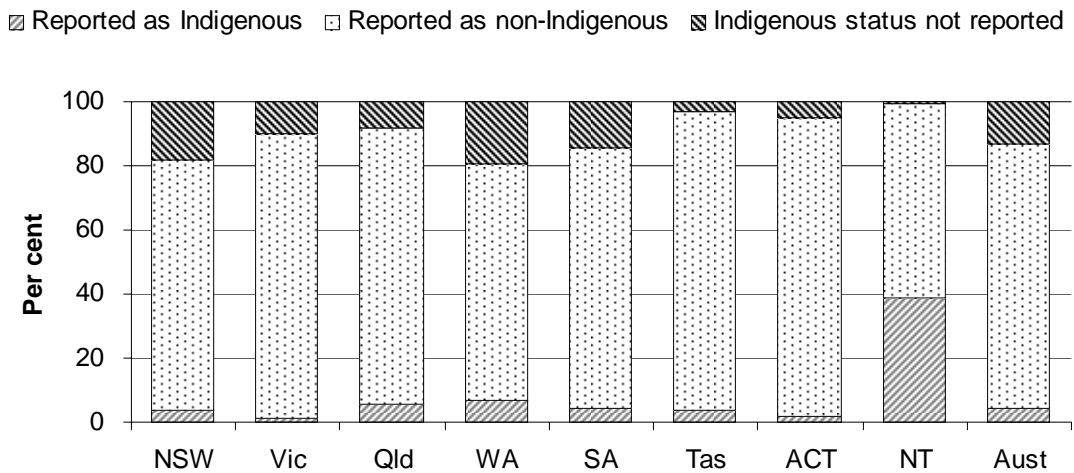
Care needs to be taken in interpreting the participation rates presented for Indigenous people, because (1) the data depend on self-identification at the time of enrolment and (2) the number of non-responses (that is, students who did not indicate whether they belong to these groups) varies across jurisdictions.

Data are for government funded VET students, excluding students participating in VET programs in schools. It is not adjusted for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and 'student enrolment no participation' (that is, students who enrolled but did not participate in VET programs).

In 2004, 4.1 per cent of government funded VET students in Australia identified themselves as Indigenous, while 13.3 per cent of students did not report their Indigenous status (figure 4.1). The proportion of government funded VET students who identified as Indigenous was higher than the proportion of Indigenous people in the total population nationally (2.4 per cent) (table 4A.1).

Nationally, the VET participation rate for Indigenous people aged 15–64 years was 16.0 per cent, compared with 8.3 per cent for all people (figure 4.2). These student participation data are not age standardised, so the younger age profile of the Indigenous population relative to all Australians is likely to affect the results.

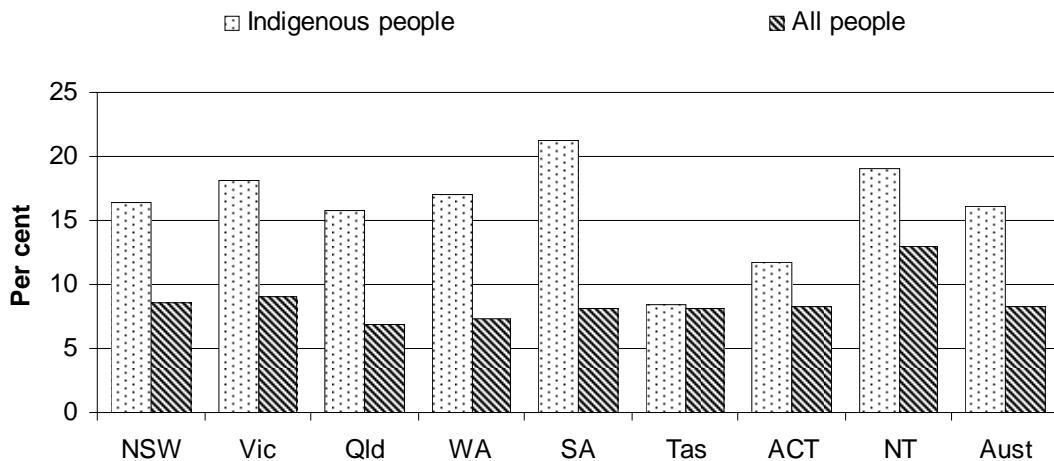
Figure 4.1 VET students, by Indigenous status, 2004^a



^a Government recurrent funded VET students, excluding students participating in VET programs in schools. Not adjusted for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and student enrolment no participation.

Source: NCVER (unpublished); table 4A.1; 2006 Report, p. 4.17, figure 4.8.

Figure 4.2 VET participation rate, by Indigenous status, 2004^{a, b, c}



^a Government recurrent funded VET students, excluding students participating in VET programs in schools. Not adjusted for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and student enrolment no participation. ^b The Indigenous participation rate is the number of students who reported being Indigenous as a percentage of the experimental estimates of Indigenous people aged 15–64 years for 30 June 2004 (ABS Experimental estimates and projections, Indigenous Australians, 3238.0 (30 June 1991 to 30 June 2009); low projection series, tables 25–34, pp. 53–62). The Indigenous participation rate in the 2005 Report and in other VET publications was based on the number of students who reported being Indigenous as a percentage of the total Indigenous population from the ABS experimental projection of all Indigenous people. ^c Care needs to be taken in interpreting these data because the Indigenous population's age profile is younger than that of the non-Indigenous population. Participation rates for all ages are likely to differ from participation rates for working age populations.

Source: ABS (2004); ABS (unpublished); NCVER (unpublished); tables A.2, A.6 and 4A.1; 2006 Report, p. 4.17, figure 4.9.

Indigenous outcomes

In the 2005 Report, VET outcomes for Indigenous people were reported under indicators reporting on VET target equity groups. This year, all Indigenous related VET outcomes are reported under one indicator — ‘Indigenous outcomes’, consistent with the new National Strategy for VET 2004–10 (box 4.2).

Box 4.2 Indigenous outcomes

‘Indigenous outcomes’ is an indicator of the extent to which Indigenous people engage with and achieve positive outcomes from VET. It reports on three elements — ‘Indigenous students’ achievement in VET’, ‘skill outputs of Indigenous students’ and ‘VET outcomes for Indigenous students’.

‘Indigenous students’ achievement in VET’ is an indicator of Indigenous students’ success in VET. It reports on load pass rates achieved by Indigenous students and the number of Indigenous students who commenced and completed expressed as a proportion of all course commencing enrolments by Indigenous students in that year. Reporting on this element is dependent on the capacity to track individual students over more than one calendar year and the data are not yet available.

‘Skill outputs of Indigenous students’ measures the level of skill outputs achieved in a given year by Indigenous students from the VET system in a given year. It reports on the number of qualifications completed by Indigenous students, the number of units of competency achieved by Indigenous students and the number of modules (outside training packages) completed by Indigenous students. Higher numbers of completions does not necessarily imply a better result. It depends on the enrolment level in the given year.

‘Qualifications completed by Indigenous students’ is defined as the number of qualifications completed by Indigenous students each year in VET, where a qualification is a certification awarded to a person on successful completion of a course in recognition of having achieved particular knowledge, skills or competencies. Qualifications completed are reported three years after they occur. That is, the number of qualifications completed in 2003 are counted in 2005.

‘Units of competency achieved by Indigenous students’ is defined as the number of units of competency achieved by Indigenous students each year in VET, where a unit of competency is defined as a component of a competency standard and/or a statement of a key function or role in a particular job or occupation.

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Box 4.2 (Continued)

'Modules completed by Indigenous students' is defined as the number of modules (outside training packages) completed each year by Indigenous students in VET, where a module (also called a subject) is a unit of education or training which can be completed on its own or as part of a course. Modules may also result in the attainment of one or more units of competency.

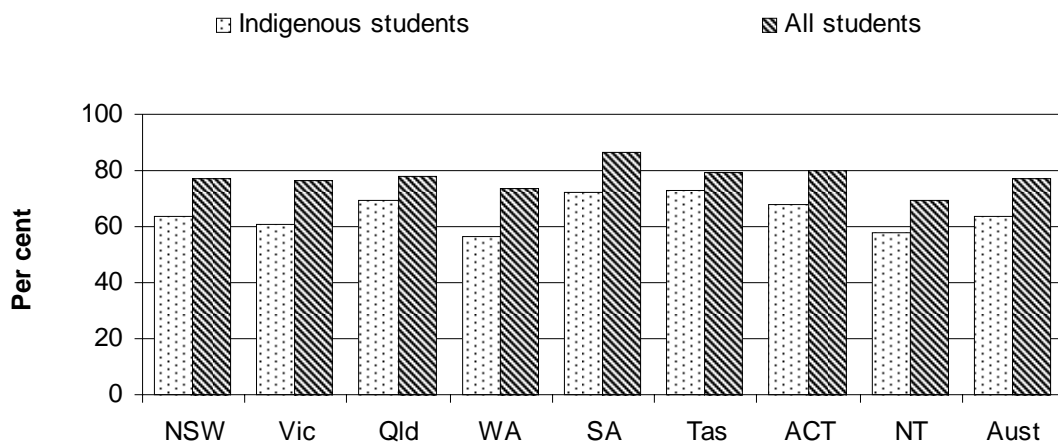
'VET outcomes for Indigenous students' is an indicator of the VET system's ability to meet Indigenous students' objectives. It reports on the benefits Indigenous students gained from the VET system and the proportion of Indigenous students who improved their employment or further study outcomes after completing a VET course.

Source: DEST (2005); 2006 Report, p. 4.54, box 4.17.

Indigenous students' achievement in VET

In 2004, the national 'load pass rate' for Indigenous students (63.7 per cent) was lower than the national load pass rate for all students (77.4 per cent) (figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Indigenous students' load pass rate, 2004^a

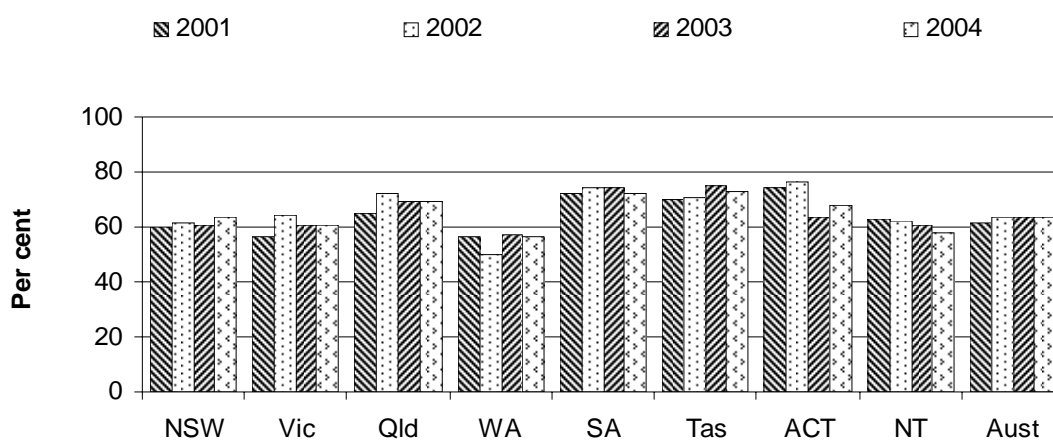


^a Government recurrent funded VET students excluding students participating in VET programs in schools. Not adjusted for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and student enrolment no participation.

Source: NCVET (unpublished); table 4A.2; 2006 Report, p. 4.55, figure 4.43.

The load pass rate for Indigenous students increased nationally from 62.4 per cent in 2001 to 63.7 per cent in 2004 (figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4 Indigenous students' load pass rate^a



^a Government recurrent funded VET students excluding students participating in VET programs in schools. Not adjusted for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and student enrolment no participation.

Source: NCVET (unpublished); table 4A.2; 2006 Report, p. 4.55, figure 4.44.

Indigenous students' skill outputs

The indicator 'skill outputs of Indigenous students' measures the skill outputs of Indigenous students from the VET system in a given year. It reports on the number and proportion of qualifications completed, units of competency achieved and modules (outside training packages) completed in a given year.

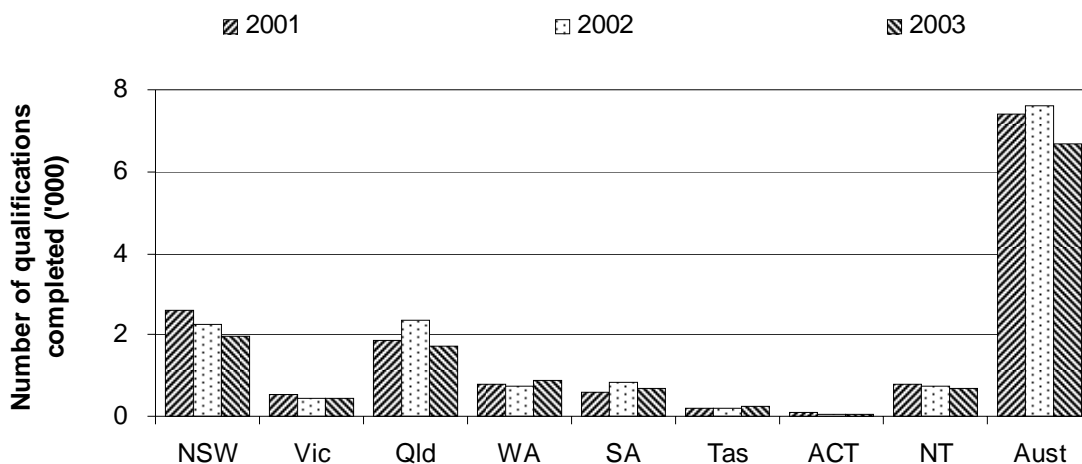
Qualifications completed — Indigenous students

In 2003, 6655 Indigenous students completed a VET qualification — 12.4 per cent fewer than the number of qualifications completed in 2002 (figure 4.5). Nationally, Indigenous students accounted for 2.4 per cent of all the qualifications completed in 2003 (table 4A.1).

Units of competency and modules completed by Indigenous students

Indigenous students completed 147 000 units of competency and 73 700 modules nationally in 2004. While the number of units of competency completed increased by 1.8 per cent, the number of modules completed decreased by 8.2 per cent from 2003 (figure 4.6).

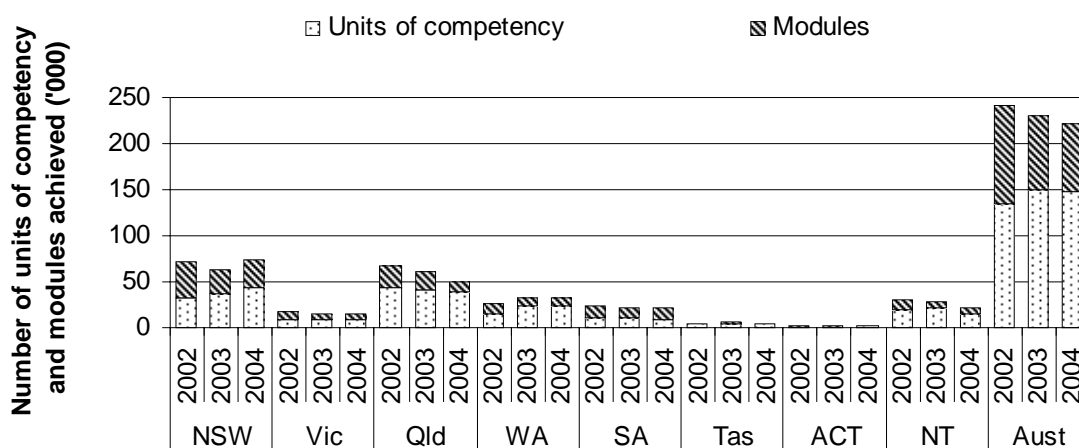
Figure 4.5 **Number of qualifications completed, by Indigenous status, 2004^{a, b, c, d}**



^a Qualifications completed includes courses accredited or approved by a local State/Territory authority. ^b The number of qualifications completed includes both government funded and non-government funded VET students. ^c Represents students eligible to be awarded a qualification. ^d Excludes students participating in VET programs in schools.

Source: NCVET (unpublished); table 4A.3; 2006 Report, p. 4.56, figure 4.45.

Figure 4.6 **Number of units of competency and modules achieved/passed, by Indigenous students^a**



^a Government recurrent funded VET students, excluding students participating in VET programs in schools. Not adjusted for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and student enrolment no participation.

Source: DEST (2005); table 4A.4; 2006 Report, p. 4.57, figure 4.46.

Indigenous students' satisfaction with VET

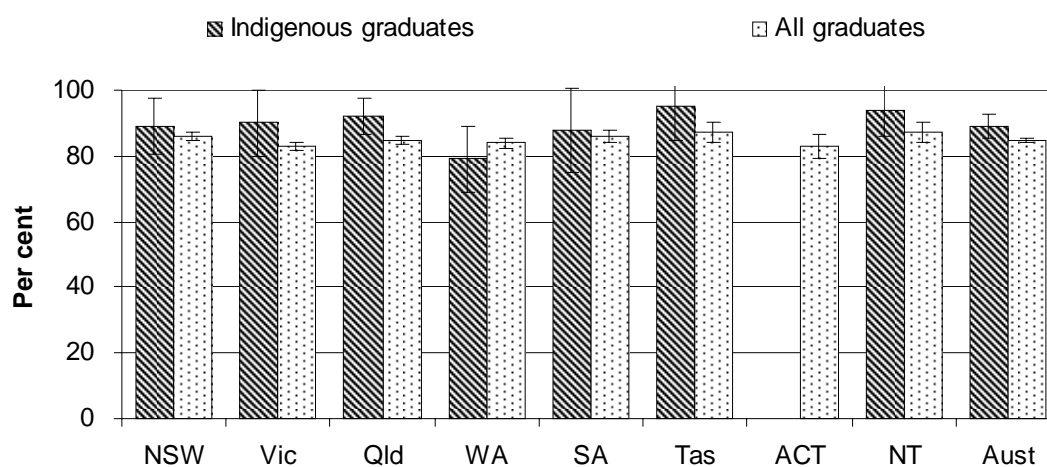
The indicator 'Indigenous students' satisfaction with VET' reports on the proportion of Indigenous students who indicated they were satisfied with the quality of their completed VET course.

Nationally, 89 per cent of Indigenous students surveyed in 2004 indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of their completed VET course, compared with 85 per cent for all students (figure 4.7).

Of those Indigenous students who completed VET courses in 2004, the proportion of those who indicated that they were satisfied with the courses was:

- 92 per cent of those seeking employment related outcomes
- 94 per cent of those seeking further study outcomes
- 88 per cent of those seeking personal development (figure 4.8).

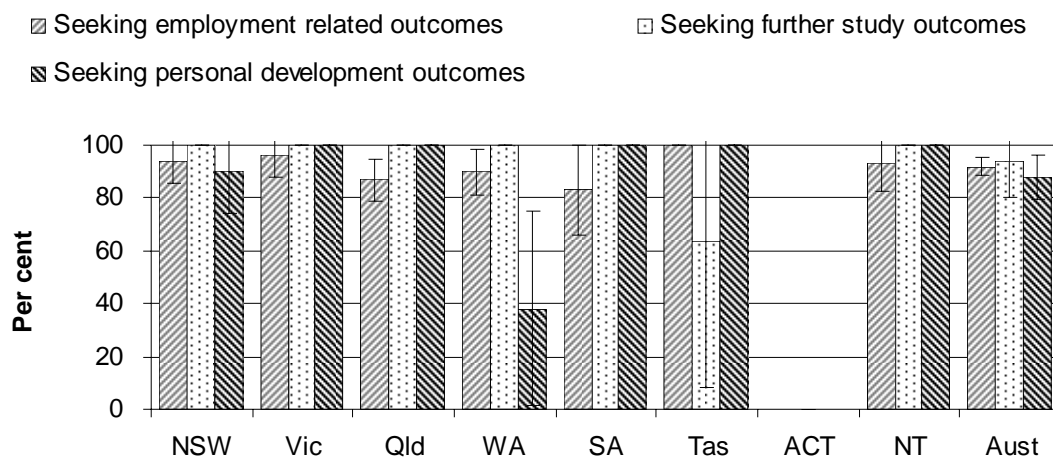
Figure 4.7 **Proportion of graduates who were satisfied with the quality of their completed VET course, by Indigenous status, 2004^{a, b, c}**



^a Satisfaction with overall quality of training was rated as 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale. ^b Indigenous data for the ACT are not published due to small sample size. ^c The error bars in the figure represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: NCVET (unpublished); table 4A.5; 2006 Report, table 4A.39, p. 4.58, figure 4.47.

Figure 4.8 Proportion of Indigenous graduates who were satisfied with the quality of their VET course, by purpose of study, 2004^{a, b, c, d}



^a Satisfaction with overall quality of training was rated as 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale. ^b Data for the ACT are not published due to small sample size. ^c The estimates for VET outcomes for Indigenous students have a standard error greater than 25 per cent for most jurisdictions and are considered too unreliable for general use (table 4A.5). ^d The error bars in the figure represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: NCVER (unpublished); table 4A.5; 2006 Report, p. 4.59, figure 4.48.

Further information on Indigenous students' views of their VET courses can be drawn from a 2004 NCVER survey (box 4.3).

Box 4.3 Indigenous views of VET

In 2004, the NCVER undertook a national survey of 785 Indigenous people who took part in government funded VET in 2003 across geographic regions.

Nationally, of those surveyed:

- 43 per cent indicated that they undertook VET training to improve their knowledge, to get a job (42 per cent), to get extra skills for a job (28 per cent), to improve their confidence/self-esteem (24 per cent), and to help in their community (20 per cent)
- 90 per cent rated the most good aspect of their training as being with other Indigenous people, access to computers (82 per cent), course flexibility (81 per cent), and teacher and tutor (81 per cent)
- 91 per cent indicated that undertaking the VET course resulted in them improving their confidence/self-esteem, helped them communicate better (89 per cent), improved their workplace skills (87 per cent), helped them understand how work places are run (75 per cent) and helped them get more involved in their community (71 per cent)

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Box 4.3 (Continued)

- 45 per cent were working in a paid job, 32 per cent were looking for work, 25 per cent continued their 2003 training, and 22 per cent were studying a different course in 2004 from 2003
- 49 per cent were doing/completed certificate levels II and III, 13 per cent were training for certificate level IV or higher, and 16 per cent were training for certificate level I in 2003
- who did not complete their course in 2003, 45 per cent cited a personal reason, a training related reason (39 per cent), and a family/community-related reason (28 per cent).

Source: NCVET (2005); 2006 Report, pp. 4.59–60, box 4.18.

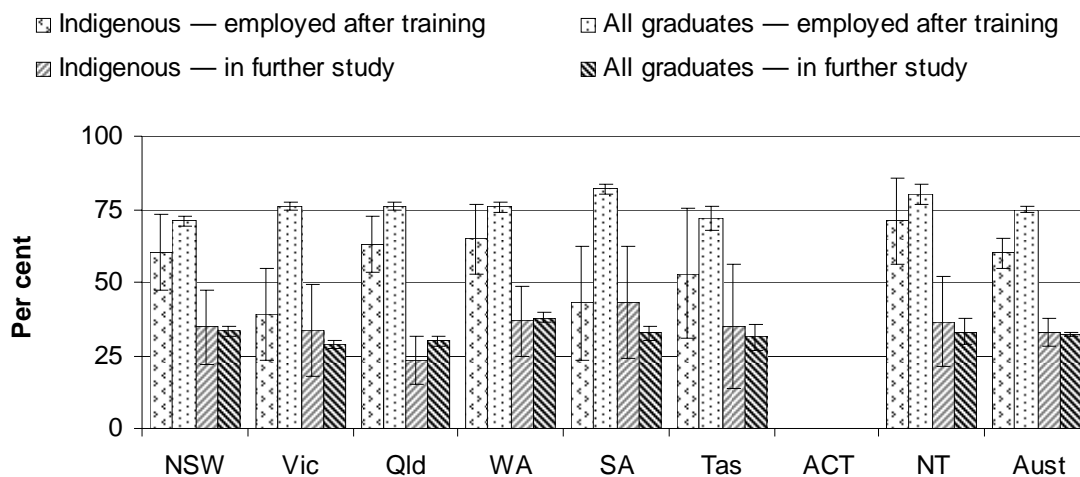
Indigenous students employment and further study outcomes

‘Indigenous students’ employment and further study outcomes’ measures the proportion of Indigenous VET students who improved their employment circumstances or continued on to further study after completing training.

In 2004, 60 per cent of Indigenous students surveyed nationally indicated that they were employed after completing a VET course, compared with 75 per cent of all students. Of the Indigenous students surveyed, 33 per cent continued on to further study, compared with 32 per cent of all students (figure 4.9).

Of those Indigenous students who went on to further study, 66 per cent continued on to further study within the TAFE system (compared with 64 per cent for all students) and 22 per cent went to university (compared with 23 per cent for all students) (figure 4.10).

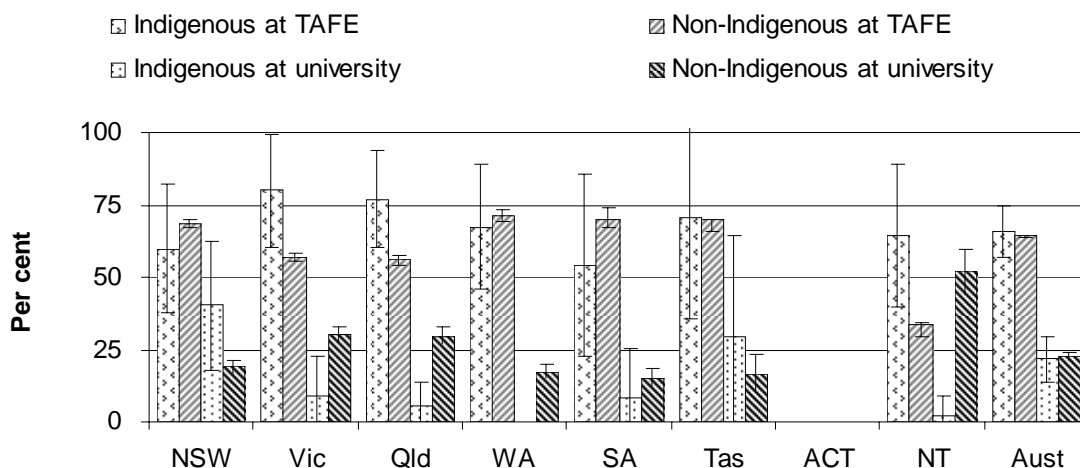
Figure 4.9 Proportion of graduates who were in employment and/or continued on to further study after completing a VET course, by Indigenous status, 2004^{a, b, c, d}



^a The findings on further study outcomes are not applicable to module completers. A module completer, by definition, is someone who has left the system. ^b Data for the ACT are not published due to small sample size. ^c The estimates for VET outcomes for Indigenous students have a standard error greater than 25 per cent for most jurisdictions and are considered unreliable for general use (2006 Report, table 4A.39, and 4A.6). ^d The error bars in the figure represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: NCVER (unpublished); table 4A.6, 2006 Report, table 4A.19, p. 4.61, figure 4.49.

Figure 4.10 Proportion of Indigenous graduates who continued on to further study after completing a VET course, by institution, 2004^{a, b, c, d, e}



^a TAFE includes TAFE institutes and TAFE Divisions of universities. ^b The findings on further study outcomes are not applicable to module completers. A module completer, by definition, is someone who has left the system. ^c Data for the ACT are not published due to small sample size. ^d The estimates for VET outcomes for Indigenous students have a standard error greater than 25 per cent for most jurisdictions and are considered too unreliable for general use (table 4A.6). ^e The error bars in the figure represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: NCVER (unpublished); table 4A.6, 2006 Report, table 4A.19, p. 4.62, figure 4.50.

Supporting tables

Supporting tables for data within this chapter are contained in the attachment to the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 4A.3 is table 3 in the VET attachment). The tables included in the attachment are listed below.

- Table 4A.1** VET participation, by Indigenous status, 2004 (per cent)
- Table 4A.2** Load pass rates, by Indigenous status 2004 (per cent)
- Table 4A.3** Number of VET qualifications completed, by Indigenous status ('000)
- Table 4A.4** Number of units of competency and modules completed, by Indigenous status ('000)
- Table 4A.5** Proportion of Indigenous VET graduates who were satisfied with their VET training, by purpose of study
- Table 4A.6** Proportion of Indigenous VET graduates who were in employment and/or continued on to further study after completing their VET course

References

- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2004, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991 to 2009*, Cat. no. 3238.0, Canberra.
- ANTA (Australian National Training Authority) 2004, *Shaping Our Future — Australia's National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 2004–2010*, Brisbane.
- DEST (Department of Education, Science and Training) 2005, *Annual National Report 2004: Vocational Education and Training Performance*, Canberra.
- NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education Research) 2005, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Indigenous Australians' Training Experiences 2004 - First Finding*, Adelaide.