# 7 Education and training

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| Strategic areas for action |
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Education is a life‑long activity, beginning with learning and development in the home through to the more formal settings of school education, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education. Education and training aims to develop the capacities and talents of students, so they have the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life. Actions in this strategic area can help strengthen communities and regions both economically and socially, and there are strong links between higher levels of education and improved health outcomes.

In September 2015, the COAG Education Council endorsed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy which identifies policies and actions that require national collaboration to succeed and shared principles that governments commit to when working with communities (Education Council 2015).

The indicators in this chapter cover some of the key factors that contribute to positive education and training outcomes:

* teacher quality (section 7.1) — the quality of teaching is a key determinant of student outcomes. However, defining and measuring teacher quality is difficult. This section discusses research into the determinants of teacher quality and identifies data that could be used for future reporting
* school engagement (section 7.2) — although defining and measuring student engagement with schooling is complex, research suggests that relevant dimensions include positive self‑identity, belonging, participation, and attendance
* transition from school to work (section 7.3) — the transition from school to work is a critical period. Young people who are actively engaged in education and training, or employed, are at a lower risk of long term disadvantage.

Several COAG targets and headline indicators reflect the importance of education and training:

* early childhood education (section 4.3)
* reading, writing and numeracy (section 4.4)
* year 1 to 10 attendance (section 4.5)
* year 12 attainment (section 4.6)
* post‑secondary education — participation and attainment (section 4.8).

Other COAG targets and headline indicators can be directly influenced by education and training outcomes:

* employment (section 4.7)
* household and individual income (section 4.10).

Outcomes in the education and training area can be affected by outcomes in several other strategic areas, or can influence outcomes in other areas:

* governance, leadership and culture (governance capacity and skills) (chapter 5)
* early child development (basic skills for life and learning, ear health) (chapter 6)
* healthy lives (access to primary health care and fewer potentially preventable hospitalisations will affect education outcomes, while education outcomes can influence tobacco consumption and harm, and obesity and nutrition) (chapter 8)
* economic participation (employment and occupation, and home ownership) (chapter 9).

Attachment tables for this chapter are identified in references throughout this chapter by an ‘A’ suffix (for example, table 7A.1.1). These tables can be found on the web page (www.pc.gov.au/oid2016).

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20documents/DECD\_\_NATSI\_EducationStrategy.pdf (accessed 9 March 2016).

## 7.1 Teacher quality**[[1]](#footnote-1)**

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| Box 7.1.1 Key message |
| * Teacher quality is considered the most important ‘in‑school’ influence on student educational outcomes. However, there is currently no nationally agreed measure of teacher quality. |
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While a lack of systematic evaluation makes it difficult to identify the most effective combination of measures to address educational disadvantage (Lloyd et al. 2015), it is clear that improving teacher quality overall is an important precondition (PC 2012). Teachers are the single most important ‘in school’ influence on student achievement (Hattie 2009). A recent literature review by Lloyd et al (2015) found there is limited empirical evidence of the facets of teacher quality that positively influence the learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, particularly from the perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Teacher quality can influence student educational outcomes both directly and indirectly, by fostering a positive, inclusive and safe learning environment (Boon 2011). However, student educational outcomes (including reading, writing and literacy, covered in section 4.4, and year 12 attainment, covered in section 4.6) are also affected by a range of other factors such as family life, student motivation and ability (Biddle and Cameron 2012), school resourcing (Sullivan, Perry and McConney 2013), cultural and language backgrounds (chapter 5) and health problems (such as hearing loss, see section 6.7) (PC 2016).

The Longitudinal Teacher Education and Workforce Study (LTEWS) tracked a national cohort of 2011 teacher education graduates and collected data on the impact of education and experiences on teacher quality. Findings of the study indicated only about half of the graduates believed that their teacher education program prepared them to teach ‘culturally, linguistically and socio-economically diverse learners’ (Mayer et al. 2014, p.215). The earlier Longitudinal Teacher Workforce Pilot Study was undertaken in 2011 with a cohort of 2007 teacher education graduates, and found that 77 per cent rated their teacher education program as either a little helpful (34 per cent), moderately helpful (26 per cent) or very/extremely helpful (17 per cent) with ‘teaching students from Indigenous backgrounds’ (Carroll 2014, p.32).

Schools with higher proportions of disadvantaged students often report persistent difficulties in attracting and retaining teachers, leaders and support staff who have the skills, knowledge and capabilities to appropriately meet the learning needs of these students (PC 2012). Schools in disadvantaged areas often have a high proportion of teachers who are recent graduates, as well as a high staff turnover, which can impede student learning. The low quantity and quality of housing in disadvantaged areas, as well as the unpredictability of the social environment can contribute to the difficulties in attracting and retaining teachers. Such problems are particularly severe in remote Indigenous schools (Brasche and Harrington 2012).

Quality teachers work closely with their peers and other school workers, recognise the diverse ways that students learn, challenge them by setting high expectations, provide them with continuous feedback and bring to the classroom a deep knowledge of the subject matter (box 7.1.2).

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| Box 7.1.2 What makes for quality teaching |
| Fully understanding what constitutes quality teaching remains an ongoing policy challenge. This is partly due to the diverse ways that individual students learn. Mapping the professional dimensions (content and pedagogy) and personal capability dimensions of teaching is also complex. Even so, there are some recurring themes in the available evidence.  In a synthesis of the research evidence, Professor Geoff Masters concluded that highly effective teachers are those who:   * create an environment where all students are expected to learn successfully * have a deep understanding of the subjects they teach * direct their teaching to student needs and readiness * provide continuous feedback to students about their learning * reflect on their own practice and strive for continuous improvement.   The particular characteristics of quality teachers of Indigenous students can include cultural awareness, awareness of individual student needs and setting ambitious learning goals. |
| *Source*: PC 2012, *Schools Workforce - Productivity Commission Research Report*, http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/study/education-workforce/schools/report (accessed 18 February 2014). |
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Quality teaching is a priority area in the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015* to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, with a focus on actions to ensure children are taught by skilled educators who are culturally competent in the local context (Education Council 2015).

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*, provides a nationally consistent basis to recognise teacher quality levels. The standards outline what teachers should know and be able to do and are grouped into three domains of teaching: professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement. The standards require that all teachers demonstrate professional expertise when teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (AITSL 2011).

In addition, the national approach to the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures, which is based on the Graduate level of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, requires providers to deliver programs that equip teacher graduates with skills and knowledge to meet the learning needs of a range of students across all abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds. Strengthened standards and procedures for accreditation of initial teacher education programs were released in 2016 (AITSL 2016), following a review of teacher preparation by the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group in 2014 (TEMAG 2015).

Data on teacher accreditation against the professional standards are not currently available. However, subject to data availability in the future, measures of initial registration and then progression through career stages may be considered for future reports.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school teachers

The initial National Teacher Workforce Dataset (NTWD) collected data from mid-2012 to mid-2013, and provides baseline data on qualification, registration and employment status of teachers. The initial NTWD includes some basic data on teachers’ Indigenous status, and found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers were less likely than non-Indigenous teachers to have postgraduate qualifications, and that the conversion from graduate to teaching or applying for teaching is lower for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers than for non-Indigenous teachers (although the reasons for this are not currently known). However, for teachers with an education qualification (Bachelor, Graduate Diploma or Diploma in Education), the proportion going on to complete further qualifications is similar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and non‑Indigenous teachers (4 to 5 per cent). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers were more likely to be teaching in schools in the lowest SES areas (39 per cent) than non‑Indigenous teachers (23 per cent) (Ernst and Young 2014).

Increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers could help foster student engagement and improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In 2013, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians made up a much lower proportion of teachers (primary 2.2 per cent and secondary 1.0 per cent) than students (primary 5.4 per cent and secondary 4.5 per cent)[[2]](#footnote-2) (ABS 2013; MATSITI 2014; table 5A.6.1 in this report). A notable area of growth since 2010 was among primary school leaders, where the proportion who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin increased from near zero to 1.1 per cent in 2013 (McKenzie et al. 2014). Section 5.6 on Indigenous cultural studies contains further information on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workforce.

### Future directions in data

Under the National Partnership Agreement on Teacher Quality (which ceased on 31 December 2013), two new data collections related to the teacher workforce were established. It would be useful, as part of any future expansion of the collections, to include larger representative samples of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander teachers to enable trend analysis.

* The National Teaching Workforce Dataset (NTWD) collected data on the Australian teaching workforce including qualifications, registration and employment status. However, Indigenous status is unknown for over half the workforce covered by the dataset, largely driven by the extremely low proportion of teachers in Victoria declaring their Indigenous status (0.1 per cent)[[3]](#footnote-3).
* The Longitudinal Teacher Education and Workforce Study (LTEWS) tracked a national cohort of teacher education graduates from 2011, and in 2014 reported data on the impact of pre‑service and in‑service education and experiences on teacher quality. However, data were not available by Indigenous status, due to the small number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in the sample (17 teachers — 1 per cent of the sample).

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## 7.2 School engagement**[[4]](#footnote-4)**

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| Box 7.2.1 Key messages |
| * Student engagement with school and learning is essential to achieving improved educational outcomes. * There is currently no nationally agreed definition of school engagement. |
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There is growing interest nationally and internationally, in looking beyond students’ physical presence at school to examine their relationships with school and learning (Fredricks and McCloskey 2012 (eds); Phan 2014; Social Inclusion Board 2007). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ engagement with schooling was a key outcome in the 2010–2014 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (MCEECDYA 2010), with the 2014 evaluation of the Action Plan finding that ‘engagement and connection activities were crucial to the achievement of all Action Plan domains’ (ACIL Allen Consulting 2014, p.86). The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015 reflects the importance of engagement with school education by students, as well as by parents and communities, and the importance of schools and services working with families and communities (Education Council 2015).

Although evidence suggests a link between school engagement and improved educational attainment, the strength of this link remains unclear and varies by school (Lonsdale et al. 2011; OECD 2003). In addition, the concept of school engagement has proven to be difficult to define and measure (Axelson and Flick 2011; Fredricks and McCloskey 2012 (eds)). In general, school engagement for the general population has been described using three main constructs:

* behavioural/participatory — such as following the rules and being present at school (attendance)
* emotional/affective — such as values and emotional responses toward school, subjects and learning (such as interest or anxiety)
* cognitive/academic — such as motivation and effort (Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris 2004; Lonsdale et al. 2011).

Research has shown that school engagement can be shaped by contextual factors such as:

* students’ experiences, needs and characteristics, including self‑identity and connectedness
* the school and classroom context, including teacher quality (see section 7.1), teacher support, school funding, attitudes of peers and culturally inclusive structures and practices in schools (see section 5.6)
* the wider environment, including socio‑economic circumstances, and parental and community involvement (Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris 2004; Helme and Lamb 2011; Munns, O’Rourke and Bodkin-Andrews 2013; Social Inclusion Board 2007).

Research also shows engaging parents in their children’s education improves the children’s educational attainment and ongoing engagement in education (Higgins and Morley 2014).

Schools have been found to have higher levels of student engagement when there was a strong disciplinary climate, good student‑teacher relations and high expectations for student success (OECD 2003).

### School engagement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Relatively few studies have considered how the concept of school engagement relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. As part of its evaluation of the Sporting Chance Program, the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) completed a literature review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school engagement (Lonsdale et al. 2011). Four key components were identified:

* positive self‑identity — including feelings about one’s self and culture
* belonging — including both broad cultural connectedness, and group connectedness (with peers), which is closely linked to self‑identity
* participation — including choosing to be actively involved in learning tasks
* attendance — including being present at school. However, merely being present did not mean that a student was engaged in school, and conversely, absenteeism did not mean that a student was not engaged (for example, cultural reasons for absences could mean a student is engaged in learning that is important to their self‑identity and belonging).

A recent study by Mooney et al (2016) in metropolitan Sydney found that a positive sense of culture was positively related to school engagement.

De Bortoli and Thomson (2010) examined the influence of contextual factors on the results of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non‑Indigenous students in the 2000 and 2006 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests.[[5]](#footnote-5) For both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non‑Indigenous students, performance in maths and science was strongly associated with self‑efficacy, and positively correlated with self‑concept. On average, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reported significantly lower levels of confidence in their abilities.

### Things that work

Whilst there is a lack of research and program evaluation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school engagement (Purdie and Buckley 2010), the ACER literature review (Lonsdale et al. 2011) identified several programs that use incentives and rewards to increase student attention and retention. Box 7.2.2 presents one program identified as increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ school engagement, and one promising program worth further consideration.

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| Box 7.2.2 Things that work – school engagement |
| The former **Sporting Chance Program (SCP)** was an Australian Government initiative that commenced operating in 2007. The Program aimed to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through sport and recreation. In 2012, a total of 21 providers delivered 64 projects for up to 11 000 primary and secondary students across NSW, Victoria, WA and the NT.  The program ceased on 30 June 2015, with the introduction of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS). Most of the former SCP providers receive funding under the IAS to deliver similar projects to 31 December 2017.  The program and ongoing funded projects have two elements:   * School‑based Sports Academies for secondary school students, which provide sports‑focused learning and development opportunities to students before, during and after school * Education Engagement Strategies (EES) for primary and secondary school students, which include school visits by high profile athletes at least twice per year. Visiting athletes stay in the community for 1–5 days and participate in mentoring and role‑modelling activities.   In December 2010, ACER evaluated the program using a mix of surveys, interviews and small group discussions with Academy project providers, principals, staff, parents, students and community members and analysis of administrative data on enrolment, attendance and literacy and numeracy outcomes. Of the 143 schools contacted as part of the evaluation, 87 (61 per cent) participated.  The evaluation found that school staff in both the Academies and ESS projects consider that the Program is having a moderate (positive) impact on school engagement (although the degree and nature of improvement varied between schools). The sustainability of this engagement was more evident in the Academies than in the EES projects. The evaluation did not include comparison results for schools and students not in the Program.  Although it has not been formally evaluated, the Steering Committee has identified the **Students Hairdressing Integrating Education (SHINE) program** (Geraldton, WA) as a promising program worth further examination.  The SHINE program, established in 2010, targets year 9 Aboriginal female students who have a history of low attendance and are significantly at risk of not completing school. The program provides a workplace simulation in a college classroom refurbished into a hair salon, and is coordinated by a classroom teacher who is also a qualified hairdresser, beauty therapist and counsellor. Students attend the program in addition to completing normal school requirements. |
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| Box 7.2.2 (continued) |
| As at the end of 2015, over 200 students had participated in the program. The program has improved attendance and behaviours at school, as well as the uptake of traineeships among program participants (PHAA 2013).  The program has won a number of awards including:   * 2011 Milton Thorne Award for WA Outstanding School Initiative for Aboriginal Education * 2012 National Australia Bank Schools First Awards — WA State Impact Award * 2013 PHAA WA award — Aboriginal health award. |
| *Sources*: Lonsdale et al. 2011, *Evaluation of the Sporting Chance Program for Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations*, October, Australian Council for Educational Research, Camberwell, Victoria; WA Government (unpublished); PHAA (Population Health Association of Australia) 2013, *in touch in WA*, PHAA WA Branch Newsletter: December 2013. |
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### Future directions in data

Further work is required to determine the definitions, appropriateness and method of collating and reporting data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ engagement with school. The ACER evaluation proposed measures against the four dimensions it identified as important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ school engagement (table 7A.2.1). The suitability of these measures for national reporting should be assessed and, if found suitable, appropriate data sources identified.

Further work is also required to investigate the factors affecting the link between school engagement and learning outcomes.

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## 7.3 Transition from school to work[[6]](#footnote-6)

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| Box 7.3.1 Key messages |
| * Young people who do not successfully make the transition from education to work are at risk of long-term disadvantage. * Between 2002 and 2014-15, there was an increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 17–24 year olds who were participating in post-school education or training or were employed (from 32.4 per cent in 2002 to 42.4 per cent in 2014-15). The non‑Indigenous rate remained around 74 per cent, leading to a narrowing of the gap (from 42.8 percentage points in 2002 to 31.4 percentage points in 2014-15) (figure 7.3.2). * In 2014-15, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 17–24 years fully engaged in work, study or training decreased as remoteness increased (from 58.2 per cent in major cities to 14.6 per cent in very remote areas) (figure 7.3.3). * Among people aged 18–64 years with a Bachelor degree or above, labour force participation and employment‑to‑population ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (86.7 per cent and 83.6 per cent respectively) were similar to those for non‑Indigenous Australians. For those with other non-school qualifications at Certificate III or above, the ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians were lower than for non‑Indigenous Australians (table 7.3.1). |
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| Box 7.3.2 Measures of transition from school to work |
| There are two main measures for this indicator:   * *Successful transition from school* is defined as the proportion of young people aged  17–24 years who are participating in post-school education or training or are employed. * *Labour force status and employment‑to‑population ratio of people aged  18 to 64 years who have achieved a qualification of Certificate level III or above* is defined as the proportion of people aged 18–64 years with a qualification of Certificate level III or above who are (a) in the labour force and (b) employed.   Data for both measures are sourced from the ABS Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (AATSIHS)/National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS), with the most recent available data for 2014‑15 (engagement by remoteness: employment status by sex; remoteness; jurisdiction). Comparable data for the non‑Indigenous population are available from the ABS General Social Survey (GSS)/National Health Survey (NHS)/Australian Health Survey (AHS), with the most recent available data for 2014.  Supplementary data are also reported from the ABS Census of Population and Housing (Census), with the most recent available data for 2011 (remoteness; all jurisdictions). Survey and Census data are not directly comparable. |
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Educational achievement is linked to economic and social wellbeing, and positive health behaviours (for example, regular physical exercise) and contributes strongly to the formation of human capital (COAG National Reform Initiative Working Group 2006; Council for the Australian Federation 2007; Karmel et al. 2014; Osbourne, Baum and Brown 2013; OECD 2013).Young people who do not successfully make the transition from education to work are at risk of long-term disadvantage. Levels of education are key contributors to labour market success. School leavers without a formal school qualification may have few opportunities for work, and as time passes, their chances of gaining employment or re‑entering full time education are likely to decline further (AIHW 2013; Marks 2008; McMillan and Marks 2003).

Low educational achievement and poor decisions about learning can particularly disadvantage young people entering the labour market. Due to the rapid transformation of traditional work through automation and globalisation, many lower-skilled entry-level jobs of today are likely to change dramatically or disappear from the Australian economy over the next 10 to 15 years (FYA 2015).

The transition from study to work is generally smoother for university and TAFE graduates, who also tend to earn more than those who enter the workforce directly from school (Lamb 2001; Lamb and McKenzie 2001). Data on employment and training outcomes for VET graduates are obtained from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research’s Student Outcomes Survey, and are reported in the Report on Government Services on an annual basis (SCRGSP 2016). For university bachelor degree graduates, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates, work participation and salary outcomes have been shown to continue to improve for at least five years after graduation (Coates and Edwards 2009).

Section 4.6 contains more information on secondary school attainment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Unemployment and labour force participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 15–64 years are discussed in section 4.7. More information on employment undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians — including employment by full time and part time status, sector, industry and skill level — is in section 9.1.

Additional factors that may affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school‑leavers in the transition to employment include ‘entrenched disadvantage’, social exclusion factors such as labour market discrimination, and the relatively higher cost of education to those of lower socioeconomic status (Hunter 2010). Section 5.1 includes information on levels of trust, perceptions of prejudice and experience of discrimination.

Some people are not working or studying because of carer responsibilities. In 2014, the birth rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females aged less than 20 years was nearly six times as high as that for non‑Indigenous females (57 babies per 1000 females, and 10 babies per 1000 females, respectively) (table 6A.3.1). Teenage birth rates are examined in more detail in section 6.3.

### Young people who havesuccessfully transitioned from school

Young people who are participating in study benefit from additional returns to further education. Those participating in employment benefit from employment experience, the development of work skills and familiarity with new technologies.

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| Figure 7.3.1 Proportion of people aged 17–24 years who are fully engaged in post‑school education, training or employment, 2014-15**a** |
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| a Error bars represent 95 per cent confidence intervals around each estimate. |
| *Sources*: ABS (unpublished) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2014‑15; ABS (unpublished) General Social Survey 2014; table 7A.3.1. |
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Nationally in 2014-15, 42.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 17–24 years were participating in post-school education or training or were employed, compared with 73.8 per cent of non‑Indigenous 17–24 year olds (figure 7.3.1). These data are also reported by remoteness in table 7A.3.1.

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| Figure 7.3.2 Proportion of people aged 17–24 years who are fully engaged in post‑school education, training or employment, 2002 to 2014-15**a** |
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| a Relative standard errors and 95 per cent confidence intervals should be considered when interpreting these data, and are available in table 7A.3.1. |
| *Sources*: ABS (unpublished) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS), 2002; ABS (unpublished) General Social Survey (GSS) 2002; ABS (unpublished) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey 2004‑05; ABS (unpublished) National Health Survey (NHS), 2004‑05; ABS (unpublished) NATSISS 2008; ABS (unpublished) NHS 2007‑08; ABS (unpublished) Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey 2012‑13 (Core component); ABS (unpublished) Australian Health Survey 2011–13 (2011‑12 Core component); ABS (unpublished) NATSISS 2014‑15; ABS (unpublished) GSS 2014; table 7A.3.2. |
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Between 2002 and 2014-15, there was an increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 17–24 years who were fully engaged in post-school education, training and/or employment (from 32.4 per cent in 2002 to 42.4 per cent in 2014-15). The rate for non-Indigenous Australians remained constant over this period (75.2 per cent in 2002 and 73.8 per cent in 2014-15), leading to a narrowing of the gap (from 42.8 percentage points in 2002 to 31.4 percentage points in 2014-15) (figure 7.3.2). These data are also reported by remoteness in table 7A.3.2.

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| Figure 7.3.3 Proportion of people aged 17–24 years who are fully engaged in post­school education, training or employment, by remoteness, 2014-15**a, b** |
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| a Data were not collected for non-Indigenous Australians in very remote areas. b Error bars represent 95 per cent confidence intervals around the estimates. |
| *Sources*: ABS (unpublished) 2014-15 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, ABS (unpublished) 2014 General Social Survey; table 7A.3.2. |
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Nationally in 2014-15, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 17–24 years fully engaged in work, study or training decreased as remoteness increased (from 58.2 per cent in major cities to 14.6 per cent in very remote areas). For non‑Indigenous Australians, relatively small survey samples made assessment more difficult, though Census data (most recent for 2011) indicates that proportions for non‑Indigenous Australians are highest in major cities and very remote areas (figure 7.3.3; table 7A.3.6).

Although not directly comparable, data from the Census show similar trends to the survey data. Census data disaggregated by State and Territory, and remoteness area for people aged 17–24 years who were not employed or studying for 2001, 2006 and 2011 are included in tables 7A.3.6–7.

### Outcomes from education — labour force participation and employment status by educational attainment

This measure examines the labour force status of people with different levels of educational qualifications. Certificate level III is usually considered the minimum qualification necessary to substantially improve a person’s employment outcomes (see section 4.8 for more information on post‑secondary education, participation and attainment).

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| Table 7.3.1 Level of highest non‑school qualification and employment status, 2002 and 2014-15**a** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 2002 | | | 2014-15 | | |  | Aboriginal and   Torres Strait   Islander | | Non‑Indigenous | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander | Non‑Indigenous | | *Labour force participation as a proportion of the population aged 18–64 years (%)* | | | | | | | Certificate III and higher | | 83.9 | 87.2 | 78.8 | 87.2 | | Certificate III to advanced diploma | | 81.9 | 85.6 | 77.7 | 85.5 | | Bachelor degree or higher | | 90.8 | 89.2 | 86.7 | 89.4 | | **Total**b | | **64.5** | **79.1** | **62.6** | **81.3** | | *Employed people as a proportion of the population aged 18–64 years (%)* | | | | | | | Certificate III and higher | | 74.3 | 84.4 | 69.4 | 83.4 | | Certificate III to advanced diploma | | 72.6 | 82.4 | 67.1 | 81.3 | | Bachelor degree or higher | | 80.4 | 86.9 | 83.6 | 85.7 | | **Total**b | | **51.4** | **74.5** | **50.8** | **76.9** | |
| a Relative standard errors and 95 per cent confidence intervals should be considered when interpreting these data, and are available in table 7A.3.3. b Total includes those with no non-school qualification or with a qualification below Certificate III. |
| *Sources*: ABS (unpublished) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2002; ABS (unpublished) General Social Survey 2002; ABS (unpublished) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2014-15; ABS (unpublished) General Social Survey, 2014; table 7A.3.3. |
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Nationally in 2014-15, for people aged 18–64 years:

* among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, those with a bachelor degree or higher had the highest labour force participation rate (86.7 per cent) and employment‑to‑population ratio (83.6 per cent), similar to that for non‑Indigenous Australians with the same level of qualifications
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians with a certificate III to advanced diploma qualification had a lower labour force participation rate and employment‑to‑population ratio than non‑Indigenous Australians. This reflects a decrease since 2002 in the proportions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (table 7.3.1).

Tables 7A3.3–5 provide data on the level of highest non‑school qualification and labour force status by sex, remoteness, and jurisdiction.

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28 June 2016).

1. The Steering Committee notes its appreciation to Ms Lynette Riley, University of Sydney, who reviewed a draft of this section of the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The 2015 proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in primary schools is 5.7 per cent and 4.9 per cent in secondary schools (ABS 2016). The 2015 proportions of teachers were not available at the time of writing for comparison with proportions of students. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. There is not an option in the Victorian data collection for ‘Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander’, therefore non-Indigenous status is not retained. This can make it harder to compare the Indigenous composition of the Victorian workforce with other States and Territories as missing responses are assumed to be non-Indigenous. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Steering Committee notes its appreciation to Ms Lynette Riley, University of Sydney, who reviewed a draft of this section of the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. PISA is a triennial international survey which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students. In Australia, PISA is a key part of the National Assessment Program (NAP) and complements other NAP assessments, such as the National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The Steering Committee notes its appreciation to Ms Lynette Riley, University of Sydney, who reviewed a draft of this section of the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)