
4 Vocational education and training

Vocational education and training (VET) delivers employment related skills across a huge 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 by 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. The scope of this chapter does not extend to university education or VET services provided in schools (which fall within the scope of chapter 3).

Indigenous data in the Vocational Education and Training chapter

The vocational education and training chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2005* (2005 Report) contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- VET participation by Indigenous status, 2003.
- The load pass rate for Indigenous students relative to other students, 2003.
- Proportion of Indigenous graduates indicating whether the VET course helped them achieve their main reason for doing the course.

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. These tables are

identified in references throughout this chapter by an ‘A’ suffix (for example, table 4A.3 is table 3 in the vocational education and training attachment to the compendium). As the data are directly sourced from the 2005 Report, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2005 Report can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to ‘2005 Report, p. 4.15’ this is page 15 of chapter 4 of the 2005 Report, and ‘2005 Report, 4A.2’ is attachment table 2 of attachment 4 of the 2005 Report.

Key performance indicator results

The equity, effectiveness and efficiency of VET services may be affected by different delivery environments, locations and types of client. For the 2004 Report, the framework was revised to provide information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and to distinguish the outputs and outcomes of government services for the VET sector.

Outputs — Equity

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 groups as an indicator of the equity of access to VET services (box 4.1). The student data for all target equity groups in this Report are for government funded students only and not adjusted for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and students who enrolled but did not participate. They are comparable to student data in the *Annual National Report on VET services 2003* (ANTA 2004) but are not directly comparable to student data presented in previous editions of this Report.

Box 4.1 VET participation by target equity groups

The extent of 'VET participation by target equity groups' (women, residents of rural and remote areas, Indigenous Australians, people with a disability, and people of non-English speaking background) provides 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.

In this Report, the 'VET participation by target equity groups' is 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 groups' 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, people with a disability and people from a non-English speaking background 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.

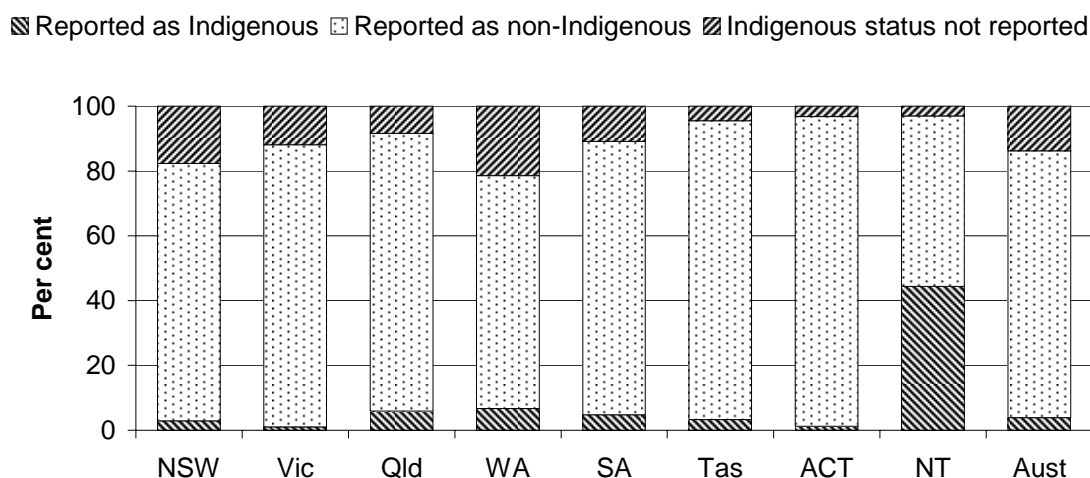
VET participation by Indigenous status

In 2003, 3.9 per cent of government funded VET students in Australia identified themselves as Indigenous, while 13.8 per cent of students did not report their Indigenous status. The proportion of VET students who identified as Indigenous ranged from 44.4 per cent in the NT to 1.0 per cent in Victoria. The proportion who did not report their Indigenous status varied from 21.4 per cent in WA to 3.0 per cent in the NT (figure 4.1).

As a measure of equity in VET participation, the proportion of VET students who identified as Indigenous can be compared to the proportion of Indigenous people in the total population. In 2003, the proportion of government funded VET students who identified as Indigenous was equal to or higher than the proportion of Indigenous people in the total population nationally and in all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the ACT (table 4A.1).

The VET participation rate for Indigenous people was higher than the participation rate for all people, in all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the ACT in 2003. Nationally, the VET participation rate for Indigenous people was 9.8 per cent, compared with 6.0 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 data.

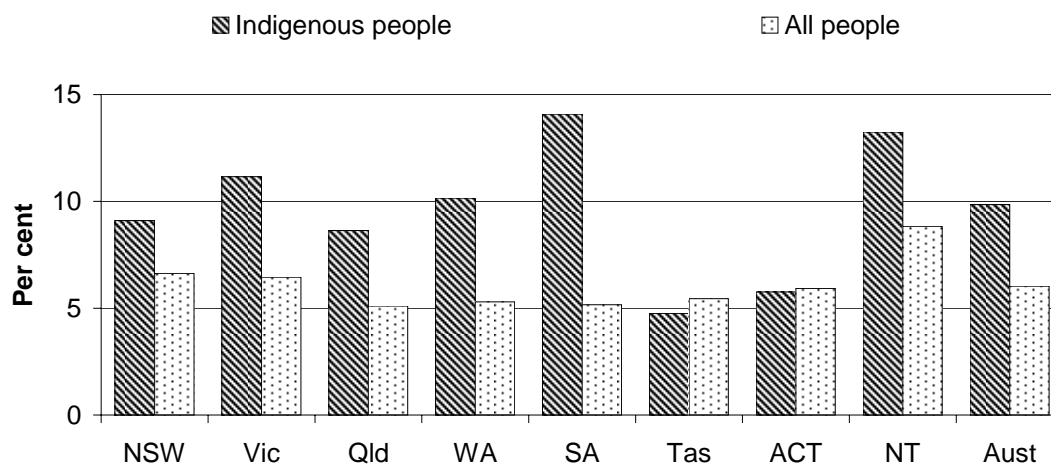
Figure 4.1 VET students, by Indigenous status, 2003^a



^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.1; 2005 Report, p. 4.14, figure 4.6.

Figure 4.2 VET participation rate, by Indigenous status, 2003^{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 ABS experimental projection of the Indigenous population for 30 June 2003. ^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 (unpublished); NCVET (unpublished); tables A.2, A.7 and 4A.1; 2005 Report, p. 4.15, figure 4.7.

Load pass rates

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 making jurisdictional comparisons of 'load pass rates' for Indigenous students, students with a disability and students from a non-English speaking background, because the non-identification rates for these groups are high. 'Load pass rates' for Indigenous students in 2003 were highest in Tasmania (75.0 per cent) and lowest in WA (56.8 per cent), but were well below the rate for all students in all states and territories (table 4A.2). 'Load pass rates' for Indigenous students was lower than the rates for all other students in the target equity groups except in Queensland and Tasmania in 2003 (table 4.1).

Table 4.1 **Load pass rates by VET target equity groups, 2003 (per cent) ^{a, b, c}**

	<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>
Women	76.9	77.9	78.1	73.2	87.2	82.1	82.5	72.9	77.8
Rural	76.8	78.1	79.5	73.0	90.7	80.0	na	75.9	78.5
Remote	79.7	85.4	82.5	72.6	93.1	76.7	..	67.9	76.5
Indigenous	61.0	61.0	69.6	56.8	74.3	75.0	63.3	60.7	63.7
Disability	69.9	65.9	67.1	64.2	81.4	69.0	72.6	70.3	68.9
Non-English speaking background	73.5	67.7	64.5	64.5	80.3	73.8	73.4	56.6	70.6
All students	76.7	76.7	77.1	72.9	86.7	80.3	79.7	71.7	77.1

^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 Disabilities include visual/sight/seeing, hearing, physical, intellectual, chronic illness and other disabilities.

^c Capital city areas are defined as State and Territory capital city statistical divisions. Other metropolitan areas are defined as other statistical subdivisions that included urban centres of population of 100 000 or more. Remote areas are defined in terms of low population density and long distances to associated large population centres. Rural areas include the remainder of non-metropolitan statistical local areas. For the ACT, the number of students from rural areas is too small to calculate meaningful participation rates. There are no remote areas in the ACT. **na** not available. **..** not applicable.

Source: NCVET (unpublished); 2005 Report, tables 4A.13–4A.17, p. 4.18, table 4.1.

Outcomes

Student outcomes: Meeting the main objectives of doing a VET course

Of TAFE graduates from the four VET equity target groups, those from remote areas were the most likely to indicate that the course helped or partly helped them achieve their main reason for doing the course — 84.2 per cent compared with 78.9 per cent of Indigenous graduates (table 4A.3).

References

ANTA (Australian National Training Authority) 2004, Annual National Report of the Australian Vocational Education and Training System 2003, Brisbane.