



NCSEHE

National Centre for Student
Equity in Higher Education



Curtin University

STUDENT EQUITY PERFORMANCE IN AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

2007 to 2014

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All analysis included here reflects the work of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of the NCSEHE or the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

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National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education

The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, and is hosted at Curtin University. The objectives of the NCSEHE are:

- to be at the centre of public policy dialogue about equity in Higher Education; and
- to 'close the loop' between equity policy, research and practice by:
 - o supporting and informing evaluation of current equity practice with a particular focus on identifying good practice;
 - o identifying innovative approaches to equity through existing research and the development of a forward research program to fill gaps in knowledge; and
 - o translating these learnings into practical advice for decision makers and practitioners alike.

Whilst the NCSEHE's focus is equity in higher education, the work of the NCSEHE is not limited to the issue of low-SES participation; rather it focuses on equity issues as they relate to a range of marginalised and/or disadvantaged groups in Australia.

For further information on the NCSEHE, please visit ncsehe.edu.au

Introduction

This NCSEHE Briefing Note provides an update on **domestic undergraduate** student enrolment and equity outcomes from 2007 to 2014, following Koshy and Seymour (2014). It focuses on undergraduate outcomes for Table A providers, given policy changes in recent years to Australian undergraduate education that affect them, including the full deregulation of undergraduate places in 2012 under the Demand Driven System (DDS). It reports on the number of domestic undergraduates between 2007 and 2014 in the 38 'Table A providers' in Australian higher education and enrolments in seven equity groups:

- Low Socio-Economic Status ('low SES') students;
- Students with Disability;
- Indigenous Students;
- Women in Non-Traditional Areas;
- Regional Students;
- Remote Students; and
- Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) students (also referred to as 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' or 'CALD' students).

In each equity group, results are reported for the national system in total, by institutional groupings, by state and territory, and by regional or metropolitan status, for each year. All reporting is for domestic undergraduates in each given year. The institutional groupings in 2014 were as follows:

- **The Group of Eight:** Australian National University (ANU), Melbourne, Monash, Sydney, New South Wales (UNSW), Queensland (UQ), Western Australia (UWA), and Adelaide.
- **The Australian Technology Network (ATN):** Curtin University, University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), RMIT University (RMIT), Queensland University of Technology (QUT), and University of South Australia (UniSA).
- **The Innovative Research Universities (IRU):** Murdoch, Flinders, Griffith, James Cook (JCU), La Trobe, Charles Darwin University (CDU) and Newcastle. (Note: Newcastle left the IRU in December 2014).
- **Regional Universities Network:** Southern Cross, New England (UNE), Federation, Sunshine Coast (SCU), CQUniversity Australia (CQU), and Southern Queensland (USQ).
- **The Unaligned Universities:** Other Table A providers) – Macquarie, Wollongong, Deakin, Charles Sturt (CSU), Tasmania, Australian Catholic University (ACU), Canberra, Edith Cowan University (ECU), Swinburne, Victoria, Western Sydney (WSU) and The Batchelor Institute (Batchelor) (Note: Batchelor and CDU entered into a collaborative partnership in 2012 which has seen CDU take delivery of most undergraduate programs.)

In addition, an analysis is reported for universities on the basis of their campus location and infrastructure, as per Koshy and Phillimore (2013):

- **Regionally Headquartered:** Institutions with a major regional – CSU, Southern Cross, UNE, Federation, CQU, JCU, USQ, Tasmania, CDU, and Batchelor.
- **Metropolitan Institutions with Regional Campuses:** Institutions with one or more regional campus – Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong, Deakin, La Trobe, Monash, RMIT, Melbourne, QUT, UQ, SCU, Curtin, ECU, Murdoch, UWA, Flinders, Adelaide, UniSA, and ACU.
- **No Regional Campuses:** Metropolitan Institutions with no regional campus: ANU, Sydney, UNSW, Griffith, Macquarie, Canberra, Swinburne, Victoria and WSU.

All student data reported or derived for the purposes of this document are sourced from *Students: Selected Higher Education Statistics 2014* (Appendix 2: Equity Data), published by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (2015).

Total Undergraduate Enrolment: 2007 to 2014

Undergraduate enrolment among Table A providers increased by 31.6% between 2007 and 2014 to 695,869 students. This growth has been particularly strong since 2009, when the sector began preparing for the introduction of the demand driven system (DDS) in higher education and the removal of caps on undergraduate student places in 2012 – with the system expanding by over 25% in the last five years. Growth was unevenly distributed across the sector, with the ‘Unaligned Group’ of newer universities witnessing a 50.1% expansion in places, while the Group of Eight saw lower growth of just 16.3% and a reduction in their share of total undergraduate enrolments to less than 25% of the national total. Regionally based universities grew less quickly than those based in metropolitan areas (‘No Regional Campuses’ in Table 1). New South Wales and Queensland recorded growth just under the national average, while Victoria saw growth in line with the nation, with Western Australia (35%), the Northern Territory (45.8%) and Tasmania (62.3%) saw the greatest expansion to 2014.

Table 1: Domestic Undergraduate Enrolments, Higher Education, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Growth (07-14) %
National	528,844	532,527	553,374	580,372	600,412	634,434	668,665	695,869	31.6%
Group of Eight ^b	147,609	148,484	152,718	157,289	159,749	163,643	168,682	171,691	16.3%
ATN Group	94,486	95,520	97,467	99,423	102,097	109,302	115,712	121,499	28.6%
IRU Group	88,632	89,480	93,518	98,191	100,849	106,050	110,622	113,887	28.5%
Regional Universities Network	47,650	47,782	49,716	51,627	54,072	57,295	60,188	62,884	32.0%
Unaligned Group	150,467	151,261	159,955	173,842	183,645	198,144	213,461	225,908	50.1%
Regionally Headquartered ^b	89,761	88,873	92,109	97,115	99,752	105,739	110,879	115,458	28.6%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	306,688	309,942	320,711	333,902	345,675	363,823	381,355	395,010	28.8%
No Regional Campuses	132,395	133,712	140,554	149,355	154,985	164,872	176,431	185,401	40.0%
New South Wales	168,521	170,055	177,540	185,704	191,504	198,720	205,852	210,805	25.1%
Victoria	125,606	126,444	128,467	134,030	138,037	147,157	159,394	168,338	34.0%
Queensland	105,434	104,966	109,415	114,602	118,218	124,619	130,586	134,945	28.0%
Western Australia	51,857	52,367	55,201	58,311	60,740	65,231	68,164	70,015	35.0%
South Australia	38,716	38,970	40,203	41,669	43,227	45,169	46,605	48,103	24.2%
Tasmania	12,042	12,108	12,612	13,160	13,061	14,990	16,914	19,548	62.3%
Northern Territory	4,339	4,469	4,865	5,243	5,213	5,609	5,958	6,325	45.8%
Australian Capital Territory	13,810	14,094	14,734	15,776	16,403	17,141	17,642	18,046	30.7%
Multi-State ^a	8,519	9,054	10,337	11,877	14,009	15,798	17,550	19,744	131.8%

Note: a. The Australian Catholic University is the Multi-State institution; b. Please see Page 2 for a discussion of these groups.

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Student Equity Group Definitions

This report specifically focusses on the following designated groups of under-represented students, originally designated by the Martin Review (Martin 1994), namely:

- **Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) students:** Socio-economic status (SES) is assigned to students on the basis of the socio-economic status of the ABS statistical area (SA1) or postcode in which they reside. All SA1 areas are ranked on the basis of ABS estimates of the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) of Education and Occupation, calculated using 2006 census data. Low SES students come from the bottom 25% of Australian SA1s (with a postcode backup) in a national ranking. For historical comparability, this report defines low SES on the postcode measure, using 2006 census data.
- **Students with Disability:** Students who self-report disability to their higher education provider, either at the time of their enrolment or during the course of their studies.
- **Indigenous Students:** Students who self-report as Indigenous to their higher education provider, either at the time of their enrolment or during the course of their studies.
- **Women in Non-Traditional Areas of Study:** Female students who are enrolled in the *Natural and Physical Sciences; Information Technology; Engineering and Related Technologies; Architecture and Building; Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies; Management and Commerce;* and the narrow field of *Education (Economics and Econometrics)*.
- **Students from Regional Areas:** Regional students are defined as having a permanent home address in an SA1/postcode area that is classified as remote using historic MCEETYA classifications and the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).
- **Students from Remote Areas:** Remote students are defined as having a permanent home address in an SA1/postcode area that is classified as remote using historic MCEETYA classifications and the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).
- **Students from a Non-English Speaking Background (NESB):** A student is classified as coming from a non-English speaking background if they are a domestic student who arrived in Australia less than 10 years prior to the year in which the data were collected, and who comes from a country where a language other than English is spoken. (Also referred to as students from 'culturally and linguistically diverse' backgrounds or 'CALD students').

Student Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014

Equity student enrolments have expanded at varying degrees between 2007 and 2014. For instance, the enrolment of students with disability increased by 73.2% while Indigenous enrolments increased by 58.9%. Enrolments from regional (30.3%) and remote (16.1%) areas and the enrolment of women in non-traditional areas (19.8% from 2008) saw slower growth, while low SES student enrolments grew 44.9% over this period. Growth in NESB was 50.4%.

Table 2: Domestic Undergraduate Enrolments, Higher Education, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Growth (07-14) %
National	528,844	532,527	553,374	580,372	600,412	634,434	668,665	695,869	31.6%
Low SES	85,873	86,581	90,447	96,706	102,163	109,788	118,003	124,429	44.9%
Students with Disability	23,148	23,447	24,948	28,057	30,094	33,220	36,486	40,087	73.2%
Indigenous	6,828	6,820	7,296	7,943	8,445	9,005	9,939	10,850	58.9%
Women in Non-Traditional Areas ¹	-	103,120	105,438	107,959	109,936	114,382	119,105	123,544	19.8% ¹
Regional	100,826	101,339	104,266	110,646	115,250	121,476	127,070	131,385	30.3%
Remote	5,428	5,240	5,368	5,532	5,572	5,804	6,069	6,303	16.1%
NESB	16,702	17,222	17,649	18,227	19,226	21,289	22,863	25,114	50.4%

Note: ¹ 2007 data for 'Women in non-traditional areas' is not publicly available for domestic undergraduates, so the growth calculation is from 2008.

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Low SES students accounted for 17.9% of undergraduate enrolments in 2014, up from 16.3% over 2007 to 2009, which reflected its historic share as an indicator. Students with disability represented 5.8% of all domestic undergraduates in 2014, up from 4.4% in 2007, reflecting overall growth in enrolments. Indigenous students saw continued growth in their share to 1.6%. Regional (18.9% in 2014) and remote (0.9%) have seen fluctuations in their shares, while the NESB student share of total enrolments has increased from 3.2% in 2007 to 3.6% in 2014 and women in non-traditional areas has declined to 17.8% in 2014.

Table 3: Student Equity Enrolment Proportions, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Low SES	16.2%	16.3%	16.3%	16.7%	17.0%	17.3%	17.6%	17.9%
Students with Disability	4.4%	4.4%	4.5%	4.8%	5.0%	5.2%	5.5%	5.8%
Indigenous	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%
Women in Non-Traditional Areas	-	19.4%	19.1%	18.6%	18.3%	18.0%	17.8%	17.8%
Regional	19.1%	19.0%	18.8%	19.1%	19.2%	19.1%	19.0%	18.9%
Remote	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
NESB	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%	3.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.6%

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Low SES Student Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014

Low SES students are defined according to the socioeconomic status of the area in which their permanent residence is located. This area measure is determined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) SEIFA measure of educational and occupational advantage, calculated using census data for the *statistical area*, be it a postcode or SA1 area. All areas across Australia are ranked on the basis of their average SEIFA index score, with those containing the lowest 25% of households on this ranking being classified as low SES areas. For the sake of consistency, we report the 2006 SEIFA measure of SES below.

In effect, an 'equal share' of enrolment for low SES students in Australia is 25%. Historically, the low SES share has been lower than this, at around 16.1 to 16.4% over much of the past two decades. However, since 2009, the national share of low SES students in Table A higher education enrolments has increased above this rate, reaching 17.9%.

The Group of Eight has seen its share of low SES undergraduate enrolment increase from 10.1% in 2007 to 11.0% in 2014; the ATN Group, 14.5% to 16.4% over a similar period, with other groupings with historically higher shares seeing growth as well. Regionally-based universities have higher rates of low SES enrolment than metropolitan institutions, with Regionally Headquartered universities seeing 28.6% of their students coming from low SES backgrounds in 2014 compared with 14.9% among those metropolitan institutions without regional campuses ("No Regional Campuses" in Table 4a).

Table 4a: Low SES Student Equity Ratio, By Institutional Groupings, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
National – Low SES	16.2%	16.3%	16.3%	16.7%	17.0%	17.3%	17.6%	17.9%
Group of Eight	10.1%	9.9%	9.8%	10.0%	10.6%	10.6%	11.1%	11.0%
ATN Group	14.5%	14.7%	14.8%	15.3%	15.4%	16.0%	16.1%	16.4%
IRU Group	19.4%	19.4%	19.4%	19.7%	20.1%	20.5%	21.2%	21.7%
Regional Universities Network	28.7%	29.0%	29.3%	29.6%	29.8%	30.0%	29.8%	29.8%
Unaligned Group	17.5%	17.6%	17.7%	17.9%	18.1%	18.2%	18.4%	18.6%
Regionally Headquartered	27.3%	27.3%	27.6%	27.9%	28.1%	28.4%	28.4%	28.6%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	14.4%	14.6%	14.6%	14.8%	15.2%	15.6%	15.9%	16.2%
No Regional Campuses	12.9%	12.9%	12.9%	13.5%	13.9%	14.0%	14.7%	14.9%

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Low SES Student Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014 (cont'd)

The variation in low SES enrolments across institutional groups is also reflected in state rankings. This is largely due to differences in low SES population share across the states on the basis of a national ranking of areas (postcodes, collection districts or SA1 areas). This can be seen in a comparison of the percentage share of each state and territories population which is classified as living in a low SES SA1 area on the basis of a national ranking using SEIFA data from the 2006 and 2011 Census results. Estimates of low SES shares vary across jurisdictions. For instance, in 2011, around 45.6% of Tasmania's population lived in a low SES SA1 area compared to just 0.2% in the Australian Capital Territory.

Table 4b: Low SES Population Share by State, National Ranking of SA1 Areas.

	2006 Census	2011 Census
New South Wales	23.5%	24.6%
Victoria	19.9%	20.6%
Queensland	30.5%	29.9%
Western Australia	19.8%	22.7%
South Australia	35.7%	30.7%
Tasmania	54.1%	45.6%
Northern Territory	26.4%	23.0%
Australian Capital Territory	0.0%	0.2%

Source: ABS (2015).

Given that around 85% of Australian undergraduate students attend an institution in their home state, institutional low SES shares will in large part reflect the socioeconomic conditions of their state areas, as can be seen in Table 4c (Tasmania – 31.8%; Australian Capital Territory – 5.7%).

Table 4c: Low SES Student Equity Ratio, By State and Territory, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
New South Wales	16.7%	16.8%	16.9%	17.4%	17.8%	17.8%	18.2%	18.1%
Victoria	13.7%	13.8%	14.0%	14.1%	14.6%	15.2%	15.7%	16.1%
Queensland	19.7%	19.4%	19.3%	19.6%	19.7%	19.9%	20.0%	20.3%
Western Australia	11.1%	11.2%	11.1%	11.2%	11.4%	12.2%	12.5%	13.1%
South Australia	20.3%	20.6%	20.8%	21.4%	22.1%	22.6%	23.4%	24.0%
Tasmania	32.4%	31.3%	31.5%	32.4%	32.8%	32.0%	31.9%	31.8%
Northern Territory	14.6%	15.5%	17.9%	19.8%	19.6%	19.3%	19.3%	18.5%
Australian Capital Territory	4.4%	4.7%	4.9%	5.6%	5.7%	5.9%	5.9%	5.7%
Multi-State	12.4%	13.0%	12.4%	12.7%	13.0%	13.3%	13.0%	12.9%

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Students with Disability Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014

The enrolment share of students with disability among domestic undergraduates has been steadily increasing since 2007, and stood at 5.8% in 2014, reflecting the growth in this equity group over that period (57.6% since 2007; see Table 2). While the ATN Group continues to see a stabilisation in its enrolment share at 4.7%, other university groupings have seen increases, notably the Group of Eight who had a 5.3% share in 2014, up from 4.7% in 2013.

Regional institutions continue to report higher levels of enrolment among students with disability than metropolitan institutions, with Regionally Headquartered institutions seeing a combined share of 6.7% compared with Metropolitan institutions with no regional campuses who have a share of 4.8%. Enrolment shares of students with disability diverge across the states and territories, ranging from 4.8% in Queensland to 8.9% in Tasmania, although they continue to rise across most jurisdictions except for the Northern Territory and the multi-state institution – ACU – and a small decline in Tasmania.

Table 5: Students with Disability Equity Ratio, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
National –Disabilities	4.4%	4.4%	4.5%	4.8%	5.0%	5.2%	5.5%	5.8%
Group of Eight	3.6%	3.6%	3.8%	4.3%	4.4%	4.5%	4.7%	5.3%
ATN Group	4.5%	4.5%	4.6%	4.7%	4.7%	4.7%	4.6%	4.7%
IRU Group	5.3%	5.3%	4.9%	5.4%	5.6%	5.9%	6.2%	6.4%
Regional Universities Network	5.0%	5.2%	5.4%	5.5%	5.7%	6.0%	6.8%	7.2%
Unaligned Group	4.3%	4.3%	4.7%	4.9%	5.2%	5.5%	5.8%	5.9%
Regionally Headquartered	5.1%	5.2%	5.4%	5.5%	5.7%	5.9%	6.5%	6.7%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	4.4%	4.5%	4.6%	5.1%	5.3%	5.5%	5.6%	5.9%
No Regional Campuses	3.9%	3.7%	3.7%	3.8%	4.0%	4.3%	4.4%	4.8%
New South Wales	4.3%	4.2%	4.2%	4.6%	4.7%	4.8%	5.1%	5.6%
Victoria	3.8%	3.9%	4.0%	4.3%	4.7%	5.1%	5.3%	5.6%
Queensland	4.2%	4.1%	4.0%	3.9%	3.9%	4.1%	4.4%	4.8%
Western Australia	3.4%	3.5%	4.4%	4.9%	5.3%	5.7%	5.8%	5.9%
South Australia	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.6%	7.8%	7.9%	7.9%	8.2%
Tasmania	6.9%	6.7%	7.4%	8.4%	9.1%	8.7%	9.0%	8.9%
Northern Territory	5.1%	5.6%	5.4%	5.8%	6.0%	5.6%	5.5%	5.1%
Australian Capital Territory	6.0%	6.1%	6.3%	6.4%	6.5%	6.3%	6.5%	6.8%
Multi-State	4.0%	5.6%	6.3%	6.0%	5.8%	6.7%	6.6%	6.1%

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Indigenous Student Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014

Indigenous students accounted for 1.6% of all domestic undergraduate enrolments in 2014, a marked increase over levels seen in 2008 (1.3%), and a particularly important trend given the expansion in the system elsewhere. Shares across the individual groupings have seen varied growth, led by the IRU Group (2.4% in 2014 from 2% in 2010) and the Regional Universities Network who have seen their level of representation increase to 2.7% in 2014. This trend is confirmed by figures for Regionally Headquartered institutions which show an increase in Indigenous share of enrolment to 3.1% of their total in 2014.

Across the States and Territories, enrolment shares have grown slightly except in the Northern Territory, where they continue to decline (6.6% in 2014), largely due to the rapid expansion in enrolments elsewhere.

Table 6: Indigenous Equity Ratio, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
National – Indigenous	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%
Group of Eight	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%
ATN Group	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
IRU Group	1.6%	1.8%	1.8%	2.0%	2.0%	2.2%	2.2%	2.4%
Regional Universities Network	1.7%	1.7%	2.1%	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%	2.5%	2.7%
Unaligned Group	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%
Regionally Headquartered	2.4%	2.4%	2.6%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%	3.1%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%
No Regional Campuses	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%
New South Wales	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
Victoria	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Queensland	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	2.1%
Western Australia	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%
South Australia	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%
Tasmania	1.9%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
Northern Territory	13.7%	12.4%	11.4%	11.3%	9.5%	7.4%	6.9%	6.6%
Australian Capital Territory	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%
Multi-State	3.7%	3.4%	2.7%	2.5%	2.4%	2.1%	1.9%	2.0%

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Women in Non-Traditional Areas Student Equity Outcomes: 2008* to 2014

Women in Non-Traditional Areas accounted for 17.8% of all domestic undergraduate enrolments in 2014. This represents an ongoing decline in the percentage of women enrolling in the WINTA areas (see Page 4), down from a high of 19.4% in 2008. The Group of Eight (22.1% in 2014) and the ATN Group (19.4%) continue to outperform the rest of the sector in WINTA enrolment shares; in contrast, the Unaligned Group have a WINTA share of 8.1%.

Metropolitan-based universities have higher levels of female participation in WINTA areas, which reflects the overall outperformance of city-based Group of Eight and ATN campuses. Western Australia (19.9%) had the highest rate of participation, while South Australia (15.0%) and the Northern Territory (10.7%) had lower rates.

Table 7: Women in Non-Traditional Areas Equity Ratio, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A Providers, 2008-2014[†]

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
National – Women in Non-Traditional Areas	19.4%	19.1%	18.6%	18.3%	18.0%	17.8%	17.8%
Group of Eight	21.3%	20.9%	17.1%	21.3%	21.5%	21.8%	22.1%
ATN Group	21.5%	21.3%	20.9%	20.2%	19.7%	19.5%	19.4%
IRU Group	16.3%	15.9%	17.7%	15.4%	15.2%	15.1%	14.9%
Regional Universities Network	17.6%	17.5%	16.8%	16.3%	15.9%	15.2%	15.4%
Unaligned Group	9.8%	10.0%	9.6%	9.7%	9.7%	8.6%	8.1%
Regionally Headquartered	17.1%	16.8%	19.8%	15.3%	14.8%	14.7%	15.3%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	18.9%	18.5%	18.1%	18.0%	17.8%	17.7%	17.6%
No Regional Campuses	21.9%	21.7%	18.9%	21.0%	20.7%	20.0%	19.6%
New South Wales	19.0%	19.0%	18.6%	18.4%	18.3%	18.1%	18.0%
Victoria	20.2%	19.8%	19.3%	19.0%	18.9%	18.6%	18.4%
Queensland	21.3%	21.0%	20.3%	19.8%	19.1%	19.0%	18.6%
Western Australia	20.3%	20.4%	20.3%	20.3%	20.0%	19.8%	19.9%
South Australia	16.6%	15.9%	15.6%	15.0%	15.1%	15.1%	15.0%
Tasmania	13.4%	12.6%	12.0%	11.9%	10.2%	10.2%	16.1%
Northern Territory	11.7%	11.0%	10.2%	11.0%	10.7%	11.2%	10.7%
Australian Capital Territory	21.6%	20.7%	19.9%	20.0%	20.1%	19.6%	19.5%
Multi-State	5.5%	5.6%	6.3%	6.5%	6.0%	5.8%	5.8%

Note: * 2007 data for 'Women in non-traditional areas' is not publicly available for domestic undergraduates.

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Regional Students Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014

In Australian undergraduate higher education, regional enrolments have tracked according to recent increases in overall enrolments, retaining their share at around 19%, and only dipping slightly to 18.9% in 2014. Predictably, the regional universities have the highest share of regional students, with around half (51.6%) of all students in the Regional Universities Network coming from regional postcodes. However, this share has been in continuous decline since 2007, when regional students accounted for 57.1% of enrolments. This decline is driven in part by the expansion in external (online) course offerings, and by both the regional institutions - which sees them enrol metropolitan students - and the metropolitan-based institutions offering online courses to regional students. The latter is evidenced by the increasing share of regional enrolments by metropolitan-based institutions since 2007, albeit with a slight retraction in 2014.

Regional student shares in the States and Territories tend to track with student population, with Queensland (22.0%), Tasmania (40.1%) and the Northern Territory (51.5%) having the largest regional student shares, in comparison with more metropolitan areas such as Western Australia (15.0% in 2014).

Table 8: Regional Student Equity Ratio, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
National – Regional	19.1%	19.0%	18.8%	19.1%	19.2%	19.1%	19.0%	18.9%
Group of Eight	11.5%	11.4%	10.9%	11.3%	11.5%	11.2%	11.5%	11.0%
ATN Group	10.3%	10.5%	10.7%	11.2%	10.8%	11.1%	10.5%	10.6%
IRU Group	19.9%	19.7%	19.3%	19.5%	20.0%	20.3%	20.3%	20.4%
Regional Universities Network	57.1%	56.3%	55.5%	54.9%	54.5%	53.7%	52.5%	51.6%
Unaligned Group	19.5%	19.8%	19.7%	19.8%	19.7%	19.5%	19.4%	19.4%
Regionally Headquartered	51.1%	50.7%	50.3%	49.5%	49.2%	48.6%	47.9%	47.6%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	14.7%	14.9%	14.9%	15.3%	15.6%	15.6%	15.5%	15.4%
No Regional Campuses	7.5%	7.6%	7.2%	7.7%	8.0%	8.0%	8.5%	8.3%
New South Wales	18.4%	18.1%	17.8%	17.6%	17.6%	17.3%	17.3%	16.8%
Victoria	18.7%	19.1%	19.0%	19.2%	19.6%	19.5%	19.1%	19.3%
Queensland	22.7%	22.4%	22.0%	22.3%	22.5%	22.5%	22.2%	22.0%
Western Australia	13.1%	13.3%	13.2%	13.6%	13.9%	14.6%	14.8%	15.0%
South Australia	13.2%	13.3%	13.5%	14.6%	15.2%	15.2%	14.9%	15.2%
Tasmania	41.0%	41.6%	42.0%	43.0%	42.7%	41.7%	40.4%	40.1%
Northern Territory	60.1%	57.8%	55.1%	53.6%	53.6%	53.0%	52.7%	51.5%
Australian Capital Territory	14.0%	14.7%	15.2%	16.6%	16.7%	16.7%	16.3%	15.3%
Multi-State	11.3%	11.9%	11.9%	12.0%	12.1%	12.2%	11.6%	10.9%

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Remote Students Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014

Remote students account for a very small share of higher education enrolments in Australia, making up only 0.9% of domestic undergraduate enrolment in 2014. This rate of participation has been relatively stable over the past eight years, as general increases in enrolments have translated into rising remote enrolments through the continued rollout of online courses and supporting technology. As with regional enrolments, remote enrolments tend to be concentrated in regional and newer universities, with metropolitan universities without a regional campus having a remote student share of only 0.2% in 2014, a pattern reflected in the institutional groupings statistics – 0.6% of domestic undergraduate enrolments in the Group of Eight in 2014 compared with 1.9% among institutions of the Regional Universities Network.

State and Territory outcomes for remote enrolment shares reflect their population locations, with Northern Territory institutions seeing 11.0% of their students originating in remote areas.

Table 9: Remote Student Equity Ratio, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
National – Remote	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Group of Eight	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%
ATN Group	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%
IRU Group	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
Regional Universities Network	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%	2.0%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
Unaligned Group	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Regionally Headquartered	3.0%	2.9%	2.8%	2.7%	2.7%	2.6%	2.5%	2.6%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%
No Regional Campuses	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
New South Wales	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%
Victoria	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Queensland	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%
Western Australia	2.0%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%
South Australia	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%
Tasmania	1.1%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%	1.0%
Northern Territory	14.3%	13.6%	13.0%	12.4%	12.0%	10.9%	10.7%	11.0%
Australian Capital Territory	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Multi-State	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) Student Equity Outcomes: 2007 to 2014

The enrolment share of students from a non-English speaking background (NESB) increased slightly in 2014 to 3.6%, the highest share over the past eight years. The Group of Eight and ATN Group institutions see higher enrolment shares of 4.3% and 4.7% respectively, in comparison with lower shares for institutions in regional areas.

NESB student shares vary across the States and Territories, being higher in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia and lower in Queensland and Tasmania.

Table 10: Non-English Speaking Background (NESB)^a Student Equity Ratio, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
National – NESB	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%	3.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.6%
Group of Eight	4.1%	4.0%	3.8%	3.7%	3.7%	4.0%	4.0%	4.3%
ATN Group	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	3.7%	4.0%	4.3%	4.7%
IRU Group	2.2%	2.4%	2.3%	2.4%	2.5%	2.8%	2.9%	3.1%
Regional Universities Network	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%	1.3%	1.4%	1.2%	1.3%
Unaligned Group	3.4%	3.7%	3.7%	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%	3.3%	3.4%
Regionally Headquartered	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%
Metro Institutions with Regional Campuses	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%	3.2%	3.3%	3.6%
No Regional Campuses	5.5%	5.6%	5.3%	5.0%	4.8%	4.8%	4.7%	4.8%
New South Wales	4.4%	4.4%	4.1%	3.8%	3.6%	3.6%	3.4%	3.7%
Victoria	3.1%	3.3%	3.4%	3.6%	3.6%	3.7%	4.0%	4.1%
Queensland	1.9%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.3%	2.6%	2.6%	2.8%
Western Australia	3.0%	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%	3.3%	3.4%	3.7%
South Australia	2.4%	2.6%	2.9%	3.2%	3.5%	4.1%	4.4%	4.5%
Tasmania	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.7%	2.0%	2.2%
Northern Territory	2.2%	2.4%	2.5%	3.1%	3.1%	3.5%	3.7%	4.1%
Australian Capital Territory	2.9%	3.1%	3.3%	3.5%	3.5%	4.0%	3.9%	4.2%
Multi-State	3.0%	3.2%	3.0%	2.5%	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%	2.7%

Note: ^a NESB students are also often referred to as ‘CALD students’ – students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

Summary

Between 2007 and 2014, the 38 Table A providers in Australian higher education saw a 31.6% increase in domestic undergraduate enrolments, with total enrolments reaching 695,869 in 2014. With the exception of the WINTA (19.8%), Regional (30.3%) and Remote (16.1%) student groups, all equity groups saw growth in excess of the overall growth in student numbers (31.6%), as measured by enrolment.

Generally, the growth in numbers among equity students elsewhere has been broadly encouraging, led by a 73.2% increase in students with disability and a 58.9% increase among Indigenous students, albeit off a small base, since 2007. The equity group with the most prominent target – low SES students, with a 20% target share under the previous government – has seen some progress in reaching it at 17.9% in 2014, up from 16.2% in 2007 using the 2006 Census (postcode) measure. The Regional, Remote and WINTA groups have seen static or declining shares of overall enrolment, although this is relative to very fast general growth. The somewhat slower growth in Remote and WINTA indicates that a specific policy focus may be required in the coming years in relation to their performance, similar to that seen in relation to other equity groups.

Table 11: Student Equity Enrolments and Ratios, Table A Providers, 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Growth (07-14) %
National	528,844	532,527	553,374	580,372	600,412	634,434	668,665	695,869	31.6%
Low SES	85,873	86,581	90,447	96,706	102,163	109,788	118,003	124,429	44.9%
Students with Disability	23,148	23,447	24,948	28,057	30,094	33,220	36,486	40,087	73.2%
Indigenous	6,828	6,820	7,296	7,943	8,445	9,005	9,939	10,850	58.9%
Women in Non-Traditional Areas	-	103,120	105,438	107,959	109,936	114,382	119,105	123,544	19.8%
Regional	100,826	101,339	104,266	110,646	115,250	121,476	127,070	131,385	30.3%
Remote	5,428	5,240	5,368	5,532	5,572	5,804	6,069	6303	16.1%
NESB	16,702	17,222	17,649	18,227	19,226	21,289	22,863	25,114	50.4%
Equity Shares (%)									Change in Share (07 - 14) PPT
Low SES	16.2%	16.3%	16.3%	16.7%	17.0%	17.3%	17.6%	17.9%	1.64
Students with Disability	4.4%	4.4%	4.5%	4.8%	5.0%	5.2%	5.5%	5.8%	1.38
Indigenous	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	0.27
Women in Non-Traditional Areas	-	19.4%	19.1%	18.6%	18.3%	18.0%	17.8%	17.8%	-1.60
Regional	19.1%	19.0%	18.8%	19.1%	19.2%	19.1%	19.0%	18.9%	-0.18
Remote	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	-0.12
NESB	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%	3.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.6%	0.45

Note: 1 Data replicated in Tables 2 and 3; 2 Data for 2007 for 'Women in non-traditional areas' is not publicly available for domestic undergraduates, so growth share calculations are from 2008.

Source: Australian Department of Education and Training (2015).

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