



NCSEHE

National Centre for Student
Equity in Higher Education



Curtin University

EQUITY STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

2013-2018

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National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education

The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) is a research and policy centre funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and based at Curtin University. The NCSEHE provides national leadership in student equity in higher education, connecting research, policy and practice to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people.

The NCSEHE conducts a broad scope of activities including:

- research-based projects both independently and in collaboration with other organisations, funded through external grants or through Centre resources
- the NCSEHE Research Grants Program
- equity policy and program evaluation
- Research Fellowships and Equity Fellowships
- student equity data analysis, online resources and briefing notes
- print and digital publications
- collaborative and independent events
- representation at national and international conferences
- an emphasis on effective communication through channels including: website, electronic newsletters, social media and general media exposure.

The Centre has established a strong national presence, engaging with key stakeholders and maintaining sector-wide partnerships to enhance outcomes and delivery of research and recommendations. The growing reputation and influence of the Centre has contributed to student equity becoming firmly incorporated into higher education policy.

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

Introduction

This NCSEHE briefing note reports on **domestic undergraduate equity student participation** in Australian higher education from 2013 to 2018. It focuses on trends among domestic undergraduate enrolments in Table A Provider institutions in identified equity groups:

- Low socioeconomic status (Low SES) students
- Students with Disability
- Indigenous students
- Women in Non-Traditional Areas (WINTA) students
- Regional students
- Remote students
- Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) students, also referred to as 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' (CALD) students.

All student data reported or derived for the purposes of this document are sourced from the Australian Government Department of Education (Australian Government Department of Education, 2019).

The Reporting in this Briefing Note

In keeping with previous editions (for instance, Koshy, 2018), this briefing note reports across a six-year window, starting in 2013 through to 2018. It reports on participation patterns among domestic undergraduates only, across both Table A Providers (major public universities) and Table B Providers (four private institutions), with system totals ('National') applying across both groups.

The definitions for equity groups reported on page 6 have remained static in recent years for Students with Disability, Indigenous students and NESB students. This briefing note now reports the official measure of WINTA participation, which is the share of WINTA students as a proportion of total enrolment, rather than as a share of total enrolment in WINTA disciplines, as per previous briefing notes. For this reason, the reported WINTA share of enrolments in this briefing note are not comparable with that reported in previous notes.

The 'area measures' for Low SES, Regional and Remote students are reported across two census bases — the 2011 census, for 2013 to 2015; and the 2016 census, for 2016 to 2018. The impact of this is most notable in relation to Low SES students, where there is a break in the reporting between 2015 and 2016, with the earlier year reporting 115,840 students (using the 2011 census definition) compared to 126,293 in 2016 (2016 census definitions).

In addition, in keeping with the last two editions, this briefing report also reports on area measures (Low SES, Regional and Remote) on the basis of the official definition which uses *current address* (address during current year of study), but also provides a comparison to the *first address* measure (address at time of enrolment), which provides an indication of student background at the commencement of their university studies.

Institutional Groupings

For each equity group measure, results are reported by the following institutional groupings:

The Table A Providers are reported by the following institutional groupings on the basis of membership at the end of 2018:

- **The Group of Eight ('Go8')**: Australian National University (ANU); The University of Melbourne; Monash University; The University of Sydney; University of New South Wales (UNSW); The University of Queensland (UQ); The University of Western Australia (UWA); and The University of Adelaide.
- **The Australian Technology Network ('ATN')**: Curtin University; University of Technology Sydney (UTS); RMIT University (RMIT); and University of South Australia (UniSA).
- **The Innovative Research Universities ('IRU')**: Murdoch University; Flinders University; Griffith University; James Cook University (JCU); La Trobe University; Charles Darwin University (CDU); and Western Sydney University (WSU).
- **Regional Universities Network ('RUN')**: Southern Cross University; University of New England (UNE); Federation University; USC (formerly University of the Sunshine Coast); CQUniversity (CQU); and University of Southern Queensland (USQ).
- **'Unaligned Group'**: (Other Table A Providers) — Macquarie University; University of Newcastle; University of Wollongong; Deakin University; Queensland University of Technology (QUT); Charles Sturt University (CSU); University of Tasmania (UTAS); Australian Catholic University (ACU); University of Canberra; Edith Cowan University (ECU); Swinburne University of Technology; and Victoria University.

It should be noted that there have been several changes in the composition of these institutional groupings recently. These include WSU joining the IRU in October 2017 and QUT leaving the ATN in October 2018. For this reason, the reporting here by institutional grouping is not directly comparable with that seen in previous editions of the briefing note.

Results for the Table B Providers are also reported collectively ('Table B Providers'), comprising:

- **Table B Providers**: Bond University (Queensland); The University of Notre Dame Australia (Western Australia); University of Divinity (Victoria); and Torrens University Australia (South Australia).

Totals by Australian state and territory (Table A and B Providers combined) are reported for each year on the basis of main campus location for most universities, with the ACU the sole 'Multi-State' institution.

Total Undergraduate Enrolments: 2013 to 2018

Domestic undergraduate enrolments increased by 0.72% in 2018 to reach a headcount of 764,562. This represented a marked slowing in the rate of expansion in recent years, which has seen enrolments increase by 12.6% since 2013, at an average annual growth rate of around 2%. Recent years have seen a tapering off in growth, following a 40% expansion in the undergraduate system between 2008 and 2016, with this slowdown most pronounced among Table A Providers, while the four Table B Provider institutions seeing growth in undergraduate enrolments of around 45% since 2013.

The recent growth in enrolments has been somewhat unevenly distributed across university groupings and states and territories. The Go8 has seen a slight decline in undergraduate enrolments since 2013—falling from 168,067 in 2013 to 166,497 in 2018—in contrast to quite marked expansions in the ATN (21.6%) and RUN (19.7%) over this period. Similarly, two of the largest states, New South Wales (7.6%) and Queensland (8.9%) saw single-digit growth, compared with a much stronger expansion in Victoria (18.8%), South Australia (22.9%) and Tasmania (43.8%), with Western Australia (0.4%) registering virtually no growth since 2013.

Table 1: Domestic Undergraduate Enrolments, Higher Education, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Growth (13–18) %
National	679,222	706,278	727,786	743,030	759,151	764,652	12.6%
Table A Providers	667,517	694,583	715,907	729,598	743,816	747,679	12.0%
Table B Providers	11,705	11,695	11,879	13,432	15,335	16,973	45.0%
Go8	168,067	170,955	170,016	168,914	167,516	166,497	-0.9%
ATN	85,737	91,271	94,369	97,374	100,854	104,243	21.6%
IRU	121,916	126,053	129,325	130,044	131,997	134,715	10.5%
RUN	60,032	62,742	66,826	69,054	71,643	71,882	19.7%
Unaligned Group	231,765	243,562	255,371	264,212	271,806	270,342	16.6%
New South Wales	205,523	210,434	215,900	217,378	219,120	221,134	7.6%
Victoria	159,724	168,617	175,932	180,984	187,228	189,747	18.8%
Queensland	132,749	136,867	140,728	142,721	144,378	144,513	8.9%
Western Australia	76,632	78,680	76,971	77,008	76,831	76,942	0.4%
South Australia	46,584	48,086	48,922	51,214	54,115	57,241	22.9%
Tasmania	16,913	19,546	22,449	24,466	26,592	24,328	43.8%
Northern Territory	5,931	6,301	6,502	6,651	6,667	6,935	16.9%
Australian Capital Territory	17,628	18,020	18,511	19,256	20,287	20,339	15.4%
Multi-State ^a	17,538	19,727	21,871	23,352	23,933	23,473	33.8%

Note: a. The Australian Catholic University is the sole multi-state institution.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Equity Student Group Definitions

This report specifically focuses on the following designated groups of underrepresented students, originally designated in *A Fair Chance for All* (DEET, 1990) and formally defined in *Equity and General Performance Indicators in Higher Education* (“the Martin Review”) (Martin, 1994), namely:

- **Low socioeconomic status (Low SES) students:** Socioeconomic status (SES) is assigned to students on the basis of the Statistical Area 1 (SA1) in which they reside. SA1s have a population of between 200 to 800 people, averaging around 400. All SA1 areas are ranked nationally using the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ (ABS) estimates of the *Socio-Economic Index for Areas* (SEIFA) — *Index of Education and Occupation* (IEO). This is calculated using ABS census data (ABS, 2015). Low SES students reside in SA1s with the lowest quartile (25%) of the Australian population in this ranking. The 2011 census is used to define SES between 2013 and 2015 and the 2016 census for 2016 to 2018.
- **Students with Disability:** Students self-report disability to their higher education provider, usually via a formal enrolment declaration.
- **Indigenous students:** Students self-report as Indigenous to their higher education provider, either at the time of their enrolment or during their studies.
- **Women in Non-Traditional Areas (WINTA):** WINTA refers to female enrolment in the following ‘non-traditional’ disciplines: 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). As noted above, this edition reports the official ‘WINTA participation share’, equal to WINTA students as a proportion of the domestic undergraduate population.
- **Students from regional areas:** Regional students are defined as having a permanent home address in an SA1 area that is classified as regional using the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).
- **Students from remote areas:** Remote students are defined as having a permanent home address in an SA1 area that is classified as remote using the ASGS.
- **Students from a non-English speaking background (NESB):** A student is assigned NESB status if they are a domestic undergraduate student who arrived in Australia less than 10 years prior to the year in which the data were collected, and come from a country where the primary language spoken is not English. NESB students are often referred to as students from ‘culturally and linguistically diverse’ backgrounds’, or ‘CALD students’.

Student Equity Participation: 2013 to 2018

The national rate of expansion in undergraduate enrolments of 12.6% to 2018 was comprised of divergent growth across equity groups. Low SES students (21.1%), Students with Disability (50.0%) and Indigenous students (42.9%) have all seen greater increases than the overall increase. In contrast, Regional (7.9%) and Remote (6.9%) students have seen much lower rates of expansion, with the NESB (12.5%) and WINTA (12.2%) student groups marginally underperforming the national trend.

Table 2: Domestic Undergraduate Enrolments, Higher Education, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Growth (13–18) %
National	679,222	706,278	727,786	743,030	759,151	764,652	12.6%
Low SES	107,219	111,004	115,840	126,293	129,554	129,858	21.1%
Students with Disability	37,032	40,679	44,856	47,970	51,773	55,565	50.0%
Indigenous	10,018	10,939	11,845	12,878	13,855	14,314	42.9%
WINTA	119,810	124,159	125,888	128,210	131,452	134,406	12.2%
Regional	140,510	145,018	149,001	150,441	153,800	151,636	7.9%
Remote	5,682	5,848	5,911	6,036	6,167	6,076	6.9%
NESB	22,927	25,129	26,661	27,158	27,185	25,793	12.5%

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

As a consequence of these trends, the participation rates of equity groups have shifted in recent years. Low SES students accounted for 17.0% of all undergraduates in 2018, up from 15.8% in 2013, partly reflecting the higher rate of growth in Low SES student numbers as well as the use of data from the 2016 census from 2017 onwards. Students with Disability have consistently increased their share of student enrolments, reaching 7.3% in 2018, while the Indigenous student share has increased to 1.9%. The remaining groups have seen flat or declining shares.

Table 3: Student Equity Enrolment Proportions, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Low SES	15.8%	15.7%	15.9%	17.0%	17.1%	17.0%
Students with Disability	5.5%	5.8%	6.2%	6.5%	6.8%	7.3%
Indigenous	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%
WINTA	17.6%	17.6%	17.3%	17.3%	17.3%	17.6%
Regional	20.7%	20.5%	20.5%	20.2%	20.3%	19.8%
Remote	0.84%	0.83%	0.81%	0.81%	0.81%	0.79%
NESB	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Low SES Student Participation: 2013 to 2018

Low SES student participation has historically been below parity, when compared to their 25% population share (as discussed in the *Introduction*). The recent increase in low SES share, to 17.0% in 2018, reflects the ongoing impact of policy measures to improve Low SES student participation, but is also partly an artefact of the shift in census definition from the 2011 to 2016 collection, starting in 2016.

Table A Providers (17.1% in 2018) have had considerably higher rates of Low SES participation than Table B Providers (12.5%), albeit with the Table B Providers increasing their enrolment shares over the past six years (8.0% in 2013 to 12.5% in 2018). Outcomes are dispersed among Table A Provider groupings, ranging from a 9.8% Low SES share for the Go8 (in 2018) to 27.5% for the RUN institutions. This pattern of enrolment reflects longer-term trends in the system and the underlying missions ('research intensive' versus 'teaching focused') and student selection procedures of institutions.

Table 4a: Low SES Enrolment Proportion, By Institutional Groupings, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National — Low SES^a	15.8%	15.7%	15.9%	17.0%	17.1%	17.0%
Table A Providers	15.9%	15.9%	16.1%	17.1%	17.2%	17.1%
Table B Providers	8.0%	7.7%	7.8%	9.8%	12.1%	12.5%
Go8	9.1%	8.9%	8.9%	10.0%	9.8%	9.8%
ATN	14.9%	14.8%	15.1%	17.1%	16.9%	16.9%
IRU	19.8%	19.8%	20.2%	21.8%	21.9%	22.1%
RUN	27.4%	26.8%	26.7%	27.5%	27.6%	27.5%
Unaligned Group	16.2%	16.2%	16.3%	16.7%	16.8%	16.4%

Note: a. Please see *Introduction* on the measure of Low SES.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

In addition to institutional grouping, geography also plays an important role in defining and shaping Low SES participation. Most Australian undergraduate students attend an institution in their home state. As a result, institutional Low SES shares in large part reflect the size of the Low SES population in their state or territory. This is important, as in a national ranking, state and territory shares of low SES population will vary around 25%. This can be seen in Table 4b, with the Low SES share of population in the 2016 census ranging from 0.2% in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) to 43.3% in Tasmania. Also of interest is the shift in Low SES population estimates across censuses, with Western Australia seeing an increase in its low SES share of population of 24.1% in 2016, up from 22.7% in 2011, in contrast to declines in New South Wales (24.4% in 2016, from 24.6% in 2011), Queensland (29.8% from 29.9%) and Tasmania (43.3% from 45.6%).

Table 4b: Low SES Population Share by State, National Ranking of SA1 Areas (2011 and 2016 Census Estimates)

	2011 Census	2016 Census
New South Wales	24.6%	24.4%
Victoria	20.6%	20.7%
Queensland	29.9%	29.8%
Western Australia	22.7%	24.1%
South Australia	30.7%	31.0%
Tasmania	45.6%	43.3%
Northern Territory	23.0%	23.3%
Australian Capital Territory	0.2%	0.2%

Source: ABS 2011 Census from Koshy (2017) and 2016 Census from author calculations.

The size of the potential Low SES student population affects participation rates across the states and territories (Table 4c), with historically higher rates of participation continuing in Queensland (18.2% in 2018) and South Australia (20.4%), but with lower rates elsewhere, notably the ACT (5.2%) where the ANU and University of Canberra draw substantial numbers of students from an area with a negligible Low SES population in a national ranking.

Table 4c: Low SES Enrolment Proportion, All Institutions in State or Territory, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
New South Wales	17.0%	16.9%	17.0%	18.2%	18.2%	18.1%
Victoria	14.1%	14.1%	14.3%	15.5%	15.4%	15.3%
Queensland	17.6%	17.2%	17.4%	17.9%	18.1%	18.2%
Western Australia	12.0%	12.0%	12.5%	14.9%	15.1%	14.9%
South Australia	18.8%	19.0%	19.4%	20.2%	20.3%	20.4%
Tasmania	25.2%	25.7%	25.4%	24.7%	24.7%	24.8%
Northern Territory	18.1%	17.4%	17.5%	18.5%	18.9%	19.2%
Australian Capital Territory	5.6%	5.5%	5.3%	5.3%	5.4%	5.2%
Multi-State	12.3%	11.9%	12.1%	13.1%	13.0%	12.8%

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Assigning SES Based on First Address

SES is assigned to students each year on the basis of their *current address* at the time of reporting in that year. An alternative, suggested by Cardak et al. (2017), is to use the *first address*, also referred to as commencing address, to form a single point of reference for area status (Low SES, Regional and Remote) at enrolment. The rationale for this is that students' movements from Low to Middle or High SES areas (and vice versa) sees their status altered, often repeatedly, over the duration of their studies. As students leave Low SES areas to attend universities, this tends to depress Low SES student numbers.

Table 5 reports estimates of Low SES participation in 2017 and 2018 using the *first address* measure, with the 2018 *current address* measure included for comparison. The *first address* measure defines 17.9% of undergraduates in 2018 as Low SES students, compared with 17.0% using the *current address*, an increase of 0.9 percentage points, where the ratio of the two equals 1.05, implying a 5% increase in the number of identified Low SES students. The Go8 (10.5%) and ATN (17.9%) see their calculated shares rise, with an even more pronounced effect in Queensland and Western Australia observed, while Low SES student share in the ACT rises to 6.2% (*first address*) from 5.2% (*current address*), a 21% increase in Low SES student numbers.

Table 5: Low SES Enrolment Proportion, SA1 Measure – First Address, 2017 and 2018; and 2018 SA1 Measure – Current Address

SA1 — First Address	2017	2018	2018 Current Address ^a	2018: Ratio of First to Current Address
National — Low SES	18.0%	17.9%	17.0%	1.05
Table A Providers	18.2%	18.0%	17.1%	1.05
Table B Providers	12.5%	12.8%	12.5%	1.03
Go8	10.7%	10.5%	9.8%	1.07
ATN	17.9%	17.9%	16.9%	1.06
IRU	23.1%	23.1%	22.1%	1.04
RUN	29.1%	28.9%	27.5%	1.05
Unaligned Group	17.5%	17.2%	16.4%	1.05
New South Wales	18.9%	18.8%	18.1%	1.04
Victoria	15.9%	15.8%	15.3%	1.04
Queensland	19.8%	19.6%	18.2%	1.08
Western Australia	16.7%	16.4%	14.9%	1.10
South Australia	21.8%	21.3%	20.4%	1.05
Tasmania	25.0%	24.8%	24.8%	1.00
Northern Territory	19.1%	19.0%	19.2%	0.99
Australian Capital Territory	6.4%	6.2%	5.2%	1.21
Multi-State	13.6%	13.4%	12.8%	1.04

Note: a. Estimates using the *current address* are sourced from Table 4a and 4c above.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Students with Disability Participation: 2013 to 2018

A consistent feature of equity group participation in Australia in recent years has been the steady increase in the proportion of domestic undergraduates reporting a disability, rising from 5.5% of all undergraduates in 2013 to 7.3% in 2018. As disability is self-reported, this increase may be partly due to the increased willingness of students to self-identify, but this effect is difficult to quantify (Brett, 2016, p. 91).

Regional universities (RUN) continue to report the highest levels of enrolment of students with disability (8.8%), with considerable variation observed across the states and territories, with participation ranging from 9.4% in South Australia to 6.0% in Queensland.

Table 6: Students with Disability Enrolment Proportion, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National — Disability	5.5%	5.8%	6.2%	6.5%	6.8%	7.3%
Table A Providers	5.5%	5.8%	6.2%	6.5%	6.9%	7.3%
Table B Providers	5.0%	5.5%	5.9%	5.5%	3.8%	5.3%
Go8	4.7%	5.3%	6.1%	6.3%	6.6%	7.0%
ATN	5.0%	5.0%	5.2%	5.4%	5.8%	6.4%
IRU	5.5%	5.7%	6.0%	6.3%	6.9%	7.2%
RUN	6.8%	7.2%	7.8%	8.2%	8.1%	8.8%
Unaligned Group	5.8%	6.0%	6.3%	6.6%	7.1%	7.5%
New South Wales	5.1%	5.6%	6.3%	6.6%	7.0%	7.4%
Victoria	5.3%	5.5%	6.0%	6.3%	6.8%	7.3%
Queensland	4.5%	4.8%	5.1%	5.3%	5.5%	6.0%
Western Australia	5.7%	5.8%	6.2%	6.4%	6.5%	7.1%
South Australia	7.9%	8.2%	8.7%	9.1%	9.2%	9.4%
Tasmania	9.0%	8.9%	7.6%	7.7%	7.5%	7.5%
Northern Territory	5.5%	5.1%	4.6%	4.8%	5.5%	5.8%
Australian Capital Territory	6.5%	6.8%	7.5%	7.9%	9.1%	9.8%
Multi-State	6.6%	6.1%	5.9%	5.9%	6.9%	7.6%

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Indigenous Student Participation: 2013 to 2018

Indigenous students accounted for 1.9% of all domestic undergraduate enrolments in 2018, representing a steady increase in representation over the past six years. The RUN group of institutions have higher participation rates than the national average, while states and territories with larger Indigenous populations, such as Queensland (2.7%) and the Northern Territory (6.8%), also seeing higher rates of participation.

Table 7: Indigenous Enrolment Proportion, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National — Indigenous	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%
Table A Providers	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%
Table B Providers	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	1.2%	1.6%	1.8%
Go8	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
ATN	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
IRU	1.9%	2.1%	2.2%	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%
RUN	2.5%	2.7%	3.0%	3.1%	3.4%	3.5%
Unaligned Group	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	2.0%
New South Wales	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	2.1%	2.2%
Victoria	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Queensland	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%
Western Australia	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%
South Australia	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%
Tasmania	1.7%	1.8%	2.1%	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%
Northern Territory	6.9%	6.6%	6.4%	6.3%	6.6%	6.8%
Australian Capital Territory	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%
Multi-State	1.9%	2.0%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Women in Non-Traditional Areas (WINTA) Student Participation: 2013 to 2018

This briefing note reports the official definition of WINTA participation rate, namely the proportion of domestic undergraduates who are WINTA students. This figure has remained largely static in recent years, ranging between 17.3% in 2015 to 17.6% in 2018. Previous editions of the briefing note have reported WINTA enrolments as a share of total enrolments in the WINTA disciplines (see *Introduction* for details), and this figure (not reported here) has remained similarly steady at around 40% of enrolment in the WINTA disciplines (as listed on p. 6).

The institutional grouping estimates indicate that the Go8 has the highest WINTA share at around 24.7% of students, with RUN (14.2%) and the Unaligned Group (14.1%) having substantially smaller shares. Among the mainland states (New South Wales to South Australia) and the ACT, there is a generally uniformity in enrolment (18% to 18.6%). However, there have been differences in growth rates, with South Australia seeing considerable growth in the WINTA share over the period under review, rising from 15.1% in 2013 to 18.0% in 2018. By contrast, both Tasmania (10.2% in 2013 to 7.5% in 2018) and the Northern Territory (11.2% in 2013 to 6.4% in 2018), have seen marked falls in the relative enrolment share of WINTA among undergraduates in their institutions in recent years.

Table 8: WINTA Enrolment Proportion, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National — WINTA^a	17.6%	17.6%	17.3%	17.3%	17.3%	17.6%
Table A Providers	17.8%	17.7%	17.4%	17.4%	17.3%	17.5%
Table B Providers	8.6%	8.1%	8.2%	12.1%	17.3%	19.6%
Groupings						
Go8	21.8%	22.1%	22.6%	23.6%	24.1%	24.7%
ATN	19.4%	19.3%	19.4%	19.4%	19.4%	19.6%
IRU	16.6%	16.1%	15.5%	15.2%	15.3%	15.8%
RUN	17.4%	16.5%	15.5%	14.9%	14.7%	14.2%
Unaligned Group	15.1%	15.2%	14.8%	14.3%	14.0%	14.1%
States and Territories						
New South Wales	18.1%	18.0%	18.0%	18.4%	18.5%	18.6%
Victoria	18.5%	18.3%	18.2%	18.2%	18.2%	18.5%
Queensland	18.9%	18.5%	18.1%	17.9%	18.0%	18.1%
Western Australia	18.5%	18.5%	18.3%	18.2%	18.1%	18.0%
South Australia	15.1%	15.0%	15.1%	16.2%	17.2%	18.0%
Tasmania	10.2%	16.1%	12.2%	7.9%	5.9%	7.5%
Northern Territory	11.2%	10.7%	7.9%	7.4%	6.8%	6.4%
Australian Capital Territory	19.6%	19.5%	19.1%	18.6%	18.3%	18.4%
Multi-State	5.8%	5.8%	5.6%	6.1%	7.2%	7.5%

Note: a. WINTA enrolment share is per cent of total enrolment.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Regional Student Participation: 2013 to 2018

Regional student participation in Australia, as defined by the percentage of all students whose *current address* is in a regional area, has declined over the past six years, falling from 20.7% in 2013 to 19.8% in 2018. Among Table A Providers, the RUN institutions have the highest proportion of regional students, at 48.7% in 2018, although their level of representation has declined from majority status (51% in 2016), in part due to their establishment of satellite campuses in metropolitan areas. The IRU (22.6%) and Unaligned (21.7%) institutional groupings have higher rates of participation than the national average, while the Go8 (9.9%) and ATN (9.3%) have rates at, or less than half of, those of the national average.

Regional enrolments track regional population shares within states and territories. In 2018, jurisdictions with larger regional populations, including Queensland (28.0%), Tasmania (63.5%) and the Northern Territory (54.8%) had the highest rates of participation, while Western Australia had the lowest at 9.6%.

Table 9: Regional Enrolment Proportion, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National — Regional^a	20.7%	20.5%	20.5%	20.2%	20.3%	19.8%
Table A Providers	20.9%	20.8%	20.7%	20.5%	20.5%	20.1%
Table B Providers	6.3%	6.1%	6.1%	7.6%	8.8%	8.8%
Go8	11.3%	10.9%	10.5%	10.2%	10.0%	9.9%
ATN	9.1%	9.2%	9.2%	9.2%	9.2%	9.3%
IRU	22.8%	22.7%	22.3%	22.3%	23.4%	22.6%
RUN	53.4%	52.4%	51.4%	51.0%	49.7%	48.7%
Unaligned Group	22.9%	22.9%	22.9%	22.4%	22.1%	21.7%
New South Wales	18.7%	18.1%	17.8%	17.3%	17.0%	16.6%
Victoria	18.6%	18.8%	18.7%	18.7%	18.5%	18.1%
Queensland	27.7%	27.4%	27.3%	27.3%	28.4%	28.0%
Western Australia	9.7%	9.7%	10.0%	9.8%	9.9%	9.6%
South Australia	14.1%	14.3%	14.2%	14.3%	14.2%	14.5%
Tasmania	80.4%	77.1%	72.2%	67.4%	63.9%	63.5%
Northern Territory	53.1%	51.8%	51.4%	53.0%	53.7%	54.8%
Australian Capital Territory	17.5%	16.5%	15.9%	15.4%	15.4%	15.5%
Multi-State	10.4%	9.7%	9.6%	9.1%	8.9%	9.0%

Note: a. Please see *Introduction* and *Equity Student Group Definitions* for details on the Regional student equity group.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Assigning Regional Status Based on First Address

The relocation of Regional students to attend university means that the use of a *first address* measure provides a more accurate picture of their commencing status. This can be seen in the *first address* estimate of the Regional participation rate in 2018, which at 20.8% is 5% higher than the *current address* estimate of 19.8% (the ratio between the two being 1.05). A similar pattern can be seen across institutional groupings, such as Table B Providers (a 10% increase), the Go8 (13%) and ATN (16%), as well as in states and territories with relatively small populations and limited campus presence in the regions, including Western Australia (11.1% compared to 9.6%, equivalent to an increase in Regional student numbers of 17%).

Table 10: Regional Enrolment Proportion, SA1 Measure – First Address, 2017 and 2018; and 2018 SA1 Measure – Current Address

Regional — First Address	2017	2018	2018 Current Address ^a	2018: Ratio of First to Current Address
National — Regional	21.2%	20.8%	19.8%	1.05
Table A Providers	21.4%	21.1%	20.1%	1.05
Table B Providers	10.8%	9.7%	8.8%	1.10
Go8	11.3%	11.1%	9.9%	1.13
ATN	10.5%	10.8%	9.3%	1.16
IRU	23.3%	22.6%	22.6%	1.00
RUN	50.2%	49.2%	48.7%	1.01
Unaligned Group	23.2%	22.9%	21.7%	1.06
New South Wales	17.6%	17.3%	16.6%	1.04
Victoria	19.4%	18.9%	18.1%	1.05
Queensland	29.8%	29.6%	28.0%	1.06
Western Australia	11.2%	11.1%	9.6%	1.17
South Australia	16.0%	15.9%	14.5%	1.10
Tasmania	60.3%	60.2%	63.5%	0.95
Northern Territory	51.2%	51.9%	54.8%	0.95
Australian Capital Territory	18.3%	18.4%	15.5%	1.19
Multi-State	10.8%	11.1%	9.0%	1.23

Note: a. Estimates using the *current address* are sourced from Table 9.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Remote Student Participation: 2013 to 2018

Remote student participation in Australia has been in decline over the past six years, falling from a 0.84% share in 2013 to 0.79% in 2018. This trend is particularly pronounced among Table B Providers (1.12% to 0.57%), the Go8 (0.53% to 0.46%), and the ATN (0.94% to 0.73%).

Patterns across the states and territories reflect the relative underlying populations of these areas, with institutions in the Northern Territory having a Remote student participation rate of 10.68% in 2018, in comparison to the Australian Capital Territory at 0.26%.

Table 11: Remote Enrolment Proportion, By Groupings and State and Territory, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National — Remote^a	0.84%	0.83%	0.81%	0.81%	0.81%	0.79%
Table A Providers	0.83%	0.83%	0.81%	0.81%	0.82%	0.80%
Table B Providers	1.12%	0.94%	0.76%	0.77%	0.61%	0.57%
Go8	0.53%	0.51%	0.49%	0.48%	0.47%	0.46%
ATN	0.94%	0.83%	0.83%	0.82%	0.80%	0.73%
IRU	1.37%	1.39%	1.35%	1.35%	1.40%	1.37%
RUN	1.54%	1.56%	1.52%	1.48%	1.47%	1.48%
Unaligned Group	0.55%	0.57%	0.56%	0.59%	0.58%	0.57%
New South Wales	0.40%	0.40%	0.40%	0.42%	0.43%	0.41%
Victoria	0.23%	0.25%	0.26%	0.28%	0.29%	0.30%
Queensland	1.24%	1.24%	1.18%	1.10%	1.11%	1.12%
Western Australia	1.70%	1.65%	1.58%	1.61%	1.52%	1.40%
South Australia	1.53%	1.42%	1.47%	1.45%	1.38%	1.32%
Tasmania	0.84%	0.93%	1.10%	1.13%	1.20%	1.31%
Northern Territory	10.08%	10.30%	10.34%	10.71%	11.08%	10.68%
Australian Capital Territory	0.22%	0.22%	0.23%	0.25%	0.27%	0.26%
Multi-State	0.25%	0.20%	0.21%	0.15%	0.16%	0.15%

Note: a. Please see *Introduction* and *Equity Student Group Definitions* for details on the Remote student equity group.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Assigning Remote Status Based on First Address

The use of *first address* to assign remote status results in a more pronounced increase in the participation rate in relation to remote status compared with regional status. The 2018 Remote student share rises from 0.79% using the *current address* measure, to 0.91% using the *first address* measure. This represents a 15% increase in the defined Remote student population based on the ratio between the two or 1.15. This effect is particularly noticeable for the Go8 (0.53% from 0.46%) and ATN (1.00% from 0.73%). As was the case with the introduction of *first address* in the measurement of regional status, both South Australia (1.67% from 1.32%) and Western Australia (1.90% from 1.40%) see substantial increases in their Remote student shares.

Table 12: Remote Enrolment Proportion, SA1 Measure – First Address, 2017 and 2018; and 2018 SA1 Measure – Current Address

Remote — First Address	2017	2018	2018 Current Address ^a	2018: Ratio of First to Current Address
National – Remote	0.91%	0.91%	0.79%	1.15
Table A Providers	0.91%	0.91%	0.80%	1.14
Table B Providers	0.84%	0.87%	0.57%	1.54
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Go8	0.55%	0.53%	0.46%	1.15
ATN	0.99%	1.00%	0.73%	1.37
IRU	1.50%	1.48%	1.37%	1.08
RUN	1.59%	1.64%	1.48%	1.11
Unaligned Group	0.65%	0.64%	0.57%	1.12
<hr/>				
New South Wales	0.46%	0.43%	0.41%	1.06
Victoria	0.31%	0.32%	0.30%	1.08
Queensland	1.26%	1.29%	1.12%	1.15
Western Australia	1.88%	1.90%	1.40%	1.36
South Australia	1.72%	1.67%	1.32%	1.27
Tasmania	1.19%	1.21%	1.31%	0.93
Northern Territory	10.18%	10.11%	10.68%	0.95
Australian Capital Territory	0.38%	0.35%	0.26%	1.34
Multi-State	0.23%	0.23%	0.15%	1.53

Note: a. Estimates using the *current address* are sourced from Table 11.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) Student Participation: 2013 to 2018

The participation share of NESB students among domestic undergraduates declined in 2018 to 3.4%, down from 3.6% in 2017, reflecting an overall decline since 2015 (3.7%). The NESB group is unique among equity groups in that institutions in the Go8 (4.2% in 2019) and ATN (4.7%) have higher levels of NESB enrolment than the national average, while Table B Providers (1.2%) and regional institutions (RUN, with 1.3%) have lower levels of participation. Patterns across the states and territories generally reflect their respective NESB population shares.

**Table 13: NESB Enrolment Proportion, By Groupings and State and Territory,
Table A and B Providers, 2013–18**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National — NESB^a	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%
Table A Providers	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%
Table B Providers	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
Go8	4.0%	4.3%	4.5%	4.4%	4.4%	4.2%
ATN	5.0%	5.4%	5.6%	5.4%	5.2%	4.7%
IRU	4.2%	4.3%	4.4%	4.5%	4.4%	4.2%
RUN	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%
Unaligned Group	2.5%	2.6%	2.8%	2.9%	2.8%	2.6%
New South Wales	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%	3.6%	3.5%
Victoria	4.0%	4.1%	4.2%	4.1%	4.0%	3.8%
Queensland	2.5%	2.7%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	2.6%
Western Australia	3.1%	3.4%	3.6%	3.6%	3.5%	3.0%
South Australia	4.4%	4.5%	4.5%	4.2%	3.9%	3.5%
Tasmania	2.0%	2.2%	3.2%	4.1%	4.7%	5.0%
Northern Territory	3.7%	4.1%	4.9%	5.1%	5.4%	5.3%
Australian Capital Territory	3.9%	4.2%	3.9%	3.6%	3.3%	3.2%
Multi-State	2.5%	2.7%	3.0%	3.0%	2.6%	2.1%

Note: a. NESB students are also often referred to as 'CALD students' — students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

Summary

In 2018, there were 764,652 domestic undergraduate students enrolled in Australia. This represents an increase in enrolments of 12.6% since 2013, with growth in 2018 being the lowest seen over this period, at 0.72% compared to average growth of 2% over the six years. Numbers of Low SES Students, Students with Disability and Indigenous Students increased at a rate greater than that seen overall, while other equity groups saw lower growth rates.

As a consequence, the change in share of student population—percentage point change (PPC)—was negative for the WINTA (-0.1 PPC), Regional (-0.9 PPC) and Remote (-0.04 PPC) student groups, and static in the case of NESB students (0.0 PPC).

Table 14: Student Equity Enrolments and Enrolment Shares, Table A and B Providers, 2013–18^a

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Growth (13–18) %
National	679,222	706,278	727,786	743,030	759,151	764,652	12.6%
Low SES	107,219	111,004	115,840	126,293	129,554	129,858	21.1%
Students with Disability	37,032	40,679	44,856	47,970	51,773	55,565	50.0%
Indigenous	10,018	10,939	11,845	12,878	13,855	14,314	42.9%
WINTA	119,810	124,159	125,888	128,210	131,452	134,406	12.2%
Regional	140,510	145,018	149,001	150,441	153,800	151,636	7.9%
Remote	5,682	5,848	5,911	6,036	6,167	6,076	6.9%
NESB	22,927	25,129	26,661	27,158	27,185	25,793	12.5%
Equity Shares (%)							Change in Share (13–18) PPC^b
Low SES	15.8%	15.7%	15.9%	17.0%	17.1%	17.0%	1.2
Students with Disability	5.5%	5.8%	6.2%	6.5%	6.8%	7.3%	1.8
Indigenous	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	0.4
WINTA	17.6%	17.6%	17.3%	17.3%	17.3%	17.6%	-0.1
Regional	20.7%	20.5%	20.5%	20.2%	20.3%	19.8%	-0.9
Remote	0.84%	0.83%	0.81%	0.81%	0.81%	0.79%	-0.04
NESB	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	0.0

Note: a. Data reported from Tables 2 and 3.

b. PPC is calculated as percentage share in 2018 minus percentage share in 2013.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education (2019).

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