



Australian Government
Department of Education

Needs-based Funding Guidance

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Program overview

Needs-based Funding (NBF) provides additional funding for equity supports and regional delivery in Australian higher education. It supports universities to enrol and retain students from under-represented cohorts, with each enrolment from these priority cohorts attracting demand-driven funding rather than having to be accommodated from a fixed funding pool. Regional providers also benefit from additional funding, making it more financially viable to operate regional campuses and deliver high quality, accessible higher education.

NBF grants are approved under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) with details of the programs outlined in the *Higher Education Support (Other Grants) Guidelines 2022* and the *Higher Education Support (Other Grants) Amendment (Outreach Funding Program) Guidelines 2025* which outlines eligibility and conditions for each grant.

The funding will provide per-student contribution amounts that reflect different student characteristics. Each provider's NBF allocation will be determined by a formula based on the eligible volume of students from a low SES background, First Nations students, and students studying at a regional campus in Commonwealth supported places (CSPs). Providers will attract the applicable NBF contribution amount for each student it enrolls meeting the relevant criteria using a combination of headcount and equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL).

NBF is not designed to cover the exact costs of supporting the needs of each individual student. It is intended to reflect the evidence that some student cohorts have lower levels of higher education attainment and require additional supports to access and succeed in higher education. Through NBF and other key reforms, the Government is increasing its investment in supporting improved outcomes for under-represented students.

2026 is considered a transition year for NBF with plans to enshrine NBF as a permanent feature of core Commonwealth funding for teaching and learning by amending HESA. This will give higher education providers the funding certainty they need to plan effectively for the years ahead and design long-term student support plans.

How Needs-based Funding will work

Definitions

- **Low socio-economic background** refers to a person whose first residential address, by Statistical Area 1, is in the lowest quartile of the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA).
 - The low socioeconomic status (low SES) Statistical Area 1 (SA1) measure is based on assigning students' addresses to the latest available census data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), with the SES value derived from the ABSs' Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation for SA1 areas. SA1s in the bottom 25% of the population aged 15-64 are classified as low SES (the middle 50% are classified as medium SES and the top



25% are classified as high SES). An estimate of the number of low- SES students is made by counting the number of students whose SA1 is in a low SES area.¹

- The department uses a student's 'First Address' to derive their low SES by SA1 status.² This captures the first address reported in the Tertiary Collection of Student Information system (TCSI) for a student at their current provider.
- **First Nations** refers to a person who is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, referred to as an 'Indigenous person' in *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and defined in the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*.
- **Students at regional and remote campus** refers to a person undertaking study at a higher education provider campus located in regional or remote Australia, according to the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Remoteness Structure; or a person studying externally at a higher education provider with their main campus in a regional area.
- **Undergraduate** refers to a course that leads to the award of a higher education diploma, advanced diploma, associate degree, or a bachelor degree (pass, honours or graduate entry). Undergraduate does not include enabling (or FEE-FREE Uni Ready) as these are non-award courses.
- **Postgraduate** refers to a course of study that leads to the award of a graduate certificate, graduate diploma, masters degree or doctorate.
- **Internal** delivery refers to units of study delivered face to face on campus.
- **Multimodal** delivery refers to units of study which are a mix of internal and external delivery modes
- **External** delivery refers to units of study which are delivered online with no face to face component.

Eligible student life stages

NBF is focused on supporting eligible students at three of the following student life stages including:

1. **Access:** providing supports to enable pathways into higher education and admission processes.
2. **Participation:** offering supports for transition, engagement and progression, to keep students enrolled at university and working towards completing a qualification.
3. **Attainment and transition out:** ensuring successful completion of study, with smooth transition into further study or into the workforce.

¹ [Glossary term | TCSI Support](#)

² The department uses TCSI elements E787, E789, E791, E659, and E790 (first reported address packet) in order to derive first address low SES by SA1.



2026 Needs-based Funding contribution amounts

2026 per student contribution amounts (headcount or EFTSL) will be calculated as follows:

| Equity component | | Regional component | | |
|---|-----------------|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Student belonging to identified cohort</i> | All study modes | <i>Student enrolled at regional campuses</i> | Internal and multimodal | External |
| Low SES (High Preparedness) | Baseline (A) | Inner regional | Baseline (B) | Internal equivalent x 0.5 |
| Low SES (General Preparedness) | (A) x 2.69 | Outer regional | (B) x 2 | Internal equivalent x 0.5 |
| First Nations | (A) x 3.17 | Darwin region | (B) x 3 | Internal equivalent x 0.5 |
| First Nations & Low SES (either level of preparedness) | (A) x 3.79 | Remote and very remote | (B) x 4 | Internal equivalent x 0.5 |

Eligibility for Needs-based Funding contributions

All higher education providers with students in CSPs are eligible for NBF. A provider will attract a per-student contribution (headcount or EFTSL) for every student it enrols that meets the following criteria:

| NBF component | Cohort | Study level | Study mode |
|---------------|---|--|------------------|
| Equity | Students from low SES backgrounds | Undergraduate | All |
| | First Nations students | Undergraduate and postgraduate | All |
| | First Nations students who are also low SES | Undergraduate and postgraduate | All |
| Regional | Students studying at regional campuses* | FEE-FREE Uni Ready Courses, undergraduate and postgraduate | All [~] |

* Eligible campuses are those that enrol a minimum of 50 total internal and/or multimodal EFTSL in the reference year

~ External students attract half the applicable contribution if provider's main campus is also in a regional area

Note: An individual student can attract both the equity component and the regional component.



Calculating Needs-based Funding allocations

The volume of students for which a provider will receive NBF contributions is the sum of all commencing enrolments (headcount) and all continuing (non-commencing) EFTSL in each eligible student group. This means providers will receive the full per-student contribution amount for every new student, regardless of how much they study. This front-loads support to ensure providers are resourced to support all first-year students to succeed, no matter their study load. Second and subsequent year students will be adjusted depending on their study load.

There will be no stipulation about how a provider should allocate their NBF between commencing and continuing students. Providers will be able to ensure all students receive the support they need to succeed, regardless of their study load or commencing status.

Note: a commencing student is a student who is enrolled in the first year of a course of study, regardless of their enrolment load. This means any student in the first year of a course of study, even if they have transferred internally at the same university, to a new course of study and studying full-time or part-time.

Example volume calculation:

| | Commencing Students | | Continuing Students | | Total Eligible Volume |
|--------------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| | Headcount | EFTSL | Headcount | EFTSL | |
| University A | 100 | 80 | 200 | 150 | 250 |

Setting Need-based Funding contribution amounts - 2026

A provider's allocation will be the product of their volume of eligible CSP students and the relevant contribution amounts.

In 2026, funding will be based on the most recent Commonwealth supported student load data for the reporting year as verified by the provider through the Higher Education Student Data Collection (HESDC) and accepted by the Department. In 2026, this will be 2024 verified student load data.

Equity component

Contribution amounts will reflect the relative sector attrition rate for each student cohort. The more likely a student from a particular cohort is to drop out after their first year, the more funding a provider will receive for this student. This approach provides additional support for students experiencing cumulative disadvantage, proportionate to the outcomes these students experience.

Academic preparedness also affects success in higher education and to recognise this there will be two different contribution amounts for students from low SES backgrounds, depending on whether they are considered to have 'high' or 'general' levels of academic preparedness.

- Students with an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) of 80 or above are considered to have high academic preparedness.

- Students with an ATAR of below 80 (that is, 79 and below) or no ATAR (except in certain circumstances) are considered to have general academic preparedness.

Contribution rates and amounts for the four mutually exclusive categories are set out below:

| Equity Component | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Cohort | Contribution rate | Contribution amount |
| Low SES High Preparedness | Baseline (A) | \$ 1,535 |
| Low SES General Preparedness | (A) x 2.69 | \$ 4,124 |
| First Nations | (A) x 3.17 | \$ 4,860 |
| First Nations & Low SES | (A) x 3.79 | \$ 5,819 |

Note: A student who is both First Nations and from a low SES background will attract more funding than a student who is from a low SES background but not First Nations.

Regional component

Contribution amounts vary by a campus's geographic location according to the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). This means that the more remote the campus, the higher the per-student contribution amount. These contribution amounts reflect the implicit relativities contained within the current Regional Loading Program (RLP) formula. These relativities, and other technical elements of the RLP, are being retained in 2026 for the regional component of NBF.

| Regional Component | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Student Studying at a Regional Campus | Internal and Multimodal | External |
| Inner Regional | \$1,398 | \$699 |
| Outer Regional | \$2,796 | \$1,398 |
| Darwin Regional | \$4,195 | \$2,097 |
| Remote and Very Remote | \$5,593 | \$2,796 |

Campus requirements

For a campus to be considered eligible to receive the regional component of NBF, it must enrol a minimum of 50 total internal/multimodal EFTSL in the reference year. For the purposes of the regional component of NBF, a provider's **main campus** is defined as the one with the highest internal/multimodal EFTSL in the reference year.

A provider is eligible to receive funding for its **external students** only if (1) they are enrolled at a campus in a regional or remote area and (2) the provider's main campus is in a regional or remote area. This means that even if a provider is *eligible* to attract funding for external students, such students must be enrolled against a campus which is regional or remote. Additionally, if a student is enrolled externally at a remote campus, but the provider's main campus is not in a regional or remote area, they will not attract a contribution amount for this student.



As per TCSI guidelines, “if the course is taken externally ... then the postcode to be reported is that of the campus of the institution from where the course is administered”.

Campuses are classified as regional or remote according to the ASGS Edition 3 Remoteness Areas. Remoteness Areas (RA) divide Australia into five classes of remoteness which are characterised by a measure of relative geographic access to services. Access to services is measured using the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia Plus (ARIA+), produced by the Australian Centre for Housing Research (formerly the Hugo Centre for Population and Migration Studies) at the University of Adelaide. This measure has been the official classification of remoteness used by the ABS for the past two decades. Campus remoteness is identified at the postcode level.

The regional component of NBF uses the five classes of the ASGS RA, with an additional category for the Northern Territory, and Remote Australia and Very Remote Australia combined into one category. They are as follows:

- Major cities of Australia
- Inner Regional Australia
- Outer Regional Australia
- Northern Territory Region³
- Remote and Very Remote Australia

Regional headcount

The regional component uses a headcount derived from TCSI data. A student’s headcount is assigned to the campus where the majority of their EFTSL is delivered. Where a tie occurs, the campus in the most regional area will be determined as the student’s campus for headcount purposes.

What Needs-based Funding can be used for

Equity component

Providers will use equity component contributions to deliver programs, services, facilities, and initiatives that support the access, participation, success, and completion of students from eligible cohorts.

For 2026 only, in-scope activities for the equity component of NBF will reflect the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) activity-level reporting arrangements, and be based on the HEPPP program logic provided in [The Student Equity in Higher Education Evaluation Framework \(SEHEFF\) Guidance Manual](#).

This may include, but is not limited to, a wide range of evidence-based supports such as:

- academic tutoring and mentoring
- culturally appropriate inclusion and belonging activities
- direct financial assistance (like scholarships or emergency grants)

³ The Northern Territory region was allocated a greater loading than the standard outer regional loading because research commissioned for the 2011 Review of Regional Loading found that this region faces higher costs than similar regions. Institutions in the Darwin region also face unusual challenges because of their remoteness and need to support a very thinly spread population outside Darwin.

- systemic changes to teaching and learning such as universal design for learning or inclusive course delivery models.

While supports delivered through NBF are to be principally for the benefit of students in the identified cohorts, the supports provided may benefit wider cohorts or create system-wide improvements that will benefit all students.

Regional component

Providers have flexibility in how they use regional component contributions to meet local needs and priorities. Providers are expected to ensure that spending of regional component contributions aligns with the objective to offset the higher costs associated with operating regional campuses and support high-quality, accessible higher education in regional and remote Australia.

2026 pre-access exemption

For the 2026 transition year only, where the grant recipient's expenditure on pre-access activities in 2025 under Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) exceeds their total allocation of Outreach Funding in 2026, there will be flexibility to spend NBF on initiatives at the pre-access stage of the student lifecycle. However, the total amount of NBF used for pre-access and outreach activities in 2026 cannot exceed the 2025 Outreach expenditure minus any 2026 Outreach Funding Program allocation.

From 2027 onwards pre-access activities must be funded exclusively through the Outreach Funding Program and providers should consider potential transition arrangements throughout 2026.

Eligible activity categories

For 2026, eligible activity categories will remain consist with the SEHEFF, as shown below:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Information and experiences | The activity primarily focuses on increasing knowledge or providing a knowledge-related experience. For example, schools and campus visits/camps, advice or information sessions, and expos. |
| Skills | The activity primarily focuses on increasing academic, psychosocial/life or employability skills of an individual. For example, tutoring, pathway/bridging programs, internships, and workshops. |
| Resources | The activity primarily provides physical or financial resources to an individual or organisation. For example, scholarships, and textbooks. |
| Institutional development | The activity primarily focuses on increasing institutional capacity or capability to support equity students. For example, professional development/training, research, teaching and learning practice, evaluation, or program monitoring. |



A detailed list of in-scope activities for NBF is at [Attachment A: Equity Component – Examples of in-scope activities](#), noting this is not an exhaustive list but designed to support providers in determining whether an activity may be eligible. Providers should contact the department if they are unsure if an activity would be considered in-scope before allocating NBF resources to the activity.

Ineligible activities

NBF must not be used for the following:

- Infrastructure, including maintenance and construction of buildings, fixtures, roads and pathways.
- Enabling Loading Program.
- Activities not principally for the benefit of students from low SES backgrounds and First Nations students, such as activities targeted exclusively at:
 - students with disability
 - students from regional and remote areas (studying at a metro campus).
- Pre-access and outreach initiatives, including but not limited to:
 - support to navigate application processes
 - Marketing and recruitment of potential students or general marketing and advertising
 - financial and physical resources to support students to participate in pre-access activities.
 - provision of pathway, bridging, foundation and enabling programs into undergraduate programs for people who are not enrolled as students
 - pre-enrolment immersion programs, university experience days or subject ‘tasters’
 - building the student pipeline, such as working with young people and non-school leavers, schools, career advisors, community, TAFEs and local/state governments
 - school teacher professional development and parent/carer education about developing student aspirations to attend higher education
 - administration, monitoring and evaluation of pre-access/outreach activities.

Needs-based Funding data specifications

NBF allocations for 2026 have been determined using 2024 verified data from the Higher Education Student Data Collection. Information on data inputs to the calculation of NBF grant amounts is at [Attachment B](#).

2026 Reporting Arrangements

Reporting on the use of 2026 NBF will be required in early 2027. Separate reporting guidance and templates will be provided in 2026.



Providers will be required to provide a breakdown of how the NBF equity component was spent, including confirmation that expenditure aligns with the requirements set out in the *Higher Education Support (Other Grants) Guidelines 2022 (Other Grants Guidelines)*.

This will include:

- a breakdown of total expenditure based on student life stage, equity cohort, activity and for the category
- the average/median number of participants
- the average/median number of activities
- a summary of key learnings across the sector

Providers will separately be required to provide a 'letter of assurance' for the regional component of NBF, which is intended to provide assurance that funding has been used for its intended purpose, as per the Other Grants Guidelines. This will include:

- a summary of how funding is being used
- a breakdown of total expenditure by provider

Contact

Please contact equityprograms@education.gov.au for any queries in relation to NBF.



Attachment A: Equity Component - Examples of in-scope activities

| | Access | Participation | Attainment and Transition Out |
|--|---|--|---|
| Information and experiences <i>Activities that primarily focus on providing information and/or related interactions/experiences</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher education application support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transition programs, mentoring and coaching, career advice, career events, academic advice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career advice, career events, employability workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o employment search support o how to write job applications - advice on transitioning to employment, mentoring. |
| Skills <i>Activities that focus on developing individual attributes and/or skills</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pathway, bridging, foundation and enabling programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic skills workshops (e.g. academic writing), tutoring, work integrated learning (WIL), internships and placements, life skills tutorials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tutoring, skills workshops, internships and placements, employment support pre-completion. |
| Resources <i>Activities that promote physical goods or financial assistance to recipients</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial and physical resources to facilitate access and participation in pathway programs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o scholarships o bursaries o grants o fee-exemptions o Vouchers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial and physical resources to facilitate participation in higher education, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o scholarships, bursaries and grants o fee exemptions o vouchers o tickets for travel and events o dedicated access to needed accommodation (e.g. to a special student lounge, library spaces etc.). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial resources to facilitate attainment and transition out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o equity scholarships o bursaries o study resources o vouchers o financial support for work integrated learning. |
| Institutional development <i>Activities that primarily focus on developing institutional systems including processes, structures, cultures, values and professional practices.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pathways and alternative selection criteria - Program monitoring - Establishing partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusive course design and pedagogies - Staff professional development such as cultural safety and awareness - Program monitoring contributing to evidence-based supports - Evaluation and improvement - Establishing partnerships. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equitable work integrated learning opportunities - alternative exit programs. |



Attachment B: Needs-based Funding program 2026 data input factsheet

NBF- Equity grant

Provider eligibility: All providers delivering Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) in 2024 are eligible for 2026 NBF equity grant.

Student eligibility: 2024 students will count toward a provider's NBF – Equity grant calculation where;

1. The student is in a CSP in 2024 and:
 - a. The student's first reported address is in a Low SES area and the student is non-Indigenous and is studying an undergraduate course of study and is determined to be general preparedness; or
 - b. The student's first reported address is in a Low SES area and the student is non-Indigenous and is studying an undergraduate course of study and is determined to be high preparedness; or
 - c. The student is identified as First Nations and is studying an undergraduate or postgraduate course and their first reported address is NOT in a low SES area; or
 - d. The student is identified as First Nations and studying an undergraduate or postgraduate course AND their first reported address is in a Low SES area.
2. These groupings are mutually exclusive.
3. Commencing students are counted by headcount (1 EFTSL) and continuing students are counted by the minimum of their EFTSL or 1.

Definitions

Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP): is defined by Student (liability) status (e490) where e490 in 201, 204, 260, 261, 262, 263 relate to commonwealth supported students.

- a) For EFTSL, any EFTSL coded to these liability status (e490) values are included.
- b) For headcount, if a student has any units of study reported in those liability status (e490) codes, they are counted as Commonwealth supported.

See: [Student Status code | TCSI Support](#)

Low Socio-Economic Status (SES): The Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) Statistical Area 1 (SA1) measure is used to estimate the socio-economic status of domestic onshore students based on their first reported residential location. SES is derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), specifically the Index of Education and Occupation for SA1 areas.

SA1s in the bottom 25% of the population aged 15–64 are classified as Low SES. The middle 50% are classified as Medium SES, and the top 25% as High SES.

Addresses unable to be geocoded to SA1 use the first reported postcode to determine the SES.

Mapping of SA1 and Postcode to SES is available via the Universities Australia (UA) data sharing folder, or upon request from university-statistics@education.gov.au for non-UA members.

See: [Low socio-economic status \(SES\) - SA1 measure | TCSI Support](#)

First Address: First residential address is determined from the first residential street, suburb, postcode and state (e787, e789, e790, e791) in the HESDC. This information is system generated in the Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI) from the initial residential address information (e410) recorded for a student by a higher education provider. The system generated information can be updated to match the first address recorded in provider student management systems through the First Reported Address Packet. See: [First reported address packet 2025 | TCSI Support](#)

General Preparedness: Students are defined as 'general preparedness' where:

- a) The student is admitted on a primary basis of admission (e327) other than 41 and 42; or
- b) The student is admitted on a primary basis of admission (e327) equal to 41 and 42 and the student's ATAR (e632) is less than 80.0.
- c) Students with a pre-TCSI Basis of admission value, including code 33 (Secondary education (Australian or overseas equivalent)), are counted as general preparedness.

See: [Basis for admission code | TCSI Support](#) and [Australian Tertiary Admission Rank | TCSI Support](#)

High Preparedness: Students are defined as 'high preparedness' where:

- a) The student is admitted on a primary basis of admission (e327) equal to 41 and 42 and the student's ATAR (e632) is greater than or equal to 80.0; or
- b) The student is admitted on a primary basis of admission (e327) equal to 41 and 42 and the student's ATAR (e632) is not reported in the verified student data.

First Nations: A student is counted as First Nations where their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander code (e316) is reported as Aboriginal (3), Torres Strait Islander (4) or both (5) in the verified HESDC data.

Non-Indigenous: A student is counted as non- indigenous when their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander code (e316) is reported as non-indigenous – neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin (2) or no information is provided (9).

Undergraduate: a course of study is determined to be Undergraduate where Course of study type (e310) is in 08,09,10,13,20,21,22 or 23

Postgraduate: a course of study is determined to be Postgraduate where Course of study type (e310) is in 02, 03,04 ,05 06, 07, 11, 12, or 14.

Commencing student: A [student](#) is classified as a commencing student in relation to a particular course of study. A student is a commencing student for a year if they started studying in a [course of study](#) for the first time at the [higher education provider](#) or an antecedent higher education provider in that year. This is a derived value from other information recorded in TCSI.

A student undertaking more than one course in the calendar year, including those who change courses in semester 2, will have a commencing status for each course. A student's commencing status will be determined from their major course (see below).

Headcount (different to Regional grant): A student's headcount is assigned against the course marked as their major course (e331). The major course is a student's only course or the course with the highest EFTSL in a reference year if the student enrol in more than one course, and if two courses (UID15s) have the equal highest load then the major course is the one with highest UID15. A student's SES or First Nations status is the same across all courses of study they undertake in the same year.

Link: [Major course | TCSI Support](#)

EFTSL: EFTSL is defined in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(HESA\)](#) [s169X-27] as an equivalent full time student load. It is a measure of the study load, for a year, of a student undertaking a course of study on a full-time basis, where the student undertakes a standard program of studies.

Link: [Equivalent full-time student load \(EFTSL\) | TCSI Support](#)

NBF- Regional grant

Provider eligibility:

1. All providers delivering Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) in 2024 and are either undergraduate, post-graduate or FEE-FREE Uni-ready/Enabling (e310), where e310 in 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 30 are undergraduate, post-graduate or FEE-Free Uni Ready/Enabling courses, are eligible for 2026 NBF regional grant.

Campus eligibility:

1. A campus (e477) will be considered eligible to attract NBF- regional grant if it is in a regional or remote area and there are greater than or equal to 50 internal/multimodal (e329) CSP EFTSL (e339) enrolled at that campus (e477) in the reference year.
2. A provider's main campus, to be used to determine eligibility of external EFTSL regional grant, will be defined by the campus with the highest internal/multimodal (e329) CSP EFTSL (e339) in the reference year.
3. A provider will be eligible to attract funding for students studying externally (e329) at regional campuses when:
 - a) The campus is eligible as defined above in #1 and
 - b) The campus is in a regional area as defined for NBF purposes and
 - c) the provider's main campus (as defined above in #2) is also located in a regional or remote area.
4. A provider will be eligible to attract funding for students studying internally/multimodally (e329) if
 - a) The campus is eligible as defined above in #1 and
 - b) The campus is in a regional area as defined for NBF purposes.



Student eligibility: 2024 students will count toward a providers NBF – Regional grant calculation where;

1. The student is in a commonwealth supported place in 2024 and,
2. is undertaking an enabling, undergraduate or postgraduate course of study.
3. Commencing students are counted by headcount (1 EFTSL) as per the definition below and continuing students are counted by the minimum of their EFTSL or 1.

Definitions

Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP): As per equity grant definition.

Commencing student: As per equity grant definition.

Undergraduate: As per equity grant definition.

Postgraduate: As per equity grant definition.

Enabling: a course of study is determined to be Enabling where Course of study type (e310) is equal to 30.

Campus: A campus is defined by the postcode of the delivery location where the student is studying the unit (e477).

See: [Delivery location postcode | TCSI Support](#)

Headcount (different to Equity grant): A student's headcount is assigned to the campus (e477) where the majority of their EFTSL is delivered. Where a tie occurs, the campus (e477) in the most regional area will be determined as the student's campus for headcount purposes.

A rule-based approach to assign headcount is necessary since the key data used to determine the delivery location (e477) are EFTSL based, and a student may attend many campuses.

EFTSL: EFTSL is defined in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(HESA\)](#) [s169-27] as an equivalent full time student load. EFTSL is counted against the campus of delivery of the unit of study (e477)

Link: [Equivalent full-time student load \(EFTSL\) | TCSI Support](#)

Regional Areas: Regional areas align with remoteness categories published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Statistical Geographic Standard Remoteness Area 2021, with the exception of all areas within the Northern Territory which form an NBF-specific regional area- 'Northern Territory Region'.

See: [Remoteness Areas | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)



Key Data elements – cheat sheets

Equity Grant

| TCSI element name | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| E550 | Reference year |
| E922 | Commencing indicator |
| E316 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag |
| E310 | Course type |
| E490 | Student (liability) status |
| E632 | ATAR |
| E327 | Basis of Admission |
| E787, E789, E790, E791 | First residential address |
| E339 | EFTSL |
| Low SES First Address (SA1) | Lowest 25% quartile of 15-64 year olds in the ABS SEIFA IEO |

Regional Grant

| TCSI element name | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| E550 | Reference year |
| E922 | Commencing indicator |
| E477 | Delivery location postcode |
| E329 | Mode of attendance |
| E310 | Course type |
| E490 | Student (liability) status |
| E339 | EFTSL |

