

## Summary of the 2013 full year higher education student statistics

### Student numbers

1. A total of 1 313 776 domestic and international students enrolled at higher education institutions in 2013, an increase of 4.5 per cent from 2012.
2. There were 985 374 domestic students in 2013 (75.0 per cent of all students) an increase of 5.5 per cent from 2012. Overseas student enrolments increased by 1.5 per cent over the same period to 328 402.
3. Postgraduate students increased by 5.9 per cent to 347 069 while undergraduate students increased by 3.8 per cent to 925 791.
4. More than half of all students enrolled were female (55.6 per cent).
5. Over seventy per cent of students (70.4 per cent) were studying full-time.
6. Over ninety per cent of students were enrolled at Public Universities (92.5 per cent). Public University enrolments increased 3.7 per cent in 2013 (1 215 367 students, up from 1 171 737 students in 2012), while Private Universities and Non-University Higher Education Institutions (NUHEIs) enrolments increased by 14.4 per cent (98 409 students at 99 institutions in 2013, up from 85 985 students at 91 institutions in 2012).

### Commencing student numbers

7. Commencements provide an early indicator of how the higher education system evolves over time.
8. The total number of commencing students increased by 5.5 per cent to 537 886 in 2013 compared to the same period in 2012. Domestic commencements accounted for 72.6 per cent of all commencements, an increase of 5.4 per cent from 2012, while overseas commencements increased by 5.7 per cent to 147 421 students over the same period.
9. Commencing students in enabling courses<sup>1</sup> increased by 9.4 per cent between 2012 and 2013 (17 447 to 19 089), while commencements in non-award courses<sup>2</sup> increased by 0.6 per cent (16 413 to 16 512) over the same period. Commencements in postgraduate courses increased by 7.4 per cent to 161 485, while undergraduate commencements increased by 4.7 per cent to 340 800.
10. More than half of all commencing students were female (56.0 per cent).
11. Commencements in full-time study increased by 6.4 per cent in 2013 compared to 2012 (375 093 to 399 174).

### Indigenous student numbers

12. Students who self identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander comprised 1.0 per cent of all enrolments in 2013 (up 9.1 per cent to 13 781 students) and 1.2 per cent of commencements (up 7.7 per cent to 6 275).
13. Increases in Indigenous student numbers were recorded across all broad fields of education where students were enrolled. The largest increase was in *Information Technology* (up 20.9 per cent to 197 students).
14. The main fields of education in which Indigenous students were enrolled were *Society and Culture* (4 534 students, or 32.9 per cent of all Indigenous students); followed by *Health* (2 688 students or 19.5 per cent); and *Education* (2 361 students or 17.1 per cent).

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<sup>1</sup> A course of instruction that enables a person to undertake a course leading to a higher education award. Enabling courses do not include a course leading to a higher education award or any course that the Minister determines is not an enabling course under the *HESA Act Schedule 1*.

<sup>2</sup> A program of study which does not lead to an award and which comprises a unit or units of study which: is a unit or units of study from an award course or courses at the higher education institution; and is able to be counted as a credit towards some award course at the higher education institution by all students who complete the unit or units of study.

## National priority areas and courses of special interest

15. Commencements in priority area courses in 2013 increased in courses leading to registration as a veterinary practitioner (up 23.5 per cent to 689 students); in courses in clinical psychology (up 12.6 per cent to 857 students); in courses leading to registration as a dental practitioner (up 8.4 per cent to 668 students); in courses providing initial registration as nurses (up 6.3 per cent to 18 989 students); and in courses leading to registration as a medical practitioner (up 0.8 per cent to 3 612 students).
16. In 2013, there was a decrease in commencing students undertaking courses for initial registration in teacher training (down 2.8 per cent to 29 595 students).

## Low SES<sup>3,4</sup>

17. Low SES commencing students in 2013 increased by 7.1 per cent compared to the same period in 2012 (from 61 759 or 16.9 per cent of all commencing domestic onshore students to 66 150 or 17.1 per cent of all commencing domestic onshore students), while all low SES students increased by 7.4 per cent (from 146 198 to 156 977 students).

## Regional and remote<sup>3,5</sup>

18. Commencing students in regional areas in 2013 increased by 4.5 per cent compared to the same period in 2012 (from 75 012 to 78 374 students), while commencing students in remote areas increased by 1.6 per cent to 3 717 students.

## Field of Education

19. Increases in the number of commencing students were recorded across most broad fields of education in 2013 compared to the same period in 2012, with *Mixed Field Programs*<sup>6</sup> (up 14.0 per cent); *Engineering and Related Technologies* (up 10.5 per cent); *Information Technology* (up 8.3 per cent); *Health* (up 7.6 per cent); *Management and Commerce* (up 5.7 per cent); *Creative Arts* (up 5.2 per cent); *Society and Culture* (up 4.7 per cent); *Natural and Physical Sciences* (up 4.3 per cent); *Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies* (up 2.6 per cent); *Education* (up 2.5 per cent); *Architecture and Building* (up 1.3 per cent); and *Non-award courses*<sup>2</sup> (up 0.6 per cent).
20. *Food, Hospitality and Personal Services* was the only broad field of education that recorded a decrease in commencing students in 2013 (down 31.1 per cent).
21. The largest increase in overseas student numbers was in *Mixed Field Programs*<sup>6</sup> with commencements up 83.5 per cent to 892 students and all enrolments up 64.0 per cent to 1 012 students. *Management and Commerce* comprised over half of all overseas commencements (75 367 out of 147 421) as well as over half of all overseas enrolments (164 425 students out of 328 402).

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<sup>3</sup> Excludes overseas students and domestic students where permanent home address is overseas.

<sup>4</sup> Low SES postcode measure is based on the students' postcode of permanent home residence, with the SES value derived from the 2011 SEIFA Education and Occupation Index for postal areas, where postal areas in the bottom 25% of the population aged 15-64 being classified as Low SES.

<sup>5</sup> Regional and remote categories are derived from ASGS classifications.

<sup>6</sup> *Mixed Field Programs* provide general and personal development education.