

Australian vocational education and training statistics

Total VET students and courses 2021

National Centre for Vocational Education Research



Highlights

In 2021:

- 4.3 million students were enrolled in nationally recognised vocational education and training (VET), up 9.0% from 2020
- 3529 registered training organisations (RTOs) delivered nationally recognised VET
- an estimated 24.0% of the Australian resident population aged 15 to 64 years participated in nationally recognised VET in Australia.

In 2021, compared with 2020:

- full-year training equivalents (FYTEs) increased by 12.0% to 1.1 million
- students enrolled in nationally recognised programs increased by 4.4% to 2.1 million
- students enrolled in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program increased by 14.7% to 2.7 million.

By funding source:

- government-funded students increased by 4.5% to 1.4 million and FYTEs increased by 11.0% to 548 500
- domestic fee-for-service students increased by 13.1% to 3.2 million and FYTEs increased by 15.5% to 448 600
- international fee-for-service students decreased by 4.3% to 213 000 and FYTEs increased by 5.6% to 146 800.

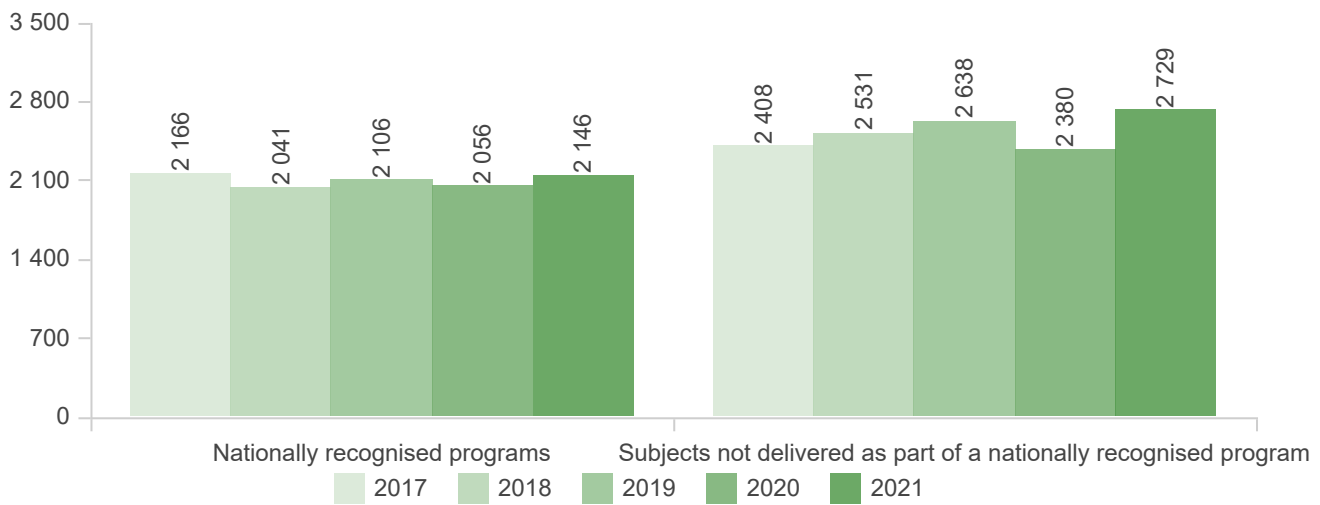
Students and full-year training equivalents (FYTEs)

In 2021, 4.3 million students were enrolled in nationally recognised VET.

An estimated 24.0% of the Australian resident population aged 15 to 64 years participated in nationally recognised training in 2021. Participation was highest among those aged 15 to 19 years (at 44.6%) followed by those aged 20 to 24 years (at 34.9%).

Some students enrolled in one or more programs, others in subjects that were not part of a nationally recognised program, and many in a combination of both. The number of students enrolled in programs in 2021 increased slightly compared to the previous year. The number enrolled in shorter, stand-alone subjects has increased in 2021 to the highest number in the last five years.

Figure 1 Students enrolled in nationally recognised training, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



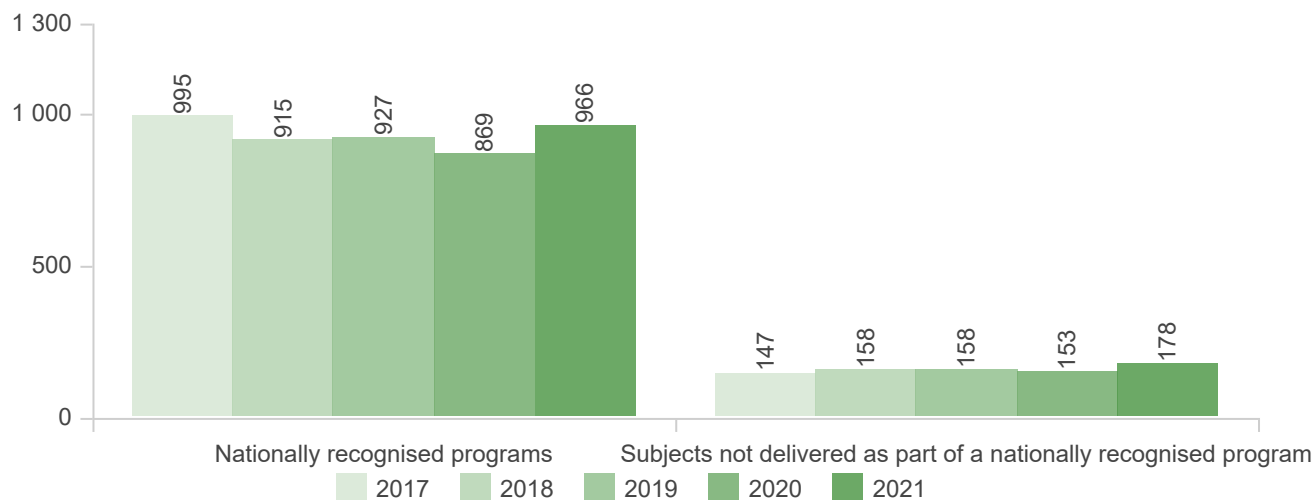
Notes: The increase in the number of students enrolled in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program from 2017 to 2019 is likely to be a combination of better reporting as well as a real increase in activity.

The sum of students (n= 4.9 million in 2021) will not add to the 2021 total (4.3 million) as a student may have enrolled in multiple types of training in a calendar year.

In 2021, compared with 2020, the number of FYTEs enrolled in:

- nationally recognised programs increased by 11.2% to 965 900
- subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program increased by 16.6% to 178 000.

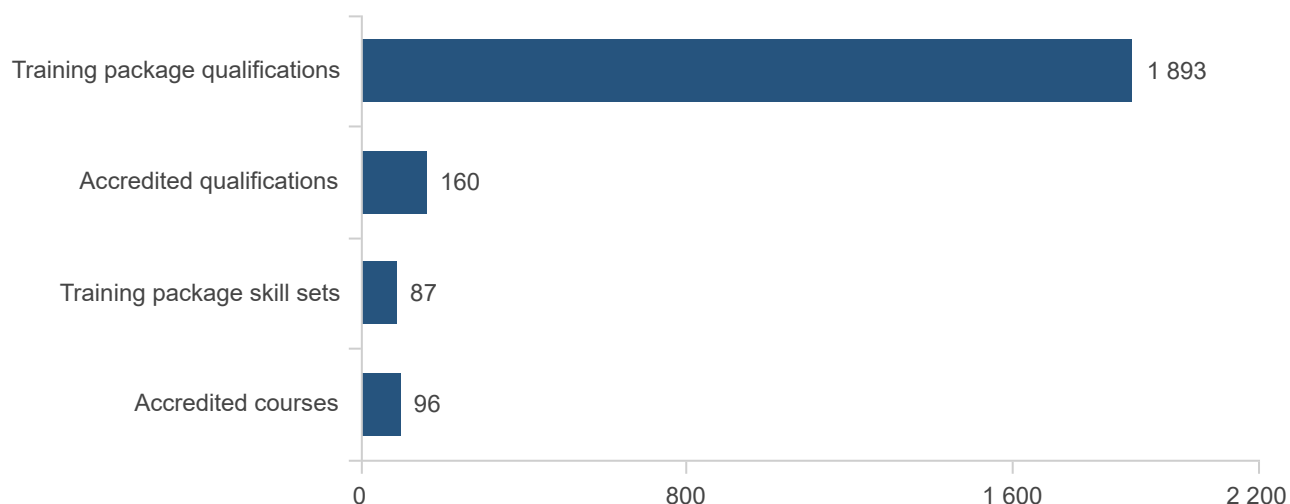
Figure 2 FYTEs in nationally recognised training, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



In 2021, 2.1 million students (49.9%) were enrolled in nationally recognised programs, consisting of:

- training package qualifications (1.9 million students)
- accredited qualifications (160 300 students)
- training package skill sets (86 800 students)
- accredited courses (96 300 students).

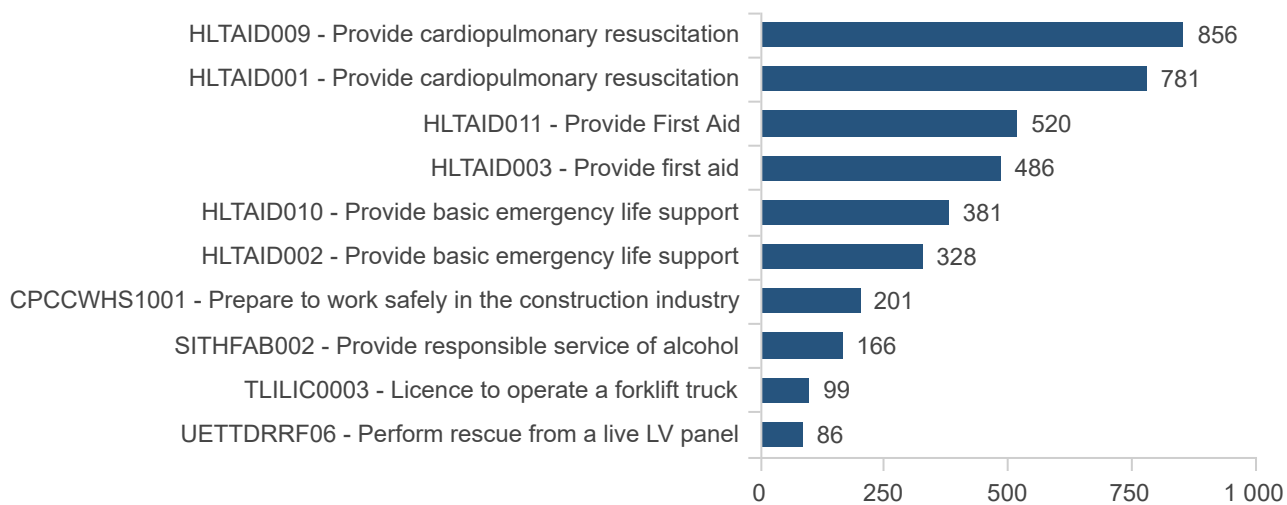
Figure 3 Students enrolled in nationally recognised programs, 2021 ('000)



Note: The sum of students (n=2.2 million in 2021) will not add to the 2021 total (2.1 million) as a student may have enrolled in multiple types of training in a calendar year.

In 2021, 2.7 million students (63.5%) enrolled in subjects that were not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program. These students had a total of 7.0 million subject enrolments (24.1% of all subject enrolments), of which the top six were all within the Health training package.

Figure 4 Enrolments in the top ten subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program, 2021 ('000)



Note: Units of competency may be superseded if replaced with an equivalent training product. This may result in enrolments being in both the current and superseded unit of competency within the same collection year. More information on the subjects listed in this chart is located at <https://training.gov.au>. Accredited units are not included.

Participation rates

24.0% of the Australian resident population aged 15 to 64 years and 44.6% of the Australian resident population aged 15 to 19 years participated in nationally recognised VET in 2021, an increase from 21.7% in 2020 and higher than pre-Covid levels (23.4% in 2019). Queensland has the highest participation rate for VET students aged 15 to 64 years (28.0%).

Table 1 Estimated participation rate of domestic VET students aged 15 to 64 years by state or territory of student residence, 2021 (%)

Age group	NSW	Vic.	Qld.	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
15 to 19 years	37.3	45.5	53.5	35.4	43.7	35.9	32.9	39.5	44.6
20 to 24 years	31.7	29.7	37.5	35.0	35.1	39.0	34.7	32.0	34.9
25 to 44 years	21.0	19.1	27.8	25.6	23.7	29.2	28.3	20.3	24.1
45 to 64 years	14.4	13.1	19.3	15.5	13.9	17.3	19.6	12.0	16.2
15 to 64 years	21.0	20.2	28.0	23.4	22.8	25.7	26.4	20.3	24.0

Sources: NCVET, National VET Provider 2021 and National VET in Schools 2021 collections; Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australian Demographic Statistics, June 2019-2021, Population by Age and Sex Tables, cat.no.3101.0.

Notes: The estimated participation rate is the number of VET students with a usual residential address in an Australian state or territory, other Australian territories or dependencies and where the state/territory is Not known. Offshore international students are excluded from the calculation.

Usual residential address refers to where the student usually resides rather than a temporary address a student relocates to for training, work, or other purposes.

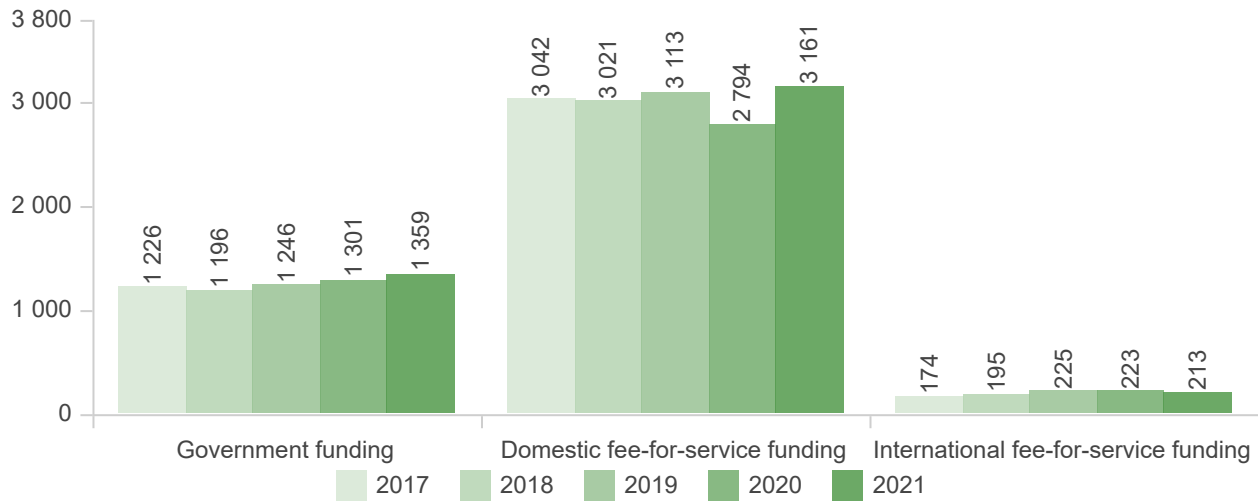
Funding source

Students

VET students can undertake training as a full fee-paying student (domestic or international fee-for-service) or with the assistance of a government subsidy (government-funded).

In 2021, compared with 2020, the number of government-funded students increased by 4.5% to 1.4 million. Domestic fee-for-service students increased by 13.1% to 3.2 million following a decrease from 2019 to 2020. International fee-for-service students decreased by 4.3% to 213 000.

Figure 5 Students enrolled in nationally recognised training, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



Note: The sum of students (n=4.7 million in 2021) will not add to the 2021 total (4.3 million) as a student may have multiple sources of funding in a calendar year.

In 2021:

- 58.5% of students enrolled in training package qualifications were government-funded
- 95.4% of students enrolled in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program were domestic fee-for-service funded.

Table 2 Students enrolled in nationally recognised training by funding source and type of training, 2021

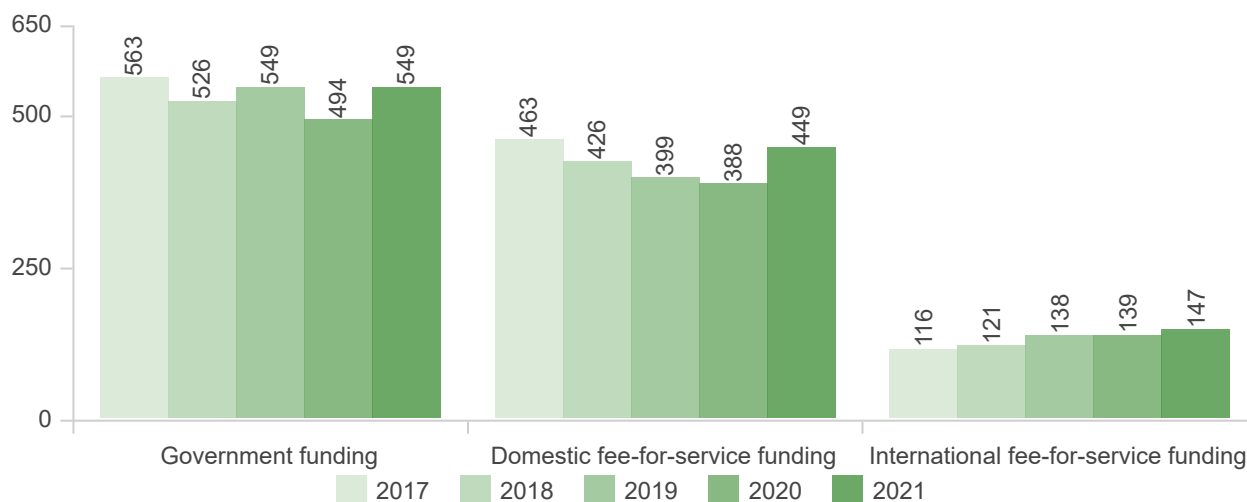
Type of training	Government funding	Domestic-fee-for-service funding	International fee-for-service funding
Training package qualifications	1 107 600	692 500	199 200
Accredited qualifications	113 900	41 000	7 800
Training package skill sets	38 300	48 100	1 000
Accredited courses	38 200	58 000	200
Subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program	158 800	2 604 900	9 400

Note: The sum of students (n=5.1 million in 2021) will not add to the 2021 total (4.3 million) as a student may have multiple sources of funding and types of training in a calendar year.

Full-year training equivalents (FYTEs)

In 2021, compared with 2020, government-funded FYTEs increased by 11.0% to 548 500 to return to 2019 levels following a drop in 2020, domestic fee-for-service FYTEs increased by 15.5% to 448 600 after several years of decline and international fee-for-service FYTEs increased by 5.6% to 146 800.

Figure 6 FYTEs by funding source, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



In 2021:

- 53.3% of FYTEs in training package qualifications were government-funded
- 88.2% of FYTEs in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program were domestic fee-for-service funded.

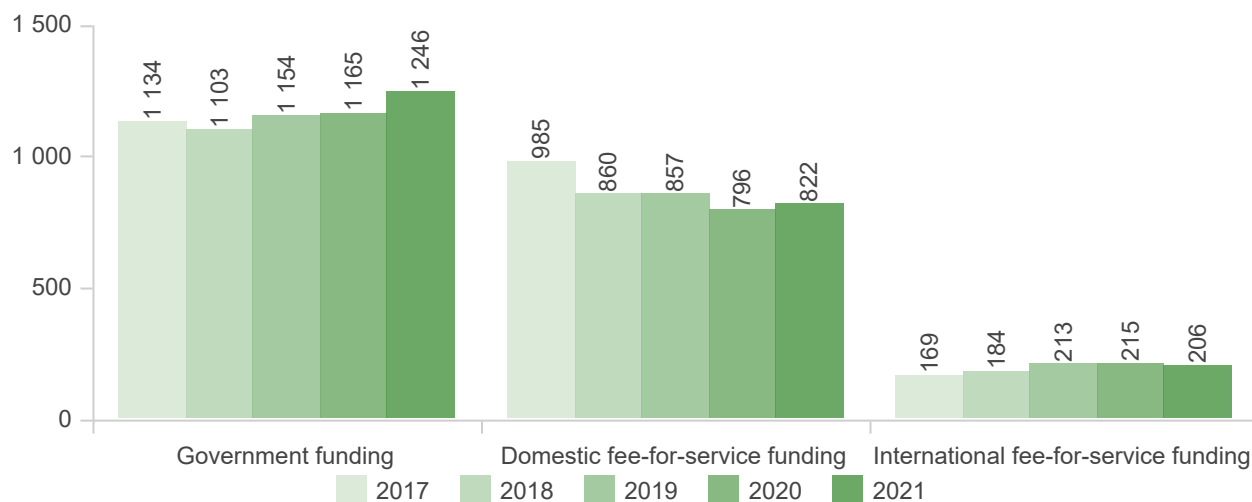
Table 3 FYTEs by funding source and type of training, 2021

Type of training	Government funding	Domestic-fee-for-service funding	International fee-for-service funding
Training package qualifications	474 700	274 700	141 200
Accredited qualifications	44 900	11 900	4 400
Training package skill sets	3 200	3 800	200
Accredited courses	5 700	1 200	0
Subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program	20 000	157 000	1 000

Students in nationally recognised programs

In 2021, compared with 2020, the number of students enrolled in nationally recognised programs increased by 4.4% to 2.1 million. Government-funded students increased by 7.0% to 1.2 million and domestic fee-for-service students increased by 3.2% to 821 700. In contrast, international fee-for-service students decreased by 3.9% to 206 400.

Figure 7 Students enrolled in nationally recognised programs by funding source, 2017 to 2021 ('000)

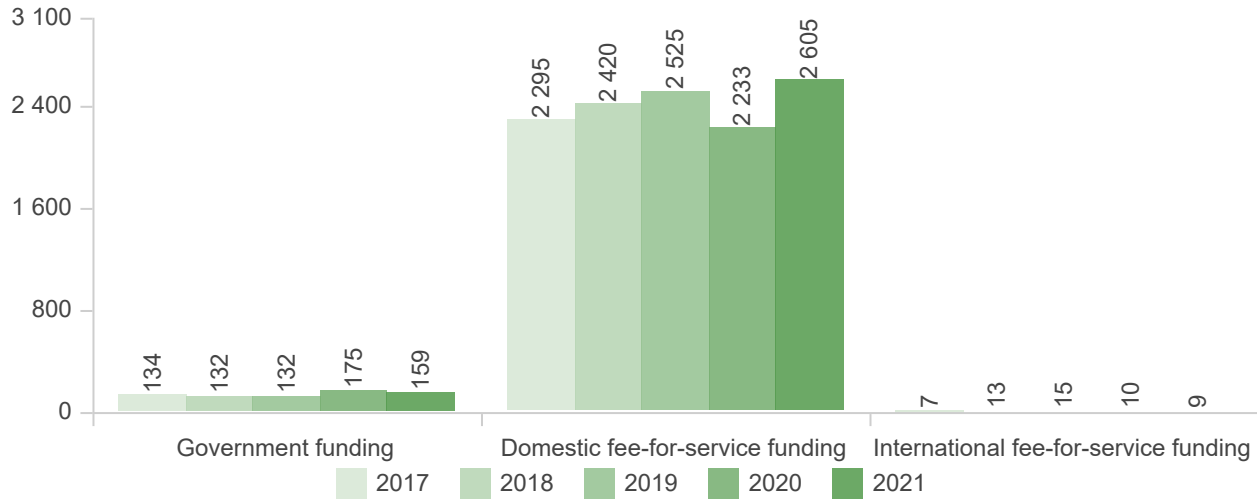


Note: The sum of students (n=2.3 million in 2021) will not add to the 2021 total (2.1 million) as a student may have multiple sources of funding in a calendar year.

Students in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program

In 2021, compared with 2020, the number of students enrolled in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program increased by 14.7% to 2.7 million. Government-funded students decreased by 9.4% to 158 800 and domestic fee-for-service students increased by 16.7% to 2.6 million following a decline in 2020. International fee-for-service students decreased by 9.4% to 9 400.

Figure 8 Students enrolled in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program by funding source, 2017 to 2021 ('000)

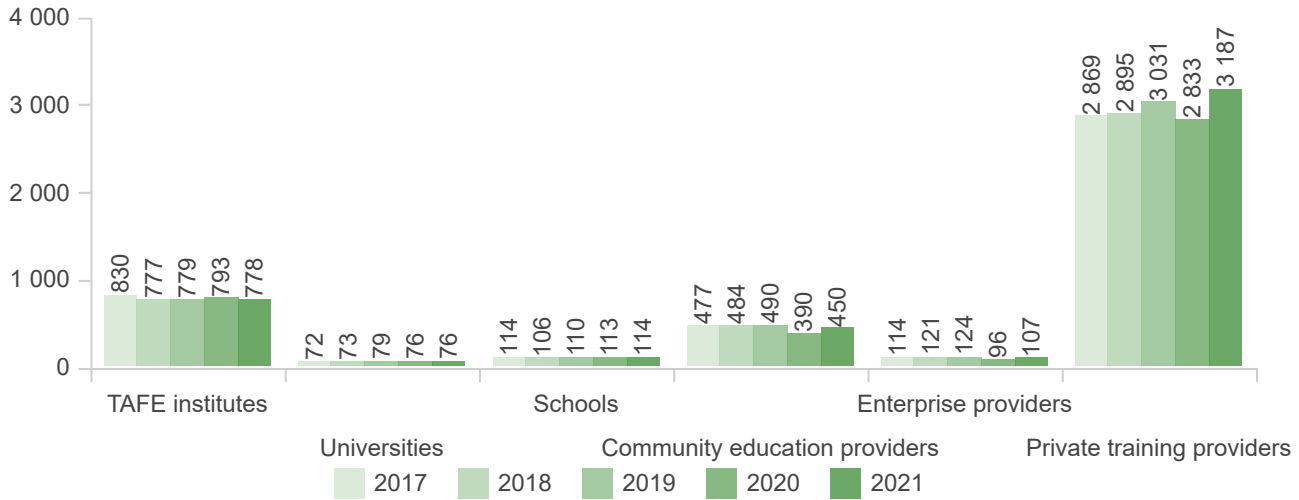


Note: The sum of students (n=2.77 million in 2021) will not add to the 2021 total (2.73 million) as a student may have multiple sources of funding in a calendar year.

Provider type

In 2021, 3.2 million students (74.1%) were enrolled in nationally recognised training at private training providers, 778 300 (18.1%) at TAFE institutes, 449 500 (10.5%) at community education providers, 114 100 (2.7%) at schools, 107 000 (2.5%) at enterprise providers and 75 600 (1.8%) at universities.

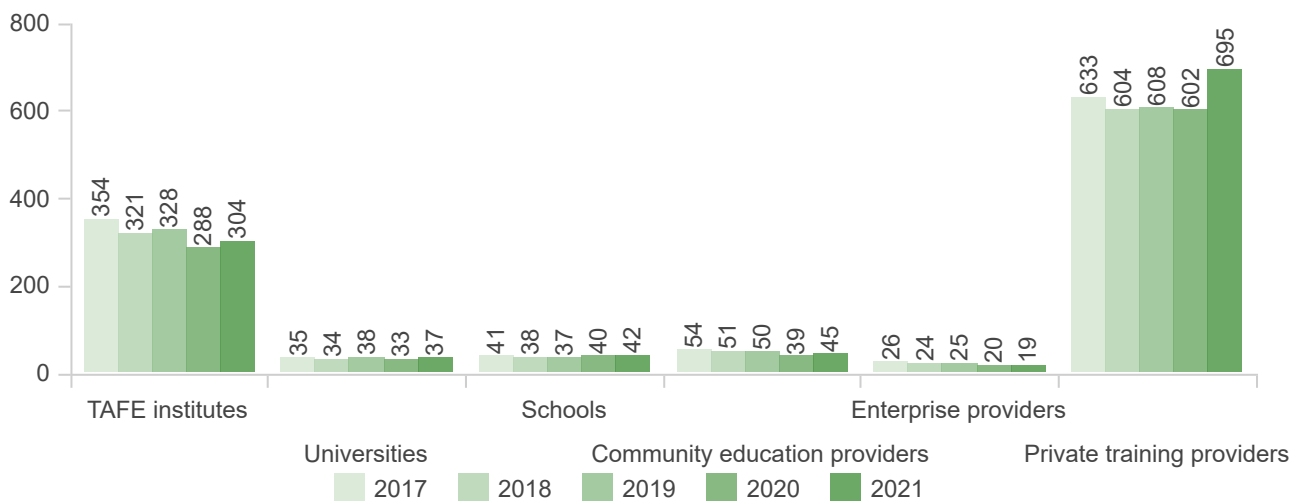
Figure 9 Students by provider type, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



Note: The sum of students (n=4.7 million in 2021) will not add to the 2021 total (4.3 million) as a student may have enrolled in training with multiple provider types in a calendar year.

In 2021, 695 000 (60.8%) FYTEs were enrolled in nationally recognised training at private training providers, 304 300 (26.6%) at TAFE institutes, 42 500 (3.7%) at schools, 45 400 (4.0%) at community education providers, 37 400 (3.3%) at universities and 19 400 (1.7%) at enterprise providers.

Figure 10 FYTEs by provider type, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



Provider counts

In 2021, there were 3529 registered training organisations (RTOs) that had an active registration and delivered nationally recognised VET.

Table 4 Provider type by state or territory of head office, 2021

Provider type	NSW	Vic.	Qld.	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
TAFE institutes	1	12	1	1	6	1	1	1	24
Universities	1	7	4	0	2	1	1	0	16
Schools	18	48	263	4	20	2	3	11	369
Community education providers	69	72	24	8	10	5	3	6	197
Enterprise providers	36	21	21	14	16	5	6	3	122
Private training providers	819	626	784	140	305	39	30	58	2 801
Total	944	786	1 097	167	359	53	44	79	3 529

Note: The number of training providers is a distinct count of providers who delivered nationally recognised training and had an active registration in the calendar year as per the National Register of VET <https://training.gov.au>.

Table 5 Provider type, 2017 to 2021

Provider type	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
TAFE institutes	41	36	25	24	24
Universities	15	15	16	16	16
Schools	398	395	389	383	369
Community education providers	249	238	220	207	197
Enterprise providers	143	140	136	127	122
Private training providers	3 104	3 019	2 898	2 769	2 801
Total	3 943	3 838	3 681	3 524	3 529

Note: The number of training providers is a distinct count of providers who delivered nationally recognised training and had an active registration in the calendar year as per the National Register of VET <https://training.gov.au>.

Table 6 Provider type by state or territory of delivery location, 2021

Provider type	NSW	Vic.	Qld.	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Other	Aust.	Offshore	Total
TAFE institutes	10	16	2	8	8	4	3	1	0	24	11	24
Universities	3	8	5	3	5	2	3	0	0	15	2	16
Schools	20	51	264	13	22	3	5	11	0	369	0	369
Community education providers	77	85	40	21	18	8	10	14	0	197	1	197
Enterprise providers	51	37	44	34	42	16	20	11	0	122	3	122
Private training providers	1 191	951	1 113	476	572	242	195	230	9	2 796	44	2 801
Total	1 352	1 148	1 468	555	667	275	236	267	9	3 523	61	3 529

Notes: The number of training providers is a distinct count of providers who delivered nationally recognised training and had an active registration in the calendar year as per the National Register of VET

<<https://training.gov.au>>.

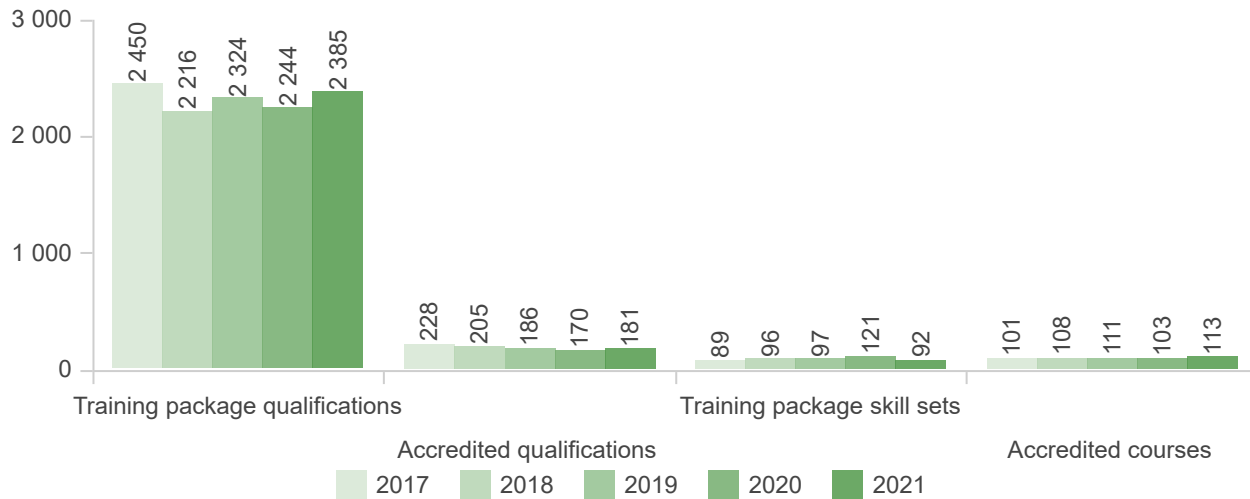
'Other' refers to 'Other Australian territories and dependencies' (for example, Christmas Island) and where the delivery location is not known.

The sum of training providers across state/territory and offshore delivery locations will not add to 'Australia' as a training provider may deliver in multiple locations in a calendar year.

Program enrolments and completions

In 2021, there were 2.8 million enrolments in nationally recognised programs. 92.6% of these were in qualifications: 86.1% in training package qualifications and 6.5% in accredited qualifications. Compared with 2020, training package qualifications increased by 6.3% to 2 385 400, accredited qualifications increased by 6.6% to 181 300, training package skill sets decreased by 24.3% to 91 600 and accredited courses increased by 10.4% to 113 100.

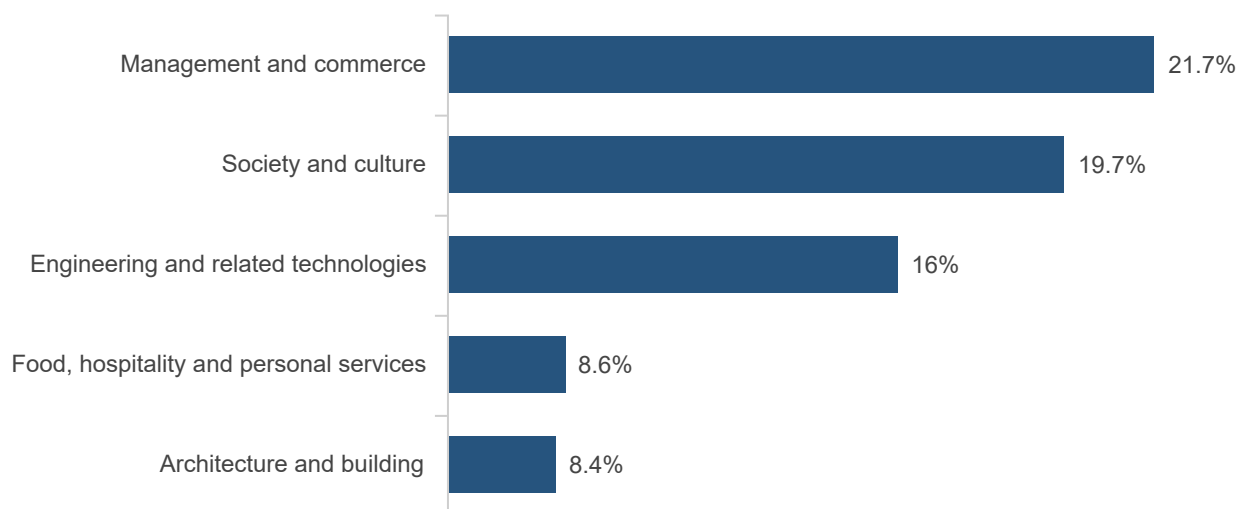
Figure 11 Nationally recognised program enrolments by type of training, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



Qualification enrolments

In 2021, Management and commerce was the most popular field of education, comprising 21.7% of all qualification enrolments. This was followed by Society and culture (19.7%) and Engineering and related technologies (16.0%).

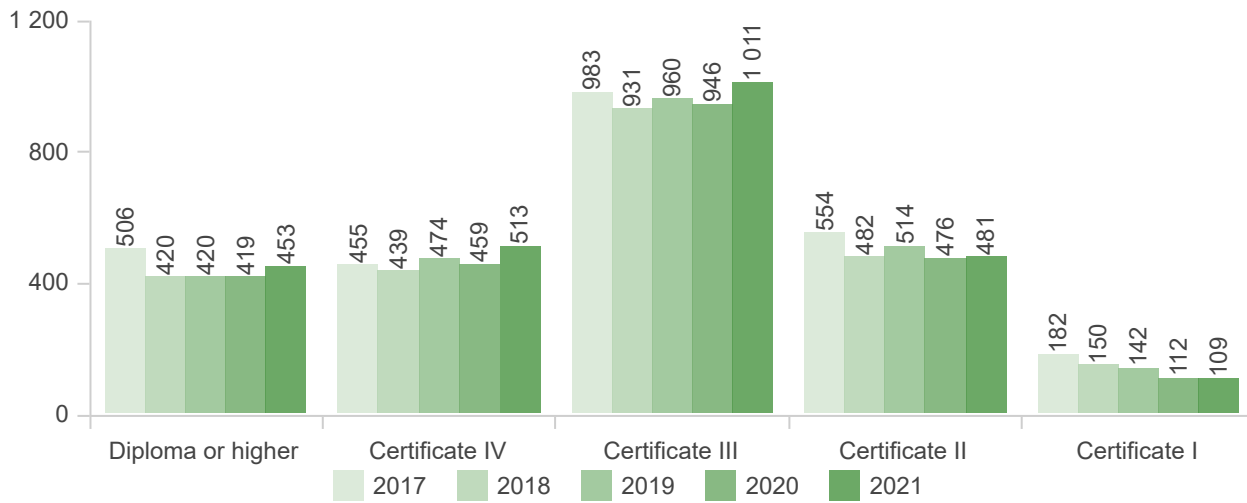
Figure 12 Qualification enrolments in the top 5 fields of education, 2021 (%)



Note: Data in the figure above are based on training package qualifications and accredited qualifications only. Other programs such as training package skill sets and accredited courses are excluded.

In 2021, the highest number of qualification enrolments were in certificate III level qualifications (39.4%), followed by certificate IV (20.0%), and certificate II (18.8%).

Figure 13 Qualification enrolments by level of education, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



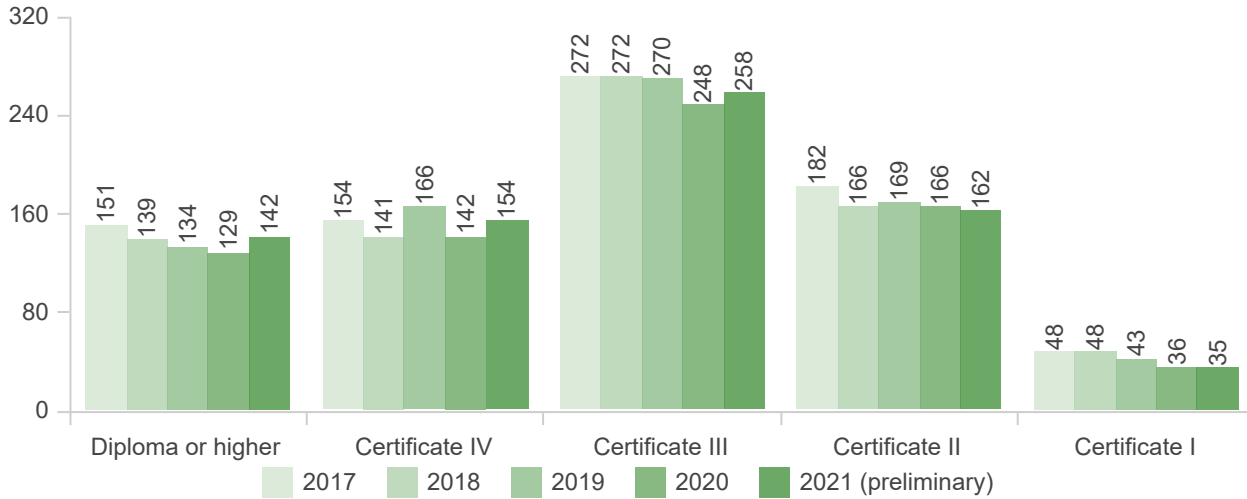
Note: Data in the figure above are based on training package qualifications and accredited qualifications only. Other programs such as training package skill sets or accredited courses are excluded.

Qualification completions

Preliminary numbers show 751 300 qualification completions in 2021. This number will be revised upwards with the release of *Total VET students and courses 2022*.

In 2021, the highest number of qualification completions were at certificate III level (34.4% of all qualification completions), followed by certificate II (21.5%), and certificate IV (20.5%).

Figure 14 Qualification completions by level of education, 2017 to 2021 ('000)



Notes: Data in the figure above are based on training package qualifications and accredited qualifications only. Other programs such as training package skill sets or accredited courses are excluded. Qualification completions for 2021 are preliminary only, and will be revised upwards with the release of *Total VET students and courses 2022*.

Qualification completion rates cannot be derived from the qualification enrolments and completions reported in the tables above. For VET completion rates refer to the publication *VET qualification completion rates* located at <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-students-and-courses>.

Historical time series data

The following figures show nationally recognised VET activity from 2015 to 2021 for students, FYTEs, program enrolments and program completions.

Figure 15 Students in nationally recognised training, 2015 to 2021 (million)

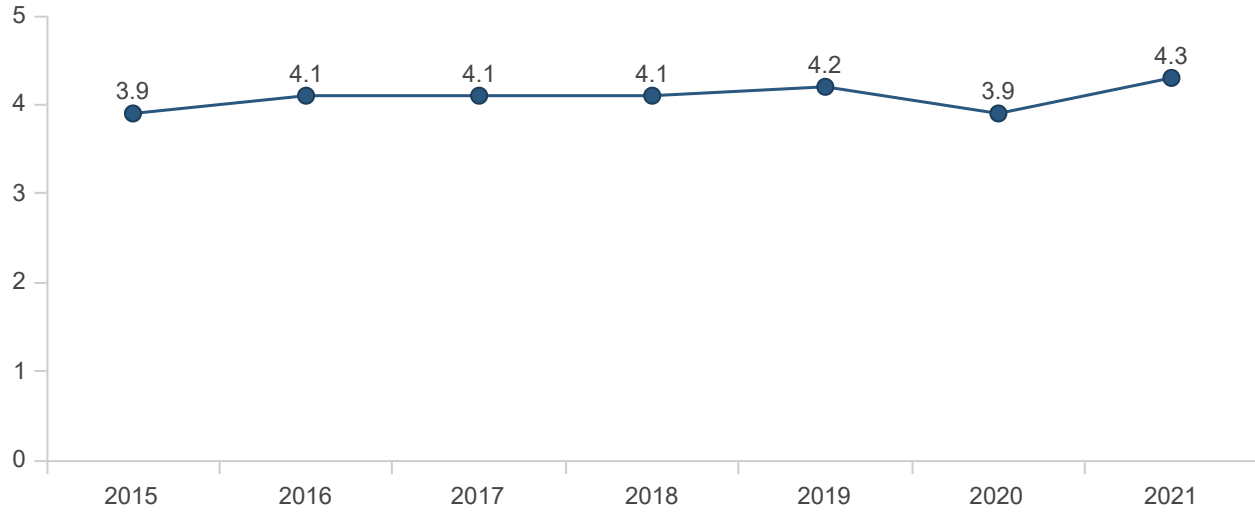


Figure 16 FYTEs in nationally recognised training, 2015 to 2021 ('000)

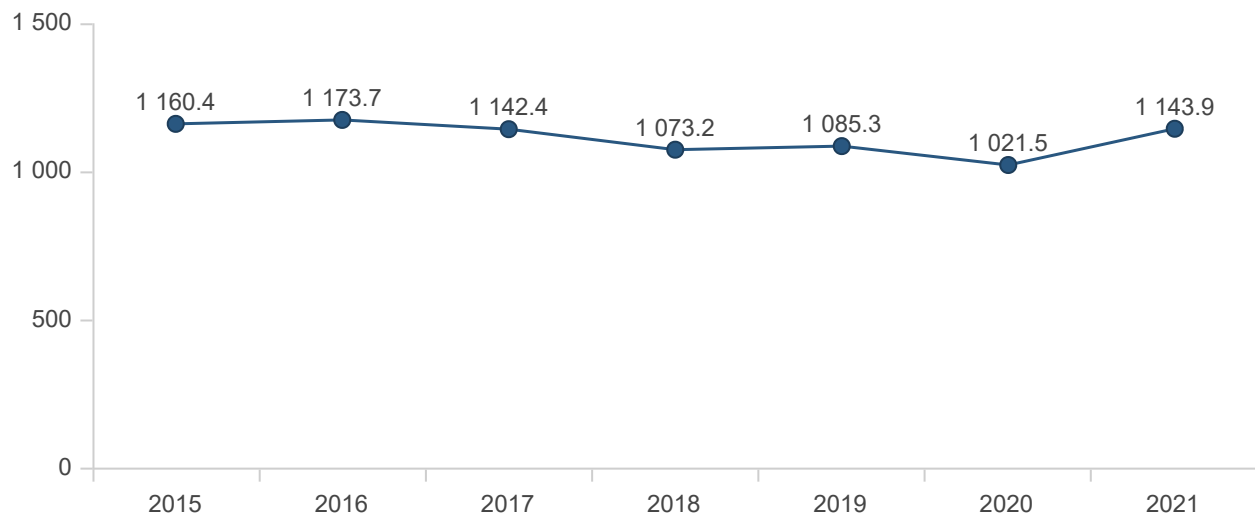


Figure 17 Program enrolments in nationally recognised training, 2015 to 2021 (million)

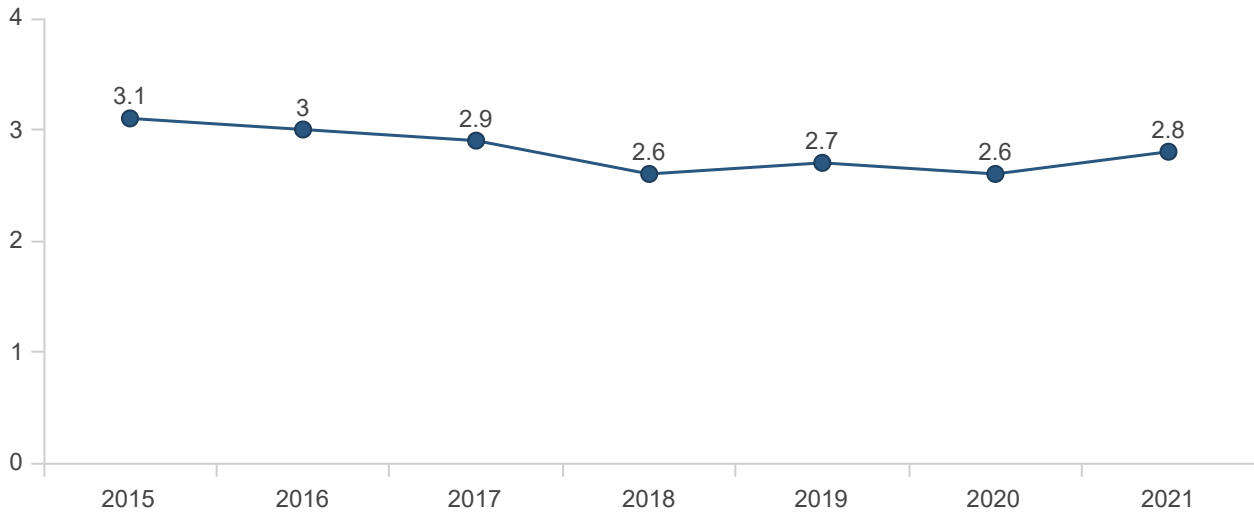
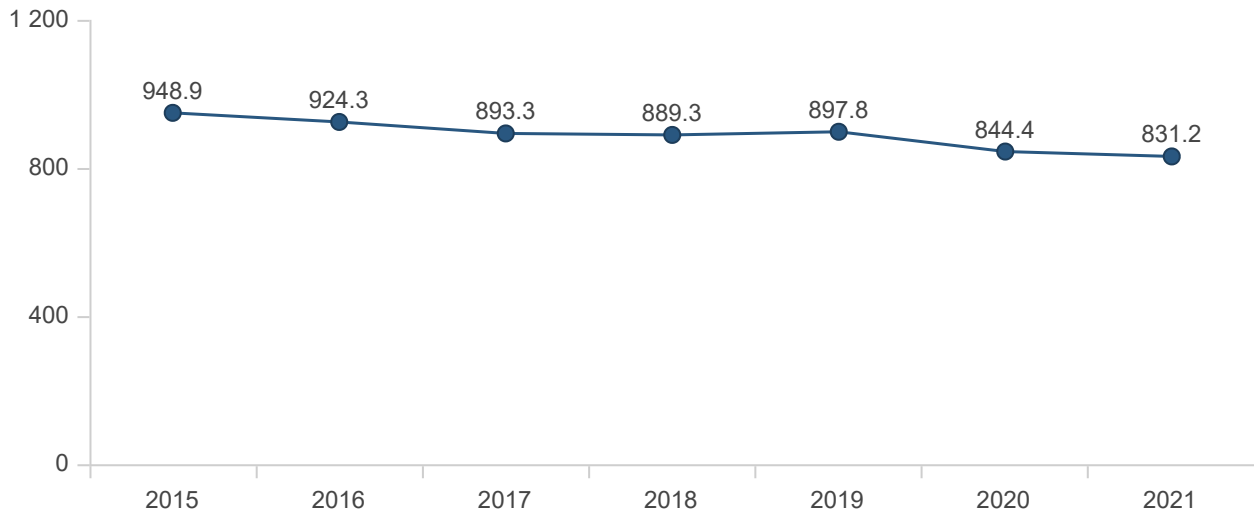


Figure 18 Program completions, 2015 to 2021 ('000)



Note: Program completions for 2021 are preliminary only, and will be revised upwards with the release of *Total VET students and courses 2022*.



For details and exceptions visit the [NCVER Portal](#).

This document should be attributed as NCVET 2022, *Total VET students and courses 2021*, NCVET, Adelaide.

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