SUPPORT DOCUMENT

NCVER

Government-funded students and courses 2023: explanatory notes

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Publisher's note

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Explanatory notes

Scope

1 This publication reports on government-funded VET students, subject enrolments, program enrolments, and program completions delivered by registered and non-registered training organisations.

2 This publication does not cover the following types of training activity:

- fee-for-service training activity (reported with *funding source – national* '20 – domestic client', '30 international client', '31 – international onshore client', or '32 - international offshore client')

- delivery undertaken at overseas campuses of Australian VET institutions

- credit transfer (reported with *outcome identifier – national* '60 – credit transfer')

- subjects that were superseded part-way through training (reported with *outcome identifier - national* '61 - superseded training')

- training that has not yet started (reported with *outcome identifier - national* '85 – not yet started')

- VET delivered in schools, where the training activity was undertaken as part of a senior secondary certificate and is not government-funded

- any Commonwealth-specific funded administrative records not held by state training authorities

- any activity where revenue was earned from another training provider in terms of subcontracting, auspicing, partnership or similar arrangements[1] (reported with *funding source – national* '80 – revenue earned from another training organisation').

Data sources

3 Data are sourced from the administrative records reported to NCVER by the state and territory training authorities.

4 The information contained in this publication is, unless otherwise stated, derived from the National VET Provider Collection. This collection is compiled under the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS), release 8.0. For further information on AVETMISS go to <https://www.ncver.edu.au/rto-hub/statistical-standard-software/avetmiss-vet-provider-collection-specifications-release-8.0>.

5 This publication also makes use of data and classification information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). For more information, refer to the fact sheet Use of ABS data in 'total VET activity' located at <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-activity-tva-fact-sheets>.

Data treatment

6 The percentages presented in this publication are reported to one decimal place.

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1 Third party delivery is issued under the name and logo of the principal provider. The principal provider is expected to submit the administrative records to the National VET Provider Collection; it is this activity that is reported on in lieu of any administrative records provided by a sub-contracted training organisation.

7   Other numbers have been rounded, after aggregation, to the nearest five. Rounding can lead to situations where the sum of rows does not add up to the rounded totals.

8   Students are counted distinctly against each by variable in a chart or table, including the total. This can lead to situations where the sums of rows or columns do not sum to the total (e.g., a student studying at multiple provider types is counted once for each type but counted only once in the total).

Data revisions

9   Data from previous collections, represented within this publication, may differ from those presented in prior publications as:

   a.   Data may have been rebased. Data revisions take place to facilitate comparisons across collection periods and years based on current data. For example, if a training provider was reported in the current year with provider type of 'school' but in the previous year the same provider was reported as 'community education provider', NCVER will adjust the previously reported provider type to match that of the current year. Improvements to the student counting methodology may also lead to minor variations in data reported between years

   b.   Data may have been submitted to NCVER after the original reporting window has closed. These data would not have been included in that collection's publication. However, they will be included in the following year's publication

   c.   Program completions are revised annually

   d.   Changes made in TGA (training.gov.au; e.g., changes to accreditation, program or unit/module details, training provider details) will be implemented in the current reporting year, with previous years' data also revised.

Student counts

10 NCVER applies a methodology to distinctly count students who may be enrolled at multiple training providers within the state or territory. For further information, refer to the fact sheet Counting students in 'total VET activity' located at <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-activity-tva-fact-sheets>.

Student attributes

11 When reporting on training activity (subject enrolments, program enrolments, or program completions), NCVER uses the student attributes as reported with the training activity and not as derived by the student counting methodology.

12 When reporting on students, NCVER uses the student attributes as derived by the student counting methodology.

Training providers

13 There have been reductions in the number of TAFE institutes reported in New South Wales, Western Australia, and Queensland in recent years due to the implementation of reform measures in those jurisdictions. For example, from 1 January 2019 the number of TAFEs reported in New South Wales decreased from 11 to one as part of the One TAFE consolidation program.

14 As a consequence of how the data are reported and the *provider reporting type* derivation (see Reporting Derivations), some training providers in South Australia (up to 2016) and New South Wales

may be reported as both 'Community education provider' and some other *provider reporting type* value. However, they are only reported and counted once in both the state's total and total for Australia.

Reporting derivations

15 *Government-funded students and courses* reports training activity according to the state/territory that administered the funding of that training. NCVER applies several derivations to the data in scope of the government-funded collection, submitted by state training authorities, so that the data are reported from that state or territory's perspective.

16 Unlike *Total VET students and courses*, which only reports on nationally recognised training, *Government-funded students and courses* also includes non-nationally recognised training. A student enrolled in a program is considered to have undertaken nationally recognised training if they were enrolled in at least one nationally recognised subject delivered by a registered training organisation. Otherwise, if all the subjects in which they were enrolled were non-nationally recognised, or if their training was delivered by a non-registered training organisation, they are considered to have undertaken non-nationally recognised training. Students may be counted against both nationally and non-nationally recognised training because they may enrol in multiple programs and/or subjects and/or at multiple providers in a calendar year.

17 One of the major derivations is *provider reporting type*, which determines how training organisations are reported in the various *Government-funded students and courses* resources. *Provider reporting type* is based on the combination of *submitter identifier* and *training organisation type identifier*. For example, training delivered by a TAFE institute in its own jurisdiction is reported as being delivered by a 'TAFE institute'. However, if the TAFE institute successfully contests funding contracts in another state or territory, then any training delivery is reported as being delivered by 'other training providers' in that state's or territory's data.

18 NCVER derive a parent training package for training package qualifications, which summarises superseded and current training package identifiers into a single training package name. As this derivation is made at the training package level, it does not account for scenarios where a training package qualification is superseded by one from an unrelated training package (i.e., where the training package is not part of the supersession chain within the same training package).

19 By using a two-stage matching process, first with a Unique Student Identifier and then with a client's details, it is possible to set commencing status values. NCVER provides two types of commencing status: *Commencing student status* and *Commencing program status*.

   a. *Commencing student status* identifies whether this is the first time a student has been reported to NCVER as part of the Government-funded collection irrespective of the training they undertook, provider with which they were enrolled, or submitter of the data

   b. *Commencing program status* identifies whether this is the first time a student has been reported to NCVER as participating in a program at a training organisation as part of the Government-funded collection, irrespective of the submitter of the data.

Data quality and comparability issues

20 The COVID-19 pandemic, and states and territories' economic responses, may have impacted training data, particularly from March 2020 onwards. Any comparison with previous years should be made with caution.

21 Training products may be added to the national VET register that take effect from a previous year. Once these products are added to NCVER's classification and reference management system they will be rebased within NCVER's data as nationally recognised training products. This can impact how many subject enrolments, program enrolments, and students are considered in scope.

22 As of the 2023 collection, NCVER has incorporated the use of geography data based on the 2021 Census. These data have been applied retrospectively to data from both the 2021 and 2022 collections. This has resulted in shifts when comparing data, which were previously published on these collection years, by statistical area, Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), and/or Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+).

23 NCVER improved the method used to calculate program completions as of the 2020 publication, resulting in a slight increase in program completions compared with previously published data.

24 Some training providers do not report data for the first three quarters to training authorities, which affects the completeness of data provided to NCVER.

New South Wales

25 The increase in training activity for New South Wales in 2020 was due to the introduction of fee-free online short courses by TAFE NSW to people wanting to upskill during the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of these fee-free short courses are locally developed skill sets.

26 NSW Private Providers reported locally developed skill sets for the first time in 2020. This training activity was previously reported as subject only enrolments.

27 Some training activity submitted by TAFE NSW between 2015 to 2020 may have been reported with an outcome of '70 – Continuing activity' instead of activity not started, which is out of scope of reporting. TAFE NSW investigations to date have shown the impact on previously reported data is immaterial. Users of this information should be aware of this issue while conducting comparisons between years. Data on reporting hours and FYTEs are unaffected.

28 In the January to March quarter of 2023, there has been an increase in subject activity reported with an *outcome identifier – national* of '70 – Continuing activity' due to a high volume of students enrolling under Fee Free initiatives - this activity is being currently monitored by the New South Wales department and may result in revision of data in the January to June submission.

Western Australia

29 The increase in training activity for Western Australia in 2020 and 2021 was due to the introduction, by the Department of Training and Workforce Development, of a wide range of initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to encourage people to enrol fee-free or at much reduced rates in targeted areas of training both at the qualification and skill set level.

30 Western Australia has comparatively high missing client demographic data across several attributes, including labour force status, Indigenous status, disability status, and previous highest education level.

'Not known' information

31 Data are reported as 'not known' for the following reasons:

- information was not collected

- a student has not responded to a question on the enrolment form

- invalid information was supplied.

32 Caution should be taken when using data which allow a 'not known' response.

33 For demonstrative purposes, the extent of 'not known' data, as submitted and before NCVER's counting student methodology has been applied, for selected student variables is illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1   Government-funded clients with 'not known' data, January to March 2019 to 2023 (%)

	Jan-Mar 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Jan-Mar 2023
Disability status	5.8	4.5	4.3	3.6	3.7
Gender	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4
Indigenous status	3.5	3.7	3.3	2.7	2.9
Labour force status	10.5	8.7	8.9	9.6	10.0
Previous highest education level	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.6	4.3
Prior education	3.0	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.1
School status	30.1	1.8	1.9	2.1	1.8

34 NCVER's counting student methodology can impact the rates of 'not known' responses either positively or negatively. For comparison, the extent of 'not known' data once the counting student methodology has been applied are illustrated in Table 2.

a. In the event of conflicting demographic information, the value will be set to 'not known'; for example, where the same student is reported as both Indigenous and non-Indigenous

b. In the event of a combination of known and unknown information, the value will be set to the known value; for example, where the same student is reported as Indigenous and 'not known' they are considered Indigenous.

Table 2   Government-funded students with 'not known' data, January to March 2019 to 2023 (%)

	Jan-Mar 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Jan-Mar 2023
Disability status	5.9	4.5	4.4	3.7	3.8
Gender	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4
Indigenous status	3.5	3.7	3.3	2.7	2.9
Labour force status	10.8	9.0	9.3	10.0	10.4
Previous highest education level	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.5	4.3
Prior education	2.9	2.6	3.0	3.1	3.0
School status	30.0	1.8	1.9	2.1	1.8

Administrative outcomes

35 Administrative outcomes are those that represent a procedural state of a subject rather than a period of active delivery or assessment. These *outcome identifier – national* values include '60 – Credit Transfer', '61 – Superseded subject' and '85 – Not yet started'. These outcomes are not reported on in NCVER's publications.

36 As these outcomes are not in scope of NCVER's publication, reporting of them will be determined by individual state and territory requirements, which may mean that these outcomes are never captured.

37 Data on these outcomes are presented in the tables following.

38 *Credit transfer* identifies that a student has received training credit for a subject they have completed previously.

Table 3   Government-funded subject enrolments by credit transfer and state/territory, January to March 2019 to 2023 ('000)

Credit transfer subjects	Jan-Mar 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Jan-Mar 2023
New South Wales	100.1	89.0	92.5	76.3	80.3
Victoria	80.4	70.3	54.8	63.5	120.8
Queensland	88.1	80.7	85.7	106.4	157.1
South Australia	14.5	17.1	21.3	16.6	22.5
Western Australia	31.4	35.7	36.6	40.9	88.7
Tasmania	7.2	6.8	6.7	5.5	9.9
Northern Territory	4.7	4.2	4.1	3.6	5.2
Australian Capital Territory	6.4	4.3	4.1	5.8	9.6

39 *Superseded subject* identifies that training activity started in a subject but was not completed before the student was transferred to a superseding subject against which the end outcome will be recorded.

Table 4   Government-funded subject enrolments by superseded subject and state/territory, January to March 2019 to 2023 ('000)

Superseded subjects	Jan-Mar 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Jan-Mar 2023
New South Wales	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	2.4
Victoria	-	-	-	-	-
Queensland	0.0	0.0	0.3	2.2	1.2
South Australia	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
Western Australia	0.0	-	0.1	1.9	0.9
Tasmania	0.0	0.0	-	0.2	0.2
Northern Territory	0.0	-	-	-	0.0
Australian Capital Territory	-	0.0	-	0.0	0.0

Note: A dash (-) represents a true zero.

40 *Not yet started* indicates that a student has been enrolled into a subject, but training activity or assessment has yet to commence. It is not mandatory to report subjects with this outcome to NCVER.

Table 5   Government-funded subject enrolments by not yet started and state/territory, January to March 2019 to 2023 ('000)

Not yet started subjects	Jan-Mar 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Jan-Mar 2023
New South Wales	0.3	0.4	2.1	319.1	16.7
Victoria	0.4	-	0.4	0.5	0.8
Queensland	-	-	-	-	-
South Australia	13.1	20.6	24.5	28.6	33.7
Western Australia	-	-	-	-	-
Tasmania	0.1	0.5	0.8	1.7	3.2
Northern Territory	10.6	8.2	8.8	9.6	12.0
Australian Capital Territory	56.3	52.3	49.7	42.4	40.4

Note: A dash (-) represents a true zero.

Miscellaneous

41 In tables containing student remoteness, 'offshore' refers to the overseas postal addresses of students studying in Australia.