# B Child care, education and training sector overview

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## B.1 Introduction

The Child care, education and training (CCET) sector services covered in this Report comprise:

* Early childhood education and care (ECEC) (chapter 3) — services related to early childhood, comprising child care and preschool services
* school education (chapter 4) — formal schooling, consisting of six to eight years of primary school education followed by five to six years of secondary schooling
* Vocational education and training (VET) (chapter 5) — government funded VET activity.

The inclusion of higher education in this sector overview results in a broader scope than the three service‑specific chapters.

### Profile of the CCET sector

#### Sector outline

The formal education and training system starts at preschool and continues through the years of compulsory schooling (generally year 10 – see section 4.1, chapter 4) and post school education (figure B.1). Child care provides services to children aged 0–12 years.

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| Figure B.1 Outline of the Australian education and training system**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure B.1 Outline of the Australian education and training system  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a There are different starting ages and names for preschool (see table 3A.1) and school education (see section 4.1) across jurisdictions. b In SA primary school scans pre‑year 1 to year 7 and secondary school spans years 8 to 12. c Providers deliver qualifications in more than one sector, all subject to meeting the relevant quality assurance requirements. |
| *Source*: Australian, State and Territory governments (unpublished). |
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Formal learning does not always progress in a linear fashion from secondary school to VET or university, as there are many learning pathways an individual might take over their lifetime. In addition, people may work in a range of roles and industries and continue their learning, for example, mature age students returning to complete senior schooling qualifications. In particular, most disadvantaged students are more likely to follow non‑linear or fragmented pathways of education (Abbott‑Chapman 2011).

#### Roles and responsibilities

A broad overview of the Australian, State and Territory governments’ involvement in the CCET sector is provided in box B.1.

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| Box B.1 Government roles and responsibilities in the CCET sector |
| **ECEC**  The Australian Government has policy responsibility for child care. It administers a fee subsidy (Child Care Benefit [CCB]), an out‑of‑pocket subsidy (Child Care Rebate) and provides some direct funding to CCB approved services and Budget Based Funded services. State and Territory governments may solely fund some child care services or contribute to services in receipt of Australian Government funding.  State and Territory governments are responsible for funding and providing preschool services. State and Territory governments are responsible for regulating services under the National Quality Framework (NQF) and licensing or registering ECEC services not approved under the NQF. The Australian Government also provides funding to States and Territories for preschool.  **School education**  The Australian Government and State and Territory governments share responsibility for developing, progressing and reviewing national objectives and outcomes for schooling and the national curriculum.  State and Territory governments are responsible for:   * ensuring all school aged children have the opportunity to enrol in a safe and supportive school that provides a high quality education, including students with particular needs * ensuring that children of compulsory school‑age attend school and for developing policy, delivering services, monitoring and reviewing performance of individual schools, regulating schools, and implementing the national curriculum * administration of government schools, for which they provide the majority of funding.   The Australian Government is responsible for:   * allocating funding to states and territories to support improved service delivery and reform to meet nationally agreed outcomes, including students with particular needs * ensuring funding arrangements for non‑government schools are consistent with, and support, the responsibilities of the states and territories in regulation, educational quality, performance and reporting on educational outcomes. |
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| Box B.1 (continued) |
| Non‑government schools operate under conditions determined by State and Territory government registration authorities and receive Australian, State and Territory government funding.  **VET**  The Australian Government and State and Territory governments allocate funding for VET services and to support the maintenance of public training infrastructure. They oversee the delivery of publicly funded training and facilitate the development and training of the public VET workforce.  The Australian Government provides funding to State and Territory governments to support training systems and provide specific incentives, interventions and assistance for national priority areas.  **Higher education**  Regulation and governance for higher education are shared between the Australian Government, State and Territory governments and higher education institutions. Universities are generally established under state or territory legislation and, once established, become self‑accrediting and responsible for their own standards. The majority of Australian Government funding on higher education is administered under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. |
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#### Engagement in CCET

In 2016, 1.2 million children aged 12 years or younger attended an Australian Government CCB approved child care service (table 3A.18). Some of these children used more than one type of care. In 2015, 304 153 children aged 4 and 5 years were enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (table 3A.25).

In 2015, there were 3.7 million full time school students attending 9404 schools in Australia, comprising 2.4 million students attending 6639 government schools and   
1.3 million students attending 2765 non‑government schools (tables 4A.1–3).

In 2015, there were 1.2 million government funded VET students in Australia (table 5A.4) and 1978 registered training organisations delivering government funded programs at 35 179 locations in Australia (table 5A.3).

There were 1.4 million students enrolled at all higher education providers in 2015, comprising 1 046 682 domestic and 363 451 international student enrolments. The most common course level was a bachelor degree, which accounted for around two thirds of all students. The majority of students undertook their course on campus on a full time basis (Australian Government Department of Education and Training 2016a).

#### Expenditure

Government Finance Statistics (GFS) data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) are used in this section for all CCET services with the exception of child care services (GFS data are not separately available for child care).

In 2014‑15, total government operating expenditure net of transfers (payments between different levels of government) for all CCET services (with the exception of child care services) was $84.6 billion for all governments (table BA.2). Primary and secondary education accounted for the highest proportion (51.2 per cent), followed by university education (29.4 per cent), Technical and further education (TAFE) (6.8 per cent) and preschool education (6.0 per cent). Proportions differed substantially between the Australian Government and the State and Territory governments (figure B.2).

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| Figure B.2 Government expenditure on education and training, 2014‑15**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure B.2 Government expenditure on education and training, 2014-15  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| nec= Not elsewhere classified. a See tables BA.3 and BA.4 for detailed footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (2016) *Government Finance Statistics, Education, 2014‑15*, Cat. no. 5518.0.55.001;  tables BA.3–4. |
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In 2014‑15, total recurrent expenditure for child care services was $7.3 billion, equivalent to 0.5 per cent of gross domestic product (table BA.1 and ABS 2016a). Child care expenditure data are sourced from the ECEC chapter in this Report, and are not directly comparable with GFS data.

#### Workforce

Nationally in 2016, there was 106 622 primary contact staff employed in Australian Government CCB approved child care services (table 3A.45). In 2014, there were 16 747 university qualified teachers delivering preschool programs (table 3A.51).

Nationally in 2015, primary schools employed 198 316 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers and secondary schools employed 184 372 FTE teachers (table 4A.3).

There is no single accepted measure of the VET workforce although there were an estimated 31 050 vocational education teachers in 2015‑16.

There were 43 807 academic staff and 65 739 non‑academic staff (non‑teaching or   
non‑research) employed at Australian universities in 2015 (Australian Government Department of Education and Training 2016b).

### Social and economic impacts of education and training

#### Benefits of CCET

Education aims to develop the capacities and talents of students, to ensure necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life.

Across a lifetime, education and training can provide significant economic and social benefits to the individual.

* Higher education levels are associated with higher employment and earnings   
  (OECD 2013, Shomos 2010). Nationally in 2015, people whose highest non‑school qualification was at least a bachelor degree (84.2 per cent) or a Certificate III or IV (81.5 per cent) were most likely to be employed, while people who had not completed secondary school (51.5 per cent) were the least likely to be employed (table BA.5).
* Levels of qualifications are also associated with types of occupation. In 2015, for those aged 15–64 years, 73.9 per cent employed as professionals had at least a bachelor degree qualification and 53.5 per cent employed as technicians or trade workers had a Certificate III or IV as their highest level of non‑school qualification (table BA.6).

Increased educational attainment also results in improved productivity through accelerated rates of innovation, the development of basic knowledge capabilities and the dissemination of new ideas (Murray 2009; PC 2011).

#### Factors affecting engagement and outcomes in CCET

Engagement and outcomes in CCET can be affected by a range of socioeconomic and geographical factors.

* Socioeconomic disadvantage can result in poor school attendance (which in itself can lead to poorer academic achievement), lower retention and completion rates and poorer average outcomes at school, as students are less likely to have parental academic support or resources that stimulate learning.
* Geographical barriers to engagement are largely faced by people living in rural and remote areas, and relate to limited or reduced access to quality education and training resources. Schools in rural and remote areas tend to be smaller with less resourcing, resulting in more limited program offerings. However, VET sector participation in rural and remote areas is higher than in urban areas which could be partly due to the higher prevalence of early school leavers who may be seeking post‑school options to support entry into the workforce. Post‑school education and work may be partly limited by a range of factors which kept people from engaging in opportunities outside their local area (Webb et al. 2015).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are affected by both of these factors and overall have a lower level of participation in childcare, education and training than   
non‑Indigenous Australians. Engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with child care services can be affected by the following key barriers: lack of available places (including what families consider to be culturally appropriate services), lack of transport and affordability (including uncertainty about government subsidies) (Jackiewicz et al. 2011). Non‑attendance at school can be influenced by a lack of recognition by schools of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history (Purdie and Buckley 2010).

Educational aspirations can have a substantial effect on educational outcomes and have a similar effect on outcomes regardless of socioeconomic status (SES) or Indigenous status (Homel and Ryan 2014). Parental influences and peer plans are particularly important drivers of young people’s educational aspirations and choices (Gemici et al. 2014). Students whose parents want them to attend university had occupational aspirations significantly higher than those whose parents did not have these expectations.

### Service‑sector objectives

The CCET sector has a range of objectives, some of which are common across all sector components, while others are specific to a particular sub‑sector. Specific high‑level objectives of ECEC, school education, VET and higher education service areas are in   
box B.2. Service delivery objectives are outlined in the relevant chapters.

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| Box B.2 Objectives of the CCET sector |
| ECEC services aim to meet the education, care and development needs of children, and meet the needs of families including enabling increased workforce participation, by providing universal access to early childhood education services for eligible children and accessible child care services.  The overarching goals for school education are that: 1) Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence; and 2) all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.  Australia’s governments aim to have a school education system:   * that benefits all young Australians, providing them with essential literacy and numeracy skills, a solid foundation in knowledge and understanding linked with complex skills that underpin problem solving, critical thinking and creativity, so they can reach their full potential * where Australian students excel by international standards * that reduces the educational disadvantage of children * that enables young people to make a successful transition from school to work and/or further study.   The VET system aims to:   * deliver a productive and highly skilled workforce * enable all Australians to participate effectively in the labour market and contribute to Australia’s economic future * contribute to increasing the skill levels of the working aged population.   The VET system also has a particular aim to address the needs of individuals experiencing disadvantage or disengagement.  The objectives of higher education services, as reflected in the *Commonwealth Higher Education Support Act 2003*, include contributing to the development of cultural and intellectual life in Australia, and appropriately meeting Australia’s social and economic needs for a highly educated and skilled population. |
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## B.2 Sector performance indicator framework

This sector performance indicator framework (figure B.3) is made up of two elements.

* Sector objectives — three sector objectives are a précis of key Council of Australian Governments (COAG) commitments. Although these goals are based on outcomes in these commitments, wording has been amended for relevance to the CCET sector overview reporting (box B.2).
* Sector‑wide indicators — three sector‑wide headline indicators reflect activity across the sector. Several measures support each indicator.

Sector‑wide indicators are high level indicators of CCET outcomes. Many factors are likely to influence outcomes; however, these outcomes inform development of appropriate policies and delivery of government services.

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| Figure B.3 CCET sector performance indicator framework |
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### School readiness

‘School readiness’ is an indicator of governments’ objective that all children have access to ECEC services that meet the education, care and development needs of children (box B.3).

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| Box B.3 School readiness |
| ‘School readiness’ refers to the level of development at which a child can fulfil schooling requirements, and can be described in terms of a range of factors including a child’s emotional and social competence, language and cognitive skills, and resilience. It is reported using two measures:   * Transition to primary school, defined as the proportion of children developmentally on track (results above the 25th percentile) on four or more (of the five) domains of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). * Early learning (homebased), a proxy measure, defined as the proportion of children aged  3–8 years who are involved in home‑based reading activities (based on the number of days per week that a parent told stories, read to a child or listened to a child read).   Higher proportions of children developmentally on track, and involved in home‑based reading activities is desirable.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time and across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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#### Transition to primary school

Transition to school represents a major change in a child’s life. Children displaying higher levels of development are more likely than those who do not to make a successful transition to primary school and have higher levels of achievement (AIHW 2011).

Nationally in 2015, 69.4 per cent of children were on track on four or more domains of the AEDC, as they entered school (compared with 69.1 per cent in 2012) (figure B.4 and   
table BA.7). The proportion was higher for non‑Indigenous children (70.6 per cent) compared to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (48.6 per cent) (figure B.4). Table BA.7 includes proportions of students who were on track in one or more, two or more, three or more, and all five domains for 2009, 2012 and 2015.

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| Figure B.4 Children on track on four or more domains of the AEDC as they enter school, by Indigenous status, 2015**a** |
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| a See box B.3 and table BA.7 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished) *Australian Early Development Census 2015*; table BA.7. |
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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are more likely than non‑Indigenous children to be developmentally at risk (score in the 10–25 percentile for an AEDC domain) and developmentally vulnerable (score in the lowest 10 per cent for an AEDC domain) (tables BA.8–9).

#### Early learning (home based)

Home literacy activities can improve children’s reading, vocabulary, general information and letter recognition skills when entering school. Parent/carer education levels may influence a supportive home learning environment (AIHW 2011; McTurk et al. 2011).

Nationally in 2014, 50.0 per cent of children aged 3–8 years were told stories, read to or listened to reading each day, compared to 48.5 per cent in 2011 (for children aged   
0–2 years this was 56.1 per cent and 57.1 per cent, respectively) (table BA.10).

### Participation

‘Participation’ is an indicator of governments’ objectives to develop the talents and competencies of the population through the education and training system, to equip them with the learning and skills required to contribute to Australia’s economic future (box B.4).

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| Box B.4 Participation |
| Participation’ is defined by four measures:   * Participation in education and training — the proportion of 15–19, 20–24 and 15–24 year olds participating in education and training by level of study. * Full time participation in education and training and/or employment — the proportion of  15–19, 20–24, 15–24, 17–24 and 15–64 year olds participating in full time education and training and/or employment. * School leaver full time participation in education and training and/or employment — proportion of 17–24 year old school leavers participating in full time education and training and/or employment. [*This aligns with an indicator in the NEA*]. * Participation in higher education by selected groups — the proportion of the population participating in higher education by selected disadvantaged groups, compared with their representation in the community.   Holding other factors constant, higher or increasing participation in education and training suggests an improvement in educational outcomes through greater access.  The level of participation in education and training can vary across jurisdictions due to factors such as different age/grade structures, starting ages at school, minimum leaving age and the level of service provision. In addition, there are influences beyond the direct control of governments, such as labour market changes, population movements, urbanisation and SES.  The level of participation in education, training or work can indicate the proportion of the population at risk of marginal or non‑participation in the labour market. Young people who are not participating full time in education, training, work or some combination of these activities may be more likely to have difficulty making a transition to full time employment in the future.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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#### Participation in education and training by level of study

Nationally in 2015, 62.2 per cent of 15–24 year olds were enrolled in education and training (83.2 per cent of 15–19 year olds and 43.6 per cent of 20–24 year olds)   
(table BA.11). Participation by level of study is shown in figure B.5.

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| Figure B.5 Participation in education and training by level of study, by age groups, 2015**a** |
| |  | | --- | | **15–19 year olds**  **20–24 year olds** | |
| nfd = not further defined. a See box B.4 and table BA.11 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015,* Cat. no. 6227.0.30.001; table BA.11. |
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Participation rates for the 17–24, 25–29 and 15–64 year age groups are reported in   
table BA.11. National data on participation in education and training by level of study are reported for single year ages from 15 to 24 years in table BA.12. A five year time series for various age groups is reported in table BA.13. Data on applications to enrol in an educational institution are reported in table BA.14.

#### Full time participation in education and training and/or employment

Nationally in 2015, 64.3 per cent of 15–64 year olds were in full time education, training and/or employment. Results for selected age groups are in figure B.6.

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| Figure B.6 Full time participation in education and training and/or employment, by age groups, 2015**a** |
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| a See box B.4 and table BA.15 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Education and Work, Australia, May 2014*, Cat. no. 6227.0.30.001; table BA.15. |
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Participation rates in full time education and training at or above Certificate III level and/or employment are presented for various age groups in table BA.16, with data presented by SES in tables BA.17–18.

#### School leaver full time participation in education and training and/or employment

Nationally in 2015, 73.0 per cent of 17–24 year old school leavers were fully participating in education, training and/or employment (figure B.7).

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| Figure B.7 Proportion of 17–24 year old school leavers participating in full time education and training and/or employment**a** |
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| a See box B.4 and table BA.19 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Education and Work, Australia, May 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015,* Cat. no. 6227.0.30.001; table BA.19. |
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The most recent available Census data are for 2011, with data available disaggregated by Indigenous status. Nationally in 2011, a larger proportion of non‑Indigenous 17–24 year old school leavers were in full time education and training and/or employment   
(74.0 per cent) than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 17–24 year old school leavers (39.4 per cent) (table BA.21).

Additional data on school leaver participation in education and training and/or employment by SES are presented in table BA.22 (survey data) and BA.23 (Census data).

#### Participation in higher education by selected groups

In higher education, there is an under‑representation of people from regional and remote areas of Australia, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people from low SES backgrounds, compared with their representation in the community (figure B.8).

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| Figure B.8 Participation in higher education by selected groups, compared with their representation in the community, 2015**a** |
| |  | | --- | |  | |
| a See box B.4 and table BA.24 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education and Training (2016) *Higher Education Statistics Collection, 2015 Student data*; ABS (2016) *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2015,* Cat. no 4430.0; ABS (2016) *Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2014‑15*, Cat. no. 3218.0; ABS (2015) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Jun 2015,* Cat. no. 3101.0; ABS (2014) *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2011 to 2026,* Cat. no. 3238.0; table BA.24. |
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### Attainment

‘Attainment’ is an indicator of governments’ objective for people to possess adequate skills to enable them to contribute to society and the economy (box B.5).

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| Box B.5 Attainment |
| ‘Attainment’ is defined by six measures:   * Level of highest non‑school qualification completed — proportion of 15–64 year olds with a non‑school qualification. * Population with or working towards a non‑school qualification — proportion of 20–64 year olds with or working towards a non‑school qualification. [This aligns with an indicator in the *National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (NASWD)*.] * Completion of year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate II level or above — proportion of 20–24 and 20–64 year olds who have completed year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate II level or above. [This aligns with an indicator for 20–24 year olds in the *National Education Agreement (NEA)*.] * Completion of year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate III level or above — proportion of 20–24 year olds who have completed year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate III level or above. [This aligns with an indicator in the NEA.] * Population with qualifications at Certificate III level or above — proportion of 20–64 year olds with qualifications at Certificate III level or above. [This aligns with an indicator in the NASWD] * Achievement of foundation skills (literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology‑rich environments [PSTRE]) — proportion of 20–64 year olds who have achieved literacy, numeracy and PSTRE competencies. [This aligns with an indicator for literacy and numeracy in the NASWD].   Educational attainment is used as a proxy indicator for the stock of skills. Holding other factors constant, a higher or increasing attainment level indicates an improvement in educational outcomes, leading to additional contributions to society and the economy.  However, attainment should be interpreted with caution. It understates the skill base because it does not capture skills acquired through partially completed courses, courses not leading to a formal qualification, and informal learning. Industry endorsed skill sets are also an important consideration for industry in course design. Skill sets recognise part qualifications and groups of competencies, but data on skill sets are not available for this Report.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time and across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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#### Level of highest non‑school qualification completed

Nationally in 2015, 60.4 per cent of people aged 15–64 years had a non‑school qualification, with over one quarter having a bachelor degree or above (26.6 per cent) (figure B.9).

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| Figure B.9 Level of highest non‑school qualification completed, 15–64 year olds, 2015**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure B.9 Level of highest non-school qualification completed, 15–64 year olds, 2015  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box B.5 and table BA.25 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015*, Cat. no. 6227.0.30.001; table BA.25. |
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#### Population with or working towards a non‑school qualification

Nationally in 2015, 70.3 per cent of 20–64 year olds had or were working towards a non‑school qualification — an increase from 66.9 per cent in 2011 (figure B.10).

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| Figure B.10 Proportion of 20–64 year olds with or working towards a non‑school qualification**a** |
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| a See box B.5 and table BA.26 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (2015) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015*, Cat. no. 6227.0, Canberra;  ABS (unpublished) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2011−2014*, Cat. no. 6227.0; table BA.26. |
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Census data are available for the total population and by Indigenous status. The most recent available data are for 2011 and are reported in tables BA.27‑28.

#### Completion of year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate II level or above

Nationally in 2015, 88.4 per cent of 20–24 year olds and 80.5 per cent of 20–64 year olds had completed year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate II level or above (figure B.11).

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| Figure B.11 Completion of year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate II level or above, by age groups**a** |
| |  | | --- | | **20–24 year olds** | |  | | **20–64 year olds** | |  | |
| a See box B.5 and table BA.29 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (2015) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015*, Cat. no. 6227.0, Canberra; ABS (various years) *Education and Work*, *Australia* *— Additional data cubes, May 2011, 2012 and 2013,*  Cat. no. 6227.0.55.003, Canberra; ABS (unpublished) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2014,* Cat. no. 6227.0,Canberra; table BA.29. |
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Census data are available for the total population and by Indigenous status, remoteness area and SES. The most recent available data are for 2011 and are reported in tables BA.30–31 and BA.33. Additional survey data by SES are presented in table BA.32.

#### Completion of year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate III level or above

Nationally in 2015, 87.1 per cent of 20–24 year olds had completed year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate III level or above (figure B.12).

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| Figure B.12 Proportion of 20–24 year olds who have completed year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate III level or above**a** |
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| a See box B.5 and table BA.34 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (2015) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015*, Cat. no. 6227.0, Canberra; ABS (various years) *Education and Work*, *Australia* *— Additional data cubes, May 2011, 2012 and 2013,*  Cat. no. 6227.0.55.003, Canberra; ABS (unpublished) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2014,* Cat. no. 6227.0,Canberra; table BA.34. |
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Census data are also available for this indicator. The most recent available data are for 2011 and are reported in table BA.35. Additional survey data by SES are reported in   
table BA.36.

#### Population with qualifications at Certificate III level or above

Nationally in 2015, 60.0 per cent of 20–64 year olds had a qualification at Certificate III level or above (figure B.13). The proportion of 20–64 year olds with qualifications at Certificate III level or above by SES are presented in table BA.40.

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| Figure B.13 Proportion of 20–64 year olds with qualifications at Certificate III level or above**a** |
| |  | | --- | |  | |
| a See box B.5 and table BA.37 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (2015) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2015*, Cat. no. 6227.0, Canberra; ABS (various years) *Education and Work*, *Australia* *— Additional data cubes, May 2011, 2012 and 2013,*  Cat. no. 6227.0.55.003, Canberra; ABS (unpublished) *Education and Work, Australia, May 2014,* Cat. no. 6227.0,Canberra; table BA.37. |
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Census data are available for the total population and by Indigenous status and SES. The most recent available data are for 2011 and are reported in tables BA.38, BA.39 and BA.41.

#### Achievement of foundation skills (literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology‑rich environments [PSTRE])

Data for 2011‑12 for this measure are sourced from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) which is an OECD survey that measures adult skills and competencies.

Data are available for all skill levels for literacy, numeracy and PSTRE competencies (where below level 1 represents the poorest level of skill attainment and level 5 the highest level of skill attainment for literacy and numeracy; level 3 represents the highest level of skill attainment for PSTRE).

The proportions of the population aged 20–64 years across all PIAAC literacy, numeracy, and PSTRE skill levels in 2011‑12 are in tables BA.42–44.

Additional data on the proportions of the population aged 15–74 years across all PIAAC literacy, numeracy, and PSTRE skill levels in 2011‑12 are also reported in   
tables BA.42–44.

## B.3 Cross‑cutting and interface issues

Although this Report addresses three areas of education in separate chapters, research shows many linkages between these services across the lifespan.

* Participation in quality ECEC impacts beneficially upon children’s educational and social development (Ramey et al. 2012; Tayler et al. 2013).
* Engagement in school influences a child’s prospects of educational and occupational success, over and above his or her academic attainment and socioeconomic background. The more children felt connected to their school community and felt engaged, the greater their likelihood of achieving a higher educational qualification and going on to a professional career (Abbott‑Chapman et al. 2013).
* Completion of school is a predicator of positive life outcomes. On average, young people who complete Year 12 tend to have more successful transitions from education to work than those who do not. Completion of senior secondary schooling provides the best labour market outcomes, relative to other vocational education paths (Ryan 2011).
* There are also benefits of completing a VET qualification, compared to withdrawing before completion, in terms of students’ future employment prospects, occupational status, salary and further study options (Karmel and Fieger 2012).

Research also identifies interrelationships between education and other government services.

* The value of investment in ECEC shows sustained benefits beyond childhood, including government savings in the justice system (Reynolds et al. 2009).
* Higher levels of education are associated with health benefits. Cutler and Lleras Muney (2007) found a clear association between education and health. Whilst the mechanisms by which education influences health are likely to be complex, there is a direct relationship — better educated individuals have more positive health outcomes. This association remains significant even after controlling for other factors.
* Education can also reduce the likelihood of social exclusion, and thus reduce reliance on government and community services. Social exclusion comprises a lack of material resources, unemployment, poor health and disability, and limited social connections and interactions. Early school leavers, and people who have Certificate II level as their highest qualification, suffer from social exclusion to a greater degree than those with higher levels of educational attainment (Buddelmeyer et al. 2012).

## B.4 References

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