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# Report on Government Services 2021

PART B: RELEASED ON 2 FEBRUARY 2021

Produced by the Productivity Commission for the Steering Committee for Review of Government Service Provision. The content for this PDF is generated from the online, interactive publication. Data below are the most recent at the time of preparing the report. In some cases, charts and tables may present data for a single jurisdiction. To access data for all jurisdictions and the most current data available, go to: [www.pc.gov.au/rogs](http://www.pc.gov.au/rogs)

## B Child care, education and training

### Impact of COVID-19 on data for the Child care, education and training sector overview

COVID-19 may affect data in this report in a number of ways. This includes in respect of actual performance (that is, the impact of COVID-19 on service delivery in 2020 which is reflected in the data results), and the collection and processing of data (that is, the ability of data providers to undertake data collection and process results for inclusion in the report).

Various restrictions introduced from March 2020 including travel restrictions, shutting down of non-essential services, stimulus packages, free child care for working parents and social distancing rules are likely to have had an impact on the child care, education and training sector. Any impacts which are specific to the service areas covered in this Report are noted in sections 3, 4, and 5.

### Main aims of services within the sector

The child care, education and training (CCET) sector services aim to care for and develop the capacities and talents of children and students, to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life.

### Services included in the sector

#### [Early childhood education and care \(ECEC\)](#) >

Services related to early childhood and out-of-school care, comprising child care and preschool services.

#### [School education](#) >

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 \(VET\)](#) >

Tertiary education delivered by technical and further education (TAFE) institutes and other VET providers.

**Higher education** — education delivered by universities (not included as a service specific-chapter in this Report).

Detailed information on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of service provision and the achievement of outcomes for the ECEC, Schools and VET service areas is contained in the service-specific chapters.

**Note:** Data tables are referenced by table xA.1, xA.2, etc, with x referring to the section or

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overview. For example, table BA.1 refers to data table 1 for this sector overview.

## Government expenditure in the sector

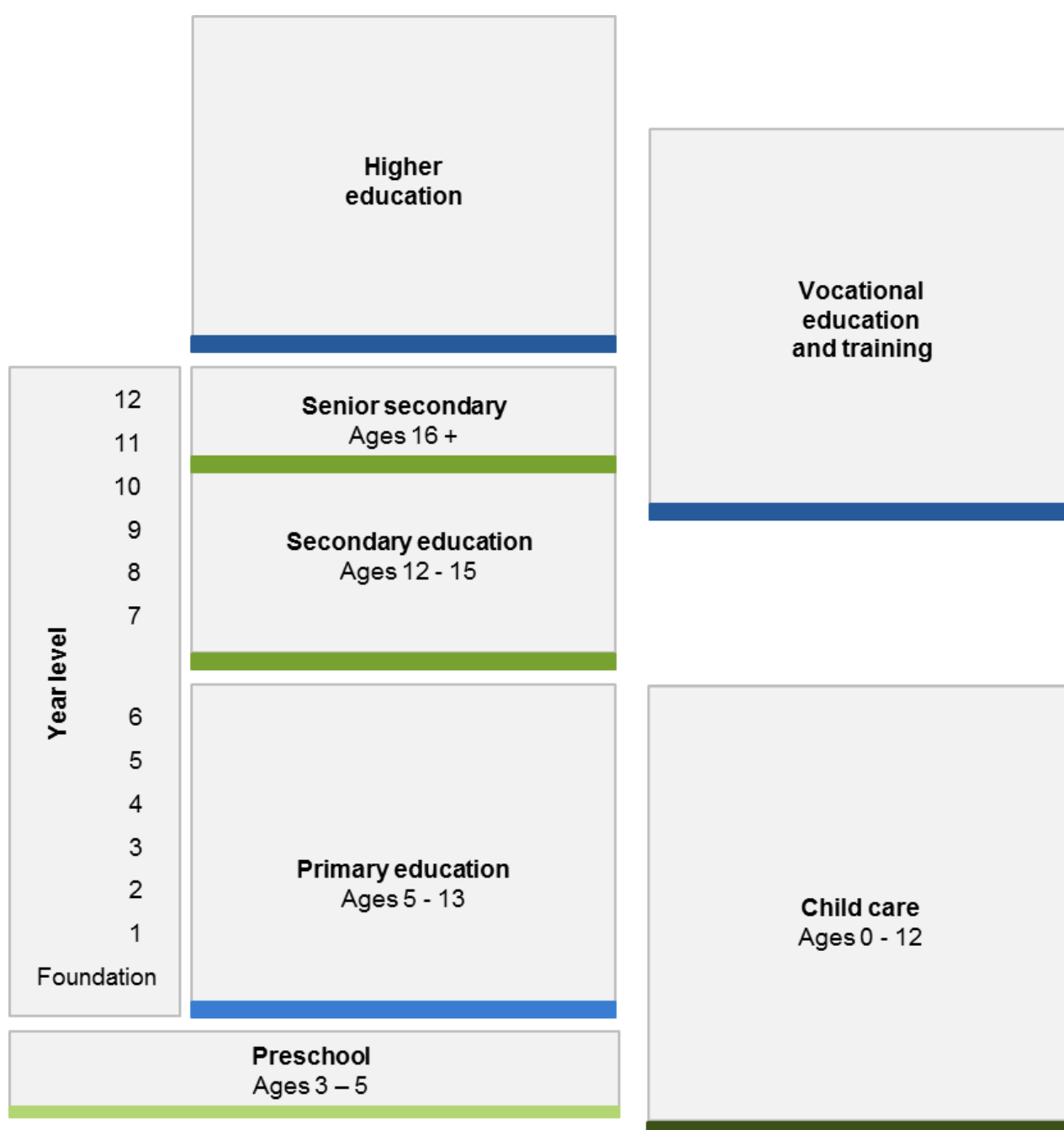
Expenditure on CCET services is significant. Total Australian, State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on CCET services was \$82.3 billion, around 29.8 per cent of total government expenditure on services covered in this Report. School education was the largest contributor (\$65.6 billion, table 4A.10), followed by ECEC (\$10.5 billion, table 3A.4) and VET (\$6.2 billion, table 5A.1).

For higher education, expenditure data are not collected for this Report, but in the ABS's Government Finance Statistics (GFS) report<sup>1</sup> it was around \$30.7 billion in 2018-19.

## Flows in the sector

The formal education and training system starts at preschool and continues through the years of compulsory schooling (generally year 10 — see sub-section 4.1, section 4) and post school education. Child care provides services to children aged 0–12 years, in the years before preschool begins and in out-of-school care during the primary school years (figure B.1). Formal learning does not always progress in a linear fashion from preschool to school (primary and secondary) to VET or university, as there are many learning pathways an individual might take over their lifetime.

**Figure B.1 Outline of the Australian childcare, education and training system<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



**a** There are different starting ages and names for preschool (see section 3, table 3.1) and school education (see section 4, context) across jurisdictions. **b** In SA primary school spans pre-year 1 to year 7 and secondary school spans years 8 to 12. **c** Providers can deliver qualifications in more than one sector, all subject to meeting the relevant quality assurance requirements.

Source: Australian, State and Territory governments (unpublished).

Participation in education and training is particularly important for younger people. Nationally in 2020, 62.5 per cent of 15–24 year olds were enrolled in education and training (83.3 per cent of 15–19 year olds and 44.3 per cent of 20–24 year olds), compared to 8.4 per cent of 25–64 year olds (figure B.2).

Select jurisdiction:

Aust

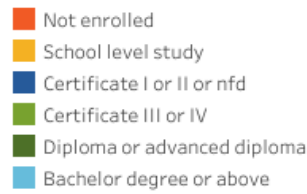
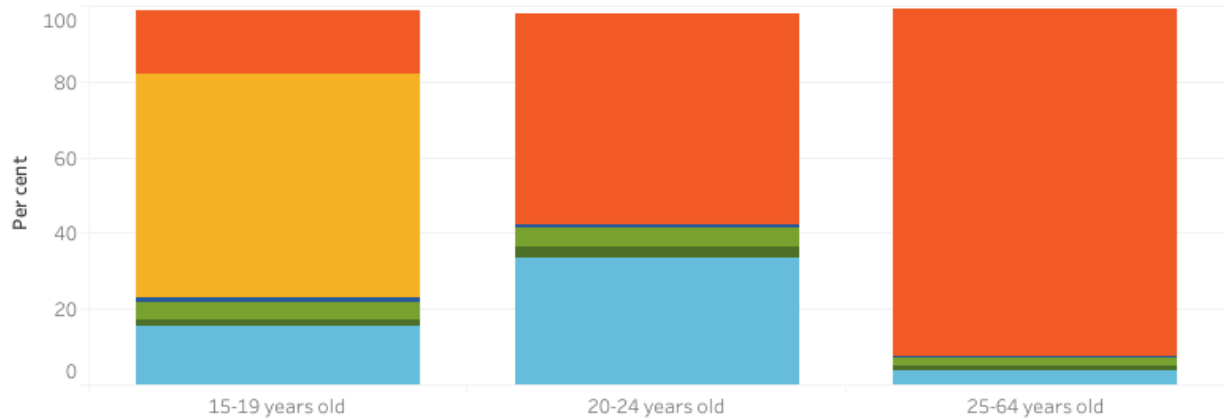



Figure B.2 Participation in education and training, Aust, 2020  
by age group, by level of study



Source: table BA.1  
nfd = not further defined.

Data tables are referenced above by a 'BA' prefix and all data (footnotes and data sources) are available for download from the supporting material below (both in Excel and CSV format).

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Young people's successful transition from compulsory schooling to education, training and employment is particularly important, with a positive relationship between completion of year 12 and subsequent engagement (figure B.3). Nationally in 2020, 69.3 per cent of 17–24 year old school leavers were fully participating in education, training and/or employment (with proportions higher for those completing year 12 compared to year 11 or below). This is below the four previous years (74.0-75.5 per cent); likely due in part to the impacts from COVID-19.

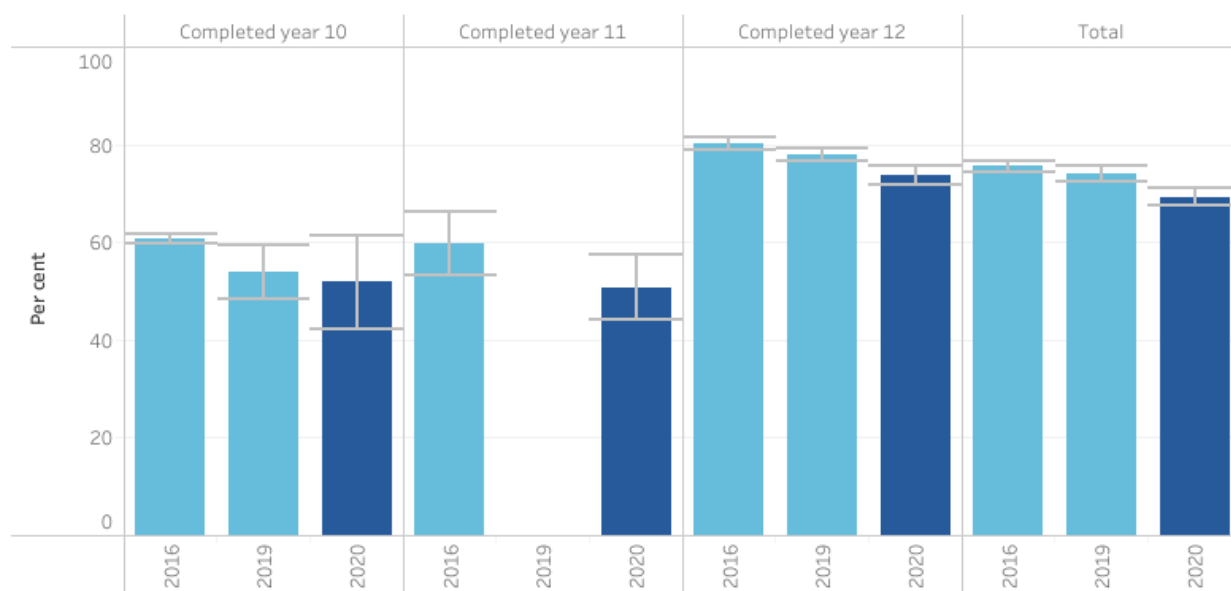
Select year(s):

Multiple values

Select jurisdiction:

Aust

Figure B.3 Proportion of School leavers 17-24 years old participating in education and training and/or employment (a) by completion year, by year



Source: table BA.2

(a) See data table BA.2 for information on non-publication of data for individual jurisdictions.

Data tables are referenced above by a 'BA' prefix and all data (footnotes and data sources) are available for download from the supporting material below (both in Excel and CSV format).



## Sector-wide indicators

Two sector-wide indicators of governments' aim to develop the capacities and talents of children and students to ensure necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life are reported.

- Achievement of foundation skills — proportion of 20–64 year olds who have achieved literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology rich environments (PSTRE) competencies.
- Attainment of qualifications — proportion of 20–64 year olds with qualifications at Certificate III level or above.

High or increasing levels of the achievement of foundation skills or attainment of qualifications indicates an improvement in education and training outcomes.

### Achievement of foundation skills

Achievement of foundation skills is a proxy indicator as it measures only a subset of the skills and values needed for a productive and rewarding life. Data are sourced from the OECD survey *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)*<sup>2</sup> that measures adult skills and competencies for literacy, numeracy and PSTRE. 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 PSTRE skill attainment.

- In 2011-12, the proportion of the population aged 20–64 years who achieved at level 3 or above was 56.7 per cent for literacy and 46.3 per cent for numeracy (tables BA.16–17).
- 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 in tables BA.16–18.

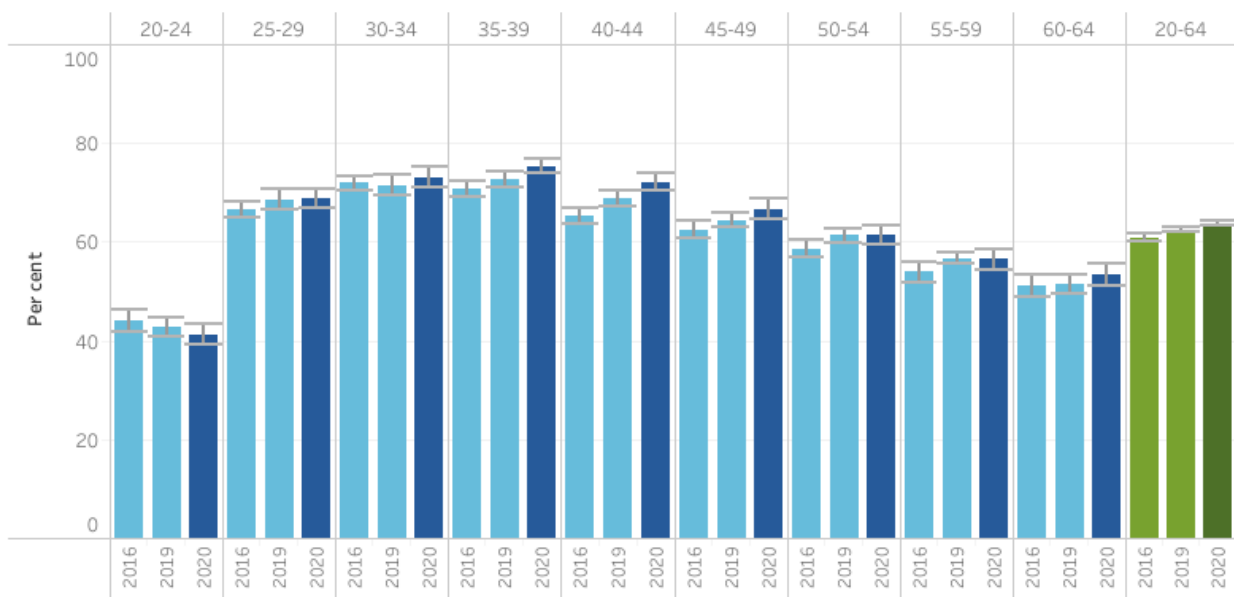
## Attainment of qualifications

Attainment of qualifications is a proxy indicator for skills as 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.

Nationally in 2020, 63.7 per cent of 20–64 year olds had a qualification at Certificate III level or above (figure B.4). Qualification rates at Certificate level III or above are highest for 35–39 year olds and have been increasing over time. The proportion is lower across the remaining working age population age groups. Data by Indigenous status are in table BA.15. Data for 20-24 year olds who have completed year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate III level or above by remoteness are in table BA.11.

Select year(s): Multiple values      Select jurisdiction: Aust      Select age group: All

Figure B.4 Proportion of 20-64 year olds with qualifications at Certificate III level or above, Aust by age group, by year



Source: table BA.13

Data tables are referenced above by a 'BA' prefix and all data (footnotes and data sources) are available for download from the supporting material below (both in Excel and CSV format).



## Download data tables

These data tables relate to the sector as a whole. Data specific to individual service areas are in the data tables under the relevant service area.

[Child care, education and training data tables \(XLSX - 259 Kb\)](#)

[Child care, education and training dataset \(CSV - 238 Kb\)](#)

See the Sector overview text and corresponding table number in the data tables above for detailed definitions, caveats, footnotes and data source(s).

## Footnotes

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (unpublished), *Government Finance Statistics, Education, Australia, 2018-19*, Cat. no. 5518.0.55.001, Canberra. Expenditure data from the GFS are not comparable to expenditure data collected for this Report.
2. The most recent available data are from the first cycle of the PIAAC and are in respect of 2011-12. The second cycle of the PIAAC is due to be conducted in 2022-23 with data anticipated to be available in 2023-24.