
Report on Government Services 2021

PART B, SECTION 4: RELEASED ON 2 FEBRUARY 2021

4 School education

This section is presented in a new online format. Dynamic data visualisations replace the static chapter format used in previous editions. Machine readable data are also available for download. A guide is available on [accessing information in the new format](#).

Impact of COVID-19 on data for the School education section

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).

For the School education section, there has been some impact on the data that is attributable to COVID-19 but this has not affected the comparability of any indicators. These impacts are primarily due to the social distancing restrictions implemented in March 2020 and associated economic downturn, which may have affected 2020 data for the post school destination indicator. Data for 2020 for the Student outcomes (national testing) indicator are not available as NAPLAN testing was not performed in 2020 due to COVID-19. Data for 2020 for the Attendance and participation and Attendance and participation by target group indicators were collected but were not available for reporting due to the impact of COVID-19.

This section focuses on performance information for government-funded school education in Australia.

The **Indicator Results** tab uses data from the data tables to provide information on the performance for each indicator in the **Indicator Framework**. The same data are also available in CSV format.

Context

Objectives for School education

Australian schooling aims for all young Australians to become successful lifelong learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed members of the community positioning them to transition to further study and/or work and successful lives. It aims for students to improve academic achievement and excel by international standards.

To meet this vision, the school education system aims to:

- engage all students and promote student participation
- deliver high quality teaching of a world-class curriculum.

Governments aim for school education services to meet these objectives in an equitable and efficient manner.

The vision and objectives align with the educational goals in the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (EC 2019) and the National School Reform Agreement (NSRA) (COAG 2018).

Service overview

Schooling aims to provide education for all young people. The structure of school education varies across states and territories.

Compulsory school education

Entry to school education is compulsory for all children in all states and territories, although the child age entry requirements vary by jurisdiction (ABS 2020). In 2019, minimum starting ages generally restrict enrolment to children aged between four-and-a-half and five years at the beginning of the year (ABS 2020). (See section 3, interpretative material, for more details.)

National mandatory requirements for schooling — as agreed in the National Youth Participation Requirement (NYPR) — came into effect through relevant State and Territory government legislation in 2010. Under the NYPR, all young people must participate in schooling until they complete year 10; and if they have completed year 10, in full time education, training or employment (or combination of these) until 17 years of age (COAG 2009). Some State and Territory governments have extended these requirements for their jurisdiction.

Type and level of school education

Schools are the institutions within which organised school education takes place (see sub-section 4.2, interpretative material, for a definition of 'school') and are differentiated by the type and level of education they provide:

- *Primary schools* provide education from the first year of primary school — known as the 'foundation year' in the Australian Curriculum (see sub-section 4.2, interpretative material, for the naming conventions used in each state and territory). Primary school education extends to year 6 (year 7 in SA until 2022 when it will be high school). (Prior to 2015, primary school education also extended to year 7 in Queensland and WA.)
- *Secondary schools* provide education from the end of primary school to year 12
- *Special schools* provide education for students that exhibit one or more of the following characteristics before enrolment: mental or physical disability or impairment; slow learning ability; social or emotional problems; or in custody, on remand or in hospital (ABS 2020).

Affiliation, ownership and management

Schools can also be differentiated by their affiliation, ownership and management, which are presented for two broad categories:

- *Government schools* are owned and managed by State and Territory governments
- *Non-government schools*, including Catholic and Independent schools, are owned and managed by non-government establishments.

Roles and responsibilities

State and Territory governments are responsible for ensuring the delivery and regulation of schooling to all children of school age in their jurisdiction. State and Territory governments provide most of the school education funding in Australia, which is administered under their own legislation. They determine curricula, register schools, regulate school activities and are directly responsible for the administration of government schools. They also provide support services used by both government and non-government schools. Non-government schools operate under conditions determined by State and Territory government registration authorities.

From 1 January 2018 the Australian Government introduced the Quality Schools Package replacing the Students First funding model which had been in effect since 1 January 2014. States and territories will also contribute funding under the Quality schools Package. More information on these funding arrangements can be found in box 4.6 of the supporting interpretative material.

The Australian Government and State and Territory governments work together to progress and implement national policy priorities, such as: a national curriculum; national statistics and reporting; national testing; and, teaching standards (PM&C 2014). The Education Council — comprising the Australian, State and Territory education ministers and the New Zealand education minister (as a non-decision making member) — is the principal forum for developing national priorities and strategies for schooling.

Funding

Nationally in 2018-19, government recurrent expenditure on school education was \$65.6 billion, a 4.3 per cent real increase from 2017-18 (table 4A.10). State and Territory governments provided the majority of funding (69.7 per cent) (figure 4.1).

Government schools accounted for \$49.7 billion (75.8 per cent), with State and Territory governments the major funding source (\$42.0 billion, or 84.4 per cent of government schools' funding). Non-government schools accounted for \$15.9 billion (24.2 per cent), with the Australian Government the major funding source (\$12.1 billion, or 76.2 per cent of non-government schools funding) (table 4A.10).

The share of government funding to government and non-government schools varies across jurisdictions and over time according to jurisdictional approaches to funding schools (see box 4.6 in interpretative material) and is affected by the characteristics of school structures and the student body in each state and territory.

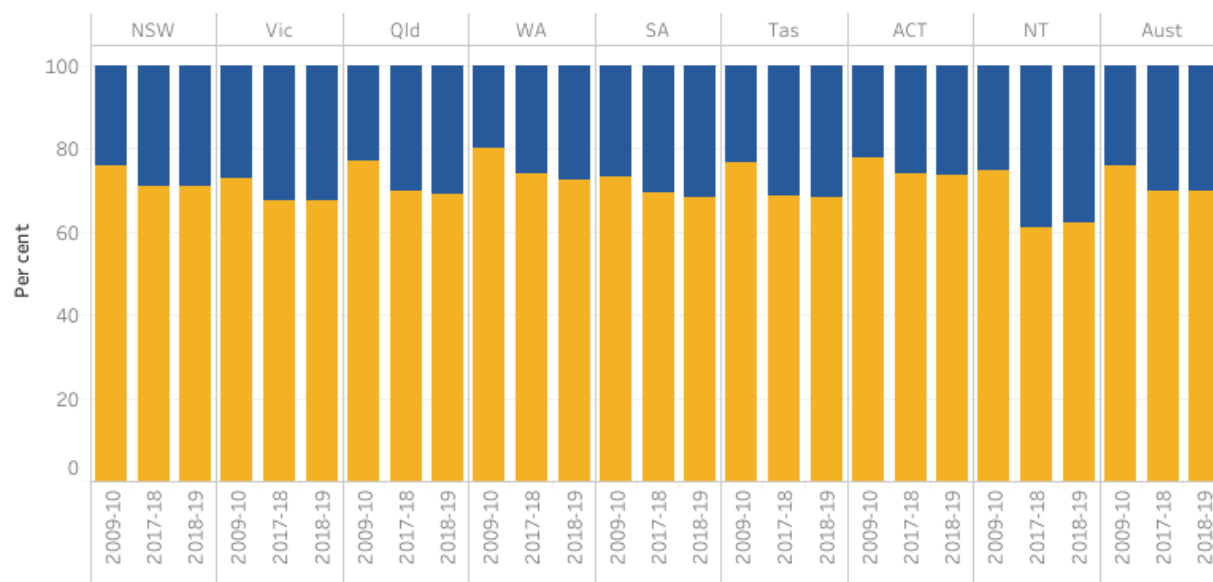
This Report presents expenditure related to government funding only, not to the full cost to the community of providing school education. Caution should be taken when comparing expenditure data for government and non-government schools, because governments provide only part of school funding. Governments provided 58.6 per cent of non-government school funding in 2019, with the remaining 41.4 per cent sourced from private fees and fund raising (Australian Government Department of Education unpublished).

Select year(s):

Multiple values

■ Australian Government expenditure
■ State and Territory government expenditure

Figure 4.1 Proportion of total government expenditure, Real recurrent expenditure, All schools by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 4A.10

Data tables are referenced above by a '4A' prefix and all data (footnotes and data sources) are available for download from the supporting material below (both in Excel and CSV format).

 + a b | e a u

Size and scope

Schools

In 2019, there were 9503 schools in Australia (6245 primary schools, 1416 secondary schools, 1359 combined schools, and 483 special schools) (table 4A.1). The majority of schools were government owned and managed (70.1 per cent) (tables 4A.1).

Settlement patterns (population dispersion), the age distribution of the population and educational policy influence the distribution of schools by size and level in different jurisdictions. Data on school size and level are in *Schools Australia, 2019* (ABS 2020).

Student body

There were 3.9 million full time equivalent (FTE) students enrolled in school nationally in 2019 (table 4A.3). Whilst the majority of students are full time, there were 10 619 part time students in 2019 (predominantly in secondary schools) (ABS 2020).

- *Government schools* had 2.6 million FTE students enrolled (65.7 per cent of all FTE students). Over the past seven years this proportion has increased from 65.1 per cent (in 2012) (table 4A.3).
- *Non-government schools* had 1.4 million FTE students enrolled (34.3 per cent of all FTE students).

- The proportion of students enrolled in government schools is higher for primary schools than secondary schools (table 4A.3).

A higher proportion of FTE students were enrolled in primary schools (57.4 per cent) than in secondary schools (42.6 per cent) (table 4A.3). SA has the highest proportion of FTE students enrolled in primary school education (60.6 per cent) as it is the only jurisdiction that still includes year 7 in primary school.

The enrolment rate is close to 100 per cent for Australian children aged 15 years (consistent with requirements under the NYPR), but decreases as ages increase. Nationally in 2019, 99.0 per cent of Australian children aged 15 years were enrolled at school, declining to 93.8 per cent of 16 year olds and 77.6 per cent of 17 year olds. Data are available for 15–19 year olds by single year of age and totals in table 4A.4.

Nationally in 2019, government schools had a higher proportion of students from selected special needs groups than non-government schools, including for:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students — 7.4 per cent of government school students and 2.8 per cent of non-government school students (table 4A.5)
- students from a low socio-educational background — 30.5 per cent of government school students and 12.8 per cent of non-government school students (table 4A.6)
- geographically remote and very remote students — 2.3 per cent of government school students and 1.0 per cent of non-government school students (table 4A.8).

For students with disability, 20.5 per cent, 17.9 per cent, and 19.5 per cent of students at government, Catholic, and independent schools, respectively, required an education adjustment due to disability (table 4A.7). Data by level of adjustment are in table 4A.7.


School and Vocational Education and Training (VET)

School-aged people may participate in VET by either participating in ‘VET in Schools’, or (see section 5) remain engaged in education through a Registered Training Organisation. Nationally in 2019, there were 235 800 VET in Schools students (NCVER 2020). Overall, 407 500 people aged 15–19 years successfully completed at least one unit of competency as part of a VET qualification at the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II level or above (at a school or Registered Training Organisation) (table 4A.9).

References


- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2020, *Schools Australia, 2019*, Cat. no. 4221.0, Canberra.
- ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority) 2019, *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2019*, ACARA, Sydney.
- ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research) 2019, *PISA 2018: Reporting Australia's Results. Volume I Student Performance*, ACER Australia.
- 2018, *PISA Australia in Focus: Number 1 – Sense of belonging at school*, ACER, Australia.
- 2017, *PIRLS 2016: Reporting Australia's results*, ACER, Melbourne.

COAG 2018, *National School Reform Agreement*,

https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/national_school_reform_agreement_9_0.pdf 
(accessed 9 October 2020).

— 2009, *COAG Meeting Communique April 2009*, <https://www.coag.gov.au/meeting-outcomes/coag-meeting-communique-30-april-2009>  (accessed 21 November 2019).

EC (Education Council) 2019, *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration*,

<http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/Alice-Springs--Mparntwe--Education-Declaration.aspx> 
(accessed 9 October 2020).

NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education Research) 2020, *VET in Schools 2019*, Adelaide.

PM&C (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet) 2014, *Roles and responsibilities in education, Part A: Early Childhood and Schools*, Reform of Federation White Issues Paper 4, Canberra.

Indicator Framework

The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of School education.

The performance indicator framework shows which data are complete and comparable in this Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. [Section 1](#) discusses data comparability and completeness from a Report-wide perspective. In addition to the service area's Profile information, the Report's statistical context ([Section 2](#)) contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this section.

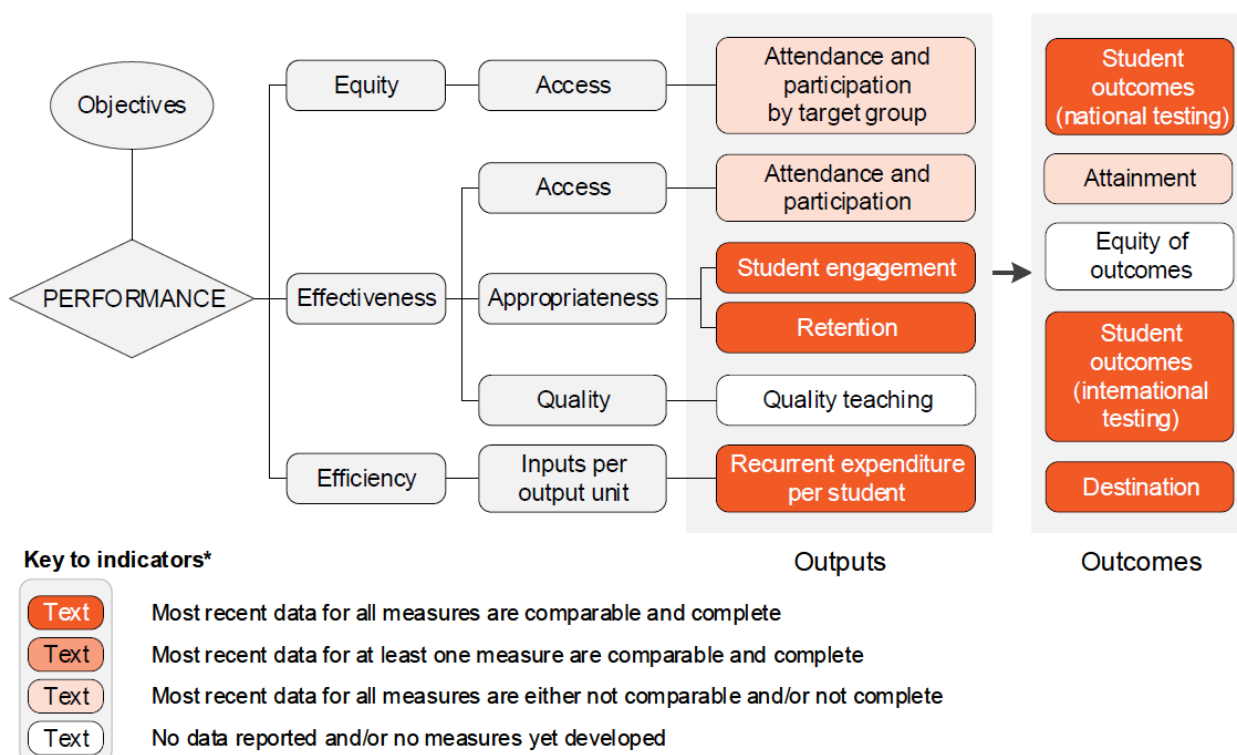
Improvements to performance reporting for School education are ongoing and include identifying data sources to fill gaps in reporting for performance indicators and measures, and improving the comparability and completeness of data.

Outputs

Outputs are the services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see section 1). Output information is also critical for equitable, efficient and effective management of government services.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (see section 1).



* A description of the comparability and completeness of each measure is provided in indicator interpretation boxes within the section

Indicator Results

An overview of the school education services performance indicator results are presented. Different delivery contexts, locations and types of clients can affect the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of school education services.

Information to assist the interpretation of these data can be found in the school education supporting interpretative material and data tables. Data tables are identified by a '4A' prefix (for example, table 4A.1).

All data are available for download as an excel spreadsheet and as a CSV dataset — refer to [Download supporting material](#). Specific data used in figures can be downloaded by clicking in the figure area, navigating to the bottom of the visualisation to the grey toolbar, clicking on the 'Download' icon and selecting 'Data' from the menu. Selecting 'PDF' or 'Powerpoint' from the 'Download' menu will download a static view of the performance indicator results.

Attendance and participation by target group is an indicator of governments' objective for school education services to be provided in an equitable manner.

Measure: Compares the attendance rate of those in the target group (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students in remote/very remote areas) with the attendance rate of those outside the target group (non-Indigenous students, students in major cities and regional areas).

The student attendance rate is the number of actual full time equivalent student days attended by full time students as a percentage of the total number of possible student attendance days attended over the period.

Guidance: Similar rates of attendance for those within and outside the target groups indicates equity of access.

■ Data are comparable across jurisdictions (subject to caveats) from 2018 onwards but not prior to 2018 and are not comparable over time (data for 2018 are not comparable to earlier years).

■ Data are incomplete for the current reporting period; 2020 data were not available due to COVID-19.

Select target group (applies to figure 4.2a):

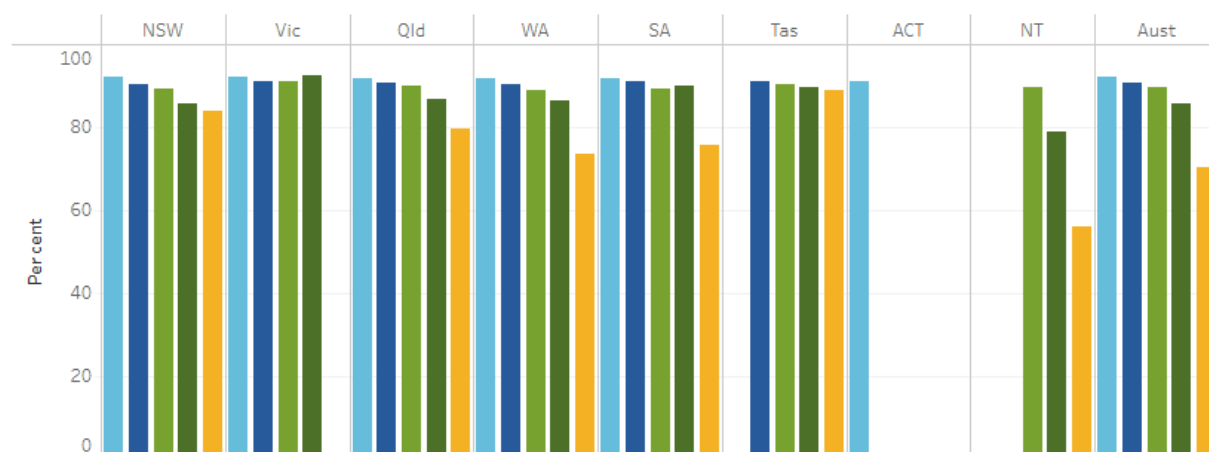
All students

- Major city
- Inner regional
- Outer regional
- Remote
- Very remote

Select school-type (applies to figure 4.2a):

All schools

Figure 4.2a Student attendance rates for years 1 to 10 combined, All students, All schools, 2019 (a)
by jurisdiction, by remoteness



Source: table 4A.21

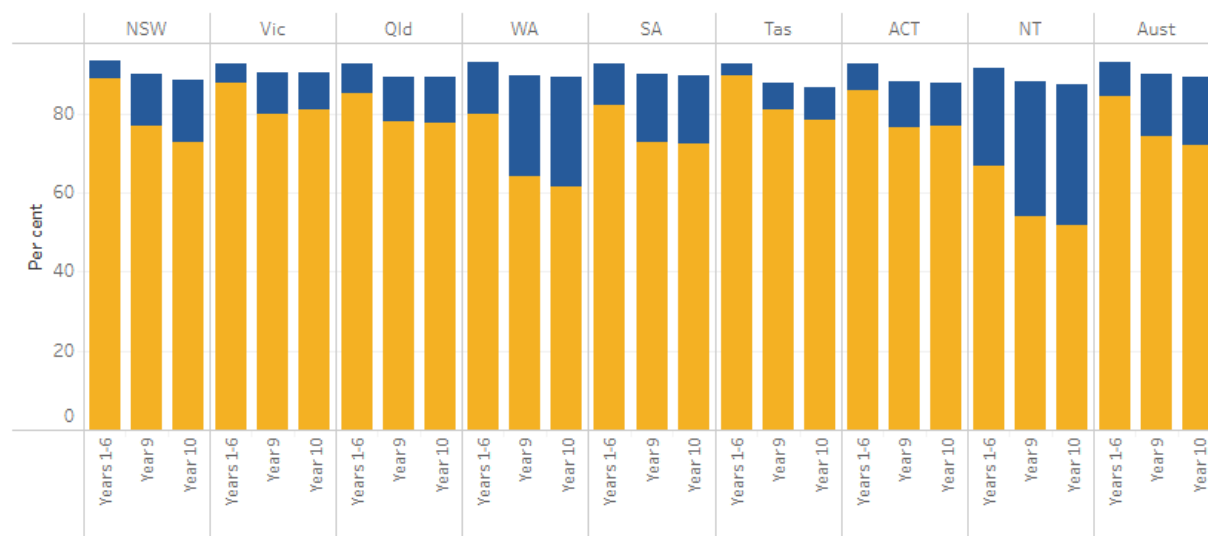
(a) There are no very remote areas in Victoria; no major city in Tasmania; no outer regional, remote or very remote areas in the ACT; no major city or inner regional areas in the NT.

Nationally in 2019, attendance rates across years 1–10 decreased as remoteness increased, with the decrease greater for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than for non-Indigenous students. This pattern was similar for government and non-government schools (table 4A.21).

Select school year level
(applies to figure 4.2b):
(Multiple values)

■ Rate difference between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students
■ Attendance rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Figure 4.2b Student attendance rates, All schools, 2019
by Jurisdiction, by year level, by Indigenous status



Source: table 4A.20

Nationally in 2019, non-Indigenous students in all schools had higher attendance rates than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across all year levels in all jurisdictions. This pattern was similar for government and non-government schools.

The student attendance level is the proportion of full time students whose attendance rate is greater than or equal to 90 per cent over the period. Analysis of the attendance level can highlight 'at risk' populations (where a large proportion of individuals have had low attendance over the school year). Data on the student attendance level by Indigenous status and remoteness are in tables 4A.22-24, with patterns consistent with the student attendance rate data.

Attendance and participation is an indicator of governments' objective that school education services promote student participation.

Measure: The student attendance rate — the number of actual full time equivalent student days attended by full time students as a percentage of the total number of possible student attendance days attended over the period.

Guidance: Higher or increasing rates of attendance are desirable. Poor attendance has been related to poor student outcomes, particularly once patterns of non-attendance are established.

■ Data are comparable across jurisdictions (subject to caveats) from 2018 onwards but not prior to 2018 and are not comparable over time (data for 2018 are not comparable to earlier years).

■ Data are incomplete for the current reporting period; 2020 data were not available due to COVID-19.

Select year: 2019

Select school type:

All schools

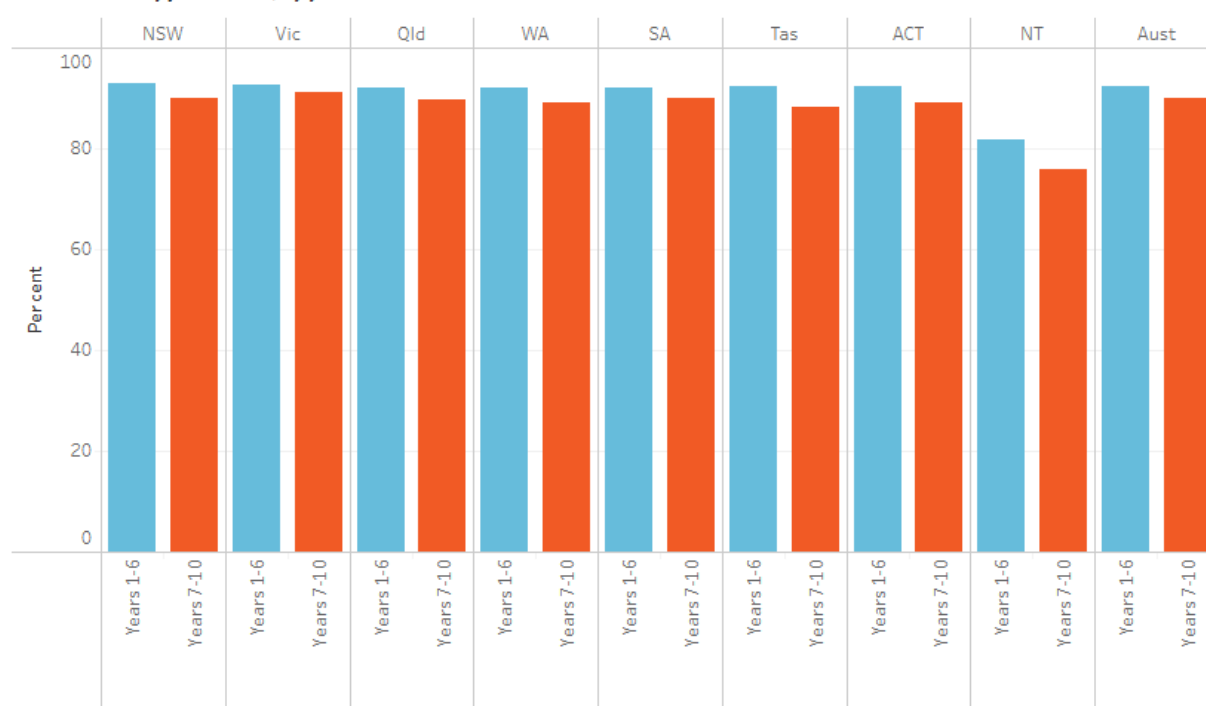
Government schools

Non-government schools

Select year level: (Multiple values)

Legend: Years 1-6 (Blue), Years 7-10 (Orange)

Figure 4.3 Student attendance rates, All schools, 2019 (a)
by jurisdiction, by year level



Source: tables 4A.20

(a) Data for individual year levels are only published for the current year.

Nationally in 2019, across all schools attendance rates decreased from year 7 to year 10 — from 91.9 per cent to 88.4 per cent (table 4A.20). For years 7–10 combined, attendance rates are higher at non-government schools (92.1 per cent) than government schools (88.4 per cent).

Nationally in 2019, the attendance rate for all school students across year levels 1–6 was 92.4 per cent. The year 1–6 attendance rates have decreased slightly since 2015 (around 1 percentage point) with similar decreases across most jurisdictions and within each state and territory over time (table 4A.20).

The student attendance level is the proportion of full time students whose attendance rate is greater than or equal to 90 per cent over the period. Analysis of the attendance level can highlight 'at risk' populations (where a large proportion of individuals have had low attendance over the school year). Data for the student attendance level are in tables 4A.22–24, with patterns consistent with the student attendance rate data.

Student engagement is an indicator of governments' objective that school education services engage all students.

Measure: Encompasses the following three dimensions:

- *behavioural engagement* — which may be measured by identifiable behaviours of engagement, such as school attendance, attainment and retention
- *emotional engagement* — which may be measured by students' attitudes to learning and school
- *cognitive engagement* — which may be measured by students' perception of intellectual challenge, effort or interest and motivation.

It is measured using data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which collects information on one aspect of emotional engagement — students' sense of belonging at school. Students' level of agreement to six statements are combined to construct a Sense of Belonging at School Index.

Guidance: Higher or increasing scores on the Index illustrate a greater sense of belonging at school, which is desirable. (Scores are indexed to the OECD average in PISA 2003, with a negative score indicating a sense of belonging below 2003 and a positive score above 2003.) These data should be interpreted with caution, as they are limited to one aspect of emotional engagement and captured for students at a single age (students aged 15 years).

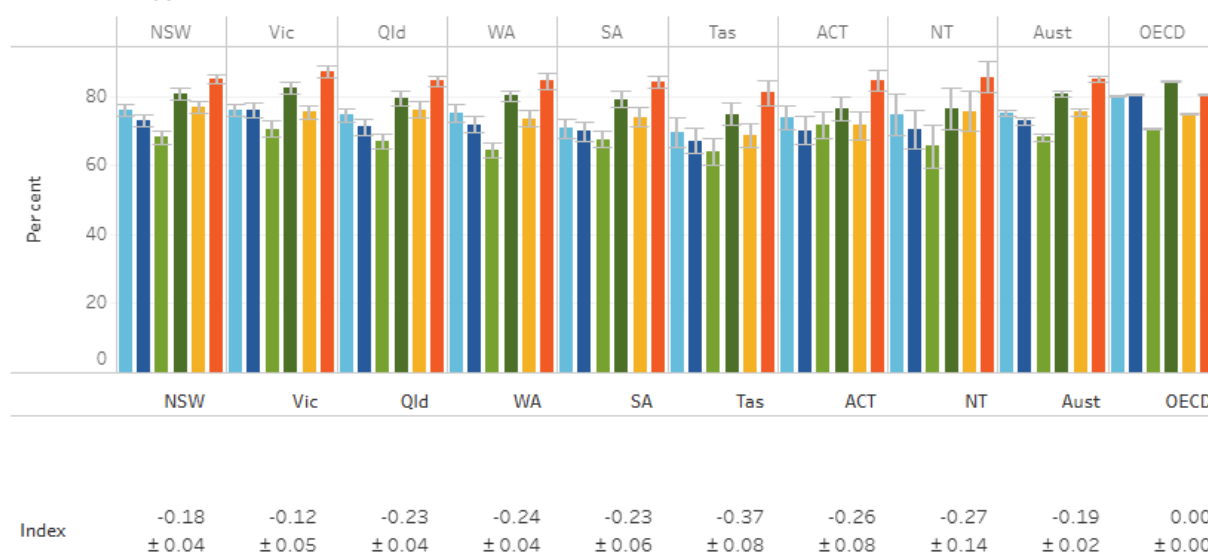
■ Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions (Index scores are only available for one year).

■ Data are complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats).

National data are not currently agreed to report against behavioural or cognitive engagement. However contextual information is provided on State and Territory government student engagement surveys, where they have been conducted (see table 4.1 in supporting interpretative material below).

- I feel awkward and out of place at my school (disagree)
- I feel like an outsider (or left out of things) at school (disagree)
- I feel like I belong at school (agree)
- I feel lonely at school (disagree)
- I make friends easily at school (agree)
- Other students seem to like me (agree)

Figure 4.4 Australian Sense of Belonging at School Index and students' level of agreement to six statements, 2018 by jurisdiction



Source: table 4A.25

Percentages reported include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 percentage points).

Nationally in 2018, the proportion of 15 year old students that agreed/disagreed with the following statements was:

- I make friends easily at school (agree) — 75.6 (± 1.0) per cent
- I feel like I belong at school (agree) — 68.2 (± 1.0) per cent
- Other students seem to like me (agree) — 85.3 (± 0.9) per cent
- I feel like an outsider (or left out of things) at school (disagree) — 72.9 (± 1.0) per cent
- I feel awkward and out of place at my school (disagree) — 75.2 (± 0.9) per cent
- I feel lonely at school (disagree) — 80.7 (± 0.9) per cent.

From these responses, the Sense of Belonging at School Index for Australian students aged 15 years was -0.19 (± 0.02). The score, which is below the 2018 OECD average, varied across jurisdictions. National data on the Sense of Belonging at School Index, by special needs group (sex, Indigenous status, geolocation, and socioeconomic background) are included in table 4A.26.

Sense of belonging at school has been measured in four cycles of PISA: in 2003, 2012 2015 and 2018. Nationally, over this 12 year period, students' agreement/disagreement with the Sense of Belonging Index statements have declined (ACER 2018, table 4A.25).

Retention to the final years of schooling is an indicator of governments' objective that the school education system aims to engage all students and promote student participation.

Measure: The number of full time school students in year 10 that continue to year 12 (apparent retention rate).

Guidance: A higher or increasing rate is desirable as it suggests that a larger proportion of students are continuing in school, which may result in improved educational outcomes.

■ Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time.

■ Data are complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats).

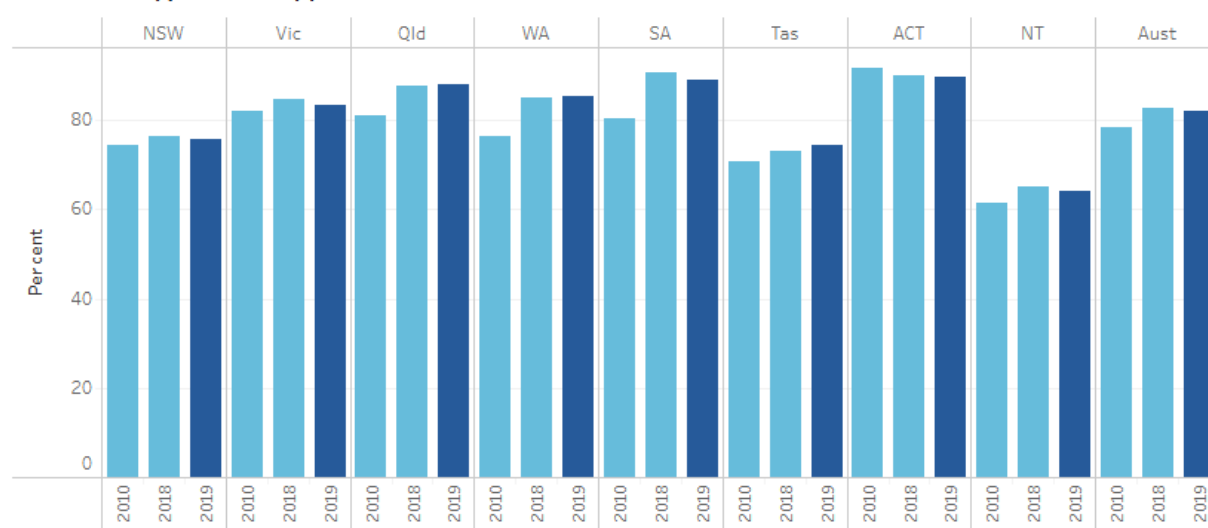
Select year(s): (Multiple values) ▼

Select school type: All schools ▼

Select target group: All full time students ▼

Select year level: Year 10 to year 12 ▼

Figure 4.5 Apparent retention rates from Year 10 to year 12, All full time students, All schools by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 4A.27

Nationally in 2019, the apparent retention rate from year 10 to year 12 was 82.0 per cent, an increase from 78.5 per cent in 2010 but below the peak of 83.3 per cent in 2017. The rate was 78.0 per cent for government schools and 87.7 per cent for non-government schools. This pattern was similar for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students.

Consistent with the NYPR mandatory requirement that all young people participate in schooling until they complete year 10, the apparent retention rate from the commencement of secondary school (at year 7 or 8) to year 10 has remained above 97 per cent in all jurisdictions (other than the NT) since 2010. Nationally, the retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was over 97 per cent in 2018, but lower than that of non-Indigenous students.

Quality teaching is an indicator of governments' objective that school education delivers high quality teaching of a world-class curriculum.

Measure: Defined in relation to the teaching environment, it includes the effectiveness of teachers and the quality of the curriculum. Teachers are considered effective where they:

- create an environment where all students are expected to learn successfully
- have a deep understanding of the curriculum and subjects they teach
- have a repertoire of effective teaching strategies to meet student needs
- direct their teaching to student needs and readiness
- provide continuous feedback to students about their learning
- reflect on their own practice and strive for continuous improvement.

Guidance: High or increasing proportions of students indicating positive responses to the teaching environment are desirable.

Data are not yet available for reporting against this indicator.

Recurrent expenditure per student is an indicator of governments' objective to provide school education services in an efficient manner.

Measure: Total government recurrent expenditure per FTE student, reported for government schools and for non-government schools. Government recurrent expenditure per FTE student includes estimates for user cost of capital (UCC) for government schools. See box 4.7 in the interpretative material linked below for further information on the data used to report on this measure.

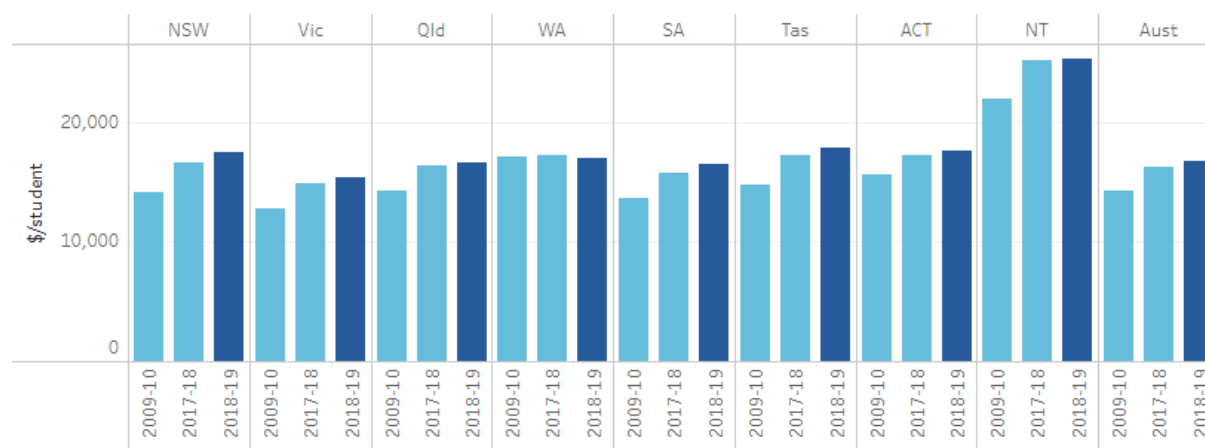
Guidance: Holding other factors constant, a low or decreasing government recurrent expenditure or staff expenditure per FTE student may represent better or improved efficiency. Care should be taken in interpretation of efficiency data as a number of factors beyond the control of governments may influence expenditure (see box 4.7 in the interpretative material for further details).

■ Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time. (Note that as non-government schools data do not account for UCC nor non-government sources of funding, the data are *not comparable* for comparing the efficiency of government and non-government schools.)

■ Data are complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats). All required 2018-19 data are available for all jurisdictions.

Select year(s): (Multiple values) **Select school-type:** All schools

Figure 4.6 Real recurrent expenditure All schools, All school levels, 2018-19 dollars (a)
by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 4A.14

(a) Data for non-government schools does not include UCC.

Nationally in 2018-19, government recurrent expenditure per FTE student in all schools was \$16 748. Between 2009-10 and 2018-19, real government expenditure per FTE student increased at an average rate of 1.8 per cent per year (table 4A.14).

Nationally in 2018-19, government recurrent expenditure per FTE student in non-government schools was \$11 813 (does not include UCC). Between 2009-10 and 2018-19, real government expenditure per FTE student increased at an average rate of 3.3 per cent per year.

Nationally in 2018-19, government recurrent expenditure (including UCC) was \$19 328 per FTE student in government schools (excluding UCC this was \$16 399). Between 2009-10 and 2018-19, real government expenditure (including UCC) per FTE student increased at an average rate of 1.4 per cent per year.

In-school expenditure per FTE student was higher for government secondary schools (\$20 839 per FTE student) compared to government primary schools (\$16 931 per FTE student). Out-of-school government expenditure per FTE student was substantially lower (\$902 per FTE student) (table 4A.15).

Differences in the 'student-to-staff ratio' can provide some context to differences in the government recurrent expenditure per FTE student. Further information is available under Size and scope under the 'Context' tab.

Student outcomes (national testing) is an indicator of governments' objective that Australian schooling aims for all young Australians to become successful lifelong learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed members of the community.

Measure 1: National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) — the proportion of students at or above the national minimum standard in NAPLAN testing and mean scale score for reading, writing and numeracy.

Measure 2: National Assessment Program (NAP) sample assessments — the proportion of students at or above the proficient standard in NAP assessments and mean scale score for civics and citizenship literacy, science literacy, information and communication technologies literacy.

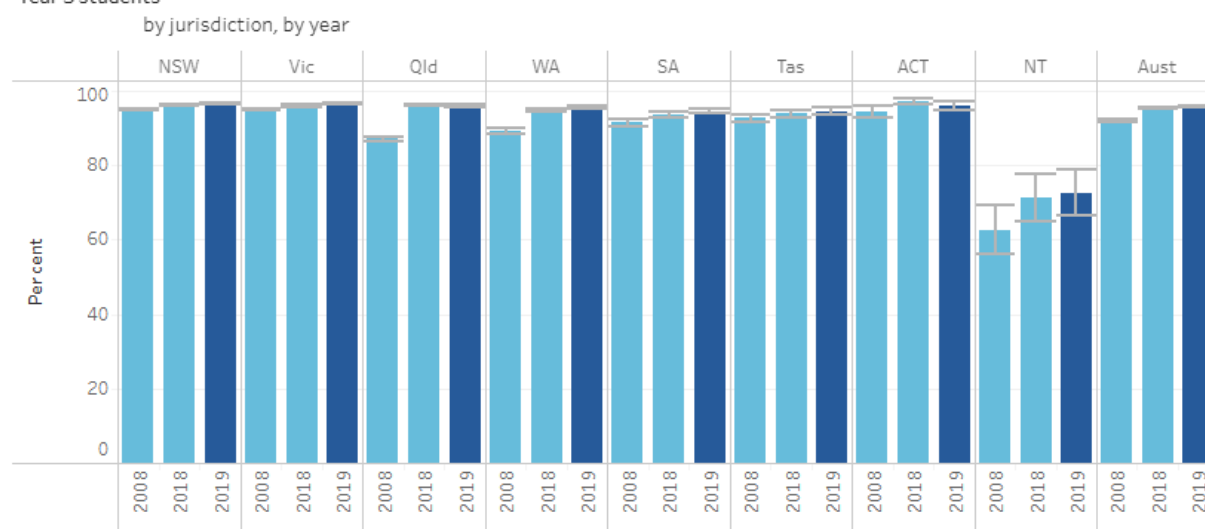
Guidance: A high or increasing mean scale score or proportion of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard and proficiency standard is desirable.

■ Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time.

■ Data are complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats). All required data are available for 2019 (for NAPLAN and NAP civics and citizenship literacy), 2018 (for science literacy) and 2017 (for ICT literacy).

Select year level: Select NAPLAN: Select year(s):

Figure 4.7 Measure 1: Proportion of students who achieved at or above the national minimum standard in NAPLAN Reading among Year 3 students



Source: table 4A.30

Nationally, the proportion in 2019 was statistically significantly:

- above that in 2008 for reading for Year 3 and Year 5 students, but there was no significant difference for Years 7 or 9 (table 4A.30)
- no different from 2011 for writing for Year 3, 5, 7 or 9 students (table 4A.34)
- above that in 2008 for numeracy for Year 5 and Year 9 students, but there was no significant difference for Years 3 or 7 (table 4A.38).

Mean scale scores are reported for reading, writing and numeracy in tables 4A.31, 4A.35 and 4A.39 respectively.

Students are counted as participating if they were assessed or deemed exempt (other students identified as absent or withdrawn are counted as not participating). In 2019, NAPLAN participation rates were at or above 90 per cent for most jurisdictions across testing domains and year levels (ACARA 2019).

Select year(s): (All) Select assessment: National Assessment Program; civics and citizenship literacy

Table 4.1 Measure 2: Proportion of students at or above the proficient standard (level 2 or above), National Assessment Program; civics and citizenship literacy, Year 6 by jurisdiction, by year

		NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
2019	%	54.0 ± 4.3	53.0 ± 4.2	54.0 ± 4.6	53.0 ± 5.3	43.0 ± 5.3	47.0 ± 5.1	66.0 ± 7.2	40.0 ± 7.4	53.0 ± 2.0
2016	%	56.3 ± 5.8	55.9 ± 5.3	52.2 ± 4.4	52.4 ± 5.3	55.2 ± 6.3	52.9 ± 5.6	59.5 ± 6.2	34.2 ± 8.0	54.5 ± 2.4
2013	%	56.3 ± 4.8	58.4 ± 5.5	44.5 ± 4.8	44.2 ± 5.8	43.2 ± 6.0	45.6 ± 5.5	63.6 ± 6.0	26.0 ± 8.4	51.6 ± 2.4
2010	%	57.3 ± 4.5	56.0 ± 5.9	41.5 ± 5.9	50.9 ± 5.8	47.9 ± 5.5	53.5 ± 4.7	63.7 ± 5.5	31.6 ± 6.2	52.0 ± 2.4
2007	%	64.2 ± 6.3	58.6 ± 5.5	41.2 ± 5.9	39.6 ± 4.3	43.4 ± 6.8	52.5 ± 6.9	59.9 ± 8.7	27.7 ± 6.6	53.4 ± 2.8

Source: table 4A.45

Percentages reported include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 percentage points.)

Nationally in 2019, 53.0 (± 2.0) per cent of Year 6 students and 38.0 (± 2.6) per cent of Year 10 students achieved at or above the proficient standard in NAP civics and citizenship literacy performance (table 4A.45). Mean scale scores for NAP citizenship literacy performance are in table 4A.46. National data on the proportion of students achieving at or above the proficient standard by special needs group (sex, Indigenous status, geolocation and parental occupation) are in table 4A.47.

Nationally in 2018, 58.0 (± 2.4) per cent of Year 6 students achieved at or above the proficient standard NAP in science literacy. Mean scale scores for NAP science literacy performance are in table 4A.43. National data on the proportion of students achieving at or above the proficient standard by special needs group (sex, Indigenous status, geolocation and parental occupation) are in table 4A.44.

Nationally in 2017, of Year 6 students and Year 10 students, 53 (± 2.4) per cent and 54 (± 3.0) per cent, respectively, achieved at or above the proficient standards in ICT literacy performance (table 4A.48). Mean scale scores for NAP ICT literacy are in table 4A.49. National data on the proportion of students achieving at or above the proficient standard by special needs group (sex, Indigenous status, geolocation and parental occupation) are in table 4A.50.

Attainment is an indicator of governments' objective that Australian schooling aims for all young Australians to become successful lifelong learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed members of the community.

Measure: The number of students who meet the requirements of a year 12 certificate or equivalent expressed as a percentage of the estimated potential year 12 population. The estimated potential year 12 population is an estimate of a single year age group that could have attended year 12 that year, calculated as the estimated resident population aged 15–19 divided by five.

Guidance: A high or increasing completion rate is desirable.

■ Data are not comparable across jurisdictions, but are comparable (subject to caveats) within some jurisdictions over time.

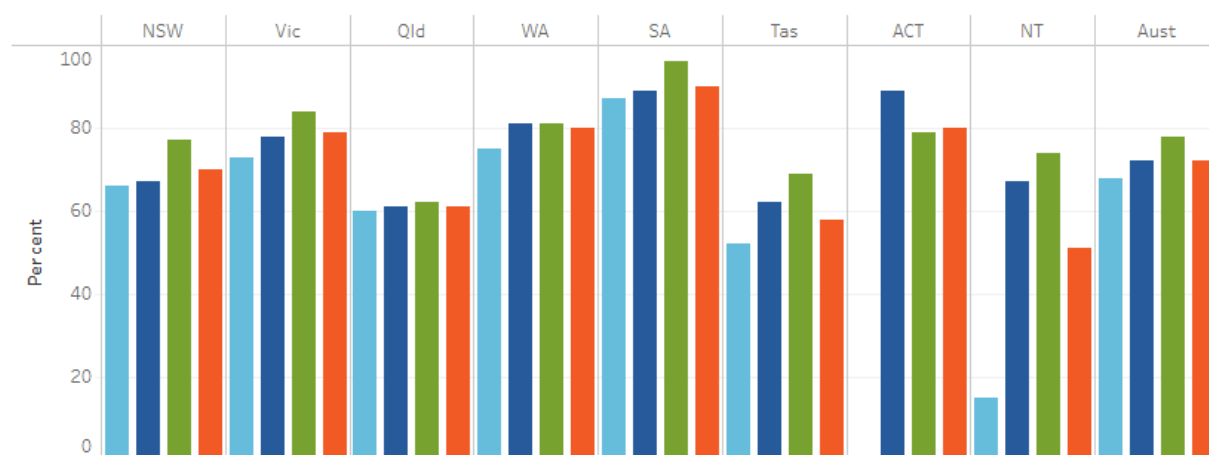
■ Data are complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats).

Select year:

Select disaggregation:
 Remoteness area
 Socioeconomic status

Low
 Medium
 High
 Total

Figure 4.8 Year 12 Attainment rates, 2019 (a), (b)
by jurisdiction, by Socioeconomic status



Source: table 4A.57

(a) There are no very remote areas in Victoria; no major city in Tasmania; no outer regional, remote or very remote areas in the ACT; no major city or inner regional areas in the NT.

(b) See data tables 4A.57-58 for information on non-publication of data on remoteness area or socioeconomic status for individual jurisdictions.

Nationally in 2019, the year 12 certificate attainment rate for all students was 72 per cent. The rates increased as socioeconomic status increased. Across remoteness areas, the rates were substantially lower in very remote areas compared to other areas.

The Child care, education and training sector overview includes data on the proportions of the population aged 20–24 and 20–64 years that attained at least a year 12 or equivalent or AQF Certificate II or above (that is school and non-school education and training to year 12 or equivalent or above) (tables BA.9–10).

Equity of outcomes is an indicator of governments' objective that the outcomes of Australian schooling are equitable.

Measure: The difference in the scores for students at the median and the lower end of national testing for literacy and numeracy. The test score difference between students undertaking standardised tests can be used to measure the relative performance gap between students at the median and the lower end of achievement.

Guidance: A low or decreasing gap between poor performing students and the median performers (and median score not reducing over time) is desirable.

Data are not yet available for reporting against this indicator.

Student outcomes (international testing) is an indicator of governments' objective that Australian schooling aims for students to excel by international standards.

Measure: Australia's participation in three international tests:

- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) — the proportion of sampled year 4 and year 8 students achieving at or above the IEA intermediate international benchmark, the national proficient standard in Australia for mathematics and science in the TIMSS assessment.
- Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) — the proportion of sampled 15 year old students achieving at or above the national proficient standard (set to level 3) on the OECD PISA combined scales for reading, mathematical and scientific literacy.
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) — the proportion of sampled year 4 students achieving at or above the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) intermediate international benchmark, the national proficient standard in Australia for the PIRLS assessment.

Guidance: A high or increasing proportion of students achieving at or above the national proficient standard, or a high or increasing mean scale score is desirable.

- Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time.
- Data are complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats). All required 2019 (quadrennial TIMSS), 2018 (triennial PISA) and 2016 (quinquennial PIRLS) data are available for all jurisdictions.

Select assessment:

TIMSS: Mathematics achievement assessment

Table 4.2 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Mathematics achievement assessment, Proportion of students achieving at or above the intermediate international benchmark; the Australian national proficient standard (per cent) by jurisdiction, by year, by year level

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Year 8 2019	72.3±6.5	67.1±5.4	67.3±4.8	63.8±7.8	62.7±6.6	56.2±11.1	71.7±4.4	44.6±12.7	68.0±2.9
2015	62.7±6.8	69.8±4.1	62.3±6.1	64.6±5.3	61.9±6.9	60.6±7.3	69.9±4.2	39.7±10.2	64.4±3.1
2011	66.8±9.7	64.4±7.1	58.7±7.4	60.8±10.5	58.2±7.3	49.0±8.1	74.4±6.1	44.1±16.6	62.9±4.6
2007	59.3±8.8	64.6±7.0	60.8±5.7	57.6±10.2	59.2±8.2	56.6±7.8	69.4±20.5	57.4±15.5	60.8±3.5
Year 4 2019	71.9±5.7	72.0±4.9	66.1±5.5	68.1±6.1	63.9±6.1	68.5±8.1	79.5±5.4	46.5±8.5	69.6±2.5
2015	69.9±5.9	74.1±4.3	68.8±5.6	66.8±7.0	69.5±8.0	68.0±10.2	82.3±6.8	48.7±13.8	70.2±2.6
2011	73.8±5.5	75.5±4.7	64.3±5.6	62.5±6.2	65.2±6.4	68.1±7.3	81.4±4.8	59.1±12.3	70.2±2.8
2007	76.3±5.9	78.9±7.6	58.8±6.8	58.4±6.5	61.5±9.1	68.1±6.9	67.8±11.0	58.8±12.2	70.5±3.5

Source: tables 4A.54

Percentages reported include 95 per cent confidence intervals (for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 percentage points).

TIMSS: Nationally in 2019, the proportion of students that achieved at or above the national proficient standard for the TIMSS:

- mathematics assessment was 69.6 (± 2.5) per cent for year 4 students and 68.0 (± 2.9) per cent for year 8 students (table 4A.54).
- science assessment was 78.3 (± 2.3) per cent for year 4 students and 74.2 (± 2.4) per cent for year 8 students (table 4A.55).

Nationally in 2019, a higher or similar proportion of students achieved at or above the intermediate international benchmark compared to previous assessments. Results varied across jurisdictions (tables 4A.54–55).

PISA: Nationally in 2018, the proportion of Australian 15 year old students who achieved the national proficient standard in:

- reading literacy was 59.3 (± 1.3) per cent
- mathematical literacy was 54.2 (± 1.6) per cent
- scientific literacy was 58.1 (± 1.5) per cent.

Across the three literacy domains, the proportions of Australian 15 year old students who achieved at or above the national proficient standard in 2018 were significantly lower than the proportions achieved in 2015 for science, but similar to results in 2015 for mathematics and reading (tables 4A.51-53). Compared to the OECD average in 2018, Australian 15 year old students scored:

- higher for reading literacy and scientific literacy
- the same for mathematical literacy (ACER 2019).

Data by Indigenous status, remoteness, socioeconomic background and sex for each literacy domain are reported in tables 4A.51-53.

PIRLS: Nationally in 2016, the proportion of year 4 students that achieved at or above the national proficient standard for reading literacy was 80.9 (± 2.1) per cent, a significant increase from 2011 although results vary by jurisdiction (table 4A.56).

Of the countries that participated in the PIRLS assessment, Australian year 4 students:

- significantly outperformed students from 24 other countries.
- were significantly outperformed by students from 13 other countries (ACER 2017).

Destination is an indicator of governments' objective that Australian schooling aims for all young Australians to become active and informed members of the community positioning them to live fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.

Measure: The proportion of school leavers aged 15–24 years who left school in the previous year, who are participating in further education, training and/or employment. Data are reported for school leavers whose highest level of school completed was year 12, or year 11 and below.

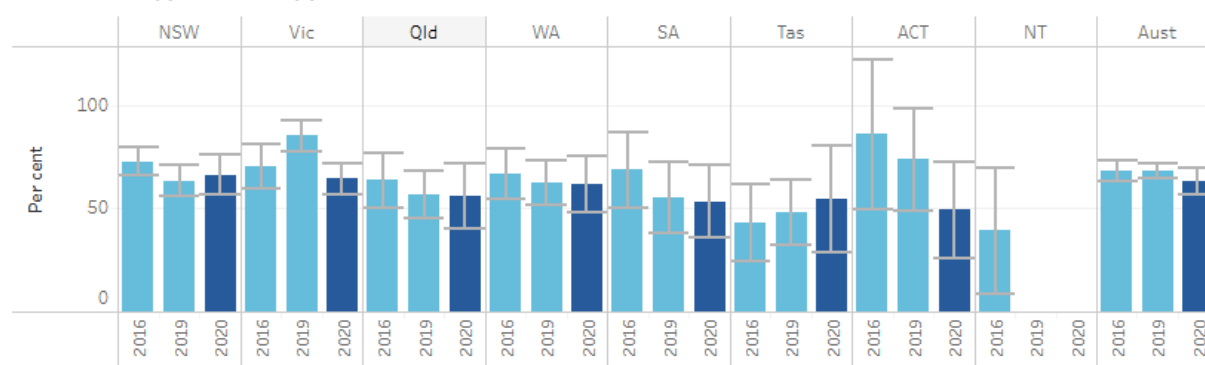
Guidance: A higher or increasing proportion of school leavers participating in further education, training and/or employment is desirable.

- Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time.
- Data are complete for the current reporting period.

Select year(s):

(Multiple values) ▼

Figure 4.9 Proportion of all school leavers who are fully engaged in education or work (15-24 year olds) (a) by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 4A.59

(a) Data are not published for the NT in 2019 and 2020.

The proportion of all school leavers aged 15–24 years who left school in 2019 and who in 2020 were fully engaged in work or study was 63.2 per cent, compared with 68.0 per cent in 2019. Proportions were higher for year 12 completers (65.1 per cent), compared to those who completed year 11 or below (58.0 per cent) (table 4A.59).

Information on student destination surveys conducted by each State and Territory government is provided as context to this indicator (see supporting interpretative material below). These surveys collect information from a larger number of students within relevant jurisdictions, but the research methods and data collection instruments differ which do not enable comparative reporting.

The Child care, education and training sector overview includes additional data on the participation of school leavers aged 17–24 years in work and study, including data on the Indigenous status of school leavers (tables BA.2–4).

[Refer to the interpretative material for detailed indicator interpretation, definitions and caveats. www.pc.gov.au/rogs](http://www.pc.gov.au/rogs)

Data tables are referenced above by a '4A' prefix and all data (footnotes and data sources) are available for download from the supporting material below (both in Excel and CSV format).

Indigenous Data

Performance indicator data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this section are available in the data tables listed below. Further supporting information can be found in the interpretative material and data tables.

School education data disaggregated for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Table number	Table title
Attendance	
Table 4A.18	Student attendance rates, government schools, by Indigenous status (per cent)
Table 4A.19	Student attendance rates, non-government schools, by Indigenous status (per cent)
Table 4A.20	Student attendance rates, all schools, by Indigenous status (per cent)
Table 4A.21	Student attendance rates, by Indigenous status and remoteness (per cent)
Table 4A.22	Student attendance level, government schools, by Indigenous status (per cent)
Table 4A.23	Student attendance level, non-government schools, by Indigenous status (per cent)
Table 4A.24	Student attendance level, by Indigenous status and remoteness (per cent)
Student Engagement	
Table 4A.26	PISA Sense of Belong at School Index, by special needs group
Retention	

Table 4A.27	Apparent retention rates of full time secondary students, all schools (per cent)
Table 4A.28	Apparent retention rates of full time secondary students, government schools (per cent)
Table 4A.29	Apparent retention rates of full time secondary students, non-government schools (per cent)

Student outcomes (National testing)

Table 4A.30	NAPLAN reading: Proportion of students who achieved at or above the national minimum standard, by Indigenous status and geolocation (per cent)
Table 4A.31	NAPLAN reading: Mean scores, by Indigenous status and geolocation (score points)
Table 4A.34	NAPLAN writing: Proportion of students who achieved at or above the national minimum standard, by Indigenous status and geolocation (per cent)
Table 4A.35	NAPLAN writing: Mean scores, by Indigenous status and geolocation (score points)
Table 4A.38	NAPLAN numeracy: Proportion of students who achieved at or above the national minimum standard, by Indigenous status and geolocation (per cent)
Table 4A.39	NAPLAN numeracy: Mean scores, by Indigenous status and geolocation (score points)
Table 4A.44	National Assessment Program, proportion of Year 6 students at or above proficient standard in science achievement performance, by equity group, Australia

Table 4A.47	National Assessment Program, proportion of students at or above proficient standard in civics and citizenship achievement performance, by equity group, Australia
Table 4A.50	National Assessment Program, information and communication technologies: proportion of students attaining the proficient standard, by equity group, Australia

Student outcomes (International testing)

Table 4A.51	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reading literacy assessment
Table 4A.52	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) mathematical literacy assessment
Table 4A.53	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scientific literacy assessment

Download supporting material

[4 School education interpretative material \(PDF - 555 Kb\)](#)

[4 School education interpretative material \(Word - 81 Kb\)](#)

[4 School education data tables \(XLSX - 873 Kb\)](#)

[4 School education dataset \(CSV - 2364 Kb\)](#)

See the interpretative material and corresponding table number in the data tables for detailed definitions, caveats, footnotes and data source(s).