



Australian Government

Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education

Undergraduate Applications, Offers and Acceptances 2012

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1. Executive Summary

This report contains applications and offers data received from Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs) and universities as of 16 May 2012. It is an update of the data published in the earlier report *The Demand Driven System: Undergraduate Application and Offers, February 2012*.

Final Tertiary Admissions Centre applications and offers data

Highest preference applications

- As of 16 May 2012, there were 273 167 applications made through TACs, an increase of 2.2% compared with 2011. All states and territories recorded an increase in applications except WA (-6.0%).
- Nationally, current Year 12 applications increased by 3.7% while non-Year 12 applications increased by 0.5% in 2012.
- The most popular broad field of education (in terms of number of applications) in 2012 was Health (68 861). This was followed by Society and Culture (55 231) and Management and Commerce (35 182).
- Natural and Physical Sciences recorded the largest increase in applications (10.8%). This was followed by Engineering (6.2%) and Health (4.1%). The largest decrease in applications was recorded in Creative Arts (-3.8%), followed by Architecture and Building (-3.1%).
- Applications increased for all university groups in 2012, with the Australian Technology Network (ATN) recording the largest increase (3.2%) closely followed by the Regional Universities Network (RUN) (3.1%).

Offers

- In 2012, there were 222 476 offers, an increase of 5.2% compared with 2011.
- Nationally, offers to Year 12 applicants increased by 5.8% in 2012 while offers to non-Year 12 applicants rose by 4.4%.
- On top of strong growth in the number of offers, the national offer rate (number of offers as a percentage of highest preference applications) increased from 79.1% in 2011 to 81.4% in 2012. The offer rate provides an indicator of the way which universities choose to respond to student demand. This represents a key indicator as universities transition to the introduction of the demand driven system from 2012.
- Offers increased for all broad fields of education. Health recorded the largest increase in offers (10.2%). This was followed by Engineering (7.6%) and Natural and Physical Sciences (6.5%).
- Applications to RUN universities were most likely to receive an offer (an offer rate of 98.6%). This was followed by the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) (85.2%) and the ATN (73.6%). The Group of Eight (Go8) recorded the lowest offer rate (69.7%), reflecting its relatively high entry requirements.

Acceptances/Deferrals

- There were 159 837 applicants who accepted an offer in 2012, an increase of 5.9% compared with 2011.
- Of all applicants who received offers in 2012, 23 395 or 10.5% deferred their offer through a TAC. The deferral rate was similar in 2011 (10.4%).
- Year 12 applicants were more than twice as likely to defer compared with non-Year 12 applicants (14.1% compared with 6.2% respectively).
- Non-metropolitan applicants were also more than twice as likely to defer compared with metropolitan applicants (17.9% compared with 8.3% respectively).

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds

- Applications from applicants from low SES backgrounds have shown the largest increase (2.7%) from 2011 to 2012, compared with those from medium SES backgrounds (2.4%) and high SES backgrounds (1.7%).
- Over the same period, offers to low SES applicants increased at a higher rate (5.2%) than offers to high SES applicants (4.7%). Offers to medium SES applicants rose by 5.4%.
- Since 2009, offers to low SES applicants recorded the largest increase (19.5%) compared with medium SES (17.6%) and high SES applicants (12.8%).
- Applications by applicants from low SES backgrounds were less likely to result in an offer. Their offer rate was 79.4% compared with 81.4% for medium SES applications and 83.6% for high SES applications in 2012.
- Low SES applicants are more likely to apply for courses in Nursing and Education, and less likely to apply for Medical Studies, Creative Arts and Management and Commerce.

Students from non-metropolitan areas

- Just over a fifth of applicants (21.9%) were from non-metropolitan areas (regional and remote areas), less than their population share of 27.4%.
- In 2012, applications from metropolitan applicants and non-metropolitan applicants increased (2.4% and 1.7% respectively).
- Offers made to metropolitan applicants increased by 5.6% compared with an increase of 3.5% in offers made to non-metropolitan applicants.
- While non-metropolitan applicants are under-represented, they are more likely to receive an offer than metropolitan applicants: 84.1% of non-metropolitan applicants received offers, compared with 81.0% of metropolitan applicants.
- However, metropolitan applicants were more likely to accept an offer (74.9%) than non-metropolitan applicants (62.9%).
- Non-metropolitan applicants are more likely to apply for courses in Education, Nursing and Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies courses. On the other hand, Management and Commerce courses were more popular among metropolitan applicants.

Indigenous students

- Indigenous people are under-represented in the pool of TAC applications. Indigenous people represent around 2.3% of the Australian working age population whereas they constitute only 1.2% of all applications to university. Indigenous applicants have a larger representation among direct applications (2.7%) than among TAC applications.
- Nationally there are 3341 applications from applicants who identified as Indigenous (Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both), an increase of 407 applications or 13.9%.
- Nationally 2520 offers have resulted from applications from Indigenous applicants, an increase of 311 offers or 14.1%.
- Just over three quarters (75.4%) of applications from Indigenous applicants had attracted an offer, compared with an offer rate of 81.5% for non-Indigenous applicants in 2012.
- Indigenous applicants are more likely to apply for courses in Education, Nursing and Society and Culture compared with non-Indigenous applicants. They are less likely to apply for Management and Commerce, Natural and Physical Sciences, Engineering and Medical Sciences courses.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank

- In 2012, 71.5% of all offers made to Year 12 applicants were for those with an ATAR above 70. Offers to Year 12 applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90 accounted for 27.8% of all offers.
- The share of offers has shifted from applicants with a high ATAR to applicants with lower ATAR over the last four years. The share of offers for applicants in the ATAR band “50.00 or less” has increased steadily from 1.6% in 2009 to 3.2% in 2012.
- During this time, the likelihood of an applicant with a low ATAR receiving an offer has recorded a greater increase than an applicant with a higher ATAR, which has remained relatively steady. Offer rates for Year 12 applicants in the “50.00 or less” ATAR band have recorded the largest increase from 12.0% in 2009 to 24.9% in 2012.

Direct applications

- The total number of applications made directly to universities in 2012 was 76 805, an increase of 7.3% when compared with 2011.
- There were 61 833 offers resulting from direct applications, an increase of 9.6% between 2011 and 2012.
- Offer rates in relation to direct applications increased from 80.1% to 80.5% over the same period.
- Compared to TAC applicants, direct applicants were less likely to be Year 12 students and hence were more likely to be older. Female and Indigenous applicants made up a larger share of direct applications than TAC applicants.
- Taking into account that 13 366 applicants applied through TACs as well as directly to universities, a total of 309 639 applicants submitted 323 005 applications. This represents an increase of 3.5% for total unique applicants between 2011 and 2012.

2. Introduction

Purpose of the report

This report looks at the number of applications for undergraduate university places in the first semester of the 2012 academic year, the number of applicants who received offers and the number who accepted offers. These items are key indicators of the level of demand for university education and assist in monitoring the progress of the higher education demand driven system.

Overview of the data

Data in this report have been derived from the University Applications and Offers data collection. The data is for domestic undergraduate student applications and covers the main university admissions process (for first semester admissions) that runs from August to May each year. This report includes a detailed analysis of Tertiary Admissions Centres (TAC) applications data, updating the figures presented in previous reports, and also contains some detail on direct applications. TACs processed around 77% of applications made during the August 2011 to May 2012 admissions process, the remaining 23% of all applicants applied directly to universities.

As mentioned in the 2011 report, the new demand driven system has changed the concept of unmet demand from one that measures the inability of applicants to secure university entrance, to one that reflects the mismatch between applicants' preferences for particular fields of education or university. As a result of this break in series, statistics on unmet demand are no longer presented in this report.

The 2011 applications and offers figures have been revised in this report to achieve consistency with the 2012 data.

- The Department receives five submissions of applications and offer data from TACs annually. In 2011, applications from all five submissions were included in the scope of the analysis. However, to better reflect demand in higher education, only applications that were captured in the final data submission are included in the scope of this report as these applications are most likely to translate into offers and commencements.
- The data received in 2011 from the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) included applicants who had not paid their application processing fees. However, in the 2012 data collection these unpaid applicants have been excluded in the VTAC data received. To be consistent with the scope of the 2012 data, the 2011 data has been revised in this report to exclude applicants who did not pay their fees.

The appendix tables of this report are published as MS Excel spreadsheets on the Department's website:

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/ResourcesAndPublications/HigherEducationPublications/HigherEducationReports/Pages/UndergraduateApplicationsOffersAndAcceptancesReports.aspx>

Acknowledgements

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3. Applications to Tertiary Admission Centres

Total number of applications

The Department receives five submissions of applications and offer data from Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs) annually. At the end of the fifth submission (reference date of 16 May 2012) there were a total of 273 167 applications, an increase of 2.2% compared with 2011.

State and territory

Compared with 2011, applications grew in all states and territories, except in WA (-6.0%). Tasmania recorded the largest growth of 11.6%, followed by SA/NT (6.7%). NSW/ACT also recorded above-average growth (3.1%). The decline in applications in WA coincides with the relatively strong labour market conditions experienced in that state. Note also that WA applications have a relatively large share among direct applications (21.6%, see Chapter 9) than among TAC applications (7.1%).

Since 2009, when unit record data first became available to the Department, applications have risen by 9.4%. The largest growth has occurred in Tasmania (26.6%), SA/NT (13.5%) and Queensland (12.9%). The smallest growth occurred in WA (3.5%).

Table 1: Applications by state and territory, 2009-2012

State	2009	2010	2011*	2012	% Change 2011-2012	% Change 2009-2012
NSW/ACT	81,101	83,108	84,415	86,999	3.1%	7.3%
Vic.	67,457	71,984	71,202	72,275	1.5%	7.1%
Qld	50,055	57,205	55,852	56,512	1.2%	12.9%
WA	18,650	20,834	20,532	19,304	-6.0%	3.5%
SA/NT	23,279	24,235	24,766	26,425	6.7%	13.5%
Tas.	9,201	9,630	10,443	11,652	11.6%	26.6%
Australia	249,743	266,996	267,210	273,167	2.2%	9.4%

*Revised 2011 figures, refer to Chapter 2.

Prior Education

Of the total number of applications in 2012, 147 604 applications or 54.0% were from current Year 12 applicants. Year 12 applications represent the larger proportion of applications in NSW/ACT, Victoria and WA but the reverse is true in Queensland, SA/NT and Tasmania. In Tasmania, non-Year 12 applications represent more than 70% of total applications.

Nationally, Year 12 applications increased by 3.7% in 2012. All states and territories recorded increases in Year 12 applications except WA where a slight decrease occurred (-0.4%). SA/NT (7.9%), Victoria (4.1%) and NSW/ACT (3.8%) recorded above-average increases in Year 12 applications.

Non-Year 12 applications rose by 0.5% in 2012 with Tasmania recording the largest increase (16.6%). WA recorded a decrease of 14.4% in non-Year 12 applications.

Table 2: Applications by Current Year 12 status by state and territory, 2011 and 2012

State	Current Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	% Change
NSW/ACT	46,885	48,671	3.8%	37,530	38,328	2.1%
Vic.	41,673	43,398	4.1%	29,529	28,877	-2.2%
Qld	26,584	27,489	3.4%	29,268	29,023	-0.8%
WA	12,365	12,312	-0.4%	8,167	6,992	-14.4%
SA/NT	11,386	12,286	7.9%	13,380	14,139	5.7%
Tas.	3,409	3,448	1.1%	7,034	8,204	16.6%
Australia	142,302	147,604	3.7%	124,908	125,563	0.5%

Among non-Year 12 applications, 37.7% were from applicants who had previously attempted higher education without obtaining a qualification. Fewer applications were received from applicants who had completed a higher education qualification (13.9%) or VET qualification (13.2%). Over a quarter of non-Year 12 applications (25.8%) were from applicants whose highest prior educational participation was secondary education.

Table 3: Highest prior educational participation, Non-Year 12 applicants, 2012

Highest prior educational participation	Number	Share (%)
Complete postgraduate	2,796	2.2%
Complete bachelor	11,499	9.2%
Complete sub-degree	3,162	2.5%
Incomplete higher education	47,379	37.7%
Complete VET	16,629	13.2%
Incomplete VET	3,488	2.8%
Complete secondary education	32,374	25.8%
Other qual - complete or incomplete	4,135	3.3%
No prior educational attainment	4,101	3.3%
Total	125,563	100.0%

Gender

Applications by females represented more than half (58.2%) of total applications. This is consistent with university enrolments data for 2011 which shows that females accounted for 58.8% of commencing domestic students.

Home state/Interstate

The majority of applicants (86.1%) applied to study in their home state¹ in 2012. In total, 38 040 interstate applications were recorded nationally, many of these applicants also applied in their home state. The proportion of interstate applications ranged from a low of 8.8% in NSW/ACT to a high of 39.0% in Tasmania. The number of interstate applications to Tasmania has been high for several years.

¹ For current Year 12 applicants, those who obtained their Year 12 qualification from a state or territory within the jurisdiction of the Tertiary Admissions Centre (TAC) to which they applied are defined as a home state applicant. For non-Year 12 applicants, those who have a permanent home address that is within a state or territory in the jurisdiction of the TAC to which they applied are defined as a home state applicant.

The proportion of home state applications was largest in Queensland and WA (both 87.8%), followed by SA (87.7%). People residing in the NT (40.8%) and ACT (51.1%) were more likely to apply interstate in 2012.

Table 4: State and territory of application by state and territory of permanent home residence, 2012

State of university of highest preference	State of permanent home residence							
	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT
NSW	80.0%	3.4%	4.1%	2.4%	2.5%	3.7%	7.2%	16.7%
Vic.	3.8%	83.3%	2.8%	4.3%	3.6%	8.8%	12.2%	11.8%
Qld	5.6%	2.6%	87.8%	2.2%	2.3%	4.0%	15.8%	7.0%
WA	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	87.8%	0.7%	1.0%	4.6%	1.3%
SA	1.4%	2.5%	0.8%	1.1%	87.7%	2.3%	15.5%	3.6%
Tas.	2.8%	1.6%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	78.8%	1.4%	2.5%
NT	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.9%	1.9%	0.3%	40.8%	0.4%
ACT	2.3%	0.7%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0.9%	1.6%	51.1%
Multi-State	3.4%	4.9%	2.5%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.7%	5.5%

Non-metropolitan applicants were more likely to apply interstate compared with metropolitan applicants (18.9% compared with 10.9% respectively). This is consistent with their need to move to attend university.

The propensity to apply interstate appears to be positively related to Year 12 achievement. Only a small proportion of applications from Year 12 applicants with an ATAR of 80 or less applied interstate (6.4%). This compares with 10.9% for applicants with an ATAR between 80.05 and 90.00 and 26.3% for applicants in the highest ATAR band (90.05 or more).

These figures are consistent with interstate applicants' focus on a limited number of high demand courses. Medical Studies, Dental Studies and Veterinary Studies were strongly over-represented among interstate applications. Over one eighth (13.2%) of all interstate highest preference applications were for a course in Medical Studies. By contrast, Medical Studies accounted for only 1.4% of all home state applications.

Field of education

The most popular broad field of education (in terms of number of applications) in 2012 was Health (68 861 highest preference applications or 25.2% of all applications). This was followed by Society and Culture (55 231 highest preference applications or 20.2% of all applications) and Management and Commerce (35 182 highest preference applications or 12.9% of all applications).

Out of all broad fields of education, Natural and Physical Sciences recorded the largest increase in applications (10.8%). This was followed by Engineering (6.2%) and Health (4.1%). The largest decrease in applications was recorded in Creative Arts (-3.8%), followed by Architecture and Building (-3.1%).

Table 5: Applications by field of education, 2011 and 2012

Field of education	2011	2012	% Change
Natural and Physical Sciences	20,932	23,199	10.8%
Information Technology	6,712	6,891	2.7%
Engineering and Related Technologies	17,159	18,224	6.2%
Architecture and Building	9,428	9,137	-3.1%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	4,231	4,203	-0.7%
Health	66,156	68,861	4.1%
<i>Medical Studies</i>	12,681	11,814	-6.8%
<i>Nursing</i>	21,596	22,176	2.7%
<i>Dental Studies</i>	4,084	3,964	-2.9%
<i>Veterinary</i>	2,100	2,302	9.6%
<i>Health Other</i>	25,695	28,605	11.3%
Education	23,402	23,542	0.6%
<i>Teacher Education</i>	22,401	22,661	1.2%
<i>Education Other</i>	1,001	881	-12.0%
Management and Commerce	34,790	35,182	1.1%
Society and Culture*	55,024	55,231	0.4%
Creative Arts	27,455	26,417	-3.8%
Total	267,210	273,167	2.2%

Note: Hospitality and Mixed Field Programs are not shown due to the small number of applications, hence the total number of applications does not equal the sum of applications/offers by broad field of education in the above table.

* Society and Culture includes a broad range of subject areas including Behavioural Science, Law, Language & Literature, Economics & Econometrics.

Type of university

Applications increased for all university groups in 2012. The Australian Technology Network (ATN) recorded the largest increase (3.2%), closely followed by the Regional Universities Network (RUN) (3.1%).

The Group of Eight (Go8) received the largest share (30.2%) of applications in 2012. The ATN universities and the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) received 19.9% and 17.5% respectively. RUN recorded 5.7% of the share of total applications.

Table 6: Applications by type of university, 2011 and 2012

Type of university	2011		2012		% Change in number of applications
	Number	Share (%)	Number	Share (%)	
Group of Eight	82,511	30.9%	82,616	30.2%	0.1%
Australian Technology Network	52,709	19.7%	54,379	19.9%	3.2%
Innovative Research Universities	47,093	17.6%	47,877	17.5%	1.7%
Regional Universities Network	14,986	5.6%	15,450	5.7%	3.1%
Total*	267,210	100.0%	273,167	100.0%	2.2%

*Total includes applications to universities that are not aligned with a university group.

4. Offers

Total number of offers

There were 222 476 offers made in 2012, an increase of 5.2% compared with 2011. The majority of applications (81.4%) attracted an offer, which is 2.3 percentage points higher than the offer rate in 2011.

State and territory

The number of applicants who received offers in 2012 rose in all states and territories except WA (-2.4%) compared with 2011. The biggest increase was in Tasmania (9.0%), followed by Victoria (8.5%). Since 2009, the number of applicants who received offers has increased by 16.4%. Increases over the same period were observed across all states and territories. Victoria (27.9%) and Tasmania (20.3%) recorded above-average growth while the growth experienced in WA (7.0%) was well below the national average.

Table 7: Offers by state and territory, 2009-2012

State	2009	2010	2011	2012	% Change 2011-2012	% Change 2009-2012
NSW/ACT	64,402	67,232	69,149	72,004	4.1%	11.8%
Vic.	46,428	51,258	54,714	59,371	8.5%	27.9%
Qld	39,333	42,738	43,391	45,637	5.2%	16.0%
WA	15,322	17,045	16,795	16,399	-2.4%	7.0%
SA/NT	18,527	19,323	19,652	20,580	4.7%	11.1%
Tas.	7,056	7,198	7,784	8,485	9.0%	20.3%
Australia	191,068	204,794	211,485	222,476	5.2%	16.4%

In 2012, the largest offer rate (number of offers as a percentage of highest preference applications) was recorded in WA (85.0%), followed by NSW/ACT (82.8%) and Victoria (82.1%). Offer rates fell in Tasmania and SA/NT (down 1.7 and 1.5 percentage points respectively).

Since 2009, offer rates have increased each year in Victoria (by 13.3 percentage points overall). This may be associated with supplementary offers made by the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) since 2010.² Offer rates have also increased steadily in NSW/ACT since 2009 (3.4 percentage points overall), but have decreased each year in Tasmania (by 3.9 percentage points overall). Note that while the number of offers in WA has decreased in recent years, its offer rate in 2012 was at its highest since 2009.

² A supplementary offer is an offer of a place in a course for which there was no expressed preference in the VTAC application. In 2010, VTAC made 2551 supplementary offers and this number grew to 3893 in 2011 and 4923 in 2012. Note that only 12.8% of supplementary offers were formally accepted by applicants in 2012. Excluding supplementary offers, Victoria recorded an increase of 7.1% in offers between 2011 and 2012.

Table 8: Offer Rates by state and territory, 2009-2012

State	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change (p.p) 2011-2012	Change (p.p) 2009-2012
NSW/ACT	79.4%	80.9%	81.9%	82.8%	0.8	3.4
Vic.	68.8%	71.2%	76.8%	82.1%	5.3	13.3
Qld	78.6%	74.7%	77.7%	80.8%	3.1	2.2
WA	82.2%	81.8%	81.8%	85.0%	3.2	2.8
SA/NT	79.6%	79.7%	79.4%	77.9%	-1.5	-1.7
Tas.	76.7%	74.7%	74.5%	72.8%	-1.7	-3.9
Australia	76.5%	76.7%	79.1%	81.4%	2.3	4.9

Prior Education

Nationally, offers to current Year 12 applicants increased by 5.8% in 2012. Offers to Year 12 applicants increased in all states and territories except Tasmania (-4.3%). Growth in offers to Year 12 applicants was strongest in Victoria (9.5%), followed by Queensland (6.5%) and SA/NT (5.3%).

Offers to non-Year 12 applicants rose by 4.4% nationally. WA was the only state that recorded a decrease in offers to non-Year 12 applicants (-9.9%), in line with its decrease in applications from non-Year 12 applicants.

Table 9: Offers by Current Year 12 status by state and territory, 2011 and 2012

State	Current Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	% Change
NSW/ACT	39,828	41,505	4.2%	29,321	30,499	4.0%
Vic.	32,028	35,078	9.5%	22,686	24,293	7.1%
Qld	21,670	23,088	6.5%	21,721	22,549	3.8%
WA	10,441	10,673	2.2%	6,354	5,726	-9.9%
SA/NT	9,293	9,784	5.3%	10,359	10,796	4.2%
Tas.	2,478	2,371	-4.3%	5,306	6,114	15.2%
Australia	115,738	122,499	5.8%	95,747	99,977	4.4%

Nationally applications from Year 12 applicants were more likely to receive an offer than non-Year 12 students. In 2012, the Year 12 offer rate was 83.0% compared with the non-Year 12 offer rate of 79.6%. In 2012, Year 12 offer rates were higher than the non-Year 12 offer rates in all states and territories except Victoria and Tasmania.

Table 10: Offer Rates by Current Year 12 status by state and territory, 2011 and 2012

State	Current Year 12			Non-Year 12		
	2011	2012	Change (p.p)	2011	2012	Change (p.p)
NSW/ACT	84.9%	85.3%	0.3	78.1%	79.6%	1.4
Vic.	76.9%	80.8%	4.0	76.8%	84.1%	7.3
Qld	81.5%	84.0%	2.5	74.2%	77.7%	3.5
WA	84.4%	86.7%	2.2	77.8%	81.9%	4.1
SA/NT	81.6%	79.6%	-2.0	77.4%	76.4%	-1.1
Tas.	72.7%	68.8%	-3.9	75.4%	74.5%	-0.9
Australia	81.3%	83.0%	1.7	76.7%	79.6%	3.0

Gender

Female applicants (applications) were more likely to receive an offer than male applicants, although the difference was only slight, with 82.0% of female applicants being offered a place compared to 80.7% of male applicants.

Home state/Interstate

Home state applicants (applications) were more likely to receive an offer than interstate applicants. This was consistent with the profile of interstate applications which were mostly for high demand courses with high admissions standards such as Medical Studies, Dental Studies and Veterinary Studies, as discussed in Chapter 3.

In all, 83.5% or 196 376 home state applicants were offered a place compared with 26 100 interstate applicants (68.6%). This pattern was broadly consistent in all states and territories except Victoria, although the size of the gap between home state and interstate offer rates differed. Tasmanian home state applicants are more likely to receive an offer than those who apply from interstate (88.2% compared with 48.7% respectively).

Table 11: Offers and offer rates by home state/interstate and state and territory, 2012

State	Offers		Offer rates	
	Home state	Interstate	Home state	Interstate
NSW/ACT	66,744	5,260	84.1%	69.1%
Vic.	51,549	7,822	81.6%	86.0%
Qld	39,340	6,297	83.6%	66.8%
WA	15,236	1,163	87.1%	64.4%
SA/NT	17,240	3,340	82.6%	60.3%
Tas.	6,267	2,218	88.2%	48.7%
Australia	196,376	26,100	83.5%	68.6%

Field of education

Society and Culture received the largest number of offers (51 491 or 23.1% of total offers), followed by Health (44 227 or 19.9% of total offers). Offers increased for all broad fields of education. Health recorded the largest increase in offers (10.2%), followed by Engineering (7.6%) and Natural and Physical Sciences (6.5%).

Applicants who applied for Medical Studies (21.0%), Veterinary Studies (26.1%) and Dental Studies (27.7%) as their highest preference were least likely to receive an offer. On the other hand, applicants who applied for Natural and Physical Sciences were most likely to be offered a place (99.8%), followed by Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (99.1%).

Table 12: Offers by field of education, 2011-2012

Field of education	Offers			Offer rates		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	Change (p.p)
Natural and Physical Sciences	21,741	23,148	6.5%	103.9%	99.8%	-4.1
Information Technology	6,013	6,081	1.1%	89.6%	88.2%	-1.3
Engineering and Related Technologies	14,489	15,586	7.6%	84.4%	85.5%	1.1
Architecture and Building	6,318	6,432	1.8%	67.0%	70.4%	3.4
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	4,086	4,164	1.9%	96.6%	99.1%	2.5
Health	40,124	44,227	10.2%	60.7%	64.2%	3.6
<i>Medical Studies</i>	2,669	2,480	-7.1%	21.0%	21.0%	-0.1
<i>Nursing</i>	15,627	16,934	8.4%	72.4%	76.4%	4.0
<i>Dental Studies</i>	1,114	1,100	-1.3%	27.3%	27.7%	0.5
<i>Veterinary</i>	598	601	0.5%	28.5%	26.1%	-2.4
<i>Health Other</i>	20,116	23,112	14.9%	78.3%	80.8%	2.5
Education	18,470	19,010	2.9%	78.9%	80.7%	1.8
<i>Teacher Education</i>	17,752	18,159	2.3%	79.2%	80.1%	0.9
<i>Education Other</i>	718	851	18.5%	71.7%	96.6%	24.9
Management and Commerce	30,327	30,949	2.1%	87.2%	88.0%	0.8
Society and Culture*	49,243	51,491	4.6%	89.5%	93.2%	3.7
Creative Arts	19,054	19,120	0.3%	69.4%	72.4%	3.0
Total	211,485	222,476	5.2%	79.1%	81.4%	2.3

Note: Hospitality and Mixed Field Programs are not shown due to the small number of offers, hence the total number of offers does not equal the sum of offers by broad field of education in the above table.

Note: Offer rates are expressed as the number of offers as a percentage of first preference applications. Given that offers may result from lower order preferences, offer rates for certain fields of education may exceed 100%.

* Society and Culture includes a broad range of subject areas including Behavioural Science, Law, Language & Literature, Economics & Econometrics.

Type of university

The Go8 recorded the largest share of offers in 2012 (25.9%) out of all university groups. This was followed by the IRU (18.3%) and the ATN (18.0%). RUN recorded just 6.8% of total offers.

Applications to Go8 universities were less likely to receive an offer (offer rate of 69.7%), reflecting the relatively high entry requirements at these universities. On the other hand, applications made to RUN were more likely to receive an offer (98.6%).

Table 13: Offers and offer rates by type of university, 2011 and 2012

Type of university	2011			2012		
	Number	Share (%)	Offer rates (%)	Number	Share (%)	Offer rates (%)
Group of Eight	54,660	25.8%	66.2%	57,562	25.9%	69.7%
Australian Technology Network	37,362	17.7%	70.9%	40,045	18.0%	73.6%
Innovative Research Universities	39,343	18.6%	83.5%	40,769	18.3%	85.2%
Regional Universities Network	14,861	7.0%	99.2%	15,238	6.8%	98.6%
Total*	211,485	100.0%	79.1%	222,476	100.0%	81.4%

*Total includes offers from universities that are not aligned with a university group.

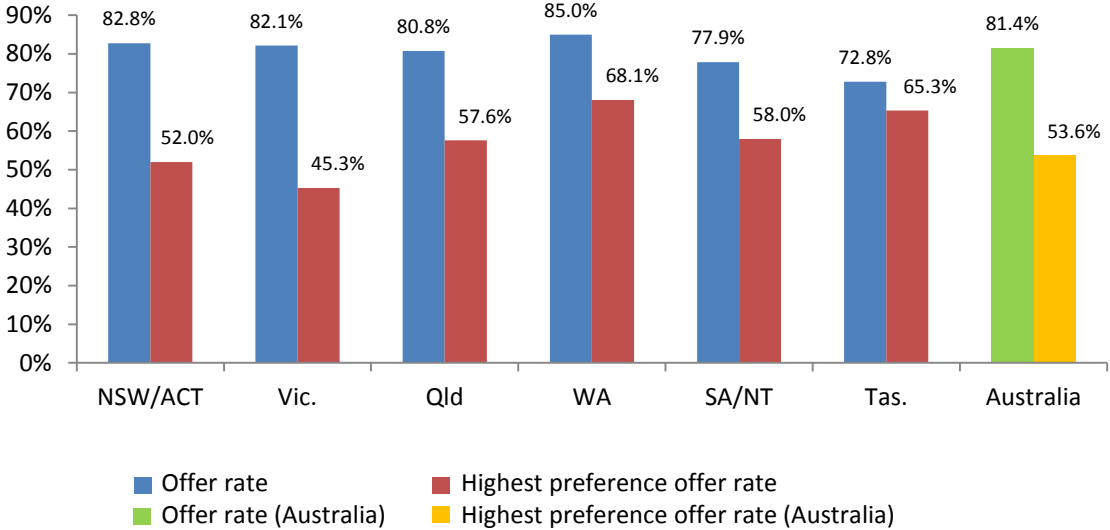
Offers by preference order

Across Australia, a total of 146 553 applicants received an offer for their highest preference application. Note that highest preference refers to the highest ranking preference for a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) in a university undergraduate award course in a set of preferences expressed by the applicant.³

Nationally, more than a half of all applicants (53.6%) were offered a place in their preferred course. WA recorded the highest first preference offer rate of 68.1%, followed by Tasmania (65.3%). Just 45.3% of Victorian applicants received an offer in their first preference course. The gap between the overall offer rate and the highest preference offer rate was also largest in Victoria (36.8 percentage points). This may be associated with supplementary offers made in Victoria.

³ This does not necessarily represent the first preference on an application. For example, if the first preference listed in an application is a postgraduate, non-award or VET course, it is not included in the analysis of this report which is focusing on undergraduate higher education award courses. In these cases, the next highest in-scope preference is used.

Figure 1: Proportion of applicants who received an offer for their highest preference and proportion receiving any offer, by state and territory, 2012



Year 12 applicants were less likely to receive an offer for their highest preference course (50.9%) compared with non-Year 12 applicants (56.9%). However, not accounting for preferences, Year 12 applicants had a higher offer rate than non-Year 12 applicants. These figures support the theory that many Year 12 students nominate an aspirational first preference, while non-Year 12 applicants are more focused in their preferences.

5. Acceptances

Total number of acceptances

It is important to note that the definition of acceptances used in this report includes only applicants who formally notify the TAC that they accepted an offer. Deferrals are excluded from the total number of acceptances.

In 2012, 159 837 applicants accepted an offer (an increase of 5.9% compared with 2011). This is associated, in part, with the increase in offers and applications. Also, the acceptance rate (number of acceptances as a percentage of number of offers) increased slightly (from 71.4% in 2011 to 71.8% in 2012).

State and territory

Tasmania recorded the largest increase in acceptances (12.9%) in 2012. This was followed by Victoria (9.0%), SA/NT (8.1%) and Queensland (7.9%). Since 2009, Tasmania (32.9%), Victoria (24.2%) and Queensland (16.7%) recorded above-average growth in acceptances. By contrast, SA/NT (3.3%) only recorded a modest increase in acceptances since 2009.

Table 14: Acceptances* by state and territory, 2009-2012

State	2009	2010	2011	2012	% Change 2011-2012	% Change 2009-2012
NSW/ACT	46,770	48,681	50,633	51,829	2.4%	10.8%
Vic.	31,777	35,300	36,216	39,479	9.0%	24.2%
Qld	31,064	33,572	33,599	36,244	7.9%	16.7%
WA	11,143	12,738	12,311	12,333	0.2%	10.7%
SA/NT	13,170	13,810	12,589	13,609	8.1%	3.3%
Tas.	4,773	5,129	5,618	6,343	12.9%	32.9%
Australia	138,697	149,230	150,966	159,837	5.9%	15.2%

*Acceptances exclude deferrals.

In 2012, the largest acceptance rate was recorded in Queensland (79.4%), followed by WA (75.2%) and Tasmania (74.8%). NSW/ACT was the only state that recorded a fall in acceptance rates compared with 2011 (down 1.2 percentage points). Overall, the national acceptance rate has fallen by 0.7 percentage points since 2009 to 71.8%. Tasmania has recorded the largest increase in its acceptance rate (7.1 percentage points) while the acceptance rate in SA/NT has fallen by 5.0 percentage points.

Table 15: Acceptance rates by state and territory, 2009-2012

State	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change (p.p) 2011-2012	Change (p.p) 2009-2012
NSW/ACT	72.6%	72.4%	73.2%	72.0%	-1.2	-0.6
Vic.	68.4%	68.9%	66.2%	66.5%	0.3	-1.9
Qld	79.0%	78.6%	77.4%	79.4%	2.0	0.4
WA	72.7%	74.7%	73.3%	75.2%	1.9	2.5
SA/NT	71.1%	71.5%	64.1%	66.1%	2.1	-5.0
Tas.	67.6%	71.3%	72.2%	74.8%	2.6	7.1
Australia	72.6%	72.9%	71.4%	71.8%	0.5	-0.7

Prior Education

Current Year 12 applicants were less likely to accept an offer compared with non-Year 12 applicants in 2012 (acceptance rate of 70.5% compared with 73.5% respectively).

Gender

Acceptance rates differed slightly by gender. Of all male applicants who received an offer, 73.1% accepted the offer, compared with 71.0% of female applicants.

Field of education

Acceptances increased for all broad fields of education in 2012 except Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies which fell slightly by 0.1%. Health recorded the largest increase in acceptances (12.0%). This was followed by Engineering (8.0%) and Natural and Physical Sciences (7.8%).

Acceptance rates were relatively low for Dental Studies (60.0%) and Veterinary Studies (65.2%) because applicants often apply and receive offers for these high demand courses in different states but can only accept one offer.

Table 16: Acceptances* and acceptance rates by field of education, 2011 and 2012

Field of education	Acceptances			Acceptance rates		
	2011	2012	% Change	2011	2012	% Change (p.p)
Natural and Physical Sciences	15,320	16,519	7.8%	70.5%	71.4%	0.9%
Information Technology	4,644	4,682	0.8%	77.2%	77.0%	-0.2%
Engineering and Related Technologies	11,150	12,046	8.0%	77.0%	77.3%	0.3%
Architecture and Building	4,749	4,832	1.7%	75.2%	75.1%	0.0%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	2,738	2,734	-0.1%	67.0%	65.7%	-1.4%
Health	27,960	31,324	12.0%	69.7%	70.8%	1.1%
<i>Medical Studies</i>	1,867	1,680	-10.0%	70.0%	67.7%	-2.2%
<i>Nursing</i>	11,489	12,633	10.0%	73.5%	74.6%	1.1%
<i>Dental Studies</i>	695	660	-5.0%	62.4%	60.0%	-2.4%
<i>Veterinary</i>	377	392	4.0%	63.0%	65.2%	2.2%
<i>Health Other</i>	13,532	15,959	17.9%	67.3%	69.1%	1.8%
Education	13,234	13,928	5.2%	71.7%	73.3%	1.6%
<i>Teacher Education</i>	12,682	13,332	5.1%	71.4%	73.4%	2.0%
<i>Education Other</i>	552	596	8.0%	76.9%	70.0%	-6.8%
Management and Commerce	22,099	23,357	5.7%	72.9%	75.5%	2.6%
Society and Culture**	34,138	34,635	1.5%	69.3%	67.3%	-2.1%
Creative Arts	13,590	14,055	3.4%	71.3%	73.5%	2.2%
Total	150,966	159,837	5.9%	71.4%	71.8%	0.5%

Note: Hospitality and Mixed Field Programs are not shown due to the small number of applications/offers, hence the total number of applications/offers does not equal the sum of applications/offers by broad field of education in the above table.

*Acceptances exclude deferrals.

** Society and Culture includes a broad range of subject areas including Behavioural Science, Law, Language & Literature, Economics & Econometrics.

Type of university

Out of all university groups, the Go8 constituted the largest share of acceptances (26.7%). Offers made by the ATN or Go8 were more likely to be accepted by the applicant (with acceptance rates of 77.7% and 74.2% respectively). On the other hand, offers made to the IRU were less likely to be accepted (70.7%).

Table 17: Acceptances* and acceptance rates by type of university, 2011 and 2012

Type of university	2011			2012		
	Number	Share (%)	Acceptance rate (%)	Number	Share (%)	Acceptance rate (%)
Group of Eight	40,592	26.9%	74.3%	42,728	26.7%	74.2%
Australian Technology Network	28,498	18.9%	76.3%	31,097	19.5%	77.7%
Innovative Research Universities	26,757	17.7%	68.0%	28,837	18.0%	70.7%
Regional Universities Network	10,916	7.2%	73.5%	11,005	6.9%	72.2%
Total**	150,966	100.0%	71.4%	159,837	100.0%	71.8%

*Acceptances exclude deferrals.

**Total includes acceptances for universities that are not aligned with a university group.

Deferrals

Note that deferrals data in this report includes only applicants who formally deferred their offer through their TAC. Some applicants defer later (during enrolment for example).

Recently published Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) reports⁴ provide insights on young people who commence university one to two years after completing Year 12 and the relationship between deferrals and taking gap years. The LSAY reports found that the incidence of taking a gap year has increased in Australia, rising from 10% in the period 1999-2000 to 24% in 2009-10. The research report also notes that 'deferring after being offered a university place' is less common than taking a gap year and applying for university entry during the gap year. In addition, it found that three quarters of individuals in the LSAY cohort who deferred university entry started studying at university after taking one or two gap years. These findings suggest that care needs to be taken when inferring the number of students taking a gap year from deferrals data.

Nationally, the rate of deferrals (number of deferrals as a percentage of number of offers) for 2012 was similar to the rates in 2011 (10.5% in 2012 compared with 10.4% in 2011). The number of deferrals increased by 6.1% from 22 050 in 2011 to 23 395 in 2012. The pattern of deferrals across states in 2012 was similar to 2011, with deferral rates increasing slightly in NSW/ACT, remaining the same in Victoria but decreasing slightly in the other states.

⁴ Curtis D, Mlotkowski P and Lumsden M, 2012, *Bridging the gap: who takes a gap year and why?*, NCVER research report, Adelaide and Lumsden and Stanwick 2012, *Briefing Paper 28, Who takes a gap year and why?*, NCVER, Adelaide.

Table 18: Deferrals by state and territory, 2010-2012 2012

State	2011		2012	
	Deferrals	Deferral rate	Deferrals	Deferral rate
NSW/ACT	5,670	8.2%	6,587	9.1%
Vic.	5,821	10.6%	6,297	10.6%
Qld	4,966	11.4%	4,971	10.9%
WA	2,202	13.1%	2,125	13.0%
SA/NT	3,063	15.6%	3,085	15.0%
Tas.	328	4.2%	330	3.9%
Australia	22,050	10.4%	23,395	10.5%

Year 12 applicants were more than twice as likely to defer compared with non-Year 12 applicants (14.1% compared with 6.2% respectively). LSAY research suggests that common reasons for deferring after completing Year 12 are to have a break, holiday or travel.⁵ There was only a small difference in deferral rates between medium and low SES applicants. High SES applicants were slightly less likely to defer compared to low and medium SES applicants.

Non-metropolitan applicants were more than twice as likely to defer compared with metropolitan applicants (17.9% compared with 8.3% respectively). LSAY research found that students from regional and remote locations are also more likely to take a gap year.⁶

Deferral rates are similar between Indigenous and non-Indigenous applicants.

Table 19: Profile of deferrals, 2012

	Deferrals	Deferral rate
Prior Education		
Current Year 12	17,221	14.1%
Non-Year 12	6,174	6.2%
Socioeconomic status		
Low	4,358	10.8%
Medium	11,957	11.0%
High	6,678	9.6%
Region		
Metropolitan	14,147	8.3%
Non-Metropolitan	9,013	17.9%
Indigenous status		
Indigenous	251	10.0%
Non-Indigenous	23,135	10.5%

⁵ Curtis D, Mlotkowski P and Lumsden M, 2012, Ibid.

⁶ Curtis D, Mlotkowski P and Lumsden M, 2012, Ibid.

6. Key Skill Areas

Trends in key skill areas

Trends in applications and offers since 2009 are reported in this chapter for four fields of education where the Australian Government has introduced changes to Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) repayments, namely:

- Nursing,
- Education,
- Early Childhood Education, and
- Natural and Physical Sciences (including Mathematical Sciences).

Time series data are also presented for three further fields of education where concerns have been expressed about potential skills shortages:

- Medical Studies,
- Dental Studies, and
- Engineering.

Nursing

Demand for Nursing courses (applications) rose by 2.7% to 22 176 in 2012, though it remains slightly below the peak of 2010. Since 2009, nursing applications increased by 18.2%.

The number of offers in Nursing also increased strongly (by 8.4%) in 2012. Compared with 2009, the number of offers increased by 20.4%. The offer rate for Nursing has increased in the last three years from 70.4% in 2010 to 76.4% in 2012.

In 2010, the maximum student contribution amount for Nursing was shifted from the national priority rate to the band 1 rate to support expanded course provision. To encourage more people to enrol in these courses and then work as nurses, the Government introduced the HECS-HELP Benefit for nurses which reduces the compulsory HELP repayments of eligible graduates who go on to work in related occupations.

Table 20: Applications, offers and offer rates, Nursing, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change 2011-2012	Change 2009-2012
Applications	18,768	22,527	21,596	22,176	2.7%	18.2%
Offers	14,061	15,865	15,627	16,934	8.4%	20.4%
Offer Rates	74.9%	70.4%	72.4%	76.4%	4.0 p.p.	1.5 p.p.

Education

Applications for Education courses increased by 0.6% to 23 542 in 2012 compared with 2011. Compared with 2009, applications in Education increased by 3.0% in 2012.

The growth in offers has outstripped the growth in applications for Education courses. In 2012, offers were 2.9% higher compared with 2011, and 12.7% higher compared with 2009. The offer rate for Education courses is currently at its highest in the last four years (80.7% in 2012).

In 2010, the maximum student contribution amount for Education units of study was shifted from the national priority rate to the band 1 rate to support expanded course provision. To encourage more people to enrol in these courses and then work as teachers, the Government also introduced the HECS-HELP Benefit for teachers which reduces the compulsory HELP repayments of eligible graduates who go on to work in related occupations.

Table 21: Applications, offers and offer rates, Education, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change 2011-2012	Change 2009-2012
Applications	22,858	24,684	23,402	23,542	0.6%	3.0%
Offers	16,871	17,843	18,470	19,010	2.9%	12.7%
Offer Rates	73.8%	72.3%	78.9%	80.7%	1.8 p.p.	6.9 p.p.

Early Childhood Teacher Education

In 2012, there were 4122 applications for Early Childhood Teacher Education courses, an increase of 12.8% compared with 2011 and 20.2% compared with 2009. Over the same periods, offers increased by 14.3% and 28.0% respectively. Offer rates increased from 68.9% in 2010 to 77.0% in 2012.

In 2009, the Government announced the HECS-HELP Benefit for early childhood education teachers. This scheme reduces the HELP debt of early childhood teachers who work in regional and remote areas, Indigenous communities and areas of high disadvantage, based on postcode location.

On 1 December 2011, the Government announced the expansion of the HECS-HELP Benefit for early childhood education teachers by expanding the number of eligible postcodes to include all rural and remote areas, including regional cities. As part of this expansion, the requirement for early childhood teachers to spend 50 per cent of the week 'teaching' has been removed. This would allow eligible qualified early childhood teachers who are providing pedagogical support to other staff, but not carrying this level of teaching workload, to obtain the benefit.

Table 22: Applications, offers and offer rates, Early Childhood Teacher Education, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change 2011- 2012	Change 2009- 2012
Applications	3,428	3,967	3,653	4,122	12.8%	20.2%
Offers	2,481	2,735	2,778	3,176	14.3%	28.0%
Offer Rates	72.4%	68.9%	76.0%	77.0%	1.0 p.p.	4.6 p.p.

Natural and Physical Sciences

Applications for Natural and Physical Sciences (including Mathematical Sciences) in 2012 were up by 10.8% compared with 2011 and 34.7% since 2009. The strong growth in applications has not been met with the same level of growth in offers. Offers increased by 6.5% and 28.5% respectively over the same periods.

As part of the 2012-13 Budget, the Government announced that from 1 January 2013, the maximum student contribution amounts for all students undertaking mathematics, statistics and science units will be increased to Band 2. However, the Government will continue to provide incentives for mathematics and science graduates who work or teach in a relevant field of study by continuing to offer the HECS-HELP Benefit for mathematics and science graduates. People who graduate from a Natural and Physical Sciences course with a HECS-HELP debt and work in a relevant occupation can have their compulsory HELP repayments reduced by more than \$1,600 per year for up to five years – a total of \$8000.

Table 23: Applications, offers and offer rates, Natural and Physical Sciences, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change 2011- 2012	Change 2009- 2012
Applications	17,222	19,390	20,932	23,199	10.8%	34.7%
Offers	18,018	20,420	21,741	23,148	6.5%	28.5%
Offer Rates	104.6%	105.3%	103.9%	99.8%	-4.1 p.p.	-4.8 p.p.

Note: Offer rates are expressed as the number of offers as a percentage of first preference applications. Given that offers may result from lower order preferences, offer rates may exceed 100%.

Medical Studies

Applications for Medical Studies decreased by 6.8% to 11 814 in 2012 to be more in line with the number of applications recorded in 2010. However, compared with 2009, applications increased by 16.9%.

Offers for Medical Studies decreased by 7.1% in 2012. The number of offers in 2012 was similar to 2010 but 15.6% higher compared with 2009. The offer rate has remained relatively low at around 21% over the last four years.

Medical Studies is one of a number of health fields where the supply of places depends not only on the number of university places available, but also on the availability of practical training placements.

Table 24: Applications, offers and offer rates, Medical Studies, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change 2011- 2012	Change 2009- 2012
Applications	10,110	11,438	12,681	11,814	-6.8%	16.9%
Offers	2,146	2,466	2,669	2,480	-7.1%	15.6%
Offer Rates	21.2%	21.6%	21.0%	21.0%	0.0 p.p.	-0.2 p.p.

Dental Studies

In 2012, applications for Dental Studies decreased by 2.9% to 3964 in 2012. However, compared with 2009, demand for Dental Studies rose by 11.6%.

In 2012, offers were 1.3% lower compared with 2011 but were 2.9% higher compared with 2009. The offer rate in 2012 (27.7%) was 2.3 percentage points lower compared with 2009.

Table 25: Applications, offers and offer rates, Dental Studies, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change 2011- 2012	Change 2009- 2012
Applications	3,553	3,547	4,084	3,964	-2.9%	11.6%
Offers	1,069	1,103	1,114	1,100	-1.3%	2.9%
Offer Rates	30.1%	31.1%	27.3%	27.7%	0.4 p.p.	-2.3 p.p.

Engineering

In 2012, demand for Engineering rose by 6.2% compared with 2011. Applications for Engineering have grown each year since 2009 (an increase of 10.3% between 2009 and 2012).

Offers increased by 7.6% in 2012 compared with 2011. Since 2009, offers have grown by 12.9%. The offer rate has risen from 83.5% in 2009 to 85.5% in 2012.

Table 26: Applications, offers and offer rates, Engineering, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change 2011- 2012	Change 2009- 2012
Applications	16,523	16,713	17,159	18,224	6.2%	10.3%
Offers	13,803	14,083	14,489	15,586	7.6%	12.9%
Offer Rates	83.5%	84.3%	84.4%	85.5%	1.1 p.p.	2.0 p.p.

7. Under-Represented Groups

Socioeconomic status⁷

Share of applicants

In 2012, 18.6% of all TAC applications were from low SES applicants, compared with 49.1% from medium SES applicants and 30.5% from high SES applicants (based on the postcode measure of SES). To be represented in proportion to their population share, applications from low and high SES applicants would each constitute 25% of the pool of applications, with applications from medium SES applicants constituting the remaining 50%.

The pattern of under-representation of low SES persons in applications and offers data translates into lower participation at university. In 2011 (latest published enrolment data), students from low SES postcodes constituted 16.8% of domestic undergraduate student enrolments.

Applications

While low SES applicants are under-represented, applications from this group have shown the largest increase (2.7%) compared with those from medium SES backgrounds (2.4%) and high SES backgrounds (1.7%) in 2012.

Table 27: Applications by SES, 2011 and 2012

SES	2011	2012	% Change
Low	49,535	50,870	2.7%
Medium	130,847	134,048	2.4%
High	81,902	83,287	1.7%
Total*	267,210	273,167	2.2%

* The Australia total includes data that could not be coded to an SES.

Offers

Offers to applicants from low SES backgrounds have grown by 5.2%, compared with 4.7% for high SES applicants. Offers to applicants from medium SES backgrounds grew by 5.4%. Between 2009 and 2012, offers to low SES applicants increased by 19.5%, larger than the increase seen in offers to medium and high SES applicants (17.6% and 12.8% respectively).

⁷SES in this report is based on the students' postcode of permanent home residence, with the SES value derived from the 2006 ABS Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation (IEO). The postcode measure of SES provides an indication of the level of disadvantage of an applicant by providing data on the disadvantage associated with the geographical area (postcode) of the applicant's home address. The postcode measure uses a population reference point of 25% for low SES. The postcodes that comprise the bottom 25% of the population aged between 15 to 64 years are considered low SES postcodes. Applicants with home address in low SES postcodes are classified as applicants from low SES backgrounds. Applicants with residential addresses outside Australia, and Australian resident applicants with postcodes that do not have SEIFA values are classified as 'unknown'.

Table 28: Offers by SES, 2011 and 2012

SES	2011	2012	% Change
Low	38,393	40,384	5.2%
Medium	103,445	109,064	5.4%
High	66,473	69,596	4.7%
Total*	211,485	222,476	5.2%

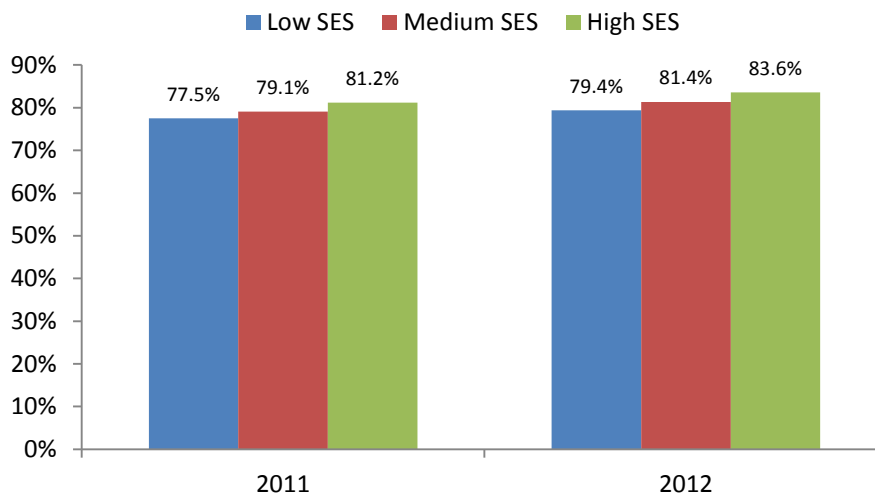
*The Australia total includes data that could not be coded to an SES.

Offer Rate

Applicants from low SES backgrounds are less likely to receive an offer compared with medium SES and high SES applicants. Their offer rate was 79.4% compared with 81.4% for medium SES applicants and 83.6% for high SES applicants in 2012. The offer rate for low SES applicants has increased from 77.5% in 2011 to 79.4% in 2012.

The difference in offer rates may, in part, arise from the differences in the distribution of ATAR among current Year 12 applicants from low SES backgrounds compared with applicants from high SES backgrounds. In 2012, only 16.7% of low SES Year 12 applicants had an ATAR above 90, compared with 41.1% for high SES applicants.

Figure 2: Offer rates by SES, 2011 and 2012



Acceptances

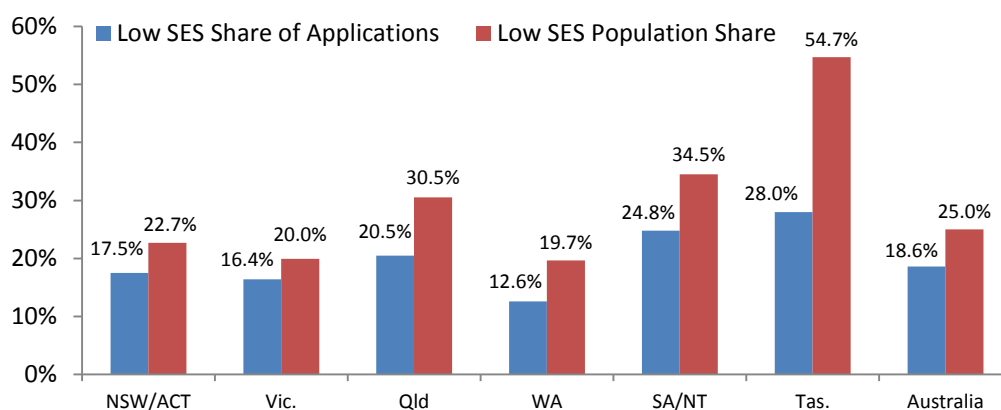
Despite their lower offer rates, low SES applicants who received an offer were slightly more likely to accept the offer⁸, compared with other SES groups. Low SES applicants recorded a higher acceptance rate (72.9%) compared with medium SES applications (72.4%) and high SES applicants (71.6%).

⁸ Acceptance rates exclude deferrals.

State and territory

Tasmania recorded the largest proportion of low SES applications (28.0%) but this is only around half of its population share of low SES (54.7%).⁹ Among all states, the share of low SES applications in Victoria (16.4%) is the closest match to its population share (20.0%). WA recorded the lowest proportion of low SES applicants (12.6%), well below the national average of 18.6%.

Figure 3: Share of applications and share of population for low SES applicants by state and territory, 2012



Note: The population share is the proportion of the population aged 15 to 64 years in low SES postcodes, based on SEIFA data from the 2006 Census.

Offer rates for low SES applicants increased from 77.5% in 2011 to 79.4% in 2012. Low SES applicants from Victoria recorded the largest increase in offer rates (from 70.7% in 2011 to 76.8% in 2012). Offer rates for low SES applicants in Tasmania and SA/NT decreased slightly from 2011 to 2012.

Low SES applicants were less likely to receive an offer compared with medium and high SES applicants in NSW/ACT, Victoria, WA and SA/NT. However, in Tasmania the offer rates for low SES applicants was much higher compared with high SES applicants (81.4% compared with 62.6% respectively).

Table 29: Offer rates by SES by state, 2011 and 2012

State	2011				2012			
	Low SES	Medium SES	High SES	Total*	Low SES	Medium SES	High SES	Total*
NSW/ACT	80.4%	81.4%	84.2%	81.9%	81.0%	82.2%	84.9%	82.8%
Vic.	70.7%	75.5%	81.9%	76.8%	76.8%	81.0%	86.5%	82.1%
Qld	78.6%	78.8%	75.4%	77.7%	80.8%	81.8%	79.9%	80.8%
WA	79.2%	82.2%	83.4%	81.8%	80.9%	83.9%	88.6%	85.0%
SA/NT	77.7%	81.0%	78.9%	79.4%	76.4%	79.5%	77.1%	77.9%
Tas.	82.8%	76.2%	64.7%	74.5%	81.4%	74.4%	62.6%	72.8%
Australia	77.5%	79.1%	81.2%	79.1%	79.4%	81.4%	83.6%	81.4%

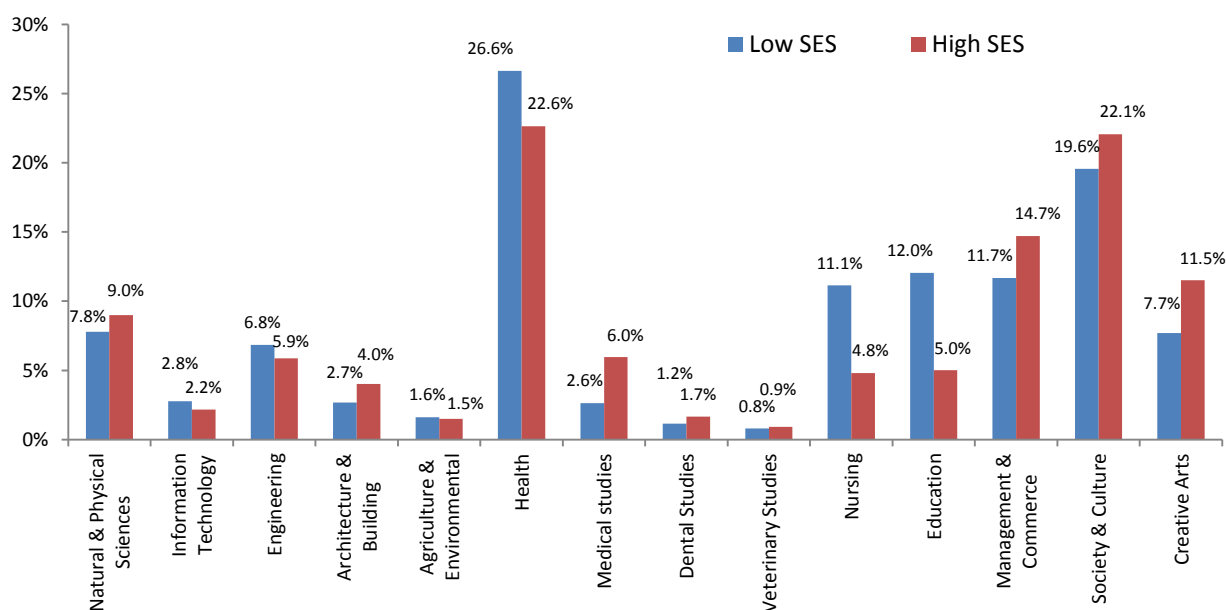
* The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned an SES.

⁹ Population share is based on postcode population and SEIFA data from the 2006 Census.

Field of education

In comparison with high SES applicants, low SES applicants are more likely to apply for courses in Education and Nursing. They are less likely to apply for Medical Studies, Management and Commerce, Society and Culture, Creative Arts and Natural and Physical Sciences courses than high SES applicants.

Figure 4: Proportion of highest preference applications by SES and field of education, 2012



Type of university

Compared with low SES applicants, high SES applicants were more likely to apply to Go8 universities (20.3% and 42.8% respectively). On the other hand, 9.7% of applications from low SES applicants were for RUN universities compared with 1.3% of applications from high SES applicants. IRU universities were also more popular among low and medium SES applicants compared with high SES applicants.

Table 30: Applications by SES and type of university, 2012

Type of university	Applications			Share of applications		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Group of Eight	10,346	33,980	35,649	20.3%	25.3%	42.8%
Australian Technology Network	9,706	25,923	18,226	19.1%	19.3%	21.9%
Innovative Research Universities	11,286	27,684	7,946	22.2%	20.7%	9.5%
Regional Universities Network	4,933	9,293	1,100	9.7%	6.9%	1.3%
Total*	50,870	134,048	83,287	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: This table excludes data that could not be coded to an SES.

*Total includes applications for universities that are not aligned with a university group.

Regionality

Share of applicants¹⁰

In 2012, just over one-fifth of domestic applicants (21.9%) were from non-metropolitan areas (regional and remote areas). This is lower than their share of the population (27.4%)¹¹, demonstrating that people from non-metropolitan areas are under-represented in the pool of domestic applications. Just over three quarters of applications (76.7%) were from applicants living in metropolitan areas, higher than their share of the population aged 15 to 64 years (72.1%). The remaining 1.4% reported overseas addresses or had invalid or missing postcodes.

Under-representation of non-metropolitan residents in university applications translates into lower participation at university. In 2011 (latest published student commencement data), non-metropolitan students accounted for 20.6%¹² of all domestic undergraduate student commencements, compared with their population share of 27.9%.

Applications

The growth in applications from metropolitan residents (2.4%) was higher than the increase in applications from non-metropolitan residents (1.7%) in 2012.

Table 31: Applications by region, 2011 and 2012

Region	2011	2012	% Change
Metropolitan	204,592	209,508	2.4%
Non-Metropolitan	58,718	59,733	1.7%
Australia*	267,210	273,167	2.2%

* The Australia total includes data that could not be coded to a region.

Offers

Offers made to metropolitan applicants increased by 5.6% compared with an increase of 3.5% in offers made to non-metropolitan applicants in 2012.

Table 32: Offers by region, 2011 and 2012

Region	2011	2012	% Change
Metropolitan	160,633	169,672	5.6%
Non-Metropolitan	48,528	50,229	3.5%
Australia*	211,485	222,476	5.2%

* The Australia total includes data that could not be coded to a region.

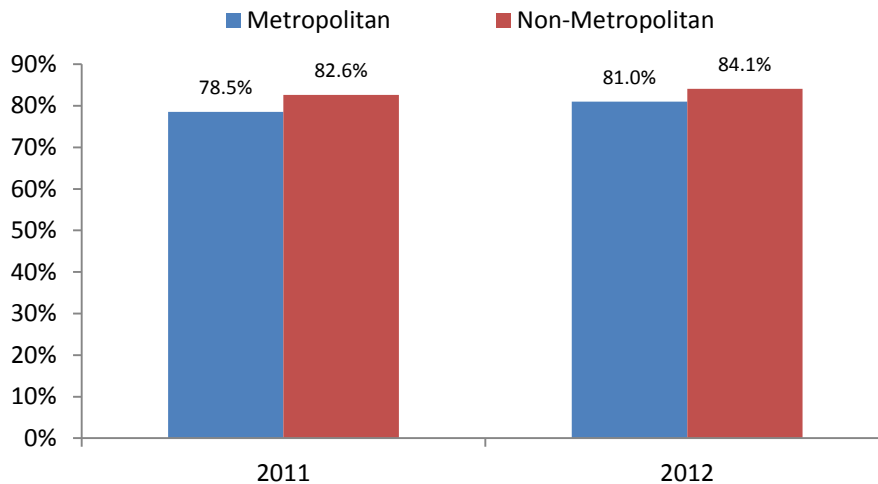
¹⁰ Applicants' postcode of permanent home residence has been used to construct indicators of applicants' geographic region. To categorise applicants, postcodes are assigned to two groups (metropolitan, non-metropolitan) based on the Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) classification of regions. The MCEETYA Classification of Geographical Location incorporates the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) and maintains comparability with the Rural, Remote and Metropolitan areas Classification (Department of Primary Industries and Energy/Department of Human Affairs and Health, 1994), which uses Census data to identify statistical local areas of population density. Applicants with residential addresses outside Australia, and Australian resident applicants with postcodes that are not in the MCEETYA Classification are classified as 'unknown'.

¹¹ ABS (2011), Census of Population and Housing

¹² DIISRTE (2012), *Student 2011 Full Year: Selected Higher Education Statistics*

However, non-metropolitan applicants were more likely to receive an offer compared with metropolitan applicants in 2012 (offer rate of 84.1% compared with 81.0% respectively). Offer rates for both metropolitan and non-metropolitan applicants increased in 2012.

Figure 5: Offer rates by region, 2011 and 2012



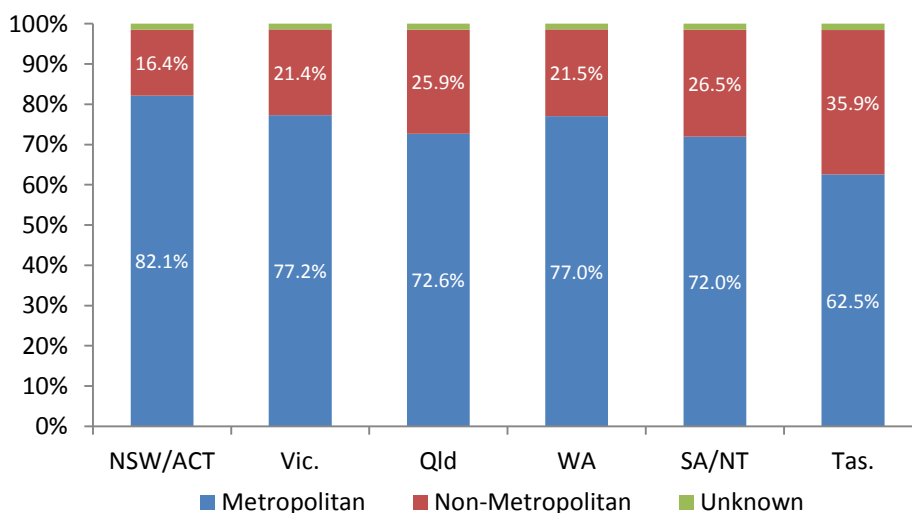
Acceptances

Despite their higher offer rate, non-metropolitan applicants are less likely to accept their offer compared with metropolitan applicants in 2012 (acceptance rates of 62.9% compared with 74.9% respectively). This pattern was also observed in 2011. As noted in Chapter 5, non-metropolitan applicants were more likely to defer their offer compared with metropolitan applicants.

State and territory

NSW/ACT recorded the largest proportion of applications from metropolitan residents (82.1%) in 2012. By contrast, just 62.5% of applications in Tasmania were from metropolitan residents. Similar patterns were also observed in 2011.

Figure 6: Share of total applications by region and state and territory, 2012



In all states except WA, non-metropolitan applicants were more likely to receive an offer compared with metropolitan applicants. The largest gap in offer rates between non-metropolitan and metropolitan applicants was recorded in Tasmania (84.6% compared with 67.1% respectively).

Table 33: Offer rates by region by state and territory, 2011 and 2012

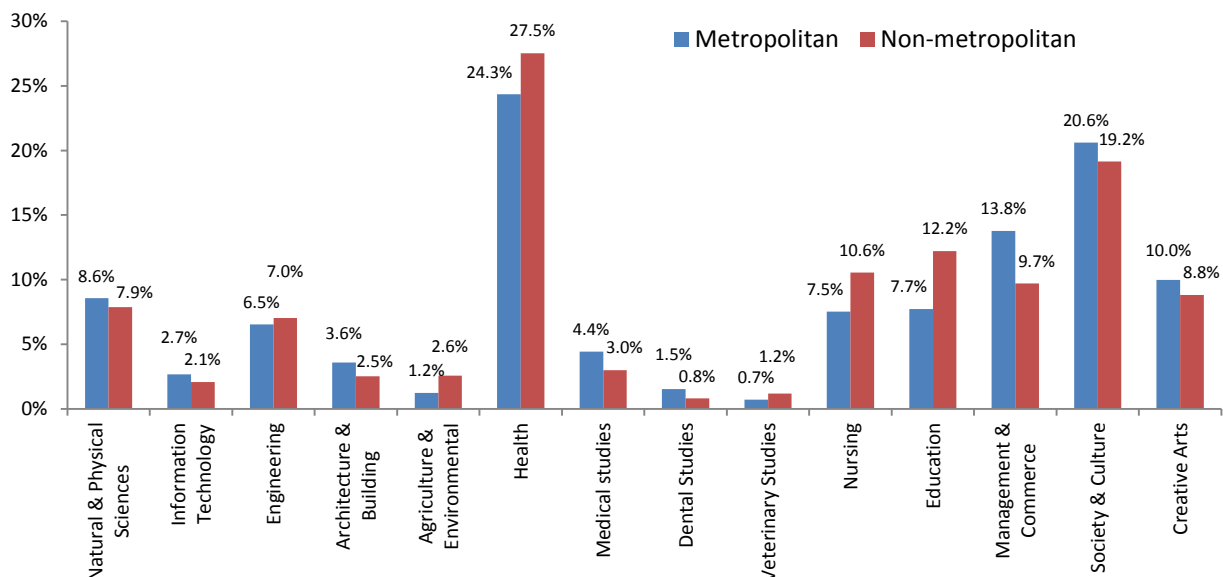
State	2011			2012		
	Metropolitan	Non-Metropolitan	Total*	Metropolitan	Non-Metropolitan	Total*
NSW/ACT	81.4%	86.1%	81.9%	82.3%	86.5%	82.8%
Vic.	76.4%	78.9%	76.8%	81.9%	83.4%	82.1%
Qld	76.6%	81.9%	77.7%	80.3%	83.4%	80.8%
WA	81.8%	84.2%	81.8%	85.4%	84.1%	85.0%
SA/NT	78.6%	82.8%	79.4%	76.8%	81.9%	77.9%
Tas.	69.0%	85.6%	74.5%	67.1%	84.6%	72.8%
Australia	78.5%	82.6%	79.1%	81.0%	84.1%	81.4%

* The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned to a region.

Field of education

Compared with metropolitan applicants, non-metropolitan applicants were more likely to apply for courses in Nursing, Education and Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies courses in 2012. On the other hand, Management and Commerce courses were more popular among metropolitan applicants.

Figure 7: Proportion of highest preference applications by region and field of education, 2012



Type of university

Compared with metropolitan applicants, non-metropolitan applicants are more likely to apply to RUN universities (3.0% compared with 15.2% respectively). On the other hand, metropolitan applicants are more likely to apply to Go8 universities (32.3%) compared with non-metropolitan students (20.9%).

A higher proportion of non-metropolitan applicants (22.4%) apply to IRU universities compared with metropolitan applicants (16.2%). In contrast, a lower proportion of non-metropolitan applicants (14.2%) apply to ATN universities compared with metropolitan applicants (21.8%).

Table 34: Applications by region and type of university, 2012

Type of university	Applications		Share of applications (%)	
	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan
Group of Eight	67,731	12,505	32.3%	20.9%
Australian Technology Network	45,600	8,453	21.8%	14.2%
Innovative Research Universities	33,847	13,362	16.2%	22.4%
Regional Universities Network	6,283	9,082	3.0%	15.2%
Total*	209,508	59,733	100.0%	100.0%

Note: This table excludes data that could not be coded to a region.

*Total includes applications for universities that are not aligned with a university group.

Indigenous status

Data on Indigenous status (Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both) is based on a self-reported question on TAC application forms. Indigenous applicants may choose not to identify as Indigenous at the point of application.

Share of applicants

In 2012, 1.2% of total TAC applications were from people who identified as Indigenous. This figure is less than their 2.3% population share of the Australian working age population (aged 15-64 years), indicating that Indigenous people remain under-represented in the pool of domestic applications. Note however that Indigenous applicants have a larger representation among direct applications (2.7%) than among TAC applications (1.2%) (see Chapter 9 for details).

Applications

Nationally, 3341 applications were made by Indigenous applicants in 2012, an increase of 407 applications or 13.9% compared with 2011. By contrast, applications from non-Indigenous applicants increased by 2.1%.

Table 35: Applications by Indigenous status, 2011 and 2012

	2011	2012	% Change
Indigenous	2,934	3,341	13.9%
Non-Indigenous	263,631	269,130	2.1%
Total*	267,210	273,167	2.2%

* The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned an Indigenous status.

Offers

Compared with 2011, offers to Indigenous applicants increased by 311 or 14.1% to 2520 in 2012. This growth in offers is consistent with the growth in applications from Indigenous applicants. By contrast, offers to non-Indigenous applicants increased by 5.1%.

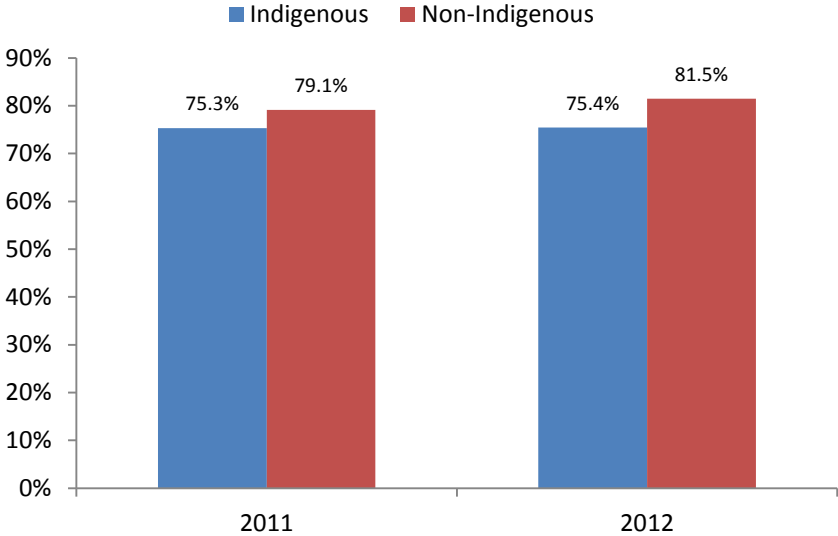
Table 36: Offers by Indigenous status, 2011 and 2012

	2011	2012	% Change
Indigenous	2,209	2,520	14.1%
Non-Indigenous	208,655	219,296	5.1%
Total*	211,485	222,476	5.2%

* The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned an Indigenous status.

Indigenous applicants were less likely to receive an offer compared with non-Indigenous applicants. Just over three quarters (75.4%) of applications from Indigenous applicants had attracted an offer in 2012, compared with 81.5% of applications from non-Indigenous applicants.

Figure 8: Offer rates by Indigenous status, 2012



Note: This chart excludes applicants whose Indigenous status is unknown.

Acceptances

While Indigenous applicants are less likely to receive an offer compared with non-Indigenous applicants, they are almost equally likely to accept an offer. Acceptance rates are similar between Indigenous applicants and non-Indigenous applicants (71.6% compared with 71.8% respectively).

Age

The gap between Indigenous people’s share of applications and their share of the working age population was more pronounced in the younger age groups. Out of all applications from applicants aged 15 to 19 years, just 1.0% were from Indigenous applicants compared with their population share of 4.2%.

On the other hand, the proportion of applications from Indigenous applicants was well above the population share for those aged 40 to 64 years (2.4% compared with their population share of 1.7%), reflecting the pattern that most Indigenous people choose to participate in higher education at an older age compared with non-Indigenous people.

Table 37: Proportion of applications from Indigenous applicants, compared with Indigenous population share by age, 2012

Age	Proportion of applications from Indigenous applicants	Proportion of Indigenous people in the general working age population
15 to 19	1.0%	4.2%
20 to 24	1.3%	3.2%
25 to 39	1.8%	2.4%
40 to 64	2.4%	1.7%
Total	1.2%	2.3%

Source for population figures: ABS (2011), 2011 Census of Population and Housing

State and territory

In all states and territories except Tasmania, Indigenous applicants were less likely to receive offers compared with non-Indigenous applicants. For states and territories other than Tasmania, the difference in offer rates for Indigenous applicants compared with non-Indigenous applicants ranges from 0.3 percentage points lower in Queensland to 10.9 percentage points lower in NSW/ACT.

Table 38: Offer rates by Indigenous status by state and territory, 2012

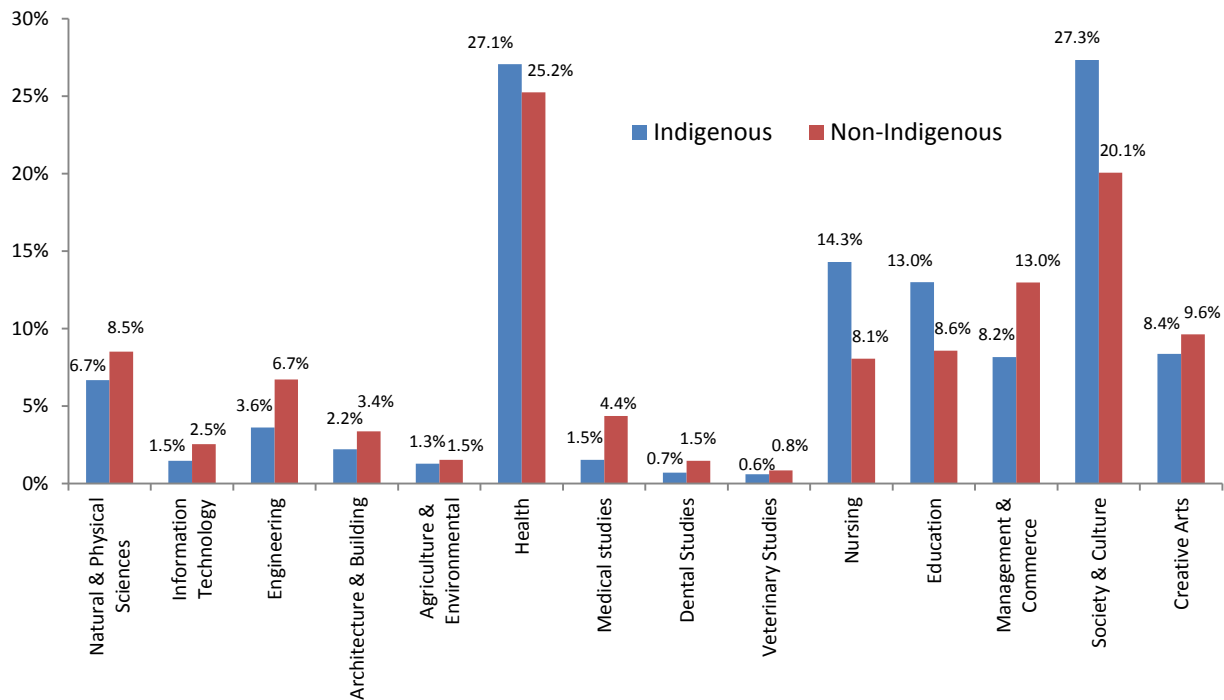
State	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
NSW/ACT	72.0%	82.9%
Vic.	76.4%	82.2%
Qld	80.5%	80.8%
WA	77.7%	85.0%
SA/NT	68.7%	78.0%
Tas.	79.9%	71.3%
Australia	75.4%	81.5%

Note: This table excludes applicants whose Indigenous status is unknown.

Field of education

Indigenous applicants were more likely to apply for Education, Nursing, and Society and Culture courses. By contrast, Management and Commerce, Natural and Physical Sciences, Engineering and Medical Studies were more popular among non-Indigenous applicants.

Figure 9: Proportion of applications by Indigenous status and field of education, 2012



Note: This chart excludes applicants whose Indigenous status is unknown.

Type of university

Compared with non-Indigenous applicants, Indigenous applicants were less likely to apply to Go8 universities (30.4% and 19.5% respectively). On the other hand, Indigenous applicants were more likely to apply to RUN universities compared with non-Indigenous applicants (11.3% compared with 5.6% respectively). IRU universities are also more popular among Indigenous applicants (30.8%) than non-Indigenous applicants (17.4%).

Table 39: Share of applications by Indigenous status and type of university, 2012

Type of university	Applications		Share of Applications (%)	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Group of Eight	651	81,943	19.5%	30.4%
Australian Technology Network	538	53,808	16.1%	20.0%
Innovative Research Universities	1,029	46,828	30.8%	17.4%
Regional Universities Network	376	15,074	11.3%	5.6%
Total*	3,341	269,130	100.0%	100.0%

Note: This table excludes applicants whose Indigenous status is unknown.

*Total includes applications for universities that are not aligned with a university group.

8. Year 12 applicants and ATAR

In 2012, there were 147 604 applications by current Year 12 students – just over half (54.0%) of all TAC applications. Of these Year 12 applications, 142 638 were from applicants who had a valid ATAR or equivalent.

Propensity to apply to university

The proportion of Year 12 students applying for university in their home state is used a proxy for their propensity to apply to university i.e. application rate, on the basis that Year 12 applicants are assumed to apply at least in their home state. An estimate of the propensity to apply to university is derived by expressing the number of Year 12 applicants aged 20 or less who apply in their home state as a percentage of the number of Year 12 students aged 20 or less in each state and territory.

In 2012, 65.9% of Year 12 students applied for university compared with 64.1% in 2011. By comparison, the proportion of Year 12 students who applied for university in 2005 was 56.6%.

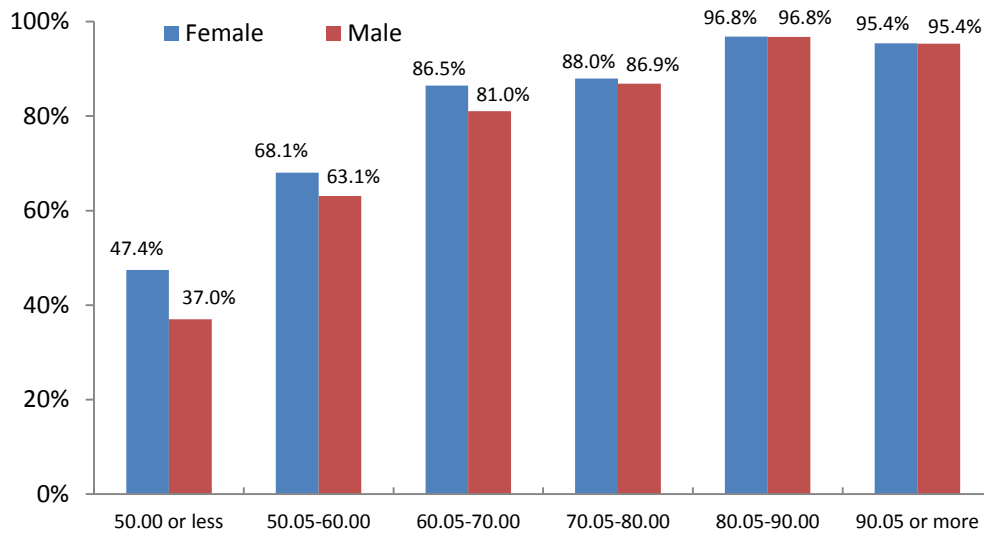
There is a strong relationship between academic performance in Year 12 and propensity to apply for university. In 2012, 93.3% of Year 12 students with an ATAR greater than 70 applied for university in their home state. Students in the top ATAR band (90.05 or more) were even more likely to apply, with 95.4% making an application in their home state. In comparison, 61.2% of students with an ATAR of 70 or less applied for university in their home state. The proportion of Year 12 students with an ATAR of 50 or below applying for university in their home state was just 42.2%.

Gender

Consistent with patterns in overall applications noted earlier, female Year 12 students were decidedly more likely to apply for university than males. The proportion of female Year 12 applicants applying in their home state was 69.9% compared with 61.2% for male Year 12 applicants. In the top three ATAR deciles, however, male and female Year 12 students apply for university at similar rates.

The overall difference in applications between females and males is explained by the greater propensity of female Year 12 students in lower ATAR deciles to apply for university. Some 47.4% of female students with an ATAR below 50 applied for university, compared with 37.0% for males. This may be associated with males who achieve a lower ATAR being more attracted to vocational education and training or employment.

Figure 10: Proportion of current Year 12 students aged 20 or less applying in their home state by gender and ATAR band, 2012

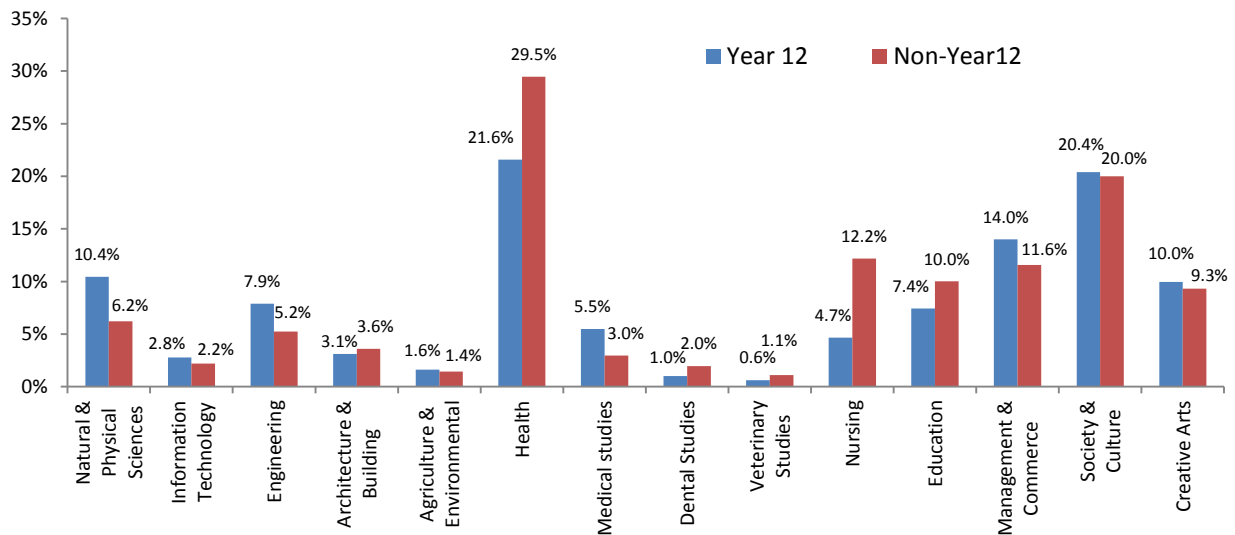


Note: Applicants with an ATAR above 90 are more likely to apply interstate than applicants with an ATAR between 80.05 and 90.00.

Field of education

Compared with Year 12 applicants, non-Year 12 applicants were more likely to apply for Nursing and Education courses. By comparison, Natural and Physical Sciences, Engineering, Medical Studies, and Management and Commerce were more popular among Year 12 applicants.

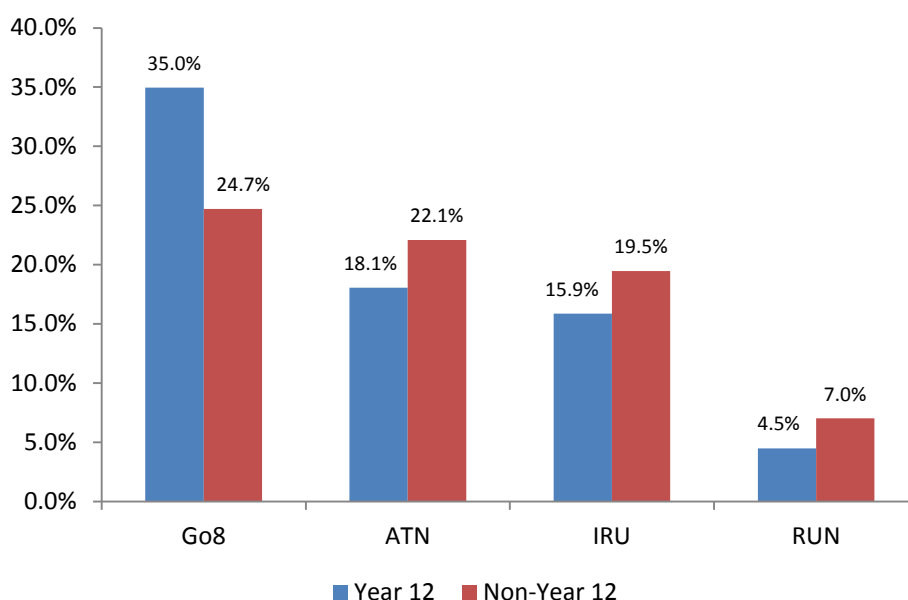
Figure 11: Proportion of applications by current Year 12 status and field of education, 2012



Type of university

Year 12 applicants were more attracted to Go8 universities compared with non-Year 12 applicants (35.0% compared with 24.7% respectively). On the other hand, ATN, IRU and RUN universities tend to be more popular among non-Year 12 applicants than they are with Year 12 applicants.

Figure 12: Proportion of applications by current Year 12 status and type of university, 2012



Offers by ATAR

In 2012, 71.6% of all offers made to Year 12 applicants were for those with an ATAR of at least 70.05. Offers to Year 12 applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90.00 accounted for 27.8%.

Over the last four years, in general the share of offers has shifted from applicants with high ATAR to applicants with lower ATAR. The share of offers for applicants in the ATAR band “50.00 or less” has increased steadily from 1.6% in 2009 to 3.2% in 2012.

Table 40: Share of Year 12 offers by ATAR band, 2009-2012

ATAR band	2009	2010	2011	2012
50.00 or less	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%	3.2%
50.05-60.00	7.1%	7.0%	8.4%	8.6%
60.05-70.00	15.6%	15.5%	16.3%	16.7%
70.05-80.00	21.1%	21.3%	20.5%	20.2%
80.05-90.00	25.0%	25.0%	24.2%	23.6%
90.05 or more	29.6%	29.4%	28.5%	27.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The likelihood of an applicant with a low ATAR receiving an offer has recorded a greater increase than for an applicant with a higher ATAR. Offer rates for Year 12 applicants in the “50.00 or less” ATAR band have recorded the largest increase, from 12.0% in 2009 to 24.9% in 2012. The offer rates for the top two ATAR bands have fallen slightly over the last four years.

It is interesting to note that the ATAR bands “70.05-80.00” and “80.05-90.00” recorded a higher offer rate compared with the top ATAR band (90.00 or more) in each of the last four years. This may be explained in part by the greater propensity of high performing Year 12 students to submit applications in a number of states for high demand courses that have strict entry requirements (e.g. Medical Studies) but only receive few offers.

Table 41: Year 12 offer rates by ATAR band, 2009-2012

ATAR band	2009	2010	2011	2012
50.00 or less	12.0%	15.3%	18.1%	24.9%
50.05-60.00	56.3%	57.6%	64.6%	72.0%
60.05-70.00	84.3%	83.9%	86.8%	90.3%
70.05-80.00	94.5%	93.7%	94.8%	96.1%
80.05-90.00	96.9%	96.4%	96.7%	96.9%
90.05 or more	92.3%	90.9%	90.5%	91.0%
Total	79.4%	80.3%	81.3%	83.0%

In 2012, Natural and Physical Sciences, and Engineering recorded the largest share of offers made to Year 12 applicants who achieved an ATAR above 90 (27.9% and 26.2% respectively). This was followed by Health (14.2%). This reflects the relatively high ATAR entry requirements for courses in these fields.

Table 42: Share of offers by ATAR band and field of education, 2012

Field of education	50.00 or less	50.05-60.00	60.05-70.00	70.05-80.00	80.05-90.00	90.05 or more	No ATAR / Non-Yr 12	Total offers (%)	Total offers (No.)
Natural and Physical Sciences	0.9%	3.4%	7.4%	11.4%	16.5%	27.9%	32.5%	100.0%	23,148
Information Technology	3.4%	10.3%	15.7%	13.5%	10.6%	4.2%	42.2%	100.0%	6,081
Engineering	0.7%	2.0%	6.2%	11.5%	18.9%	26.2%	34.6%	100.0%	15,586
Architecture	1.1%	2.9%	7.2%	12.5%	15.1%	9.5%	51.7%	100.0%	6,432
Agriculture	2.4%	4.3%	10.0%	12.7%	16.4%	11.6%	42.6%	100.0%	4,164
Health	1.4%	3.4%	7.3%	8.7%	10.3%	14.2%	54.7%	100.0%	44,227
<i>Medical Studies</i>	0.0%	0.3%	2.9%	6.8%	5.2%	54.0%	30.7%	100.0%	2,480
<i>Nursing</i>	2.2%	4.4%	8.9%	7.8%	4.9%	1.9%	70.0%	100.0%	16,934
<i>Dental Studies</i>	0.0%	0.3%	1.3%	2.6%	4.4%	40.7%	50.7%	100.0%	1,100
<i>Veterinary Studies</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	2.7%	7.5%	34.3%	55.1%	100.0%	601
Education	2.8%	6.6%	13.1%	11.5%	7.3%	2.2%	56.5%	100.0%	19,010
Management and Commerce	1.9%	5.8%	11.1%	11.8%	12.9%	15.1%	41.4%	100.0%	30,949
Society and Culture	1.7%	5.3%	8.5%	9.6%	12.2%	15.0%	47.7%	100.0%	51,491
Creative Arts	1.9%	4.8%	9.8%	12.5%	14.8%	11.1%	45.0%	100.0%	19,120
Total	1.7%	4.6%	9.0%	10.8%	12.7%	14.9%	46.2%	100.0%	222,476

Note: Hospitality and Mixed Field Programs are not shown due to the small number of offers, hence the total number of offers does not equal the sum of offers by broad field of education in the above table.

9. Direct Applications

While most applications for university are processed by TACs, some applications are made directly to universities (direct applications).¹³ The direct admissions process is more straightforward than the TAC administrative process: the majority of direct applicants apply for a single course, unlike the preference system of the TAC process.

Direct applicants tended to be older than TAC applicants. There were relatively few current Year 12 students among direct applicants.

Direct Applications

In total, 83 037 applications were made directly to universities in 2012. This includes double counting of individuals who submitted more than one application to a single university as well as those who applied to several universities.

Different universities have different administration practices. Double counting of an applicant can occur within an institution as some universities allow several applications per applicant. Other universities allow applicants to specify several preferences on a single application form, somewhat like the system operated by TACs. Since preferences were used to a limited extent in direct admissions, the highest preference cannot easily be identified.

When one application record was selected per person, per university, there were 76 805 applicants (where an applicant applied to more than one university, each application to a separate university has been counted). This method of counting direct applications was broadly analogous to reporting of TAC data above, where applicants were counted only once in each state but may have been counted in more than one state. The tables in this chapter are based on this group of direct applications.

There were 76 805 direct applications in 2012, an increase of 7.3% compared with 2011. NSW/ACT recorded the largest share of direct applications (39.7%), followed by WA (21.6%) and Victoria (21.1%) in 2012.

Table 43: Direct applications, by state and territory of institution, 2012

State	Number	Share (%)
NSW/ACT	30,637	39.9%
Vic.	16,282	21.2%
Qld	10,218	13.3%
WA	16,616	21.6%
SA/NT	3,051	4.0%
Australia*	76,805	100.0%

Note: This table presents the number of applications made directly to institutions, grouped by the state of the institution. All applications for the University of Tasmania are included in the Tertiary Admissions Centre (TAC) count.

* The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned to a state.

¹³ Aggregated data formerly collected by Universities Australia covered TAC data only. In its first year (2009), the Department's unit record collection of university applications and offers data included only data on applications that were processed by TACs. This was extended to include direct applications for the first time in 2010.

Prior Education

A small number (4587, or 6.0%) of direct applications were from Year 12 students, with the majority (94.0%) being from non-Year 12 applicants.

The most common highest prior educational participation among direct applicants was secondary education (28.0%), followed by an incomplete higher education (23.6%).

Table 44: Direct applications by highest prior educational participation, 2012

Highest prior educational participation	Number	Share (%)
Complete postgraduate	2,171	2.8%
Complete bachelor	11,101	14.5%
Complete sub-degree	3,921	5.1%
Incomplete higher education	18,140	23.6%
Complete VET	6,804	8.9%
Incomplete VET	1,129	1.5%
Complete secondary education	21,526	28.0%
Other qualification – complete or incomplete	5,306	6.9%
No prior education attainment	6,308	8.2%
Not specified	399	0.5%
Total	76,805	100.0%

Gender

Among direct applications, 62.8% were from females and 37.2% were from males. This compares with 58.2% for female TAC applicants and 41.8% for male TAC applicants.

Indigenous status

There was a higher proportion of Indigenous direct applications (2.7%) compared with TAC applications (1.2%). Indigenous status is a self-reported item and Indigenous applicants may choose not to identify as Indigenous at the point of application. It is possible that Indigenous applicants are more likely to identify when applying directly because they may be applying through dedicated Indigenous admissions schemes.

The highest proportion of Indigenous direct applications was recorded in SA/NT (6.5%), followed by Queensland (3.4%). Victoria recorded the lowest proportion of Indigenous direct applications (1.6%).

Table 45: Direct applications by Indigenous status and state and territory of institution, 2012

State	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total**	% Indigenous
NSW/ACT	844	27,159	30,637	2.8%
Vic.	259	13,211	16,282	1.6%
Qld	345	8,888	10,218	3.4%
WA	325	15,841	16,616	2.0%
SA/NT	199	2,800	3,051	6.5%
Australia*	2,058	68,799	76,805	2.7%

Note: This table presents the number of applications made directly to institutions, grouped by the state of the institution. All applications for the University of Tasmania are included in the Tertiary Admissions Centre (TAC) count.

*The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned to a state.

**Applicants with an unknown Indigenous status are included in the total application count.

The largest share of Indigenous direct applications (32.4%) was from applicants aged 25-39 years, compared with just 24.8% for non-Indigenous direct applications. Over one in five (22.6%) of Indigenous direct applications were from applicants aged 40 and above, compared with around one in ten (10.3%) for non-Indigenous direct applications. This is consistent with the pattern observed in the TAC data that most Indigenous people choose to participate in higher education at an older age compared with non-Indigenous people.

Table 46: Share of direct applications by Indigenous status and age, 2012

Age	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
15 to 19	23.2%	29.1%
20 to 24	21.8%	35.3%
25 to 39	32.4%	25.1%
40 and above	22.6%	10.6%
Total*	100.0%	100.0%

Note: This table excludes applicants whose Indigenous status is unknown.

*The Australia total includes data that could not be assigned to an age group.

Field of education

Comprehensive data were not available from universities with regard to course preference order for those people who applied for multiple courses at one university, hence the top preference could not be established for all applicants (as in TAC data).

Among direct applications, Society and Culture was the most popular broad field of education (30.6% of direct applications), followed by Health (18.0%) and Education (13.0%).

Table 47: Direct applications by field of education, 2012

Field of Education	Number	Share (%)
Natural and Physical Sciences	7,482	9.7%
Information Technology	1,759	2.3%
Engineering and Related Technologies	2,835	3.7%
Architecture and Building	1,059	1.4%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	1,413	1.8%
Health	13,789	18.0%
<i>Medical Studies</i>	2,589	3.4%
<i>Nursing</i>	4,910	6.4%
<i>Dental Studies</i>	152	0.2%
<i>Veterinary Studies</i>	148	0.2%
<i>Health Other</i>	5,990	7.8%
Education	10,006	13.0%
<i>Teacher Education</i>	9,671	12.6%
<i>Education Other</i>	335	0.4%
Management and Commerce	9,528	12.4%
Society and Culture*	23,499	30.6%
Creative Arts	5,433	7.1%
Total	76,805	100%

Note: Hospitality and Mixed Field Programs are not shown due to the small number of applications, hence the total number of applications does not equal the sum of applications/offers by broad field of education in the above table.

* Society and Culture includes a broad range of subject areas including Behavioural Science, Law, Language & Literature, Economics & Econometrics.

Type of university

Out of all university groups, the Go8 recorded the largest share of direct applications (16.3%). On the other hand, Australian Technology Network universities recorded the smallest share of direct applications (10.1%).

Table 48: Direct applications by type of university, 2012

Type of university	Number	Share (%)
Group of Eight	12,518	16.3%
Australian Technology Network	7,726	10.1%
Innovative Research Universities	12,480	16.2%
Regional Universities Network	11,782	15.3%
Total*	76,805	100.0%

*Total includes direct applications for universities that are not aligned with a university group.

Direct Offers and Acceptances

From the 76 805 applications made directly to universities in 2012, 61 833 offers were made. This is an increase of 9.6% from 56 427 offers in 2011. Offer rates in relation to direct applications increased from 80.1% in 2011 to 80.5% over the same period. In 2012, 49 461 direct offers (or 80.0%) were accepted.

TAC and Direct Applications – Combined

In 2012, 273 167 TAC applications were made, including double counting of applicants who had submitted applications in several states. When unique persons were identified, this number decreased to 249 814. On the other hand, there were 73 191 unique applicants who applied directly to universities (reduced from 76 805 multiple applications). The total number of applicants across Australia by May 2012, therefore, was 323 005 counting both TAC and direct applicants.

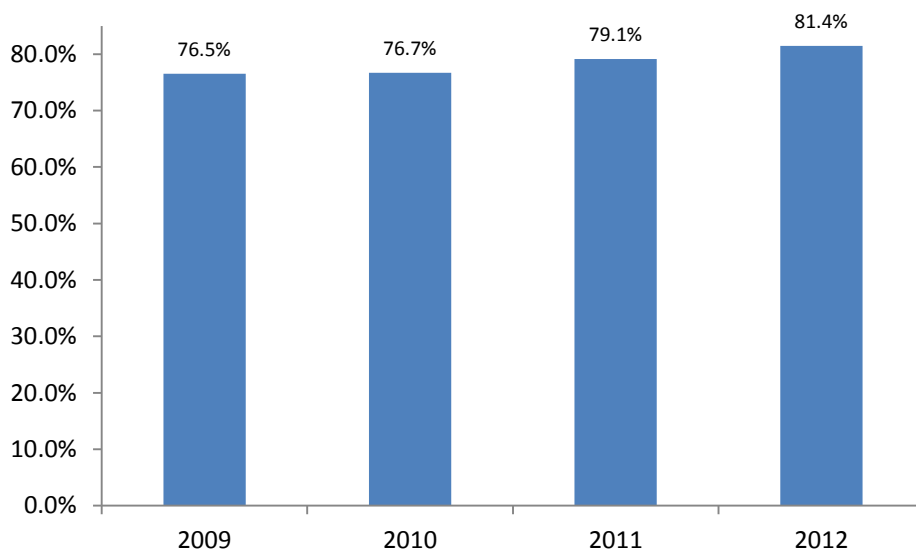
Further analysis shows that there was an overlap of 13 366 applicants who applied through TACs as well as directly to universities, hence the number of individuals that applied for a university place in 2012 was 309 639, an increase of 3.5% compared with 2011.

10. Transition to the demand driven system

In the transition to a demand driven funding system, the cap on over enrolments was lifted from 5% in 2009 to 10% in 2010 and 2011. The demand driven system enables a closer match between demand and supply and a more flexible and responsive allocation of university places.

The transition to a demand driven system has given more people the opportunity for higher education. University applications and offers have increased annually since 2009. During this period, applications processed by TACs have grown by 9.4%, compared with a much higher growth in TAC offers of 16.4%. The introduction of the demand driven system saw large growth in university offers in 2010 (7.2%). This was followed by strong growth in 2011 (3.3%) and in 2012 (5.2%). Offer rates (the percentage of all offers relative to highest preference applications) have increased from 76.5% in 2009 to 81.4% in 2012.

Figure 13: TAC offer rates, 2009-2012



The increased availability of university places has led to an increase in the proportion of students with lower ATARs receiving offers. The share of offers to applicants with an ATAR of 70.00 or less has increased from 24.3% in 2009 to 28.5% in 2012. The demand driven system has given many more of these students the opportunity to take up a university place.

Applicants from low SES backgrounds have benefited most from the demand driven system. Since 2009, offers to low SES applicants have increased at a greater rate than offers to applicants with medium and high SES backgrounds (Low SES - 19.5%; Medium SES – 17.6%; High SES – 12.8%). Offers to low SES applicants were up 5.2% in 2012, following strong growth in the preceding two years (4.4% in 2011 and 8.8% in 2010). Research shows that if students from low SES backgrounds get into university, they have a similar chance of completing their course as students from higher SES backgrounds. Hence the Australian Government has implemented the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) to attract and support students from low SES backgrounds in higher education.

The demand driven system has also increased competition across the higher education system. The 2012 applications and offers data suggests that regional universities are competing well, with the Regional Universities Network (RUN) showing an increase of 3.1% in the number of applications between 2011 and 2012. RUN maintained a relatively stable share of applications, increasing slightly from 5.6% in 2011 to 5.7% in 2012. Between 2009 and 2012, offers made by the RUN increased 16.3%, compared with 7.9% for the Group of Eight (Go8). In 2012, RUN recorded the largest offer rate, with 98.6% of applicants receiving offers compared with 69.7% at Go8 universities.

The demand driven system is key to achieving the Government's vision for a stronger and fairer Australia. It fuels economic development, productivity and high skilled jobs.¹⁴ University applications and offers data is a leading indicator of student demand and the progress of the new demand driven system. Future reports will provide a clearer picture of the impact of the demand driven system, with preliminary university applications data for the 2013 academic year available for analysis in late 2012.

¹⁴ Transforming Australia's Higher Education System, Australian Government, May 2009, p.5

11. Glossary

Acceptance: Applicants accepting offers are those who have advised the Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs) that they have accepted conditionally or unconditionally the offer they have received. Not all universities require applicants to respond to the state TACs. Acceptance rates may therefore be understated. An acceptance does not necessarily mean that the student will enrol in that course and in some states, advising the TAC that they are rejecting the offer does not prevent the applicant from enrolling with the university based on that offer.

Acceptance rate: The acceptance rate is the percentage of applicants with an offer who formally accept that offer through a TAC. Not all universities require applicants to respond to the state TACs. Acceptance rates may therefore be slightly understated.

Age: Age is calculated as at the 31 December 2011.

Applicant: For the purposes of this report, a valid applicant is defined as an Australian or New Zealand citizen, permanent resident or permanent visa holder who has applied through a TAC during the 2011-12 admissions cycle and who expressed at least one preference for a Commonwealth supported places in a higher education undergraduate award course at a Table A or B higher education provider (HEP).

Application: A valid application is one submitted to a TAC during the 2011-12 admission cycle by an Australian or New Zealand citizen, permanent resident or permanent visa holder, provided that at least one preference was for a Commonwealth supported place in a higher education undergraduate award course at a Table A or B HEP. Applications are excluded if they have been cancelled by TACs as duplicates or because the applicant is known to be deceased or has falsified documentation or for other administrative reasons. An applicant may make multiple applications during the application process and each submission is considered a separate application. Unless otherwise specified, all references to “applications” in this report relate to highest preference applications.

Australasian Curriculum Assessment Certification Authorities (ACACA) Year 12 programs: Each State has its own approved Year 12 program. ACACA is the national body responsible for monitoring senior secondary curricula and certification in Australia and New Zealand. The current programs by state are: NSW Higher School Certificate, ACT Year 12 Certificate, ACT Tertiary Entrance Statement, Queensland Certificate in Post-Compulsory School Education, Queensland Senior Certificate and Tertiary Entrance Statement, South Australian Certificate of Education, Northern Territory Certificate of Education, Tasmanian Certificate of Education, Tasmanian Qualifications Certificate, Tasmanian Certificate of Educational Achievement, Victorian Certificate of Education, Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning, and Western Australian Certificate of Education. The International Baccalaureate (IB) is an international qualification approved by ACACA in a number of states. ACACA Year 12 programs may be undertaken in schools, VET institutions or HEPs.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR): Nationwide the ACACA Year 12 programs result in a measure of overall achievement. This is a secondary qualification achieved by an applicant upon completing the ACACA Year 12 program. The ATAR presents the

State Tertiary Entrance Ranks from all years in a comparable fashion, allowing better analysis of difference between states. Since 1998, all states and territories, except for Queensland, have adopted the ATAR or its close equivalent as the state measure of student achievement, but with different names. In NSW and the ACT the result code was called the Universities Admissions Index (UAI); SA, NT, TAS and WA it was the Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER); and VIC the Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (ENTER). QLD retained the Overall Position (OP) system. This means that the measure in NSW, ACT, VIC, SA, NT WA, and TAS are exactly the same. The Queensland OP is mapped to the ATAR using an agreed scale. The ATAR was introduced in NSW/ACT in 2009 and in the other states except QLD in 2010. While ATAR is the more widely used term, the TACs use the term Interstate Transfer Index (ITI).

Award: A certification of achievement or competence recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) which is granted to a student after completion of all the requirements of an ACACA program, higher education course or VET course.

Basis of admission: The main criterion on which the applicant was granted an offer. Basis of admission can be: secondary education (undertaken at a school, TAFE or HEP); higher education; TAFE/vocational education; professional qualification; mature age special entry provision; or other.

Current Year 12 applicant: An applicant who attempted an ACACA Year 12 program or the International Baccalaureate in 2011.

Domestic applicant: A domestic applicant is an applicant who is an Australian citizen, New Zealand citizen, permanent humanitarian visa holder or other permanent visa holder.

Field of education: The field of education (FoE) is a classification used to describe higher education courses with the same or similar vocational emphasis, principal subject matter or specialisation. FoE is identified using Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) codes. There are 12 broad fields of education. This report disaggregates applications, offers and acceptances by all ASCED broad fields of education, and selected narrow fields of education that are of particular interest to stakeholders.

Higher education provider (HEP): A HEP is a university or higher education institution listed in subsection 16-B of *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and providers as determined by the Minister under section 16-35 of the Act.

Highest preference: The highest preference refers to the highest ranking preference entered in a set of preferences by a domestic applicant for a university place and course that is considered valid (that is, a Commonwealth-supported place in a higher education undergraduate award course at a Table A or B HEP). This does not necessarily represent the first preference on an application. For example, if the first preference listed in an application is a postgraduate, non-award or VET course, it is not included in the analysis of this report which is focused on undergraduate higher education award courses. In these cases, the next highest in-scope preference is used. For both applications and offers, the preference number is the ordinal position of the course as at the reference date (for this report, 16 May 2012).

Home state applicant: An applicant is defined as a home state applicant if he or she is a) a current Year 12 applicant who completed an ACACA Year 12 program in a state or territory under the jurisdiction of the TAC to which they have applied; or b) a current Year 12 applicant who completed the International Baccalaureate and whose address of permanent home residence is in the state or territory under the jurisdiction of the TAC to which he or she has applied; or c) an applicant other than a current Year 12 applicant whose address of permanent home residence is in the state or territory under the jurisdiction of the TAC to which he or she has applied.

Indigenous status: Persons who identify themselves as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. In this report, this group is also referred to as Indigenous. Note that Indigenous status is a self-identification measure. Note that Indigenous applicants may choose not to identify as Indigenous during the applications process, hence the category “non-Indigenous” in this report may include some Indigenous applicants.

Interstate applicant: An applicant is defined as an interstate applicant if he or she is a) a current Year 12 applicant who completed an ACACA Year 12 program in a state or territory not under the jurisdiction of the TAC to which he or she has applied; or b) a current Year 12 applicant who completed the International Baccalaureate and whose address of permanent home residence is in a state or territory not under the jurisdiction of the TAC to which he or she applies; or c) an applicant other than a current Year 12 applicant whose address of permanent home residence is in a state or territory not under the jurisdiction of the TAC to which he or she has applied.

Interstate Transfer Index: See ATAR.

Low socioeconomic status: See Socioeconomic Status.

Mature age applicant: This report uses the age group 25 and over as a definition of mature age applicant. This definition does not stipulate what the basis of admission is as it solely is based on age.

MCEETYA regional classification: A classification of postcodes by region/remoteness, agreed by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). It divides postcodes into eight categories (plus a further category for postcodes whose regionality cannot be determined). The categories are:

1. Mainland State Capitals
2. Major Urban (population 100,000 or more)
3. Provincial City (50,000 <= population < 100,000)
4. Provincial City (25,000 <= population < 50,000)
5. Inner Provincial (ARIA* <= 2.4)
6. Outer Provincial (2.4 < ARIA <= 5.92)
7. Remote (5.92 < ARIA <= 10.53)
8. Very Remote (ARIA > 10.53)
9. Unknown

* Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia

In this report, these categories are aggregated into two groups [metropolitan (1-2) and non-metropolitan (3-8)] plus a category for unknown and people residing outside Australia.

Metropolitan: In this report, a resident of a postcode area in MCEETYA regional categories 1 and 2.

National priority area: Areas in which the Government may allocate Commonwealth supported places to non-Table A providers or for which students are required to pay a reduced contribution amount. National priorities for the allocation of Commonwealth supported places are teaching and nursing; the study of natural and physical sciences, information technology, health, education and society and culture at the University of Notre Dame Australia; and supporting Indigenous students studying at the University of Notre Dame Australia. Mathematics and science units are considered a national priority and students enrolled in these pay a reduced student contribution amount. Noting that as part of the 2012-13 Budget, the Government announced that mathematics and science would be removed from the National Priority banding and student contribution amounts for mathematics, statistics and science units of study would increase from 1 January 2013.

Non-metropolitan: In this report, a resident of a postcode area in MCEETYA regional categories 3 to 8.

Non-Year 12 applicant: An applicant is classified as a non-Year 12 applicant if they did not attempt an ACACA Year 12 program or the International Baccalaureate in 2011.

Offer: An offer of a place to an applicant to study a particular course made by TACs on behalf of a university. An offer is in scope for the purposes of this report if it is made to a domestic applicant for a Commonwealth supported place in higher education undergraduate award course at a Table A or B HEP.

Offer rate: The offer rate is a percentage calculated as the number of offers made to applicants with at least one valid preference divided by the number of highest preference applications.

Overall Position (OP): OP provides a state-wide rank order of Queensland Year 12 students (on a scale of 1 to 25, 1 being the highest) based on students' achievement in subjects studied for the Queensland Senior Certificate.

Postgraduate course: A course of study that leads to the award of a graduate certificate, graduate diploma, master's degree or doctorate.

Preference: The current process allows for applicants to apply for several courses in the same application. The number of preferences allowed in an application varies depending on the TAC. Applicants must enter their preferences for courses in order of choice. The ordinal position of each preference in a set of preferences is reported as at the reference date (16 May 2012 for this report).

Qualification: An award or some other form of certification of attainment, competence or attendance.

Secondary education : Education of the type usually (but not always) undertaken by a student in secondary schools, and extending up to an including Year 12 studies or education of a similar type undertaken in institutions other than secondary schools (e.g. in evening colleges, TAFE institutions).

Socioeconomic status: A measure of an applicant's social background based on postcode of permanent home residence. Socioeconomic status (SES) takes values - high,

medium, or low derived from the 2006 ABS Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) which uses data from the 2006 Population Census. The postcode measure of SES provides an indication of the level of disadvantage in a student's community. The postcode measure uses a population reference point of 25% for low SES. The postcodes that comprise the bottom 25% of the population aged between 15 to 64 years are considered low SES postcodes. Higher education students with permanent home address in these low SES postcodes are classified as students from low SES backgrounds.

State and territory: Unless otherwise specified, all references to "state and territory" in this report refers to state and territory of the Tertiary Admissions Centre.

State tertiary entrance ranks: See ATAR.

Technical and Further Education (TAFE): States and territories Government-funded VET providers.

Tertiary Admissions Centre (TAC): TACs are owned by universities but have different governance arrangements. TACs manage applications and offers on behalf of their member universities. Each TAC is separate and independent. Nationwide the following TACs operate: Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) in NSW and the ACT; Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC); Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC); South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) in South Australia and the Northern Territory; and Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) in Western Australia. The University of Tasmania (UTAS) acts as a TAC for Tasmania.

Undergraduate course: A course of study at a HEP that leads to the award of an undergraduate qualification. This includes a diploma, advanced diploma, associate degree or a bachelor degree (pass, honours or graduate entry).

Vocational Education and Training: Vocational Education and Training (VET) provides skills and knowledge for work through a national system of registered training organisations, provided by a network of industry, public and private training providers that work together to provide nationally consistent training across Australia. Registered VET training organisations are listed on www.training.gov.au.

12. Abbreviations

- ACTAC:** Australasian Conference of Tertiary Admissions Centres
- AQF:** Australian Qualifications Framework
- ARIA:** Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia
- ATAR:** Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
- ATN:** Australian Technology Network
- ASCED:** Australian Standard Classification of Education
- ATSI:** Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander
- CD:** Collection district
- CSP:** Commonwealth supported place
- DIISRTE:** Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education
- ENTER:** Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank
- FoE:** Field of education
- Go8:** Group of Eight Member Universities
- HECS:** Higher Education Contribution Scheme
- HELP:** Higher Education Loan Program
- HEP:** Higher Education Provider
- HESC:** Higher education statistics collection
- IB:** International Baccalaureate
- IEO:** Index of Education and Occupation
- IRU:** Innovative Research Universities
- ITI:** Interstate transfer index
- LSAY:** Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth
- MCEETYA:** Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
- OP:** Overall Position
- RUN:** Regional Universities Network
- QTAC:** Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre
- SATAC:** South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre
- SEIFA:** Socio-Economic Index for Areas
- SES:** Socioeconomic status
- TAC:** Tertiary Admissions Centre
- TAFE:** Technical and Further Education
- TER:** Tertiary entrance rank

TES: Tertiary entrance score
TISC: Tertiary Institutions Service Centre
UA: Universities Australia
UAC: Universities Admissions Centre
UAI: Universities Admissions Index
VET: Vocational education and training
VTAC: Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre

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