As at year-to-date (YTD) November 2015, there were 640,922 enrolments by full-fee paying international students in Australia on a student visa. This represents a 10.3% increase on YTD November 2014 and compares with the average YTD November growth rate for enrolments of 6.0% per year over the preceding ten years.

There were 373,734 commencements in YTD November 2015, representing an 8.4% increase over the same period in 2014. This compares with the average YTD November growth rate for commencements of 7.3% per year over the preceding ten years.

The higher education sector had the largest share of enrolments at 42.4% in YTD November 2015. Enrolments and commencements in the sector increased by 9.3% and 7.9% respectively on 2014 figures for the same period. China and India accounted for 35.7% and 13.0% respectively of enrolments by students in higher education. Postgraduate research commencements declined by 3.6%, while other postgraduate commencements increase by 3.6% over the same period in 2014. Bachelor degree level commencements grew by 16.8% on the YTD November 2014 figures.

The VET sector accounted for 26.2% of total enrolments and 29.0% of total commencements. Enrolments and commencements in the sector increased by 14.2% and 11.9% respectively on the YTD November 2014 figures. India contributed the largest share of total enrolments (17.0%) in YTD November 2015. The Republic of Korea accounted for the next largest share of VET enrolments at 8.3%, followed by China and Thailand at 8.0% and 7.8% respectively.

The English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) sector accounted for 22.3% of total enrolments and 29.2% of total commencements in YTD November 2015. Enrolments and commencements increased by 7.8% and 6.4% respectively over the same period in 2014. China contributed the largest shares of ELICOS enrolments and commencements of 26.9% and 26.3% respectively. Brazil was the next largest nationality for ELICOS enrolments with 8.9%, followed by Thailand (7.9%) and Colombia (6.6%).

In YTD November 2015, the schools sector accounted for 3.2% of total enrolments and 3.0% of total commencements. Enrolments and commencements in the sector grew by 11.9% and 15.0% respectively on YTD November 2014 figures. Asia contributed 84.2% of enrolments and 78.5% of commencements. By nationality, China contributed the largest share of enrolments in schools at 50.1% followed by Vietnam and the Republic of Korea at 8.9% and 6.2% respectively.

Enrolments and commencements in the non-award courses (such as exchange and foundation programs) increased by 9.8% and 3.6% respectively. China (28.9%), USA (14.9%) and Brazil (6.7%) accounted for more enrolments in non-award courses than any other nationality. Commencements from China and the USA increased by 26.7% and 3.9% respectively and commencements from Brazil declined by 52.2% on 2014 figures.