



## International students studying in regional areas

In 2018, three per cent of onshore international student enrolments were in regional locations of Australia<sup>1</sup>. All enrolments in Tasmania and the Northern Territory are considered regional, otherwise Queensland had the highest regional proportion (5%), followed by New South Wales (1%) (Table 1). Note that in 2018, a total of 876,399 enrolments were reported<sup>1</sup>, but some (less than 7,000) were excluded from this analysis as they lacked correct geocoding.

The majority (91%) of international student enrolments in regional campuses across Australia were predominantly in large regional centres where education campuses are present. In 2018, total enrolments in regional areas grew by 10% on 2017, with the largest growth in Hobart (37%) followed by Ballarat (20%). Variations in enrolments in other major regions are also shown in Table 2.

### Nationality

China (24%) and India (13%) were the top two source countries for regional enrolments followed by Nepal (7%). Malaysia, South Korea and the USA contributed three per cent each to total regional enrolments. China and India together contributed over a third (37%) of all regional enrolments, although just three per cent of all student enrolments from each country were in regional areas. In comparison, seven per cent of the USA's enrolments were in regional areas. The USA had the highest proportion of regional enrolments out of the top ten nationalities represented in the regional areas.

### Sector, Level of Study and Field of Education

Half (50%) of students studying in regional areas were enrolled in higher education. The next most popular education sectors were VET, ELICOS, schools and non-award (Chart 1).

Bachelor Degree/Honours and Masters (by coursework) were the most popular levels of study for higher education students in both regional (85%) and metropolitan areas (87%). Postgraduate research made up twelve per cent of enrolments in regional areas, compared with five per cent in metropolitan areas. Higher education students in regional areas were more likely to be studying STEM<sup>2</sup> fields (41%) than those in metropolitan areas (31%) where Management and Commerce dominated (43%).

### Economic contribution

It was estimated that onshore international students studying and living in the New South Wales region of New England and the North West contributed \$33 million to the local economy and supported 243 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in 2014-15 and those studying and living in Cairns (Queensland) contributed \$36 million to the region, which supported 273 FTE jobs. In addition, regional economies also benefit indirectly from international students in metropolitan areas via supply chains. For example, spending by international students in Melbourne was estimated to contribute \$888 million to regional Victoria and supported 5,478 FTE jobs there<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 1. Distribution of international student enrolments in Australian capital and regional areas in 2018**

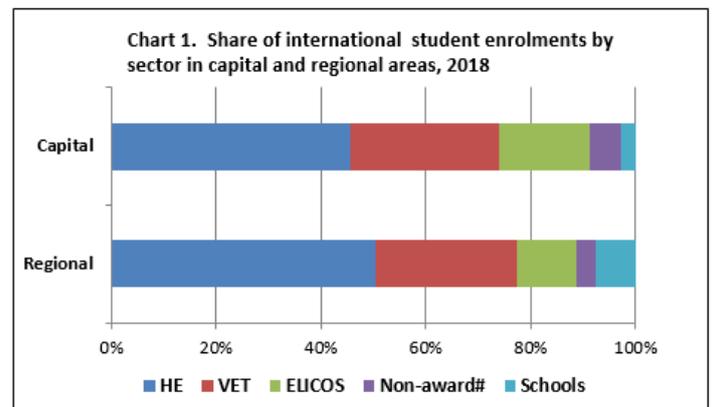
State / Territory	Share		Enrolments		Total
	*Major Cities	Regional area	*Major Cities	Regional area	
NSW	99%	1%	330,224	3,689	333,913
VIC	99%	1%	276,733	2,242	278,975
QLD	95%	5%	127,260	7,052	134,312
WA	100%	0%	51,597	233	51,830
SA	100%	0%	37,870	95	37,965
ACT	100%	0%	19,286		19,286
TAS		100%		10,796	10,796
NT		100%		2,632	2,632
<b>Australia</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>842,970</b>	<b>26,739</b>	<b>869,709</b>

\*Major Cities of Australia include capital and other large cities in each state and territory, with the exception of Tasmania (TAS) and Darwin (NT). Major cities also include non-capital cities such as the Gold Coast and Newcastle.

**Table 2. Top ten regional centres for international student enrolments in 2018**

State / Territory	**Regional centres	2017	2018	Share	Growth on 2017
TAS	Hobart	6,862	9,391	35%	37%
NT	Darwin	2,462	2,625	10%	7%
QLD	Cairns	2,675	2,475	9%	-7%
QLD	Toowoomba	2,064	2,038	8%	-1%
QLD	Townsville	1,942	1,860	7%	-4%
NSW	Richmond - Tweed	1,442	1,554	6%	8%
NSW	New England and North West	1,350	1,427	5%	6%
TAS	Launceston and North East	1,381	1,389	5%	1%
VIC	Ballarat	1,001	1,199	4%	20%
VIC	Geelong	418	323	1%	-23%
Other locations		2,612	2,458	9%	-6%
<b>Total enrolments in regional areas</b>		<b>24,209</b>	<b>26,739</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10%</b>

\*\*SA4 regions as derived from the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard.



# Including foundation and study abroad

<sup>1</sup> <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/international-student-data/pages/default.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Regional for the purpose of this research snapshot includes all non-Major Cities areas as defined in the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Remoteness structure <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/remoteness+structure>. International student enrolments not be coded to the ASGS (1.5%) are excluded in this research snapshot.

<sup>3</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics; incorporating the broad fields Natural Physical Sciences, Agriculture and Environmental Studies, Information Technology and Engineering.

<sup>4</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2016). The Value of International Education to Australia available at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/research-papers/Documents/ValueInternationalEd.pdf>.