



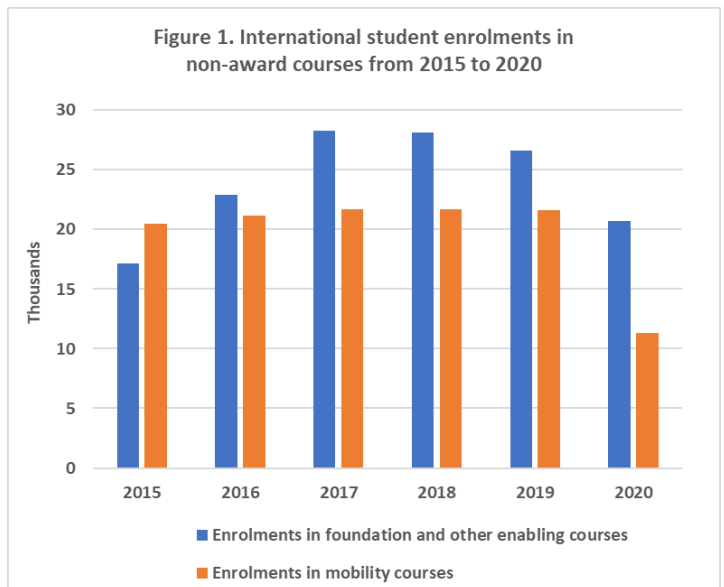
International students studying non-award courses in 2020

This snapshot provides an overview of international student enrolments in courses that do not result in an award (or qualification) that is recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework. These non-award courses include two broad types: **foundation and other enabling** courses; and **mobility** courses, which include study abroad and student exchange programs.

In 2020, there were 882,482 international student enrolments in Australia. The non-award sector had 31,963 enrolments (4% of all enrolments), including 20,672 in foundation and other enabling courses and 11,291 in mobility courses. Foundation courses are an entry pathway into undergraduate study, while other enabling courses are an entry pathway into various other courses, including postgraduate courses. Mobility courses are undertaken by students who come to Australia for a study abroad experience or as an exchange student. The duration of non-award courses is generally less than one year.

Trends

Figure 1 shows the enrolment pattern in non-award courses. Since 2015, enrolments in foundation and enabling courses grew steadily to peak in 2017 (28,302) and has been declining at an average growth rate of 10 per cent per year from 2017 to 20,672 in 2020 with a sharper decline in 2020 (22%) presumably due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Mobility course enrolments over the last 5 years from 2015, have been moderately stable up to 2019, then dropped 48 per cent in 2020 presumably due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions. Overall enrolments in non-award sector declined by 34 per cent in 2020.



Top nationalities

In 2020, almost two thirds (65%) of all non-award course enrolments were in foundation and other enabling courses and most were by students from Asian countries. Students from China accounted for 63 per cent of enrolments, of these, about 7 out of every 10 enrolments (67%) were in foundation courses. The top five nationalities contributed over three quarters of total enrolments (76%) in non-award foundation and other enabling courses (Table 1).

Of the 35 per cent of non-award enrolments in mobility courses, nearly five out of every six enrolments (82%) were by students from either the Americas or Europe. The top 5 nationalities contributed more than half (60%) of enrolments in non-award mobility courses, comprising 57 per cent in study abroad programs and 43 per cent in exchange programs or other mobility activities (Table 2).

Nationality	Foundation	Enabling	Total
China	8,811	4,266	13,077
Vietnam	787	117	904
Hong Kong	594	247	841
Nepal	123	385	508
Indonesia	408	67	475
Other nationalities	3,445	1,422	4,867
Total	14,168	6,504	20,672

Nationality	Study Abroad	Exchange	Total
USA	3,114	797	3,911
UK	188	777	965
Germany	382	276	658
Canada	164	484	648
Japan	485	134	619
Other nationalities	2,057	2,433	4,490
Total	6,390	4,901	11,291

The proportion of international students who had studied a non-award course immediately prior to commencing higher education in 2020 was 13 per cent. International student study pathways data can be obtained from a data visualisation available [here](#) for all sectors.