

## AN OVERVIEW

The number of domestic students enrolled in bachelors-level study decreased slightly from 2004 to 2005, for the second consecutive year, after many years of steady growth. The decrease was mainly driven by a decreased participation rate of older students studying at bachelors level.

The number of domestic students completing bachelors degrees decreased from 2004 to 2005 as a result of a drop in the completion rate rather than a decrease in domestic students studying at bachelors level. An estimated 41 percent of domestic students who started a bachelors degree in 2001 had completed after five years. Asian and European domestic students had the highest rates of five-year completion of bachelors degrees, while Pasifika students had the lowest rates.

While international students enrolled in bachelors study continue to make up a growing proportion of bachelors-level students, the growth in international students enrolled at bachelors-level study slowed during 2005. International students completed bachelors degrees within five years at a higher rate than domestic students, with 48 percent of international students who started a bachelors degree during 2001 having completed after five years.

## LOOKING TO 2006

Early indications suggest that student numbers at bachelors level will level out in 2006. The 'baby blip' generation is currently at upper secondary level and will be entering the tertiary education system over the next few years. This is likely to increase the number of school leavers starting bachelors-level study over this period. Countering this trend, it is likely the number of older students entering bachelors-level study will continue to decline.

For the purposes of this chapter bachelors-level is made up of three types of qualifications at level 7 of the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications. Bachelors degrees are theoretically-based qualifications that require three years or more of full-time study to complete. Graduate certificates and diplomas are designed as vehicles for graduates to pursue further study at an advanced undergraduate level. A certificate of proficiency is a programme of study consisting of assessed course(s) chosen by an individual student from an already approved qualification(s) but not credited to any qualification.

ANALYTICAL TABLES: An associated set of tables on the students in bachelor-level qualifications is available on the Education Counts website, Tables ENR1-38, EFT1-36, PPN1-13, PRG1-15, ARN1-18 and COM 1-35. Detailed technical information on the data presented here can be found in chapter 17.

## PARTICIPATION AT BACHELORS LEVEL

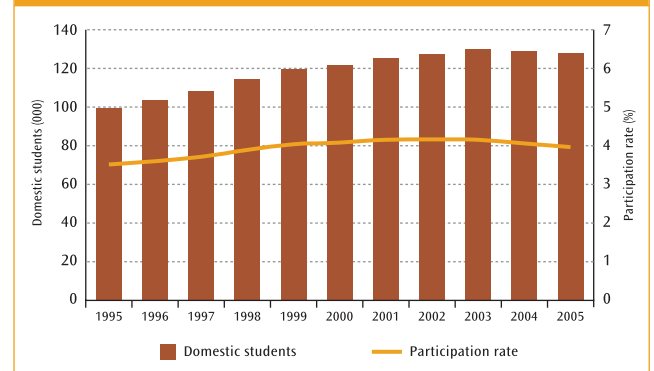
From 2004 to 2005, the number of students enrolled in bachelors-level study decreased for the first time in recent years. There were 153,280 students enrolled in bachelors-level study during 2005, a decrease of 550 students, or 0.4 percent, from 2004. The number of equivalent full-time students enrolled in bachelors-level study during 2005 also decreased, by 0.9 percent, from 119,410 to 118,280.

### Domestic students

There were 127,630 domestic students enrolled in bachelors-level study during 2005, a decrease of 1,090 students, or 0.8 percent, from 2004. This is a similar decrease to that which occurred from 2003 to 2004, but followed many years of steady growth in domestic bachelors-level students. The percentage of New Zealanders aged 15 years and over enrolled in bachelors-level study during 2005 was 4 percent, down slightly from 4.1 percent during 2004 and a peak of 4.2 percent during 2002.

During 2005, 28 percent of all domestic students were enrolled in bachelors-level study.

Figure 8.1: Participation in bachelors-level study



The largest number of domestic students enrolled at bachelors level were studying for a bachelors degree (89 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students, or 113,130 domestic students). There were 11,440 domestic students (9 percent) enrolled in graduate certificates and diplomas in 2005, and 4,520 (3.5 percent) enrolled in certificates of proficiency. While bachelors degrees have shown the most growth in domestic student numbers over the last 10 years, the proportion of domestic students in each qualification has stayed relatively unchanged over this period.

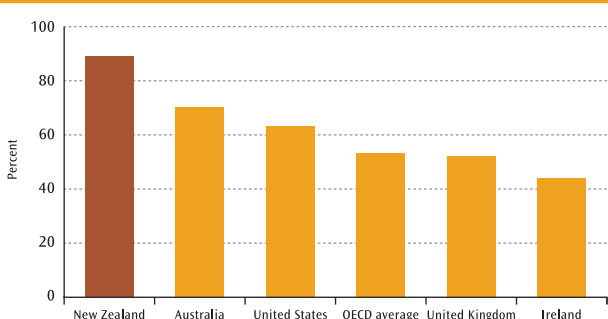


Learners in tertiary education

When converting the count of 2005 bachelors-level enrolments to equivalent full-time student units, these decreased by 1.5 percent over 2004, from 98,250 to 96,746. During 2005, 39 percent of domestic equivalent full-time students were enrolled in bachelors-level study.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development provides some international comparisons on participation in tertiary education. These comparisons are limited to tertiary-type A study, which includes bachelors-level study as well as honours, masters, and postgraduate certificates and diplomas. The net entry rate measure represents the proportion of the population that will enter tertiary education over their lifetime. New Zealand ranked first in terms of net entry rate into tertiary-type A study (OECD 2006). However, care should be used in interpreting this measure, as current high first-time participation, especially at older ages, will tend to artificially inflate the true rate at which New Zealanders will participate in tertiary education over their lifetime. For a fuller summary of international comparisons see chapter 5.

Figure 8.2: Net entry rates into tertiary-type A study in 2004 for selected OECD countries



Source: OECD, *Education at a glance: OECD indicators 2006*, Table C2.1.

### International students

International students enrolled in bachelors-level study continued in 2005 to make up a growing proportion of bachelors-level students, increasing from 5.3 percent of all bachelors-level students during 2000 to 17 percent during 2005. However, the growth in international students enrolled in bachelors-level study slowed during 2005. There were 25,650 international students enrolled in bachelors-level study during 2005, an increase of 2.2 percent over 2004, compared with an

increase of 26 percent from 2003 to 2004, and 43 percent from 2002 to 2003.

Figure 8.3: Distribution of domestic and international bachelors-level students



A higher percentage of international students than domestic students are enrolled in bachelors-level study. During 2005, 54 percent of international students were studying at bachelors level, compared with 28 percent of domestic students. International students made up a large percentage (42 percent) of all students enrolled in certificates of proficiency when compared with all bachelors-level students (17 percent).

The number of international equivalent full-time students enrolled in bachelors-level study during 2005 increased by 1.7 percent over 2004, from 21,170 to 21,530. International equivalent full-time students made up 18 percent of all bachelors-level equivalent full-time students during 2005, up from 5.5 percent during 2000.

### ACHIEVEMENT

Throughout this section, and all following sections that discuss achievement at bachelors level, the first-year attrition, five-year retention and completion rates, and the number of qualifications completed refer to bachelors degree qualifications only. Students enrolled in graduate certificates and diplomas as well as certificates of proficiency have not been included in these rates, given the very different nature of these qualifications. Progression rates do, however, include students enrolled in graduate certificates and diplomas.

## Domestic students

A total of 20,140 domestic students completed 21,250 bachelors degrees during 2005. This represented a 1.6 percent decrease from 2004 in the number of students who completed a bachelors qualification. This decrease in students completing bachelors degrees was a result of a drop in the completion rate rather than a decrease in domestic students studying at bachelors level. An estimated 41 percent of domestic students who started a bachelors degree in 2001 had completed after five years. This compared with 44 percent of domestic students who started a bachelors degree in 1998. While for bachelors degrees the five-year completion rate is 41 percent, for full-time students the rate climbs to around 70 percent. Around 50 percent of domestic students who started a bachelors degree in 2001 had left without completing it five years later, and 9 percent were still studying towards it five years later.

Overall, the first-year attrition rate for domestic students who started a bachelors degree in 2004, and who neither completed the degree nor enrolled for further study in 2005, was 22 percent. This rate was relatively unchanged from those students who started study in 2003. However, this figure includes students who later re-engage and gain qualifications at a higher or lower level than that at which they started.

Many students also successfully complete courses without necessarily having a qualification goal in mind. Course completion rates in New Zealand are over 80 percent for universities and around 70 percent for the sector as a whole (Scott 2006).

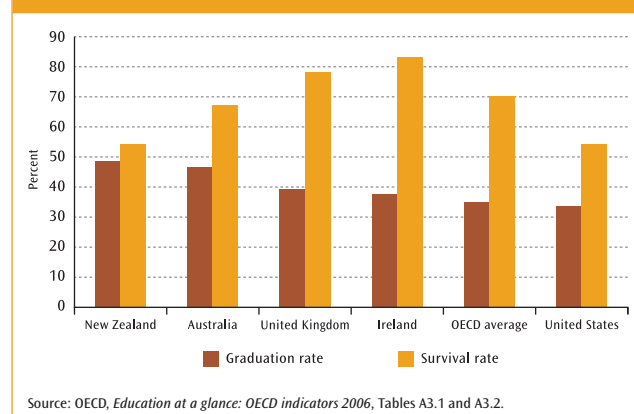
In the United States around 10 percent of students enrol in bachelors-level study without having a bachelors degree as a goal (Berkner, He and Cataldi 2002). It is possible to make some international comparisons of the completion rates of bachelors degree students. However, differences in country systems should be taken into account in these comparisons. For example, open systems such as New Zealand and the United States have fewer restrictions on entry than other countries and hence may not require the same level of academic entry requirements.

Australia has a published six-year completion rate of around 60 percent for all awards at universities. This increases to around 70 percent for full-time students (DEST 2001). While the overall rate of 60 percent is higher than New Zealand, when considering full-time students only the rates are similar. New Zealand has a very high proportion of tertiary students who are studying on

a part-time basis – the highest in the OECD. In the United States, the qualification rate for bachelors degrees is 55 percent (Berkner, He and Cataldi 2002). The rate for bachelors students *whose goal was to obtain a degree* increases to 63 percent. In this last group, those who study full-time in their first year have a completion rate of 66 percent, which is lower than the New Zealand rate. An estimated 77 percent of first-time, full-time students in the United Kingdom are projected to complete their degree.

OECD international comparisons on achievement at tertiary-type A study suggest a mixed performance for New Zealand. Tertiary-type A study includes bachelors-level study as well as honours, masters, and postgraduate certificates and diplomas. OECD indicators show our graduation rate<sup>1</sup> to be the second highest in the OECD, while our survival rate<sup>2</sup> is the third lowest. Neither of these indicators is very good at summing up the New Zealand situation. The graduation rate is being artificially inflated due to the large number of first-time, older students currently completing tertiary-type A qualifications. Also the survival rate is being artificially deflated due to the large number of part-time, mostly older, students currently starting tertiary-type A study. For a fuller summary of international comparisons see chapter 5.

Figure 8.4: Graduation and survival rates in bachelors study in 2004 for selected OECD countries



Domestic students enrolled in graduate certificates and diplomas have a lower five-year completion rate than domestic students enrolled in bachelors degrees. An estimated 37 percent of domestic students who started a graduate certificate/diploma in 2001 had completed after five years, while 59 percent had left without completing it five years later and 4 percent were still studying towards it five years later. The first-year attrition

1 The graduation rate represents the total number of first-time graduates at a particular level, divided by the population at the typical age of graduation for that level.

2 The total number of graduates at a particular level, divided by the number of new entrants to that level x years earlier, where x represents the typical time required to complete at that level.



Learners in tertiary education

rate for domestic students enrolled in graduate certificates and diplomas is 37 percent. There appear to be two main reasons for this difference. The first is that graduate certificate and diploma candidates are more likely to be studying on a part-time basis while in work – a factor associated with lower completion rates. The second reason is that the great majority of those undertaking these qualifications already hold a degree. Therefore, attainment of a qualification (as opposed to success in some courses) is less likely to be a goal of the study.

On average, a student who started a bachelors degree in 1998 took 3.1 EFTS years to complete, and was enrolled with or without breaks over four calendar years. Students who did not complete left, on average, after 1.3 EFTS years and, of those, half left in the first year (Scott 2005).

Of those domestic students completing a bachelors-level qualification during 2004, 15 percent went on to study at a higher level during 2005, and 17 percent went on to study at the same level or at a lower level, while 68 percent did not continue their studies. These progression rates have remained relatively unchanged since 2000.

Of those domestic students completing a bachelors-level qualification during 2000, 22 percent went on to study at a higher level some time between 2001 and 2005, and 26 percent went on to study at the same level or at a lower level, while 52 percent had not continued their studies.

### International students

Approximately 4,670 international students completed 4,720 bachelors degrees during 2005. This was a 51 percent increase over 2004 in the number of students who completed bachelors degrees and an increase of 330 percent on the number of students completing in 2000. This reflects the large increase in international students starting their bachelors degree three to four years earlier. International students completing bachelors degrees made up 16 percent of all students who completed a bachelors degree during 2005.

International students complete bachelors degrees within five years at a higher rate than domestic students, with 48 percent of international students who started a bachelors degree in 2001 having completed after five years.

International students are more likely to be studying full-time and intramurally than their domestic counterparts, both of which are factors associated with higher rates of completion.

However, a Ministry of Education study has shown that even after adjusting for these study-related and other demographic differences, international students were still 1.3 times more likely than domestic students to complete a bachelors degree after six years (Scott and Smart 2005).

## TYPE OF PROVIDER

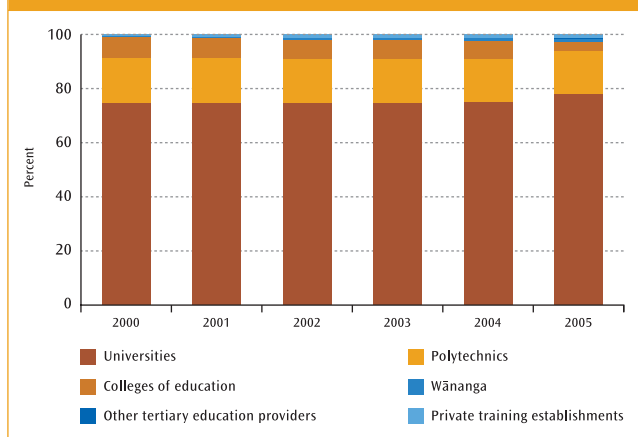
### Participation

The proportion of domestic bachelors-level students by type of provider has remained relatively unchanged over the last six years. Universities continue to be the largest type of tertiary education provider in terms of domestic students enrolled in bachelors-level study, with 79 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students. There were 100,530 domestic bachelors-level students enrolled in universities during 2005, an increase of 2.9 percent over 2004. However, this increase was due to the inclusion of students from the Auckland College of Education and the Wellington College of Education following their respective mergers with the University of Auckland on 1 September 2004 and Victoria University of Wellington on 1 January 2005. If these students are excluded, there would have been a decrease of around 1.5 percent in university domestic bachelors-level students.

From 1995 to 1999, polytechnics attracted a growing number of domestic bachelors-level students. However, the majority of these students were enrolled at the Auckland Institute of Technology, which in January 2000 became a university and was renamed the Auckland University of Technology. The number of domestic students enrolling in bachelors-level study at polytechnics has remained relatively unchanged since 2000. There were 20,430 domestic bachelors-level students enrolled in polytechnics during 2005, a decrease of 2.3 percent over 2004, and they made up 16 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students.

While wānanga students make up a growing proportion of domestic bachelors-level students, during 2005 this proportion was just 1.1 percent, up from 0.3 percent during 2000. All three of the public wānanga offer bachelors-level qualifications across a range of programmes. During 2005, there were 1,780 domestic bachelors-level students enrolled in private training establishments, an increase of 112 percent over 2000, and making up 1.4 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students.

Figure 8.5: Distribution of domestic bachelors-level students by type of provider



A relatively high proportion of tertiary study at universities is undertaken at bachelors level. During 2005, 72 percent of domestic students enrolled at universities were studying at bachelors level. This compared with 10 percent of domestic students at polytechnics, 2.6 percent at private training establishments, 2.4 percent at wānanga and 0.9 percent at other tertiary education providers.

### Achievement

Completion rates were highest at colleges of education, where 60 percent of domestic students starting a bachelors degree during 2001 had completed within five years. This compared with universities, where the five-year completion rate for 2001 starters was 41 percent, and polytechnics, where the completion rate was 31 percent. A number of students study at a polytechnic for the first year of their degree and then transfer to a university to complete the qualification. These completions are not reflected in the rates for polytechnics. Part of the reason for the high completion rates at the colleges of education is that the majority of these students would have been taking structured, professional qualifications in teaching that were well-matched to the students' aspirations.

Completion rates were lowest at wānanga, where 27 percent of students starting a bachelors degree during 2001 had completed within five years. The five-year completion rate at universities and polytechnics, for domestic students starting a bachelors degree in 2001, remained relatively unchanged compared with those who started study in 2000, but at wānanga this rate dropped by six percentage points.

Domestic bachelors degree students first studying at private training establishments during 2004 were more likely neither to complete their qualification nor to re-enrol during 2005 (first-year attrition). Students first studying at universities during 2004 had the lowest rate of first-year attrition.

Table 8.1: First-year attrition and five-year retention and completion rates for domestic bachelors degree students by sub-sector

	First-year attrition	Five-year retention	Five-year completion
	Students starting in		
	2004	2001	2001
Sub-sector	Percentage of students		
Universities	21	51	41
Polytechnics	34	36	31
Colleges of education	25	63	60
Wānanga	38	32	27
Private training establishments	43	44	36
<b>All students</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>

Of all domestic students completing a bachelors-level qualification at a university during 2004, 17 percent were studying at a higher level in 2005. This compared to 18 percent for wānanga, 8.1 percent for polytechnics and private training establishments and 5.1 percent for colleges of education. Students completing a bachelors-level qualification at wānanga are also more likely to progress to any level of further study, with 57 percent progressing to further study in 2005.

## FIELD OF STUDY

### Participation

The most common fields of study for domestic bachelors-level students during 2005 were society and culture, and management and commerce. Study in the broad field of society and culture includes, for example, law, economics, philosophy, sociology, history, language studies, human welfare support and services, and sport and recreation. The society and culture field of study had around 33,620 students (or 26 percent of domestic bachelors-level students during 2005), while the management and commerce field of study had 27,370 students (or 21 percent). Fields of study that were less common among domestic bachelors-level students were food, hospitality and personal services (0.2 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students

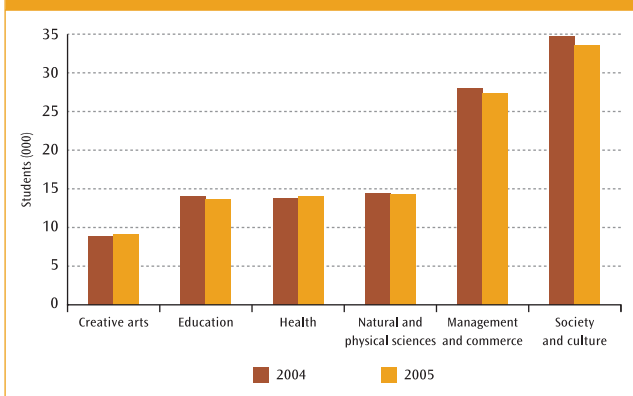


Learners in tertiary education

during 2005), and agriculture, environmental and related studies (1.3 percent).

From 2004 to 2005, domestic bachelors-level students enrolled in mixed field programmes increased by 10 percent and those studying agriculture, environmental and related studies increased by 9.3 percent. Study in 'mixed field' at bachelors level includes, for example, programmes for general education and may include qualifications that are not able to be categorised elsewhere. The number of domestic bachelors-level students enrolled in information technology fell by 12 percent between 2004 and 2005.

Figure 8.6: Top six fields of study for domestic, bachelors-level students



The fastest-growing field of study at bachelors level over the last five years has been creative arts. The number of domestic bachelors-level students enrolled in creative arts increased by 48 percent from 2000 to 2005, which is a similar rate to the growth in sub-degree and postgraduate domestic students enrolled in creative arts. The latest rise was attributable to increases in all sub-fields of creative arts, including visual arts and crafts (95 percent increase), communication and media studies (95 percent), performing arts (23 percent), and graphic and design studies (19 percent).

Information technology was the only field of study at bachelors level where the number of domestic students enrolled in polytechnics outnumbered those enrolled in universities. During 2005, 60 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students studying information technology were enrolled at polytechnics. During 2005, polytechnics were also popular for study in health (28 percent of all polytechnic domestic bachelors-level students), and management and commerce (19 percent).

The most popular fields of study for bachelors-level wānanga students were society and culture (35 percent of all wānanga bachelors-level students), education (25 percent), and creative arts (19 percent).

A relatively high proportion of study in natural and physical sciences was undertaken at bachelors level. During 2005, 75 percent of domestic students enrolled in natural and physical sciences were studying at bachelors level. This compared with 46 percent of domestic students enrolled in creative arts, 5.4 percent enrolled in agriculture, environmental and related studies and 1.9 percent enrolled in food, hospitality and personal services.

## ETHNIC GROUP, AGE AND GENDER

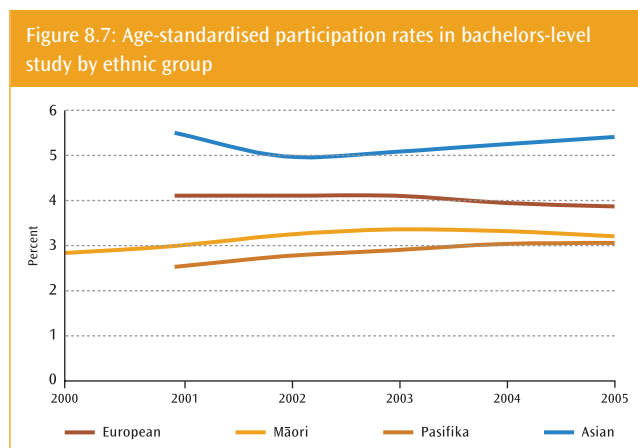
### A gradually declining European ethnic group

The percentage of domestic bachelors-level students who were of European ethnicity has been gradually declining since 2000, while all other ethnic groups are making up a growing proportion of domestic bachelors-level students over this time. During 2005, 72 percent of domestic bachelors-level students were Europeans, compared with 15 percent of Asians, 12 percent of Māori students, and 5.4 percent of Pasifika students.

Between 2004 and 2005, there was a decrease in the number of European and Māori students enrolled in bachelors-level study. The decrease in Māori students, from 15,350 in 2004 to 15,010 in 2005 (down by 2.2 percent), was the first decrease in recent years, while the fall in the number of Europeans, from 91,130 in 2004 to 89,910 in 2005 (down by 1.3 percent), was the second consecutive decrease.

The decreases in European and Māori bachelors-level students have occurred as a result of a decrease in the tertiary education participation rate rather than a decrease in the population. Participation at bachelors level by Māori aged 15 years and over was 3.7 percent during 2005, down from 3.8 percent during 2004, while for Europeans it was 3.6 percent during 2005, down from 3.7 percent during 2004. Participation at bachelors level by domestic Asians aged 15 years and over was 6.2 percent during 2005, the highest of any ethnic group. In 2005, Pasifika peoples participated at bachelors level at a higher rate than Europeans and Māori for the first time. During 2005, participation at bachelors level by Pasifika peoples aged 15 years and over was 3.8 percent.

When the participation rates are adjusted for the different age structures of the ethnic groups, Europeans participate in bachelors-level study at a higher rate than Māori and Pasifika people. When adjusted for age differences, 3.9 percent of Europeans aged 15 years and over participated in bachelors-level study, compared with 3.2 percent of Māori, 3.1 percent of Pasifika peoples and 5.4 percent of domestic Asians.



Asian and European domestic students had the highest rates of bachelors degree completion after five years while Pasifika students had the lowest rates of five-year completion. This is a similar trend to sub-degree and postgraduate-level study. First-year attrition in bachelors degrees in 2005 was highest for Māori students and lowest for Asian students.

**Table 8.2: First-year attrition and five-year retention and completion rates for domestic bachelors degree students by ethnic group**

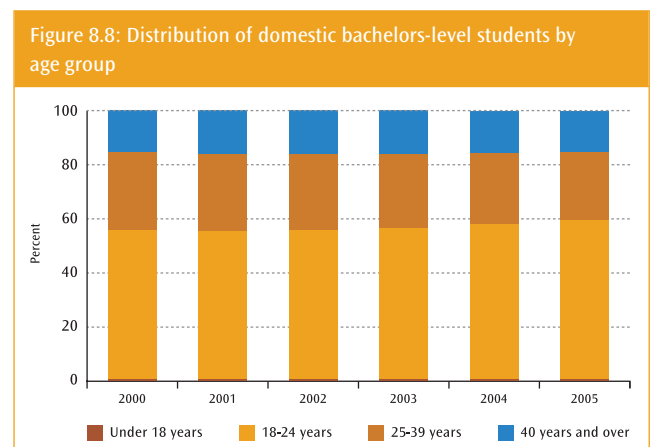
	First-year attrition	Five-year retention	Five-year completion
<b>Students starting in</b>			
	2004	2001	2001
<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>Percentage of students</b>		
European	22	52	43
Māori	32	41	30
Pasifika	28	41	28
Asian	14	55	45
Other	21	48	36
<b>All students</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>

At bachelors level, as with sub-degree and postgraduate levels, Māori had the highest rate of progression to further study. Of those completing a bachelors-level qualification in 2004, 39 percent continued studying (to higher, the same or lower-level qualifications) in 2005.

### Lower average age for bachelors students

While the average age of sub-degree and postgraduate domestic students continues to increase, the average age of bachelors-level domestic students has decreased over the last two years. From a peak of 27.4 years during 2003, the average age of domestic bachelors-level students dropped to 26.9 years in 2005. This decrease in the average age has been driven by a decrease in the enrolments of older students over the past two years. Between 2003 and 2005, the number of domestic students aged 25 years and over enrolled in bachelors-level study decreased by 8.4 percent, from 56,270 to 51,530. Between 1995 and 2005, there was a significant rise in the proportion of the population with bachelors or higher-level qualifications in the 25 to 39 years and 40 to 64 years age groups of the population (Smart 2006). In 2005, 25 percent of the New Zealand population aged 25 to 39 years had a bachelors or higher qualification.

Domestic students aged 18 to 24 years enrolled in bachelors-level study increased by 3.4 percent between 2003 and 2005, from 72,360 to 74,820. As a result of this, the percentage of domestic bachelors-level students aged 18 to 24 years has increased since 2000, to 59 percent in 2005. This compares with the percentage of domestic bachelors-level students aged 25 to 39 years, down from 29 percent in 2000 to 25 percent in 2005, while domestic students aged 40 years and over remained unchanged at 15 percent.





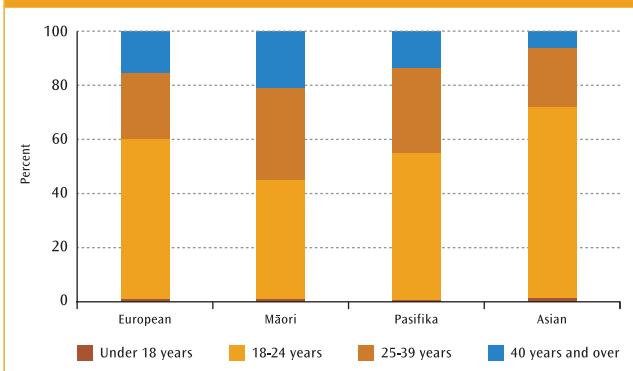
## Learners in tertiary education

The increase in domestic students aged 18 to 24 years in bachelors-level study has occurred as a result of an increase in population rather than any increase in participation rates. The rate of participation in bachelors-level study for New Zealanders aged 18 to 24 years was 18.3 percent during 2005, relatively unchanged from 18.4 percent during 2000. The rate of participation for New Zealanders aged 25 to 39 years dropped from 4 percent in 2000 to 3.8 percent in 2005, while the participation rate of those aged 40 years and over dropped slightly from 1.2 percent in 2000 to 1.1 percent in 2005.

Domestic students enrolled in either graduate certificates and diplomas or certificates of proficiency are more likely to be older than domestic students enrolled in bachelors degrees. During 2005, 85 percent of domestic students enrolled in graduate certificates and diplomas were aged 25 years and over, compared with 68 percent of domestic students enrolled in certificates of proficiency and 35 percent of domestic students enrolled in bachelors degrees.

There are marked differences in the age structure of the ethnic groups. Māori students studying at bachelors level were more likely to be aged 25 years and over than other ethnic groups. Asian students were more likely to be aged under 25 years, with 72 percent of domestic Asian students aged under 25 years during 2005.

Figure 8.9: Distribution of domestic bachelors-level students by ethnic group and age group



Domestic students under the age of 25 years had higher five-year completion rates than older students enrolled in bachelors degrees. However, older students are more likely to be studying part-time or have external work or family commitments that limit their ability to commit as fully as younger students. These

factors are likely to explain why actual completion rates are higher for younger students and, once adjusted for these factors, older students do better than younger students (Scott and Smart 2005).

First-year attrition is also higher for domestic students aged 25 years and over studying bachelors degrees. The first-year attrition rate in 2005 was 40 percent for domestic students aged 40 years and over, and 38 percent for students aged 25 to 39 years, compared with 15 percent for students aged 25 years or under. However, not all students enter bachelors-degree study with the aim of completing a full qualification. Students aged 25 years and over are more likely than younger students to be focused on completing selected courses rather than the full qualification.

Table 8.3: First-year attrition and five-year retention and completion rates for domestic bachelors degree students by age group

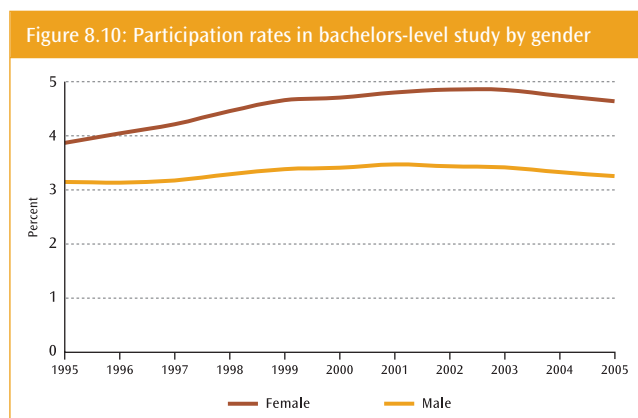
	First-year attrition	Five-year retention	Five-year completion
	Students starting in		
	2004	2001	2001
Age group	Percentage of students		
Under 18 years	15	69	57
18-24 years	15	58	48
25-39 years	38	38	29
40 years and over	40	35	27
<b>All students</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>

Domestic students aged 18 to 24 years had higher rates of progression to further study than students aged 25 years and over. Of those domestic students aged 18 to 24 years who completed a bachelors-level qualification in 2004, 17 percent went on to study at a higher level during 2005, while 17 percent went on to study at the same level or a lower level.

### Gender

The proportions of female and male domestic students enrolled at bachelors level has remained relatively unchanged since 2000, with women making up 60 percent of domestic bachelors-level students during 2005. This is a similar proportion to domestic students enrolled in postgraduate study, but men make up 46 percent of domestic students enrolled in sub-degree study.

There was a decrease in the number of both female and male domestic bachelors-level students between 2004 and 2005, with female students decreasing by 0.8 percent, from 77,340 to 76,730, and male students decreasing by 0.9 percent, from 51,380 to 50,900. These are similar decreases to those that occurred during 2004. Participation at bachelors level by females aged 15 years and over was 4.6 percent during 2005, compared with 3.3 percent of males.



There continues to be a marked difference in the gender split in some fields of study at bachelors level. Fields of study with a high proportion of women during 2005 were education (83 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students), food, hospitality and personal services (81 percent), and health (80 percent). Fields of study with a high proportion of men during 2005 were engineering and related technologies (80 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students), and information technology (76 percent).

There is a greater gender difference for Māori and Pasifika students than for other ethnic groups. Māori women make up 67 percent of all Māori bachelors-level students and Pasifika women make up 63 percent of all Pasifika students.

Women were more likely to complete a bachelors degree than men. An estimated 43 percent of female domestic students who started a bachelors degree in 2001 had completed after five years, compared with 37 percent of male domestic students. For all ethnic groups, the rate at which males completed a bachelors degree within five years was between one and seven percentage points lower than the rate for females. First-year attrition rates for women and men remained similar at around 22 percent.

Men and women progress to further study at roughly the same rate. Of those males completing a bachelors-level qualification in 2004, 16 percent progressed to higher-level study during 2005 (compared with 15 percent of females) and 18 percent progressed to the same level or lower-level study (compared with 17 percent of females).

## TYPE OF STUDENTS AND PRIOR ACTIVITY

### First-time students

There were 19,480 domestic students enrolled at bachelors level for the first time during 2005. This represented around 15 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students. First-time students enrolled at bachelors level decreased by 1 percent from 2004.

Over 87 percent of first-time, bachelors-level students were studying at universities during 2005. Around 17 percent of domestic bachelors-level students at universities were enrolled for the first time during 2005, compared with 9.6 percent at polytechnics, 7.2 percent at private training establishments and 5.9 percent at wānanga.

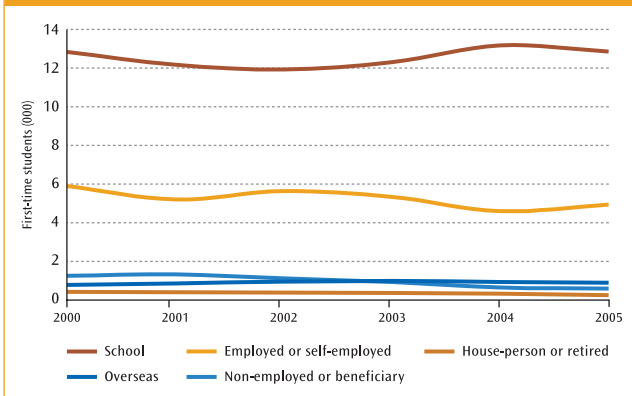
There were fewer first-time, domestic bachelors-level students in the age groups of 25 to 39 years and 40 years and over. Between 2000 and 2005, the number of first-time students aged 25 to 39 years has decreased by 47 percent and first-time students aged 40 years and over have decreased by 33 percent.

Of all first-time bachelors-level students enrolled during 2005, 66 percent came directly from school, compared with 25 percent who were employed, 4.5 percent who were overseas, 3 percent who were non-employed or a beneficiary and 1.3 percent who were a house-person or retired. The distribution of first-time, domestic bachelors-level students has remained relatively constant over the last six years.



Learners in tertiary education

Figure 8.11: First-time, domestic bachelors-level students by prior activity

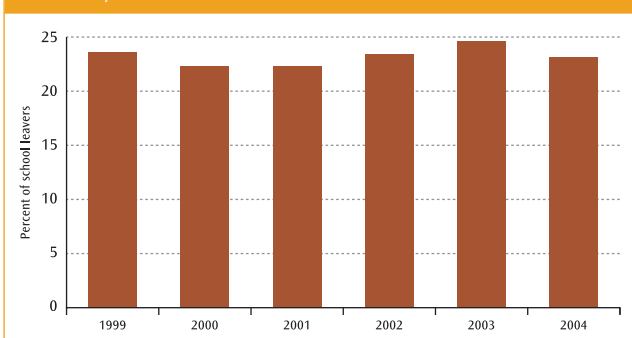


Note: Prior activity refers to a student's main activity at 1 October in the previous year. Care is needed in interpreting these trends as many students' predominant activity in the previous year may be different from what they were doing at 1 October. In addition, data on whether a student is new to tertiary education or not is generally less reliable than other fields.

Domestic first-time, bachelors-level students whose prior activity was school were more than twice as likely to complete a bachelors-level qualification within seven years as first-time students who were employed in the previous year (Ussher 2006).

The proportion of school leavers going directly to bachelors-level study in the following year decreased in 2004. Of the 55,630 school leavers in 2004, 23 percent went on to bachelors-level study in 2005, down from 25 percent for 2003 school leavers. Of all 2004 school leavers going directly to tertiary education in 2005, 42 percent enrolled at bachelors level.

Figure 8.12: Percentage of school leavers directly entering bachelors-level study

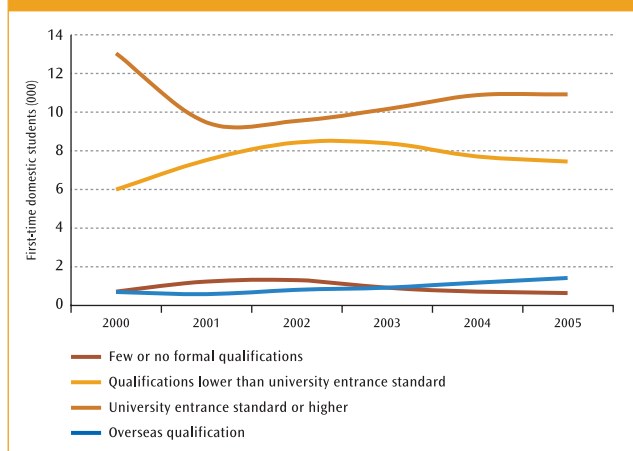


### Highest school qualification

In 2005, there were 10,920 first-time domestic students enrolled in bachelors-level study with a highest school qualification of university entrance standard<sup>3</sup> or higher. They accounted for 50 percent of all first-time domestic students enrolled in bachelors-level study. Since 2002, the proportion of first-time domestic students entering bachelors-level study with university entrance standard or higher has been increasing. From 2004 to 2005, their number increased by 0.5 percent.

The number of first-time domestic students entering with overseas qualifications more than doubled between 2000 and 2005, from 680 to 1,410. Overseas qualifications include the International Baccalaureate and Cambridge International Examinations and this increase is a result of the increased number of students coming out of the New Zealand secondary school system with overseas qualifications rather than qualifications gained at overseas secondary schools.

Figure 8.13: First-time, domestic bachelors-level students by highest school qualification

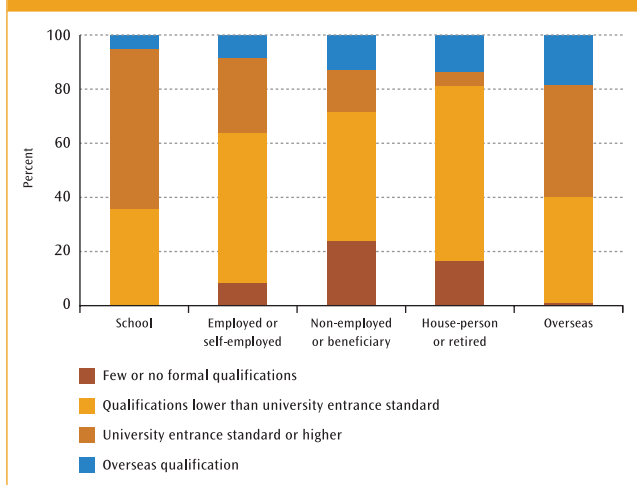


First-time domestic students enrolled at wānanga are more likely to enter bachelors-level study with few or no formal qualifications, with 51 percent of first-time wānanga students having few or no school qualifications during 2005. 'Few or no formal qualifications' is defined as no formal secondary school qualification or 0 to 13 credits at level 1 of the National Qualifications Framework. Older students are also more likely to enter bachelors-level study with few or no formal qualifications. During 2005, 19 percent of first-time domestic students aged 40 years and over and 13 percent aged 25 to 39 had few or no formal school qualifications.

<sup>3</sup> From 2004, to be qualified for entrance to university a student must have obtained: a minimum of 42 credits at level 3 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework, including a minimum of 14 credits at level 3 or higher in each of two approved subjects, with a further 14 credits at level 3 or higher in no more than two additional approved subjects. In addition to this, a student must have a minimum of 14 credits at level 1 or higher in mathematics and a minimum of eight credits at level 2 or higher in English or te reo Māori.

There are marked differences in distribution of highest school qualification according to where domestic students have come from prior to study. First-time domestic students who have come directly from school to bachelors-level study are more likely to have a highest school qualification of university entrance standard or higher, while first-time domestic students who were non-employed or a beneficiary are more likely to have few or no school qualifications.

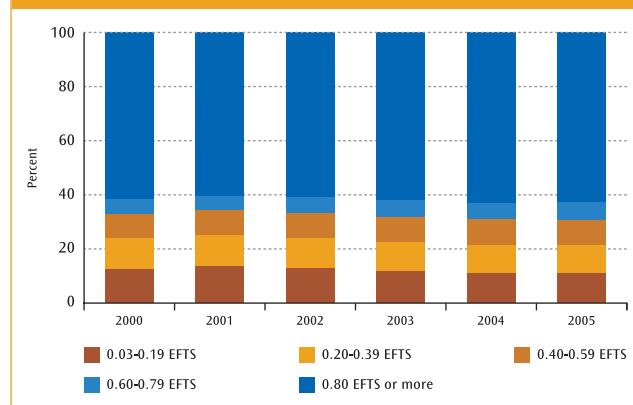
Figure 8.14: Distribution of first-time, domestic bachelors-level students by prior activity and highest school qualification



### Study load

During 2005, 63 percent of domestic bachelors-level students were enrolled with an equivalent full-time student value of 0.8 or more. A higher proportion of bachelors-level students were enrolled with an equivalent full-time student value of 0.8 or more than at either the sub-degree or postgraduate levels. The study load distribution of domestic bachelors-level students has remained relatively unchanged over the last six years.

Figure 8.15: Distribution of domestic bachelors-level students by study load



Study load was found to be a major factor influencing six-year completion rates (Scott and Smart 2005). The actual six-year completion rate for bachelors-level students studying at 1 equivalent full-time student unit was 69 percent, compared with 48 percent for all students. As in other countries, those who spend more time in study on average do better than those who do not. This holds after demographic and other study-related factors are adjusted for.

### Mode of study

During 2005, 17,230 domestic bachelors-level students (14 percent) studied extramurally, a decrease of 6.5 percent over 2004. In terms of equivalent full-time student units, extramural students make up 5.4 percent of all domestic bachelors-level equivalent full-time students. Around 14 percent of domestic, extramural bachelors-level students were enrolled with an equivalent full-time student value of 0.8 or more, compared with 71 percent of intramural students.

Domestic bachelors-level students who study extramurally are more likely to be aged 25 years and over, enrolled at a polytechnic, and in the European or Māori ethnic groups. During 2005, 30 percent of domestic bachelors-level students aged 40 years and over and 25 percent aged 25 to 39 years were studying extramurally.



Learners in tertiary education

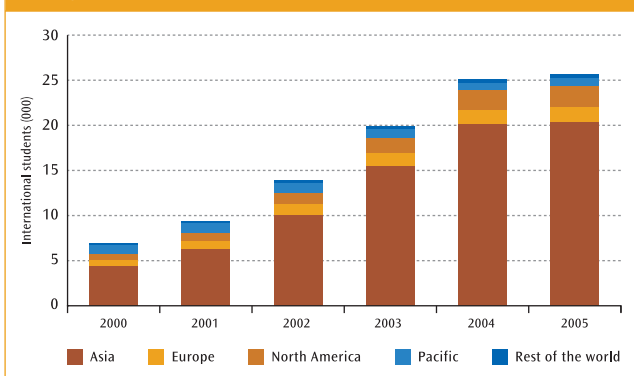
### Students with disabilities

Since information on disability was first collected in 1998, the number of students with disabilities in bachelors-level study has grown from 3,370 (excluding private training establishments) in 1998 to over 5,000 during 2005. In that year, students who self-reported a disability represented 3.9 percent of all domestic bachelors-level students, up from 3 percent during 1998. Students with disabilities are over-represented at wānanga, where 16 percent of bachelors-level students reported a disability.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The majority of international students studying at bachelors level in New Zealand are from Asia (80 percent during 2005). The next largest groups are from North America (9.1 percent), Europe (6.5 percent) and the Pacific (3 percent). There was a notable slowdown in the growth of bachelors-level students from Asia during 2005. Between 2004 and 2005, international bachelors-level students from Asia increased by 1.7 percent; this compares with annual increases of between 30 and 60 percent between 2000 and 2004. The number of bachelors-level students from the Pacific has been declining since 2002.

Figure 8.16: International students in bachelors-level study by region of origin

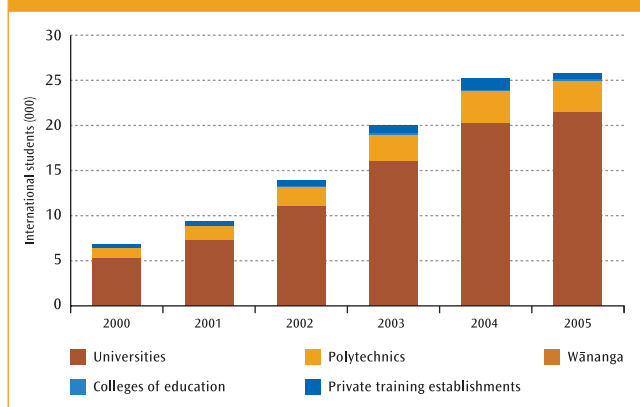


The largest number of international students studying at bachelors level continues to be from China (60 percent of international students during 2005). However, the number of bachelors-level students from China increased by only 0.7 percent from 2004 to 2005, following on from very large increases in the previous years. The second largest number of international bachelors-level students during 2005 was from the United States. Student numbers from the United States increased

by 5.6 percent between 2004 and 2005. The next largest number of bachelors-level students came from Malaysia, South Korea and India.

During 2004, 84 percent of international bachelors-level students were studying at universities, while a further 13 percent studied at polytechnics and 2.4 percent at private training establishments. The number of international bachelors-level students studying at private training establishments halved between 2004 and 2005, from 1,219 to 626. International bachelors-level students studied at wānanga for the first time in 2004 when there were just four students. During 2005, this number doubled to eight international students. All of these students were studying towards a Bachelor of Business Administration at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa.

Figure 8.17: International students in bachelors-level study by type of provider



The most popular field of study for international bachelors-level students during 2005 was management and commerce, with 49 percent of international students studying in this field. Between 2004 and 2005, international bachelors-level students studying management and commerce decreased by 2.5 percent. Other popular fields of study were mixed field programmes (14 percent of international bachelors-level students), society and culture (8.8 percent), and natural and physical sciences (8.6 percent). Between 2004 and 2005, the largest increase in international bachelors-level students was in the field of health studies, with an increase of 280 students, or 32 percent.

International bachelors-level students, as a group, are younger than their domestic counterparts. During 2005, 82 percent of international bachelors-level students were aged 18 to 24 years,

compared with 59 percent of domestic bachelors-level students. By contrast, 17 percent of international bachelors-level students are aged 25 to 39 years and just 1.1 percent are aged 40 years and over.

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Learners in tertiary education