

18 FINDING OUT MORE

This chapter contains technical information relating to the data used in *Profile & Trends*, together with the index and listings of New Zealand's key tertiary education agencies, universities, institutes of technology and polytechnics, wānanga, industry training organisations, sector groups and students' associations. On the inside page of the back cover is a selection of useful web links.

Web link to more information on the tertiary education sector

There are numerous sources of additional information on New Zealand's tertiary education sector. They include various government and provider websites and other information such as the annual reports published by tertiary education organisations. A report called *Finding out more about tertiary education* is intended to accompany *Profile & Trends 2008*, and can be found on the following webpage: www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/profile-and-trends. This link includes:

- detailed contact information, including email addresses and web links, for the key tertiary education agencies, public tertiary education providers, industry training organisations, the main sector groups and students' associations
- information on tertiary education scholarships
- a listing of the definitions commonly used to describe tertiary education, and
- a listing of commonly used tertiary education acronyms.

Technical notes

The information in this *Profile & Trends* and the analytical tables needs to be used in conjunction with these technical notes and any footnotes and table notes.

Most of the education statistics provided in *Profile & Trends 2008* are derived from the enrolment and completion collections (Single Data Returns) provided by tertiary education providers to the Ministry of Education.

The reference period used in the latest edition of *Profile & Trends* is the year ended 31 December 2008, unless otherwise indicated.

Information and statistics have also been provided by the Tertiary Education Commission, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, the Ministry of Social Development, Inland Revenue, Career Services, Statistics New Zealand and other government agencies, as well as the Industry Training Federation and quality assurance agencies.

Analytical tables

Most of the information that underlies the analysis in *Profile & Trends 2008* is also released on the Ministry of Education's website in a set of analytical tables: www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/tertiary_education.

When using the analytical tables, care needs to be taken to read the footnotes provided and these technical notes.

Attrition rate

The first-year attrition rate is the proportion of students that start a qualification, do not complete it and who are not enrolled in the following year.

Blank cells in tables

These relate to data that is missing, not available or not applicable.

Counting methods

Generally, students are counted in each category they belong to, but only once in the total student count. For example, students who identify with more than one ethnic group have been counted in each group. This means that the sum of the students in each ethnic group may exceed the total student count.

Where the above method of counting is not possible due to constraints of data sources, it is noted in the accompanying text.

Tables typically do not include rows specifically for students with unknown values, for example, no ethnic group reported by the student. However, those students are included in the total.

Note: Institutions are counted in the group they belong to in that particular year regardless of subsequent regroupings that have occurred. For example, all colleges of education have merged with universities, while Auckland Institute of Technology was redesignated as Auckland University of Technology in 2000. In some cases this means there will be shifts in trend lines that are attributable to changes in the classification of organisations.

Credits

The New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications describes the typical learning effort required to achieve a qualification in terms of credits. A full year of study is 120 credits, which equates to 1,200 notional learning hours (including teaching, classroom activities and independent study). The minimum number of credits required for a certificate is 40 credits.

Disability

Figures for students with disabilities are based on students' self-reporting of having a disability at the time of their enrolment. The recommended question for providers to include on their enrolment form is "Do you live with the effects of significant injury, long-term illness, or disability?" However, the actual question used may vary among providers. Providers are also required to provide information on how many students access disability support services.

Equivalent full-time student

The equivalent full-time student (EFTS) unit is a measure of the 'size' of each student's enrolment. One equivalent full-time student unit represents the study load taken by a student enrolled full-time for one year. Each course is given an EFTS factor that represents its proportion of a full-time, full-year programme of study.

For courses included in the National Qualifications Framework, one equivalent full-time student unit is defined as 120 credits. Part-time study years are expressed as proportions of an equivalent full-time student, for example, 0.75 EFTS. The equivalent full-time student count is the sum of the EFTS units for a year.

Highest school qualification

This information is collected by the enrolling tertiary organisation from the student at the time of enrolment. It may or may not be verified by the organisation.

Participation rate

The tertiary education participation rate is the total domestic student enrolment count expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 and over.

In the case of ethnicity and gender, the rates have been adjusted using the 2008 national age distribution estimates to produce age-standardised participation rates. These provide fairer comparisons by estimating what the rate would be if the student ages matched the 2008 national age distribution.

Prior activity

Prior activity refers to the student's main activity at 1 October in the year prior to the student's first year of formal enrolment with their current provider.

Progression rate

The progression rate is the proportion of students who subsequently enrol in further study at a higher level.

The direct progression rate is the proportion of completing students who enrol for further study in the year following qualification completion.

The five-year progression rate for 2003 is the proportion of completing students who enrol in further study at some time in the following five years.

Note: Progression rates for groups with fewer than 30 students are not reported.

Qualifications

The qualification categories referred to in chapter 4 of this report on the outcomes of tertiary education are defined as follows:

‘Bachelors or higher qualifications’ refers to bachelors degrees, postgraduate degrees and postgraduate diplomas and certificates.

‘Other tertiary qualifications’ refers to university certificates/diplomas, teaching certificates/diplomas, nursing certificates/diplomas, New Zealand certificates/diplomas, technician’s certificates, local polytechnic certificates/diplomas, and trade certificates or advanced trade certificates.

‘School qualifications’ refers to year 11, 12 and 13 qualifications and overseas school qualifications.

Qualification completion rate

Students are considered to have completed a qualification when they have fulfilled all the academic requirements for that qualification. This means the qualification does not necessarily have to have been conferred.

The qualification completion rate is the proportion of students who have started a registered qualification and have completed this after a defined period (often five years).

Note: Retention and completion rates for groups with fewer than 30 students are not reported.

Reliability of estimates

This report includes information from the *Household Labour Force* and the *New Zealand Income Surveys*, both conducted by Statistics New Zealand. Errors from these surveys are divided into two classes. Non-sampling error includes errors arising from biases in the patterns of response and non-response, inaccuracies in reporting by respondents, and errors in the recording and coding of data. Sampling error is a measure of the variability that occurs by chance because a sample, rather than an entire population, was surveyed.

Caution should therefore be exercised in interpreting the estimates for these smaller groups. The sample estimates from these surveys for ethnic groups such as Māori and Pasifika tend to be less stable due to a larger sampling error than that achieved for larger population groups. Similarly, smaller age groups, such as those with a tertiary qualification aged 65 and over, tend to have higher sampling errors. More technical information about these surveys is available from the Statistics New Zealand website.

Research top-up funding

The funding for research top-ups and foreign-based research students is an estimate only. The top-ups funding is calculated by multiplying the number of government-funded equivalent full-time students at degree level and above by the margin between the non-degree funding rate and the various funding rates for bachelors degrees, postgraduate-taught and postgraduate-research programmes. The funding for foreign postgraduate research-based students is calculated by multiplying the number of government-funded equivalent full-time students by the rate at which they are funded.

Retention rate

The first-year retention rate is the proportion of students that start a qualification and who either have completed it or are enrolled in the following year.

Students/learners

The main methods of counting tertiary students used in this report are listed below.

Student enrolment counts refer to the number of students enrolled at any time during the year with a tertiary education provider in:

- a recognised qualification listed on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications, and
- a programme of study being followed that is greater than 0.03 EFTS (more than one week’s full-time study).

Industry training enrolments refer to the number of learners enrolled any time during the year in training funded and approved by an industry training organisation.

Separate counts are provided in this report of learners who undertook adult and community education or followed formal courses of less than or equal to 0.03 EFTS (less than one week’s full-time study).

Students can be included in more than one of the above counts. For example, off-job industry training involves formal study with a tertiary education organisation, meaning that learners will be counted in both student enrolments and industry training. Currently, it is not possible to accurately identify where the counts overlap in all cases. In Table 5.1 of this publication an estimate has been made of the total number of students engaged in the counts listed above.

Unless otherwise stated, counts relate to students or learners enrolled at any time during the year.

Students enrolled in private training establishments and other tertiary education providers recognised under section 321 of the Education Act 1989 are excluded from the student enrolment counts prior to 1999.

Also excluded from the student enrolment counts are students enrolled with private training establishments and other tertiary education providers that do not receive government subsidies for tuition.

However, information on Training Opportunities and Youth Training includes all contracted providers, including those that neither received tuition subsidies nor were approved for student loans or allowances.

Study load

A student's study load is the total equivalent full-time student unit value of all the qualifications they are enrolled in during a given calendar year.

Study type

Study type is a measure of a student's full-time/part-time status. This measure is based on a student's formal enrolment(s) with their provider(s) for a single calendar year. Study type has four values:

1 = 'studying full-time for the full year'

2 = 'studying full-time for part of the year'

3 = 'studying part-time for the full year'

4 = 'studying part-time for part of the year'

A full year is treated as 32 or more weeks in a calendar year while full-time and part-time are based on the student loan entry threshold method for determining full-time/part-time.