

2017 Student Experience Survey

National Report

MARCH 2018

Acknowledgements

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We are also very grateful to the students who took the time to provide valuable feedback about their student experience. The SES data will be used by institutions for continuous improvement and will assist prospective students to make informed decisions about future study.

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The 2017 SES was led by Graham Challice and the project team consisted of Rebecca Bricknall, Lisa Bolton, Daniela Iarossi, Jayde Grisdale, Gimwah Sng, Cynthia Kim, Daniel Smith, Alistair Wilcox, Robert de Lisle, Wendy Guo and Joe Feng.

For more information on the conduct and results of the 2017 SES see the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) website: www.qilt.edu.au. The QILT team can be contacted by email at qilt@srcentre.com.au.



Executive summary

The Student Experience Survey (SES) provides a national architecture for collecting feedback on key facets of the higher education student experience and, in doing so, obtain important data on the experience of current, on-shore commencing and later-year undergraduate and from 2017, postgraduate coursework students. The SES measures five aspects of the student experience: Skills Development, Learner Engagement, Teaching Quality, Student Support, and Learning Resources.

In 2017, the overwhelming majority of undergraduate students, 79 per cent, rated the quality of their entire educational experience positively. The proportion of students rating different aspects of their student experience positively ranged from 83 per cent for Learning Resources, down to 60 per cent for Learner Engagement. A relatively large proportion, 80 per cent, of undergraduate students evaluated their experience with Teaching Quality positively and 81 per cent rated their Skills Development positively. Seventy-three per cent of students rated their experience of Student Support favourably.

Table 1 The undergraduate student experience, 2017 – by stage of studies (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
Commencing	79	58	82	76	86	81
Later year*	83	62	77	69	79	75
Total	81	60	80	73	83	79

*Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

Student rating of the quality of entire educational experience

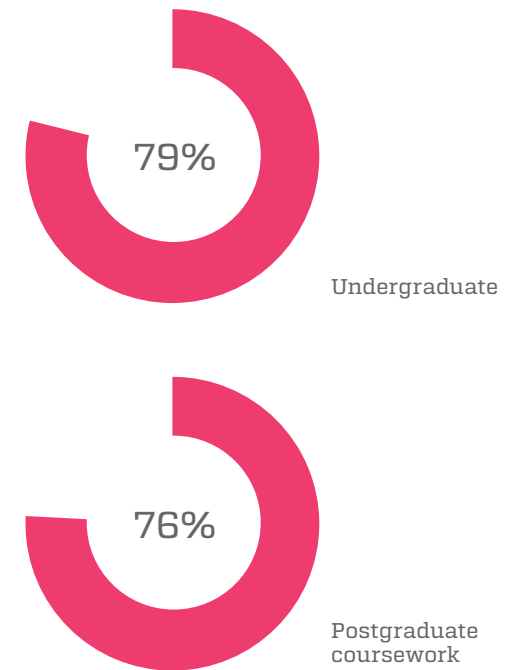
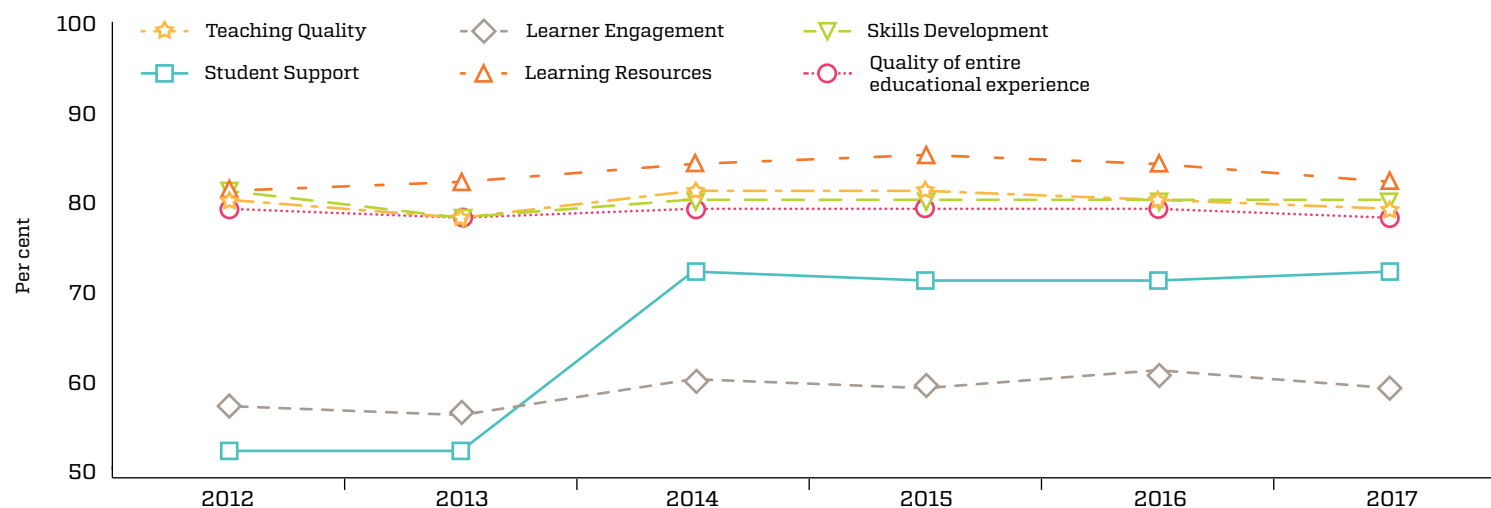


Figure 1 The undergraduate student experience 2012–2017 (% positive rating)



In 2017, both university and NUHEI students rated the ‘quality of their entire educational experience’ highly

i) In 2013 results from the University Experience Survey were reported as percentage positive scores rather than average focus area scores. Results in these tables have been compiled on this basis, but may differ from results presented in the earlier 2011 and 2012 reports. See Appendix 5 for further detail on score construction.

ii) In 2014, one item was removed from the student support focus area so results are not comparable with those from earlier surveys.

iii) Note that results from the 2015 Student Experience Surveys include students attending both university and non-university higher education institutions and therefore are not directly comparable with results from earlier surveys which refer to university students only.

Survey results over time

The positive rating of the quality of overall educational experience declined marginally by 1 percentage point to 79 per cent in 2017, as shown by Figure 1. There was a small 1 percentage point increase in the positive rating of Student Support. Other changes in results for SES focus areas between 2016 and 2017 were a decrease of 2 percentage points in positive ratings of Learner Engagement and Learning Resources. There was a slight decrease of 1 percentage point in the positive rating of Teaching Quality. Positive ratings of Skills Development have remained the same over the last four years. Note that because one survey item was removed from the Student Support focus area in 2014, results for this focus area are not directly comparable with those from earlier surveys.

Comparison of different groups of higher education students

In 2017, both university and non-university higher education institution (NUHEI) undergraduate students rated the 'quality of the entire educational experience' highly. Seventy-nine per cent of undergraduate NUHEI students rated their experience positively, slightly higher than 78 per cent of undergraduate university students, as shown by Table 2. The largest difference between NUHEI and university students across the five focus areas remains in Learning Resources, with NUHEI students rating this aspect 10 percentage points lower than university students. However, NUHEI students gave higher ratings than university students in other focus areas such as Student Support (5 percentage points), Teaching Quality (3 percentage points), Skills Development and Learner Engagement (both 1 percentage point higher).

When comparing results for university and NUHEI students there are several important caveats to consider, including the narrower range of study areas for non-university providers, different population characteristics, and the fact that, while there has been a marked increase since 2015, it is still the case that not all eligible non-university providers chose to participate in 2017.

When comparing the undergraduate higher education experience of different demographic groups of students, female, older persons aged 40 and over, English speakers, those with no reported disability, external, domestic and first in family students rated most aspects of their educational experience more positively than their counterparts. The largest variation was that external/distance students were less likely to respond positively about their Learner Engagement, 22 per cent and 63 per cent respectively. Older students also rated Learner Engagement less positively than younger students, but this difference is most likely associated with the prevalence of external or internal study modes in these age groups.

Large differences in results by study mode for Learner Engagement continues to suggest that this scale may be performing differently for internal/mixed mode students and external mode students. The Department of Education and Training is currently considering a review of the Learner Engagement scale. As an interim measure, the QILT website, which reports SES results at the institution by study area level, will continue to exclude external mode responses for the Learner Engagement focus area. This report, however, which reports SES results at national and aggregate levels, includes external mode responses in all Learner Engagement results.

There are significant differences in scores between institutions, demonstrating there is scope for improvement

Table 2 The undergraduate student experience, by type of institution, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
NUHEIs	82	61	83	77	74	79
Universities	81	60	80	72	84	78
All institutions	81	60	80	73	83	79

Study area comparisons

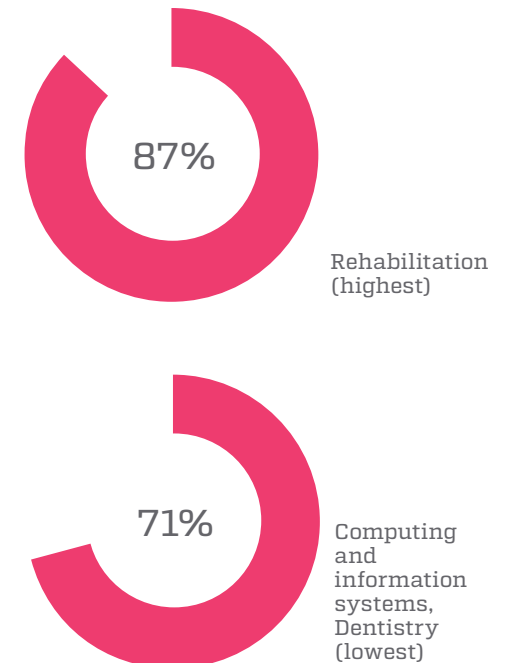
The student experience varied considerably by study area. Ratings of the entire educational experience for undergraduates ranged from a high of 87 per cent for Rehabilitation, to a low of 71 per cent for Computing and information systems and Dentistry. The widest range in results was for Learner Engagement, with 30 percentage points separating the study areas with the highest and lowest results (Medicine at 80 per cent, and Psychology and Social work both at 50 per cent and 52 per cent respectively). The narrowest range of results across study areas is seen in relation to Student Support, with 11 percentage points separating the study area with the highest and lowest scores (Rehabilitation at 79 per cent, and Architecture and built environment at 68 per cent).

Institutional comparisons

Student ratings do vary by institution, indicating sites of best practice in the student experience. In 2017, students at the University of Divinity, the University of Notre Dame Australia and Bond University rated their overall education experience at 91 per cent, much higher than at other universities. These universities are characterised by small numbers of students and this is consistent with previous research showing a negative association between institution size and student ratings. It is important to acknowledge that factors beyond the quality of the educational experience such as course offerings and the composition of the student population might also impact on student ratings.

Since the number of students enrolled in individual NUHEIs tends to be much smaller than at university level, data for individual NUHEIs have been pooled across the 2016 and 2017 surveys to improve the robustness and validity of data, as occurs on the QILT website. On this basis, there do appear to be some NUHEIs where students rate the quality of their overall education experience much higher than in other institutions. For example, a number of NUHEIs have positive student ratings for the quality of the entire educational experience clearly over 90 per cent, including Campion College Australia (96 per cent), Jazz Music Institute (95 per cent), Photography Studies College (Melbourne) and Tabor College of Higher Education (both 94 per cent), and Australian College of Theology (93 per cent). While the same caveats apply about student ratings at institution level, these are clearly sites of best practice in the student experience which other institutions may learn from.

Student rating of the quality of the entire educational experience by study area



International comparisons

Comparison of results from the 2017 SES with those from similar surveys in the United States of America (the National Survey of Student Experience, NSSE), and the United Kingdom (the National Student Survey, NSS), show that Australian students continue to rate their higher education experience lower than their counterparts in these countries. For example, for undergraduates in 2017:

- 85 per cent of United States senior year students responded positively about their educational experience in comparison with 75 per cent of Australian later year students
- 84 per cent of United States first year students responded positively about their educational experience in comparison with 81 per cent of Australian commencing students
- 84 per cent of United Kingdom final year students expressed overall satisfaction with their course in comparison with 78 per cent of Australian later year students.

It is important to note, however, that these results do not account for potential differences in the composition of the respective student populations, nor methodological differences between the surveys.

Likelihood to consider departing higher education

In addition to questions on their higher education experience, students were also asked to indicate whether they had seriously considered leaving higher education in 2017. In 2017, 20 per cent of undergraduates indicated that they had considered leaving, which was 2 percentage points higher than the previous year. Notably, undergraduate students who reported low grades were most likely to have considered early departure, including around 31 per cent of those with grades between 50 and 59 per cent and nearly half of those averaging below 50 per cent. Undergraduate Indigenous students (29 per cent) and students with a disability (28 per cent) were also relatively likely to consider early departure, as were older students (22 per cent for those between 25 and 39 years of age and 24 per cent for those aged 40 years and over). The most common reasons given for undergraduate students considering early departure were situational in nature, including health or stress, difficulties relating to finances and workload, and study/life balance.

The postgraduate coursework experience

In 2017, for the first time the SES collected almost 60,000 responses from postgraduate coursework students on a nationally consistent basis. The student ratings for postgraduate coursework students were slightly lower overall, with 76 per cent rating their entire educational experience positively compared with 79 per cent of undergraduates. However, there was a substantive difference in the area of Learner Engagement with postgraduate coursework students rating this focus area 8 percentage points lower, which may reflect, in part, the different demographic profile of postgraduate coursework students who are more likely to be older and studying off campus and part time. Postgraduate coursework students' ratings were broadly similar to those of undergraduates in the other focus areas of Skills Development, Teaching Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources, as shown by Table 3.

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A notable difference in the postgraduate coursework experience was that students attending NUHEIs were more likely to rate their overall education experience positively than university students by 4 percentage points, whereas this gap was only 1 percentage point at undergraduate level. The largest differences between NUHEI and university students across the five focus areas remained in relation to Learning Resources with NUHEI students being 10 percentage points less likely to express positive responses, as shown by Table 4. NUHEI students were also less likely to respond positively about their Learner Engagement, by 9 percentage points. NUHEI students rated Student Support slightly more positively, with 3 percentage points separating them from university students. Skills Development and Teaching Quality ratings were the same for both groups.

Postgraduate coursework students' ratings of their entire educational experience ranged from a high of 85 per cent for Humanities, culture and social sciences and 84 per cent for Agriculture and environmental studies to a low of 52 per cent for Dentistry.

Table 3 The postgraduate coursework student experience, 2017, by stage of studies, (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
Commencing	79	51	81	74	83	76
Later year*	82	53	79	72	81	75
Total	80	52	80	73	82	76

* Later Year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs where census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students)

Table 4 The postgraduate coursework student experience, NUHEI and university students, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
NUHEIs	80	44	80	76	72	79
Universities	80	53	80	73	82	75
All institutions	80	52	80	73	82	76

Postgraduate coursework students were less likely to have considered leaving higher education, with 18 per cent stating that they had seriously considered leaving, in comparison with 20 per cent of undergraduates. Postgraduate coursework students with lower reported average grades were more likely to have considered early departure including 28 per cent of those who reported grades between 50 and 59 per cent and 49 per cent of those with reported grades under 50 per cent. However, in contrast to undergraduates, postgraduate coursework students were less likely to cite health or stress, personal reasons, the need for a break, boredom/lack of interest or a change of direction as their main reasons for considering early departure perhaps reflecting their different stage of life and personal circumstances. Postgraduate coursework students were more likely than undergraduates to cite quality concerns or that their expectations had not been met as their reasons for considering leaving.

Methodology

Originally developed as the University Experience Survey (UES) in 2011, the SES was renamed in 2015 to facilitate the inclusion of students from non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs). Other than minor changes in wording to ensure the survey instrument was relevant to all higher education students, the Student Experience Questionnaire remains relatively unchanged from the 2014 UES. The online fieldwork period ran from August to September 2017.

All 41 Australian universities participated in the 2017 SES, as well as 58 NUHEIs, a total of 99 institutions compared with 95 institutions in 2016 and 79 in 2015. The 2017 SES in-scope survey population consisted of commencing and later-year onshore undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students currently enrolled in Australian higher education institutions. The population scope for undergraduate students was unchanged from 2016, while 2017 marks the inclusion of postgraduate coursework students in the survey for the first time.

From a final sample of 568,976, responses were received from a total of 206,121 students, which equated to 218,569 valid surveys once combined and double degrees were taken into account. This represents an overall response rate of 36.2 per cent, down from 45.6 per cent in 2016. This fall in the response rate is partially explained by a delay in the launch of the 2017 survey and other surveys being in the field or reported in the same time period.

The response rate for universities in the 2017 SES was 36.2 per cent, compared with 36.9 per cent for NUHEIs. Individual university response rates ranged from 51.2 per cent to 23.6 per cent, and NUHEI response rates ranged from 80.5 per cent to 15.6 per cent. The response rate for undergraduate students was slightly higher than for postgraduate coursework students at 37.1 per cent and 34.1 per cent respectively.

As in 2016, a stratified sampling approach was employed in the design of the 2017 SES, with strata defined on the basis of institution and study area. In 2017, the sample of secured responses closely matched the in-scope population on most characteristics with the exception that, as has been the case in previous years, males are notably under-represented. As in previous years, post-stratification weighting to correct the gender imbalance in the sample of secured responses did not have a substantial impact on the results at the national level. Therefore, the previous practice of analysing data without applying weights has been retained for 2017.

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1 Introduction and overview

1.1 Background to the 2017 Student Experience Survey

The Student Experience Survey (SES), originally known as the University Experience Survey (UES), was created to provide a national framework for collecting feedback on the higher education student experience. The SES focuses on aspects of the student experience that are measurable, linked with learning and development outcomes, and potentially able to be influenced by institutions.

A consortium commissioned by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) designed the UES in 2011. The UES consists of a survey instrument, the University Experience Questionnaire (UEQ), and a survey methodology (Radloff, Coates, James, & Krause, 2011). The instrument and survey approach was refined in 2012 by the same consortium. From 2013 and 2014 Graduate Careers Australia and the Social Research Centre assumed responsibility for continuous improvement in the administration of the UES.

In mid-2014, the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) federal budget measure was introduced. Since 2015, the Social Research Centre has administered the SES on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education and Training as part of the QILT initiative. QILT includes the deployment of a survey research program aimed at collecting student feedback from undergraduate students (the SES), graduates (the Graduate Outcomes Survey) and employers of graduates (the Employer Satisfaction Survey). Further information can be found on the QILT website, www.qilt.edu.au, where survey results are published in an interactive format.

In 2015, the UES was renamed the 'Student Experience Survey' (SES) to be inclusive of students enrolled at non-university higher education institutions (NUHEIs) who still offered undergraduate level degree courses. In 2017, the collection was expanded to include postgraduate coursework students for the first time.

1.2 Scope of this report

This report presents an overview of the 2017 SES. A summary of the conduct and administration of the survey is available in Appendix 1. All higher education institutions who are covered under the Higher Education Support Act are eligible to participate in the QILT program. All forty-one universities participated in the 2017 SES. Fifty-eight NUHEIs elected to take part in the 2017 SES, compared with fifty-five in 2016 and thirty-nine in 2015. Non-HESA institutions are able to participate in the SES for benchmarking and continuous improvement purposes but are not included in this report.

The 2017 SES consisted of commencing and later-year onshore undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students currently enrolled in Australian higher education institutions.

More detailed results for university students and NUHEI students are shown in a separate publication available at www.qilt.edu.au to assist with time-series comparisons and interpretation of the data.

Focus areas in the SES comprise related items representing feedback from students about their higher education experience, regarding outcomes, behaviours and satisfaction. In order to report meaningfully on these varied aspects of the student experience, each student is adjudged to have rated their experience either positively or negatively for each item and, based on the item responses, each focus area. Scores presented in this report for both items and focus areas represent the proportion of students responding positively. For detailed information on how the scores are calculated please refer to Appendix 4. To see the items that comprise each focus area, please refer to the survey items and response frames in Appendix 2.

2 Undergraduate results from the 2017 SES

The overwhelming majority of undergraduate higher education students, 79 per cent, rated the quality of their entire educational experience in 2017 favourably. The percentage of positive results for the five SES focus areas and a key questionnaire item are presented by stage of studies in Table 5. Considering first the overall results, positive ratings ranged from 83 per cent for the Learning Resources focus area, down to 60 per cent for the Learner Engagement focus area. A relatively large proportion of higher education students gave favourable ratings of both the Teaching Quality provided by their institution and their Skills Development, at 80 per cent and 81 per cent respectively. In terms of the Student Support provided by their institution, 73 per cent of survey respondents reported positive experiences.

2.1 The undergraduate student experience by stage of studies

Commencing undergraduate students were generally more positive than later year students with respect to Teaching Quality, Student Support, Learning Resources and the quality of their entire educational experience. Those in the later years of their studies rated Skills Development and Learner Engagement more highly by around 4 percentage points. The Student Support experienced by later year students may not necessarily reflect the same types of services or activities as those available to commencing students, so this result should be interpreted with caution.

2.2 The undergraduate student experience over time

The positive rating of the quality of overall educational experience declined marginally by 1 percentage point to 79 per cent in 2017, as shown by Table 6. There was a small 1 percentage point increase in the positive rating of Student Support. Other changes in results for SES focus areas between 2016 and 2017 were a decrease of 2 percentage points in positive ratings of Learner Engagement and Learning Resources. There was a slight decrease of 1 percentage point in the positive rating of Teaching Quality. Positive ratings of Skills Development have remained the same over the last four years.

When the results from the 2011 UES through to the 2017 SES collections are compared (see Table 6), the largest difference in terms of focus area results was seen in relation to Student Support between 2013 and 2014, with a difference of 20 percentage points. This difference, however, was due to modifications to the questionnaire and sampling method in 2014 and has remained stable since 2014. In general, results in other focus areas have been very stable with the largest change being a 2 percentage point increase between 2012 and 2017 in the Learner Engagement focus area.

Table 5 The undergraduate student experience, by stage of studies, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
Commencing	79	58	82	76	86	81
Later year*	83	62	77	69	79	75
Total	81	60	80	73	83	79

*Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

Table 6 The undergraduate student experience, 2011–2017 (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
2011 [*]	–	–	–	–	–	79
2012	82	58	81	53	82	80
2013 ^{**}	79	57	79	53	83	79
2014	81	61	82	73 [†]	85	80
2015 ^{††}	81	60	82	72	86	80
2016	81	62	81	72	85	80
2017	81	60	80	73	83	79

*The 2011 University Experience Survey was a pilot survey administered among 24 universities.

**In 2013 results from the University Experience Survey were reported as percentage positive scores rather than average scale scores. Results in these tables have been compiled on this basis, but may differ from results presented in the earlier 2011 and 2012 reports. See Appendix 5 for further detail on score construction.

[†]In 2014, one item was removed from the student support focus area so results are not comparable with those from earlier surveys.

^{††}Note that results for the 2015 and 2016 Student Experience Surveys include students attending both university and non-university higher education institutions and therefore are not directly comparable with results from earlier surveys which refer to university students only.

2.3 The undergraduate student experience of specific student groups

In general, international students and male students rated their overall educational experience at 4 percentage points below domestic students and female students respectively. Also of note is that students aged between 25 and 29 years, with the exception of the Learner Engagement focus area, generally had lower ratings than other groups. The 25–29 year-olds rated their overall education experience 5 percentage points lower than those aged over 40.

2017 SES results by student demographic and contextual groups are presented in Table 7. It should be noted that the results presented in this section are based on a series of separate analyses and thus do not reflect interactions between any of the characteristics.

Female students were more likely to be positive about their educational experience than male students. For example, they rated their overall education experience 4 percentage points higher than males. Similarly, females rated the Skills Development focus area 4 percentage points higher than males. However, this result may be influenced by differences in the courses undertaken by male and female students.

With respect to study mode, internal or mixed mode students were far more likely to provide positive ratings of their level of learner engagement than those studying externally, with 41 percentage points between the groups.¹ The differences between internal/mixed mode and external/distance study mode students in relation to the other four focus areas were relatively small. Large differences in results by study mode for Learner Engagement continues to suggest that this scale may be performing differently for internal/mixed mode students and external mode students. The Department of Education and Training is currently considering the findings of a

review of the Learner Engagement focus area concomitant with the 2017 SES. As an interim measure, the QILT website, which reports SES results at the institution by study area level, will continue to exclude external mode responses for the Learner Engagement focus area. This report, however, which reports SES results at national and aggregate levels, includes external mode responses in all Learner Engagement results unless otherwise indicated.

There is also a clear negative association between age and Learner Engagement, with young students (aged under 25) much more likely to respond positively in relation to their level of engagement than students in the three older age groups, and students aged 40 and over in particular. This difference persists, even when external students are considered, with students over 40 who are studying internally still rating their experiences in this focus area around 11 percentage points lower than those under 25 and all older students studying externally rating their experience 9 to 10 percentage points lower. Older students are presumably more likely to be balancing their studies with their work and family lives through part-time study, which may serve to limit Learner Engagement activities (as measured by the SEQ). Interestingly, though, students 40 years and over were more likely to respond positively in relation to the Student Support provided by their institution and Teaching Quality.

Indigenous students were less likely than non-Indigenous students to rate Learner Engagement positively by 6 percentage points, though this may be related to the fact that more Indigenous students are engaged in external study. However, when comparing Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who studied internally, Indigenous students still rated this focus area 4 percentage points lower. Indigenous students were, however, somewhat more likely to rate positively the Student Support provided by their institution.

Undergraduate student rating of the quality of the entire educational experience by residency



¹ Note that analysis of SES results by study mode has indicated that responses from multi-modal study students are more like those of internal mode than external mode students. For this reason, multi-modal responses are grouped with internal mode response for analysis in the 2017 SES National Report.

Table 7 The undergraduate student experience, by demographic and contextual group, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Group/subgroup	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Gender	Male	78	60	78	72	82	76
	Female	82	59	81	73	84	80
Age	Under 25	81	63	80	72	84	79
	25 to 29	79	52	78	72	80	76
	30 to 39	79	44	80	75	82	78
	40 and over	80	41	84	78	83	81
Indigenous	Indigenous	80	54	80	77	84	78
	Non-Indigenous	81	60	80	73	83	79
Home language	English	81	60	81	73	83	79
	Other	80	58	78	73	84	76
Disability	Disability reported	77	56	78	73	80	76
	No disability reported	81	60	80	73	84	79
Study mode	Internal/Mixed	81	63	80	72	83	78
	External	77	22	82	77	82	81
Residence status	Domestic student	81	60	81	73	83	79
	International student	79	58	78	72	83	75
First in family status*	First in family	80	57	83	77	87	82
	Not first in family	79	62	83	75	86	81
Previous higher education experience**	Previous experience – current institution	79	58	83	74	85	81
	Previous experience – another institution	79	52	83	77	85	82
	New to higher education	79	61	82	75	87	80

	Group/subgroup	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Socio-economic Status	High	80	62	81	71	83	80
	Medium	81	60	81	74	84	79
	Low	81	57	81	75	84	78
Location	Metro	81	61	81	73	83	79
	Regional/remote	81	57	81	74	84	79
Total		81	60	80	73	83	79

* Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

** Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

Differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in relation to the other three focus areas were smaller in magnitude and may not be statistically significant.

Students who spoke English as their main language at home were more likely than those from a non-English speaking background to rate their educational experience more positively. These differences were largest in relation to Teaching Quality, Learning Resources and the quality of their entire educational experience by 3 percentage points. A similar pattern is observed in relation to international and domestic students, where domestic students were more likely than international students to provide positive responses to almost every aspect of their educational experience, including in relation to the quality of their entire educational experience, which they rated more positively by 4 percentage points.

Students who reported having a disability were less likely to provide positive ratings than students who did not report any disability, with ratings 4 percentage points lower for Skills Development and Learner Engagement, and 3 percentage points lower for Learning Resources and the quality of their entire educational experience.

Few noteworthy differences were observed based on whether the student was the first in their family to attend university, other than that students who were the first in their family to attend university were less likely to rate Learner Engagement positively by 5 percentage points. Considering whether students had Previous higher education experience, it is interesting to note that students who had previously been enrolled at the current or another higher education institution were less likely to report positively in terms of Learner Engagement experiences, especially in relation to students new to higher education, by 3 and 9 percentage points respectively. This may be related to the fact that students who had been enrolled at another institution were more likely to be studying externally in 2017 (18 per cent compared with 4 per cent for those who were new to higher education and 9 per cent for those who were previously enrolled at the current institution). There were no other notable differences on the basis of previous higher education experience.

The 2017 the SES includes two additional demographic groups – socio-economic status (SES) and location. Both of these groups are derived from geocoded measures based on the location of where students are ‘from’, that is, their permanent home address at the commencement of study. These measures therefore only relate to domestic students with a recorded address.

The socio-economic status (SES) of higher education graduates is categorised as high, medium or low, as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Socio-Economic Indexes of Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation. This index reflects the educational and occupational level of communities. Geocoding is calculated at the ABS Statistical Area 1 level, or postcode level when this detail is not available. Within the population as a whole, the top 25% of the population aged 15–64 are classified as high SES based on where they live; the middle 50% of the population are classified as medium SES; and the bottom 25% of the population as low SES.

In terms of the socio-economic status of respondents, the largest differences were recorded in the Learner Engagement focus area where low SES students were less likely to rate their learner engagement positively than those from medium and high SES by 3 and 5 percentage points respectively. However, this group rated their experience of student support higher than those from high SES backgrounds by 4 percentage points with those from medium SES rating their experience higher than those from high SES by 3 percentage points which may indicate that these groups are more likely to access and benefit from these services than those from higher SES backgrounds.

Location is a measure based on the ABS 2011 Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) classification of remoteness. The SES classifies higher education graduates as being either from regional/remote or metropolitan areas. The combined regional/remote category includes graduates from Inner regional, Outer regional, Remote and Very remote areas as defined by the ASGS. Geocoding is calculated at the postcode level. However, postcodes can be mapped to multiple remoteness categories. For example, a postcode may be classified as 75 per cent regional/remote and 25 per cent metropolitan. These proportions are then used to estimate the number of graduates from metropolitan or regional/remote areas that meet the survey characteristics in question.

For the most part, results for these groups were very similar other than in the focus area of Learner Engagement where students in Regional/remote areas rated their experience 4 percentage points lower than those in metropolitan areas. This may reflect a ‘tyranny of distance’ that makes traditional face-to-face student-centred learning and interacting with their peers outside study more difficult.

2.4 The undergraduate student experience by study area

Looking at SES results across different study areas (see Table 8), there is considerable variation in student ratings. Student ratings of the entire educational experience ranged from a high of 87 per cent for Rehabilitation, to a low of 71 per cent for Computing and information systems and Dentistry representing a difference of 16 percentage points. In general, results relating to the quality of the entire educational experience remained relatively static across the larger study areas with most study areas recording slight drops of between 1 and 2 percentage points. Medicine and Pharmacy were the only study areas which recorded increases of 1 and 2 percentage points respectively.

The widest range in focus area results was for Learner Engagement, with 30 percentage points separating the study areas with the highest and lowest results (Medicine at 80 per cent, and Psychology and Social work both at 50 and 52 per cent respectively).

The narrowest range of results across study areas is seen in relation to Student Support, with 11 percentage points separating the study area with the highest and lowest scores (Rehabilitation at 79 per cent, and Architecture and built environment at 68 per cent). This possibly indicates that student support services are often provided by the institution rather than a particular faculty.

While the student ratings for each of the focus areas have remained relatively consistent across 2016 and 2017, there are a few notable differences at a national level where the rating of Learning Resources has decreased for the relatively small areas of Dentistry and Veterinary science by 9 and 8 percentage points respectively.

The other notable changes in the Teaching Quality focus area were a drop of 5 percentage points in Veterinary science and a drop of 3 percentage points in Dentistry.

While confidence intervals are not shown in Table 8, it is important to interpret the results with respect to the remarks made in Appendix 1.4.4 Stratum-level precision concerning the precision of estimates in the SES. It is possible that some of the differences in this table, especially those seen in relation to study areas containing small numbers of observations, may not be statistically significant.

It also should be noted that broad disciplinary aggregations hide much of the detail that is relevant to schools, faculties and academic departments. More detailed SES results disaggregated by 45 study areas are available in Appendix 7.2 Undergraduate Student Experience: 45 Study Areas.

Learner Engagement focus area – undergraduate

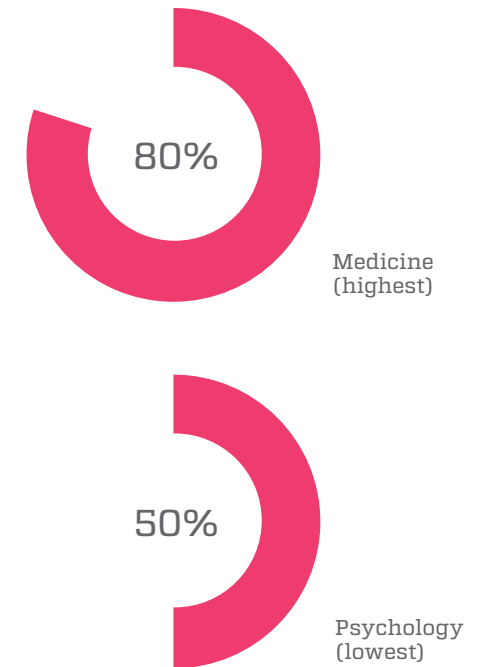


Table 8 The undergraduate student experience, by study area, 2016 and 2017 (% positive rating)

Study area	2016: SD	2016: LE	2016: TQ	2016: SS	2016: LR	2016: OEE	2017: SD	2017: LE	2017: TQ	2017: SS	2017: LR	2017: OEE
Science and mathematics	81	65	84	73	89	82	80	61	83	73	87	81
Computing and information systems	75	60	76	69	85	74	73	57	74	71	82	71
Engineering	78	67	75	68	84	75	79	66	75	69	82	73
Architecture and built environment	80	68	78	66	76	76	80	65	78	68	74	75
Agriculture and environmental studies	82	66	84	73	88	83	81	63	82	72	86	80
Health services and support	82	61	83	73	85	81	81	58	82	73	83	80
Medicine	90	83	80	75	80	82	90	80	82	76	82	83
Nursing	85	61	78	73	86	77	85	60	77	75	85	76
Pharmacy	84	66	82	74	85	79	86	67	82	77	86	81
Dentistry	87	68	76	70	81	75	86	64	73	71	72	71
Veterinary science	84	73	85	70	87	81	82	71	80	70	79	78
Rehabilitation	89	75	89	78	89	87	90	76	89	79	88	87
Teacher education	83	61	80	73	84	80	82	59	78	72	82	78
Business and management	77	59	77	70	83	77	77	57	76	72	82	76
Humanities, culture and social sciences	81	58	86	72	85	84	80	56	85	73	84	82
Social work	86	54	85	74	83	83	85	52	85	76	84	82
Psychology	82	54	86	76	87	84	81	50	86	77	86	83
Law and paralegal studies	84	58	83	70	84	81	85	57	82	70	83	79
Creative arts	82	70	84	73	81	80	80	68	83	73	78	79
Communications	83	68	83	71	86	81	81	67	82	74	85	81
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	85	67	82	74	87	82	81	62	82	70	84	78
Total	81	62	81	72	85	80	81	60	80	73	83	79

SD = Skills Development, LE = Learner Engagement, TQ = Teaching Quality, SS = Student Support, LR = Learning Resources. OEE = Overall Educational Experience

2.5 The undergraduate student experience – universities and NUHEIs

When comparing results for university and NUHEI students there are several important caveats to consider. First, while the number of non-university institutions participating in the SES has increased markedly, only 58 of the total Tertiary Education Qualifications Standards Authority (TEQSA) registered non-university providers opted to participate in the 2017 SES collection. These NUHEIs may differ in key respects from the providers that elected not to take part. Second, NUHEIs tend to teach a narrower range of study areas than universities. Finally, the demographic characteristics of the two groups differ in several important respects. NUHEI students are more likely than their peers from universities to be international students and be the first in their family to enrol in higher education. Any differences in results between NUHEI and university students may be attributable, at least in part, to these factors.

While in the 2016 SES university and NUHEI scores relating to the quality of their entire educational experience was identical at 80 per cent compared with a small difference of 1 percentage point in 2017 in favour of the NUHEIs. As shown in Table 9, the largest difference between NUHEI and university students across the five focus areas remained in relation to Learning Resources with NUHEI students being 10 percentage points less likely to express positive responses in this focus area, compared with a 13 percentage point difference in 2016. NUHEI students rated Student Support more positively, with 5 percentage points separating them from university students. Minor differences were also evident for Skills Development and Learner Engagement (1 percentage point each favouring NUHEIs) and Teaching Quality (with 3 percentage points favouring NUHEIs).

The largest difference between NUHEI and university students across the five focus areas remained in relation to Learning Resources, with NUHEI students being 10 percentage points less likely to express positive responses in this focus area

Table 9 The undergraduate student experience, NUHEI and university students, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
NUHEIs	82	61	83	77	74	79
Universities	81	60	80	72	84	78
All institutions	81	60	80	73	83	79

2.6 The undergraduate student experience by institution

University student ratings

Student ratings do vary across institutions as shown by Figure 2. For example, students at the University of Divinity, the University of Notre Dame Australia and Bond University rated their overall education experience in 2017 at 91 per cent. These universities are characterised by small numbers of students and this is consistent with previous research showing a negative association between institution size and student ratings. It is important to acknowledge that factors beyond the quality of the educational experience such as course offerings and the composition of the student population might also impact on student ratings. Where confidence intervals overlap between two universities there is no significant difference in student ratings in a statistical sense. Nevertheless, it appears there is differentiation among universities with some appealing to students more than others. Table 10 presents results for different focus areas in 2017 by university.

Figure 3 and Table 11 present results at university level combining responses from the 2016 and 2017 Student Experience Surveys. This mirrors the approach shown on the QILT website where results are pooled across surveys to increase the number of responses and confidence intervals are published to improve the robustness and validity of data, especially where survey data are presented at a disaggregated level by institution by study area.

Figure 2 Quality of entire educational experience for undergraduate university students, 2017 (% positive rating)

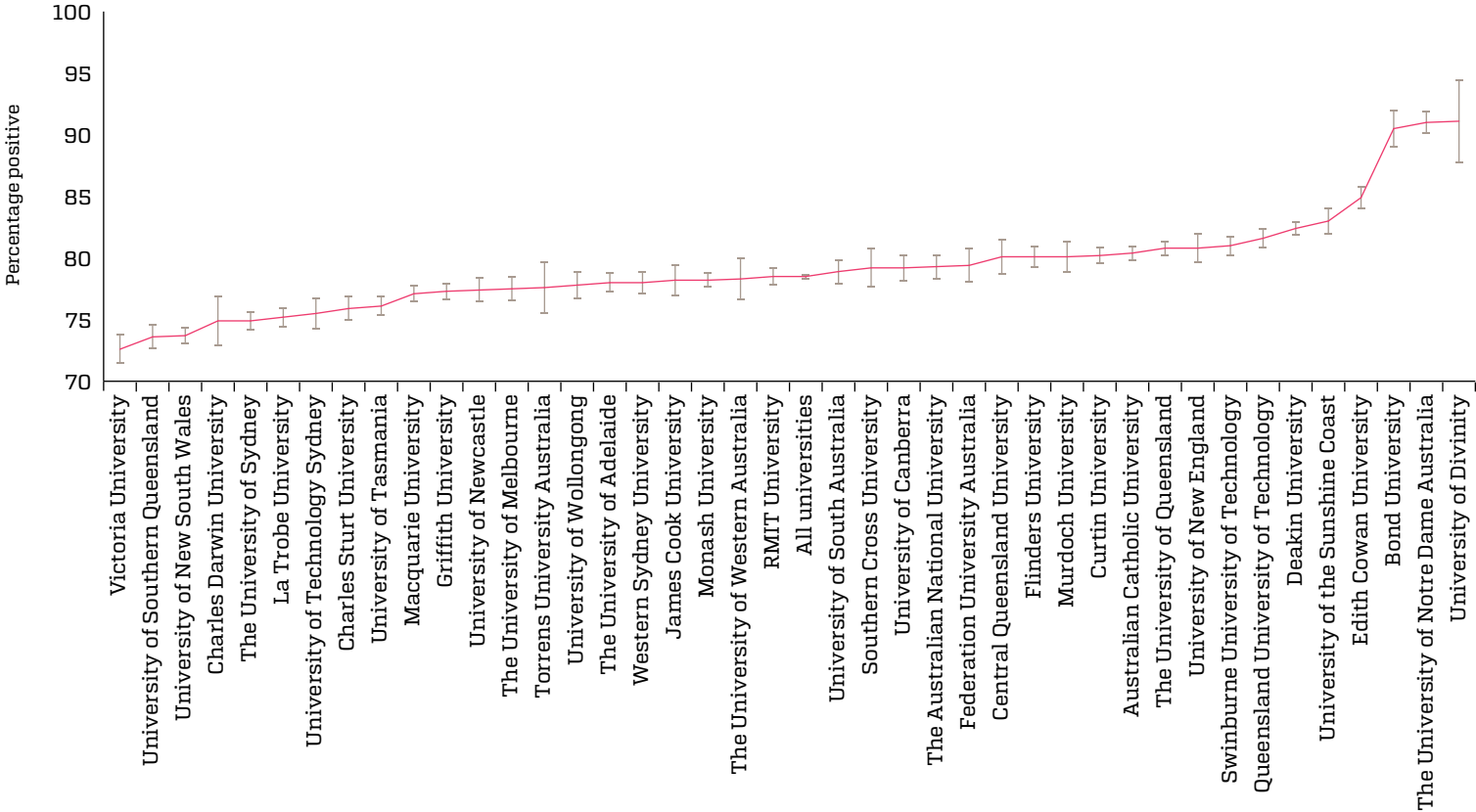


Table 10 The undergraduate student experience, 2017 – by university (% positive rating, with 90% confidence intervals)*

University	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Australian Catholic University	84.2 (83.6, 84.8)	67.7 (66.9, 68.4)	80.7 (80.1, 81.4)	74.6 (73.8, 75.4)	84.5 (83.9, 85.1)	80.4 (79.8, 81.1)
Bond University	92.7 (91.3, 94.1)	85.0 (83.1, 86.9)	92.7 (91.3, 94.1)	90.8 (89.1, 92.5)	93.9 (92.6, 95.2)	90.5 (89.0, 92.1)
Central Queensland University	79.5 (78.1, 80.8)	50.2 (48.1, 52.3)	82.2 (80.9, 83.5)	78.9 (77.3, 80.5)	85.7 (84.3, 87.2)	80.1 (78.7, 81.4)
Charles Darwin University	76.6 (74.6, 78.6)	50.3 (46.9, 53.7)	76.2 (74.3, 78.2)	73.7 (71.3, 76.2)	82.5 (79.9, 85.1)	74.9 (72.9, 76.8)
Charles Sturt University	78.6 (77.7, 79.6)	66.2 (64.7, 67.7)	78.4 (77.5, 79.3)	76.7 (75.6, 77.8)	82.1 (81.0, 83.3)	75.9 (74.9, 76.9)
Curtin University	82.7 (82.0, 83.5)	67.1 (66.2, 68.1)	81.9 (81.2, 82.7)	74.5 (73.6, 75.5)	86.0 (85.2, 86.7)	80.2 (79.5, 81.0)
Deakin University	81.5 (80.9, 82.1)	59.9 (59.1, 60.7)	82.0 (81.4, 82.6)	75.9 (75.1, 76.7)	90.6 (90.1, 91.1)	82.4 (81.8, 83.0)
Edith Cowan University	85.6 (84.8, 86.5)	64.5 (63.2, 65.7)	86.2 (85.3, 87.0)	79.9 (78.8, 81.0)	86.5 (85.6, 87.4)	84.9 (84.0, 85.7)
Federation University Australia	82.2 (80.9, 83.6)	63.4 (61.8, 65.1)	82.9 (81.6, 84.2)	80.4 (78.9, 81.9)	85.0 (83.7, 86.3)	79.4 (78.0, 80.7)
Flinders University	82.3 (81.4, 83.2)	64.5 (63.4, 65.6)	81.6 (80.7, 82.5)	75.9 (74.8, 77.1)	86.9 (86.0, 87.7)	80.1 (79.2, 81.0)
Griffith University	81.9 (81.3, 82.6)	60.9 (60.1, 61.7)	80.5 (79.8, 81.1)	74.5 (73.7, 75.3)	84.2 (83.6, 84.8)	77.3 (76.6, 77.9)
James Cook University	81.6 (80.3, 82.8)	66.2 (64.7, 67.7)	79.2 (77.9, 80.5)	75.6 (74.1, 77.1)	81.3 (80.0, 82.6)	78.2 (76.9, 79.5)
La Trobe University	78.9 (78.2, 79.7)	64.8 (63.9, 65.7)	76.5 (75.8, 77.3)	68.2 (67.2, 69.2)	83.2 (82.5, 83.9)	75.2 (74.4, 76.0)
Macquarie University	78.6 (77.9, 79.2)	56.5 (55.7, 57.3)	78.5 (77.8, 79.2)	67.6 (66.7, 68.5)	86.2 (85.7, 86.8)	77.1 (76.4, 77.7)
Monash University	80.1 (79.6, 80.6)	63.0 (62.4, 63.7)	80.1 (79.6, 80.6)	73.4 (72.7, 74.0)	83.3 (82.8, 83.8)	78.2 (77.6, 78.7)
Murdoch University	81.4 (80.1, 82.7)	61.0 (59.3, 62.6)	82.4 (81.1, 83.6)	78.4 (76.9, 79.9)	83.6 (82.3, 85.0)	80.1 (78.8, 81.4)
Queensland University of Technology	82.6 (81.9, 83.4)	65.1 (64.2, 66.1)	82.8 (82.0, 83.5)	75.5 (74.4, 76.5)	87.3 (86.6, 88.0)	81.6 (80.8, 82.3)
RMIT University	79.7 (79.0, 80.5)	68.7 (67.9, 69.5)	78.8 (78.0, 79.5)	69.9 (68.9, 70.8)	83.2 (82.5, 83.9)	78.5 (77.8, 79.2)
Southern Cross University	82.4 (80.9, 83.9)	62.7 (60.4, 65.0)	83.2 (81.7, 84.7)	80.5 (78.7, 82.2)	85.5 (83.8, 87.1)	79.2 (77.6, 80.8)
Swinburne University of Technology	78.4 (77.5, 79.3)	65.6 (64.4, 66.7)	81.2 (80.3, 82.0)	73.4 (72.3, 74.5)	83.2 (82.3, 84.2)	81.0 (80.2, 81.9)
The Australian National University	78.8 (77.7, 79.8)	60.0 (58.8, 61.2)	82.8 (81.9, 83.8)	68.0 (66.6, 69.4)	81.5 (80.4, 82.5)	79.3 (78.3, 80.3)
The University of Adelaide	79.9 (79.1, 80.8)	63.8 (62.9, 64.8)	80.5 (79.7, 81.3)	72.9 (71.8, 73.9)	82.1 (81.3, 82.9)	78.0 (77.2, 78.9)
The University of Melbourne	79.3 (78.3, 80.2)	59.8 (58.6, 60.9)	80.9 (80.0, 81.8)	62.0 (60.7, 63.2)	83.2 (82.4, 84.1)	77.5 (76.5, 78.4)
The University of Notre Dame Australia	91.1 (90.2, 92.0)	76.8 (75.5, 78.1)	90.7 (89.8, 91.6)	85.0 (83.7, 86.2)	81.7 (80.5, 82.9)	91.0 (90.1, 91.9)

University	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
The University of Queensland	81.4 (80.8, 82.0)	63.2 (62.5, 63.9)	83.3 (82.8, 83.8)	71.6 (70.8, 72.5)	87.0 (86.5, 87.6)	80.8 (80.2, 81.3)
The University of Sydney	79.6 (78.8, 80.4)	61.3 (60.3, 62.3)	78.4 (77.5, 79.2)	57.4 (56.2, 58.5)	79.0 (78.1, 79.8)	74.9 (74.1, 75.8)
The University of Western Australia	74.5 (72.7, 76.2)	59.1 (57.1, 61.1)	78.2 (76.5, 79.9)	72.0 (69.9, 74.1)	82.1 (80.5, 83.6)	78.3 (76.6, 80.0)
Torrens University Australia	81.5 (79.6, 83.5)	67.9 (65.3, 70.5)	79.9 (77.9, 81.9)	73.6 (71.2, 76.0)	72.5 (69.9, 75.0)	77.6 (75.5, 79.6)
University of Canberra	79.1 (77.9, 80.3)	54.7 (53.3, 56.1)	80.9 (79.8, 82.0)	72.4 (71.0, 73.9)	83.8 (82.7, 84.9)	79.2 (78.1, 80.4)
University of Divinity	80.8 (76.0, 85.6)	63.7 (57.7, 69.8)	89.0 (85.2, 92.8)	87.2 (83.0, 91.5)	90.8 (86.9, 94.7)	91.1 (87.7, 94.5)
University of New England	77.6 (76.4, 78.9)	58.3 (55.6, 61.1)	82.5 (81.3, 83.6)	78.5 (77.0, 80.0)	83.1 (81.3, 84.9)	80.8 (79.6, 82.0)
University of New South Wales	76.6 (75.9, 77.2)	62.6 (61.9, 63.3)	75.3 (74.7, 75.9)	65.5 (64.6, 66.3)	79.9 (79.3, 80.5)	73.7 (73.0, 74.3)
University of Newcastle	78.8 (77.8, 79.7)	55.2 (54.0, 56.3)	79.2 (78.2, 80.1)	73.8 (72.6, 75.0)	85.1 (84.3, 86.0)	77.4 (76.4, 78.3)
University of South Australia	83.4 (82.5, 84.4)	64.3 (63.0, 65.5)	80.1 (79.1, 81.1)	73.2 (71.9, 74.5)	86.2 (85.3, 87.1)	78.9 (77.9, 79.9)
University of Southern Queensland	75.2 (74.2, 76.3)	49.8 (48.2, 51.5)	72.2 (71.1, 73.2)	74.5 (73.3, 75.7)	80.6 (79.3, 81.9)	73.6 (72.6, 74.6)
University of Tasmania	77.8 (77.0, 78.6)	58.8 (57.6, 59.9)	80.9 (80.1, 81.7)	70.7 (69.6, 71.8)	74.7 (73.7, 75.8)	76.1 (75.3, 76.9)
University of Technology Sydney	77.6 (76.3, 78.9)	66.2 (64.8, 67.6)	75.6 (74.3, 76.9)	70.5 (68.9, 72.1)	84.7 (83.6, 85.8)	75.5 (74.2, 76.8)
University of the Sunshine Coast	83.4 (82.4, 84.5)	60.2 (58.8, 61.5)	84.0 (83.0, 85.0)	76.0 (74.6, 77.5)	87.5 (86.6, 88.5)	83.0 (81.9, 84.0)
University of Wollongong	81.8 (80.7, 82.9)	64.8 (63.5, 66.1)	79.3 (78.2, 80.5)	75.8 (74.5, 77.1)	85.5 (84.5, 86.5)	77.8 (76.7, 79.0)
Victoria University	81.3 (80.2, 82.3)	61.7 (60.5, 63.0)	72.9 (71.7, 74.0)	67.5 (66.1, 68.9)	78.9 (77.8, 80.0)	72.6 (71.4, 73.7)
Western Sydney University	82.3 (81.5, 83.1)	63.4 (62.5, 64.4)	79.1 (78.3, 79.9)	74.2 (73.2, 75.2)	87.3 (86.7, 88.0)	78.0 (77.1, 78.8)
All universities	80.5 (80.4, 80.7)	62.8 (62.6, 63.0)	80.1 (80.0, 80.3)	72.4 (72.2, 72.6)	84.0 (83.9, 84.2)	78.5 (78.3, 78.6)

*Learner Engagement scores for institutions do not include responses from external mode students, consistent with practices on the QILT website. As a result, the Learner Engagement score for all universities in this table does not match the equivalent result in Table 9. See www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/student-experience for further details.

Figure 3 Quality of entire educational experience for undergraduate university students, 2016 and 2017
(% positive rating)

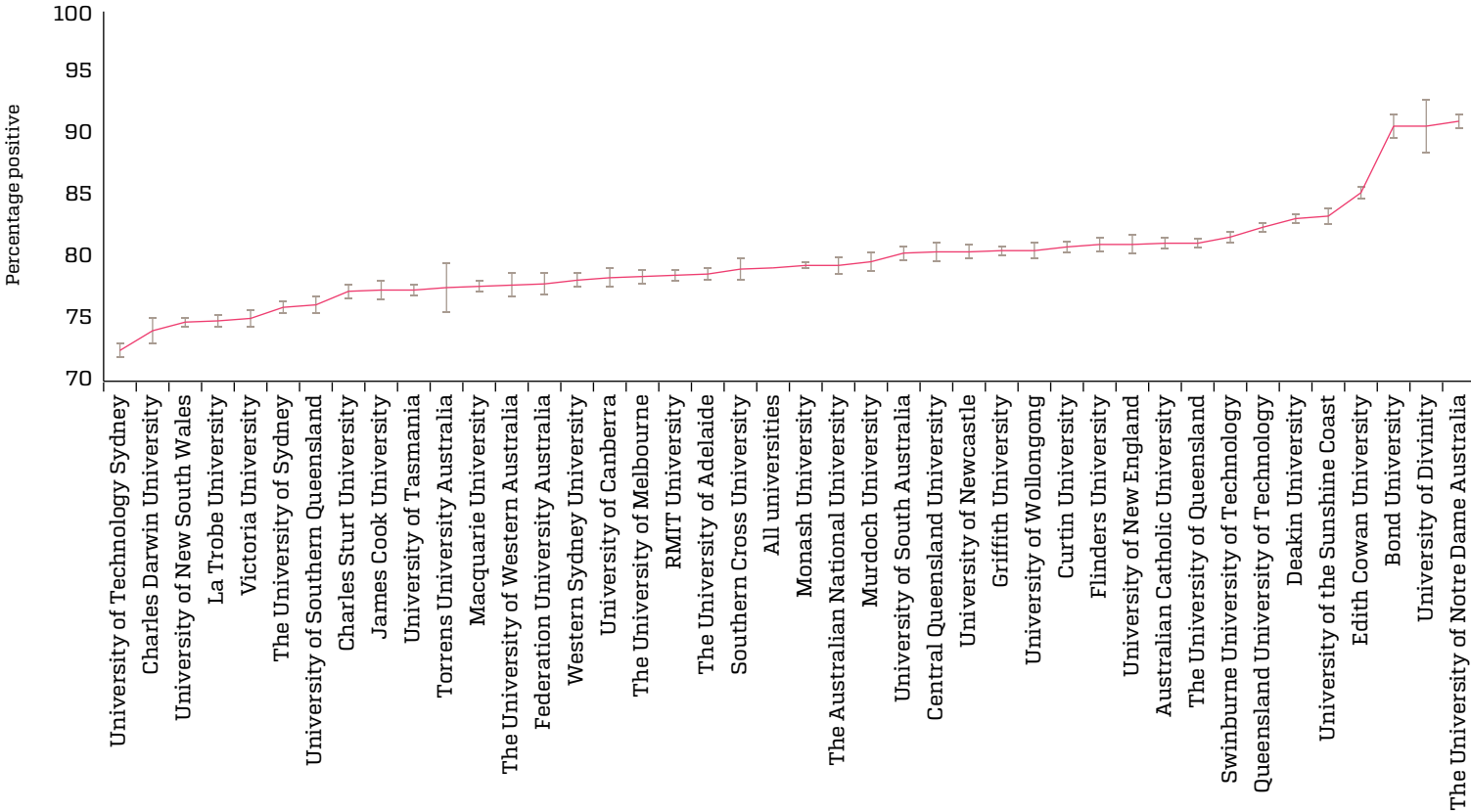


Table 11 The undergraduate student experience, 2016 and 2017 – by university (% positive rating, with 90% confidence intervals)*

University	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Australian Catholic University	83.8 (83.3, 84.2)	67.7 (67.2, 68.3)	81.6 (81.1, 82.0)	74.7 (74.2, 75.3)	85.5 (85.1, 86.0)	81.2 (80.7, 81.6)
Bond University	92.6 (91.7, 93.5)	84.7 (83.5, 85.8)	93.0 (92.2, 93.8)	89.5 (88.5, 90.6)	94.7 (94.0, 95.5)	90.7 (89.7, 91.6)
Central Queensland University	81.5 (80.7, 82.4)	56.6 (55.1, 58.0)	82.6 (81.8, 83.3)	76.1 (75.1, 77.2)	84.7 (83.7, 85.6)	80.5 (79.7, 81.4)
Charles Darwin University	77.4 (76.3, 78.5)	52.4 (50.6, 54.2)	76.7 (75.5, 77.8)	71.1 (69.7, 72.5)	81.7 (80.2, 83.2)	74.1 (73.0, 75.3)
Charles Sturt University	79.1 (78.5, 79.7)	67.6 (66.7, 68.5)	79.8 (79.2, 80.3)	75.3 (74.6, 76.0)	83.2 (82.5, 83.9)	77.3 (76.7, 77.8)
Curtin University	83.1 (82.7, 83.6)	67.6 (67.0, 68.2)	82.6 (82.1, 83.0)	73.3 (72.7, 73.9)	86.3 (85.8, 86.7)	80.9 (80.4, 81.4)
Deakin University	82.1 (81.7, 82.5)	61.8 (61.2, 62.3)	83.0 (82.6, 83.4)	77.0 (76.5, 77.5)	91.2 (90.9, 91.5)	83.2 (82.8, 83.6)
Edith Cowan University	85.8 (85.3, 86.4)	65.5 (64.7, 66.4)	86.4 (85.9, 87.0)	79.2 (78.5, 79.9)	87.6 (87.0, 88.1)	85.3 (84.8, 85.9)
Federation University Australia	82.1 (81.2, 83.0)	64.6 (63.5, 65.7)	81.8 (80.9, 82.7)	78.8 (77.8, 79.8)	85.1 (84.3, 86.0)	77.9 (77.0, 78.9)
Flinders University	83.0 (82.4, 83.5)	66.2 (65.5, 66.9)	82.4 (81.8, 83.0)	76.0 (75.2, 76.7)	88.0 (87.5, 88.5)	81.1 (80.5, 81.7)
Griffith University	82.6 (82.2, 83.1)	63.0 (62.4, 63.5)	82.5 (82.1, 82.9)	76.5 (76.0, 77.1)	86.1 (85.7, 86.6)	80.6 (80.2, 81.0)
James Cook University	81.9 (81.2, 82.7)	67.0 (66.2, 67.9)	78.3 (77.6, 79.1)	74.3 (73.4, 75.2)	82.4 (81.6, 83.1)	77.4 (76.6, 78.2)
La Trobe University	79.6 (79.1, 80.1)	66.2 (65.7, 66.8)	76.7 (76.2, 77.2)	66.7 (66.1, 67.3)	83.4 (82.9, 83.9)	74.9 (74.4, 75.4)
Macquarie University	78.1 (77.6, 78.6)	57.1 (56.5, 57.6)	79.2 (78.8, 79.7)	67.0 (66.4, 67.6)	86.7 (86.3, 87.1)	77.7 (77.2, 78.2)
Monash University	80.1 (79.8, 80.5)	64.0 (63.6, 64.3)	80.4 (80.1, 80.8)	73.3 (72.9, 73.7)	83.5 (83.2, 83.8)	79.4 (79.1, 79.7)
Murdoch University	80.5 (79.7, 81.3)	62.3 (61.2, 63.3)	81.6 (80.8, 82.5)	77.5 (76.6, 78.5)	83.6 (82.7, 84.4)	79.7 (78.9, 80.6)
Queensland University of Technology	82.5 (82.0, 83.0)	65.5 (64.9, 66.1)	83.3 (82.8, 83.8)	75.9 (75.2, 76.5)	89.2 (88.8, 89.6)	82.5 (82.1, 83.0)
RMIT University	79.8 (79.4, 80.3)	67.9 (67.4, 68.4)	78.5 (78.1, 79.0)	67.9 (67.4, 68.5)	83.4 (82.9, 83.8)	78.6 (78.1, 79.0)
Southern Cross University	82.1 (81.2, 83.0)	61.5 (60.2, 62.9)	82.5 (81.6, 83.4)	78.0 (76.9, 79.0)	84.4 (83.4, 85.4)	79.1 (78.2, 80.1)
Swinburne University of Technology	79.6 (79.0, 80.1)	65.7 (64.9, 66.4)	82.2 (81.7, 82.7)	73.3 (72.6, 73.9)	84.1 (83.4, 84.7)	81.7 (81.2, 82.2)
The Australian National University	78.2 (77.5, 78.9)	59.9 (59.1, 60.8)	82.2 (81.5, 82.8)	66.1 (65.1, 67.0)	82.1 (81.4, 82.7)	79.4 (78.7, 80.0)
The University of Adelaide	79.9 (79.4, 80.4)	64.6 (64.0, 65.2)	80.8 (80.3, 81.3)	73.5 (72.8, 74.1)	83.0 (82.5, 83.5)	78.7 (78.2, 79.2)
The University of Melbourne	79.4 (78.7, 80.0)	60.9 (60.2, 61.7)	82.0 (81.4, 82.6)	62.7 (61.9, 63.6)	84.3 (83.7, 84.9)	78.5 (77.9, 79.1)
The University of Notre Dame Australia	90.7 (90.2, 91.3)	78.6 (77.8, 79.4)	90.9 (90.4, 91.5)	85.2 (84.5, 86.0)	82.4 (81.6, 83.1)	91.1 (90.5, 91.6)

University	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
The University of Queensland	81.6 (81.2, 82.0)	64.6 (64.1, 65.0)	83.4 (83.0, 83.7)	71.1 (70.6, 71.6)	87.1 (86.7, 87.4)	81.2 (80.8, 81.6)
The University of Sydney	79.7 (79.3, 80.2)	61.5 (60.9, 62.1)	79.1 (78.6, 79.6)	58.0 (57.3, 58.6)	81.2 (80.8, 81.7)	76.0 (75.5, 76.5)
The University of Western Australia	77.3 (76.3, 78.3)	62.1 (61.0, 63.3)	79.0 (78.0, 79.9)	70.2 (69.0, 71.4)	81.8 (80.9, 82.8)	77.8 (76.8, 78.8)
Torrens University Australia	80.8 (78.9, 82.8)	67.3 (64.7, 69.9)	79.8 (77.9, 81.8)	73.4 (71.1, 75.7)	72.6 (70.1, 75.1)	77.6 (75.6, 79.6)
University of Canberra	79.3 (78.5, 80.0)	55.6 (54.7, 56.5)	80.5 (79.8, 81.3)	70.6 (69.7, 71.5)	85.2 (84.5, 85.8)	78.4 (77.6, 79.1)
University of Divinity	84.5 (81.8, 87.2)	67.8 (64.1, 71.4)	92.7 (90.8, 94.7)	90.5 (88.2, 92.8)	92.2 (89.8, 94.6)	90.7 (88.5, 92.8)
University of New England	77.4 (76.6, 78.3)	61.7 (60.1, 63.4)	82.8 (82.1, 83.6)	79.2 (78.2, 80.1)	84.2 (83.1, 85.4)	81.1 (80.3, 81.9)
University of New South Wales	77.2 (76.8, 77.7)	64.2 (63.8, 64.7)	76.3 (75.8, 76.7)	65.6 (65.1, 66.2)	81.2 (80.8, 81.6)	74.8 (74.4, 75.3)
University of Newcastle	80.9 (80.3, 81.5)	58.2 (57.4, 58.9)	81.8 (81.2, 82.4)	74.5 (73.8, 75.3)	86.8 (86.2, 87.3)	80.5 (79.9, 81.1)
University of South Australia	83.1 (82.6, 83.7)	64.5 (63.8, 65.3)	81.1 (80.5, 81.6)	72.6 (71.9, 73.4)	87.6 (87.1, 88.1)	80.4 (79.8, 80.9)
University of Southern Queensland	76.5 (75.7, 77.2)	54.0 (52.9, 55.2)	74.4 (73.7, 75.1)	74.3 (73.4, 75.1)	82.3 (81.4, 83.2)	76.2 (75.5, 76.9)
University of Tasmania	79.0 (78.5, 79.6)	60.5 (59.8, 61.3)	81.5 (81.0, 82.0)	69.5 (68.8, 70.3)	76.4 (75.7, 77.2)	77.4 (76.9, 78.0)
University of Technology Sydney	78.9 (78.3, 79.5)	65.9 (65.3, 66.6)	74.1 (73.4, 74.7)	64.1 (63.4, 64.9)	84.6 (84.0, 85.1)	72.5 (71.9, 73.2)
University of the Sunshine Coast	83.7 (83.0, 84.4)	63.0 (62.1, 63.9)	85.3 (84.7, 86.0)	77.8 (76.8, 78.7)	88.9 (88.3, 89.5)	83.4 (82.7, 84.1)
University of Wollongong	84.1 (83.5, 84.7)	68.5 (67.8, 69.3)	82.3 (81.7, 83.0)	77.5 (76.7, 78.2)	88.7 (88.1, 89.2)	80.6 (79.9, 81.2)
Victoria University	81.8 (81.1, 82.4)	64.4 (63.6, 65.2)	75.4 (74.7, 76.1)	68.2 (67.3, 69.0)	81.3 (80.6, 82.0)	75.1 (74.4, 75.9)
Western Sydney University	81.3 (80.8, 81.8)	62.4 (61.8, 63.0)	79.2 (78.7, 79.8)	72.5 (71.9, 73.1)	87.3 (86.8, 87.7)	78.2 (77.6, 78.7)
All universities	80.9 (80.8, 81.0)	64.0 (63.9, 64.1)	80.7 (80.6, 80.8)	71.9 (71.8, 72.0)	84.9 (84.8, 85.0)	79.2 (79.2, 79.3)

*Learner Engagement scores for institutions do not include responses from external mode students, consistent with practices on the QILT website. As a result, the Learner Engagement score for all universities in this table does not match the equivalent result in Table 9. See www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/student-experience for further details.

NUHEI student ratings

Figure 4 and Table 12 show student ratings of the quality of the entire educational experience item and different focus areas for students from non-university higher education institutions. Since the number of students enrolled in individual NUHEIs tends to be much smaller than at university level, survey data shown here refer to pooled data from the 2016 and 2017 surveys, the same as shown on the QILT website. Results based on fewer than 25 survey responses have not been published. Notwithstanding the pooling of data across two survey years, the confidence intervals remain much wider for some NUHEIs than was generally the case for universities. That said, there do appear to be some NUHEIs where students rate the quality of their overall education experience much higher than in other institutions. For example, a number of NUHEIs have positive student ratings for entire educational experience clearly over 90 per cent, including Campion College Australia (96 per cent), Jazz Music Institute (95 per cent), Photography Studies College (Melbourne) and Tabor College of Higher Education (both 94 per cent), and Australian College of Theology (93 per cent). While the same caveats apply to student ratings at institution level, these are clearly sites of best practice in the student experience from which other institutions may learn.

Figure 4 **Quality of entire educational experience for undergraduate non-university higher education institution (NUHEI) students, 2016 and 2017 (% positive rating)**

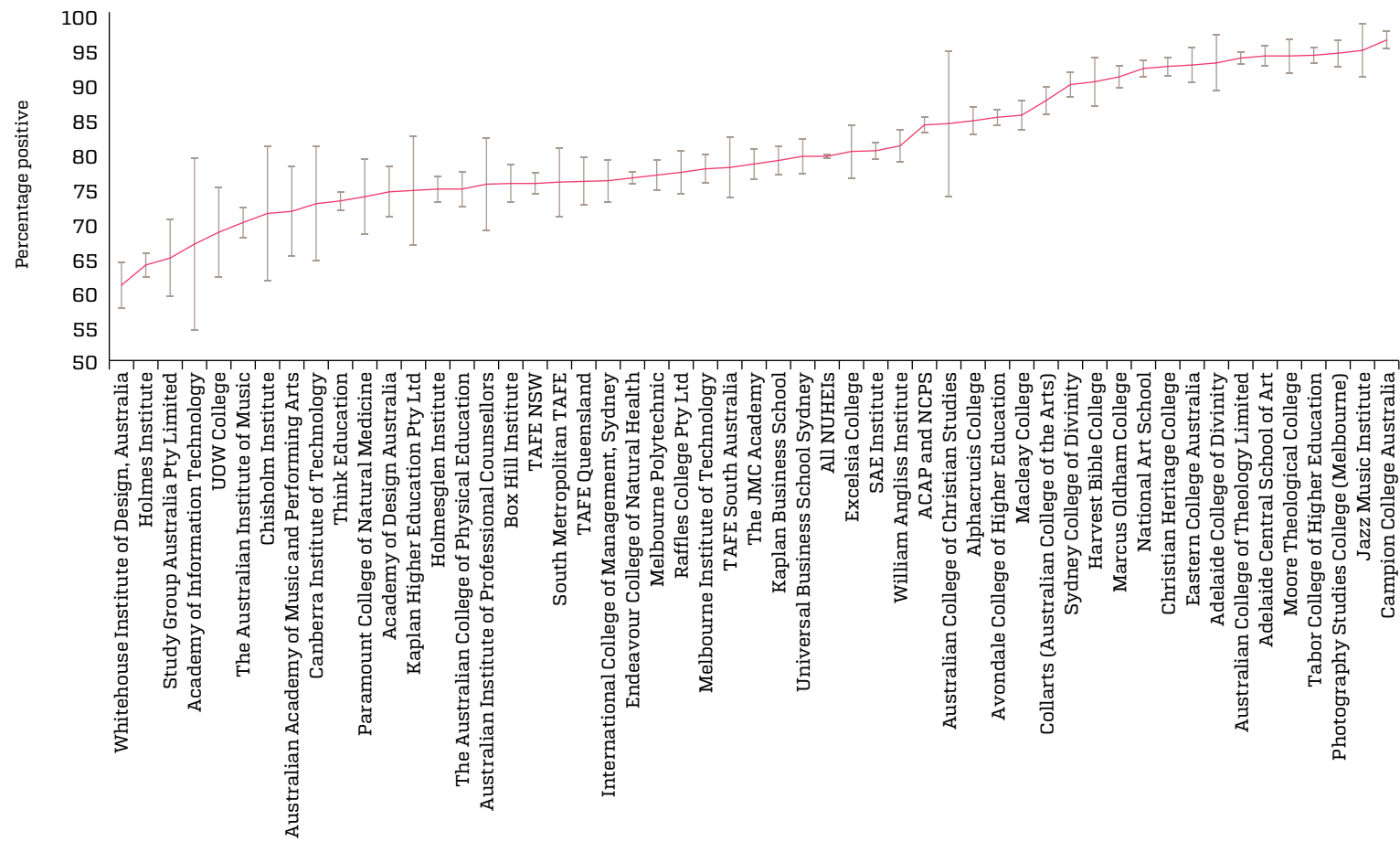


Table 12 The undergraduate student experience, 2016 and 2017, by non-university higher education institution (NUHEI) (% positive rating, with 90% confidence intervals)*

NUHEI	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Academy of Design Australia	77.7 (74.0, 81.4)	64.6 (60.5, 68.8)	84.2 (81.0, 87.4)	76.8 (72.9, 80.6)	54.2 (49.7, 58.6)	74.2 (70.5, 78.0)
Academy of Information Technology	73.1 (61.1, 85.0)	64.0 (50.8, 77.2)	73.1 (61.1, 85.0)	n/a	n/a	66.7 (54.3, 79.0)
ACAP and NCPS	84.8 (83.7, 86.0)	54.2 (52.2, 56.2)	86.2 (85.1, 87.3)	77.8 (76.3, 79.3)	81.2 (79.7, 82.8)	83.8 (82.6, 85.0)
Adelaide Central School of Art	87.7 (85.8, 89.7)	71.9 (69.2, 74.7)	96.0 (94.9, 97.2)	94.2 (92.7, 95.7)	78.0 (75.1, 80.9)	93.7 (92.2, 95.2)
Adelaide College of Divinity	94.4 (90.8, 98.1)	68.0 (56.6, 79.4)	98.1 (96.0, 100.0)	85.4 (79.0, 91.8)	94.7 (89.8, 99.7)	92.7 (88.6, 96.8)
Alphacrucis College	84.9 (82.9, 86.9)	50.2 (47.2, 53.3)	87.4 (85.5, 89.2)	78.8 (76.3, 81.2)	75.6 (72.6, 78.7)	84.4 (82.4, 86.4)
Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts	82.4 (76.7, 88.0)	77.1 (71.1, 83.2)	79.4 (73.4, 85.4)	66.7 (59.5, 73.9)	56.1 (48.5, 63.6)	71.4 (64.9, 77.9)
Australian College of Christian Studies	88.0 (78.7, 97.3)	n/a	80.0 (68.5, 91.5)	n/a	n/a	84.0 (73.5, 94.5)
Australian College of Theology Limited	86.2 (85.0, 87.4)	67.0 (65.2, 68.8)	95.4 (94.7, 96.1)	92.8 (91.8, 93.7)	91.1 (89.9, 92.3)	93.4 (92.5, 94.3)
Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors	78.1 (71.7, 84.5)	n/a	80.8 (74.7, 86.9)	73.2 (66.2, 80.3)	56.8 (44.3, 69.2)	75.3 (68.6, 82.0)
Avondale College of Higher Education	85.5 (84.3, 86.7)	72.2 (70.7, 73.7)	86.6 (85.5, 87.8)	82.3 (81.0, 83.7)	83.0 (81.7, 84.4)	84.9 (83.7, 86.1)
Box Hill Institute	80.5 (77.9, 83.1)	66.7 (63.6, 69.7)	82.3 (79.7, 84.8)	61.5 (58.0, 65.0)	67.1 (63.9, 70.3)	75.4 (72.6, 78.2)
Campion College Australia	92.0 (90.2, 93.8)	89.6 (87.5, 91.7)	97.6 (96.6, 98.6)	89.3 (87.1, 91.6)	85.5 (83.0, 87.9)	96.0 (94.7, 97.3)
Canberra Institute of Technology	74.0 (65.7, 82.3)	54.9 (45.6, 64.2)	70.6 (62.1, 79.1)	73.7 (63.4, 84.0)	68.4 (57.6, 79.3)	72.5 (64.2, 80.9)
Chisholm Institute	83.3 (75.0, 91.7)	76.3 (67.2, 85.4)	78.4 (69.4, 87.4)	81.3 (71.6, 90.9)	62.9 (51.8, 73.9)	71.1 (61.4, 80.8)
Christian Heritage College	92.7 (91.3, 94.1)	73.3 (70.8, 75.8)	94.5 (93.2, 95.7)	92.1 (90.5, 93.6)	81.2 (78.9, 83.5)	92.2 (90.8, 93.6)
Collarts (Australian College of the Arts)	87.4 (85.2, 89.5)	85.5 (83.3, 87.7)	90.5 (88.6, 92.4)	87.7 (85.5, 90.0)	83.4 (81.0, 85.9)	87.3 (85.2, 89.4)
Eastern College Australia	86.4 (83.1, 89.8)	67.3 (62.3, 72.4)	95.8 (93.8, 97.8)	94.0 (91.7, 96.4)	90.4 (87.0, 93.7)	92.4 (89.8, 95.0)
Endeavour College of Natural Health	78.7 (77.8, 79.6)	54.2 (53.0, 55.4)	82.7 (81.9, 83.6)	67.3 (66.1, 68.4)	66.4 (65.3, 67.6)	76.2 (75.3, 77.1)
Excelsia College	89.9 (86.9, 92.9)	86.0 (82.6, 89.4)	87.9 (84.6, 91.1)	87.6 (84.2, 91.0)	70.1 (65.4, 74.8)	80.0 (76.1, 83.9)

NUHEI	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Harvest Bible College	88.8 (84.9, 92.6)	35.6 (29.8, 41.3)	95.5 (93.0, 98.0)	86.7 (82.3, 91.2)	92.0 (86.6, 97.4)	90.0 (86.4, 93.6)
Holmes Institute	69.9 (68.1, 71.8)	53.6 (51.7, 55.6)	65.3 (63.4, 67.2)	55.5 (53.5, 57.5)	49.1 (47.1, 51.1)	63.7 (61.9, 65.6)
Holmesglen Institute	86.3 (84.7, 87.9)	67.7 (65.6, 69.8)	82.5 (80.8, 84.2)	70.4 (68.3, 72.6)	78.2 (76.3, 80.1)	74.6 (72.7, 76.6)
International College of Management, Sydney	83.8 (81.0, 86.6)	74.1 (70.9, 77.3)	76.0 (72.8, 79.2)	68.9 (65.3, 72.4)	60.5 (56.7, 64.2)	75.8 (72.7, 78.9)
Jazz Music Institute	94.3 (90.2, 98.5)	83.6 (77.2, 90.1)	96.3 (93.0, 99.6)	94.0 (89.5, 98.5)	74.5 (66.4, 82.6)	94.5 (90.6, 98.5)
Kaplan Business School	78.2 (76.0, 80.5)	57.1 (54.5, 59.7)	80.2 (78.0, 82.3)	81.1 (79.0, 83.3)	70.2 (67.7, 72.8)	78.7 (76.6, 80.9)
Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd	73.0 (64.4, 81.5)	59.0 (50.1, 67.9)	87.2 (81.1, 93.2)	70.6 (61.0, 80.1)	73.0 (64.4, 81.5)	74.4 (66.5, 82.3)
Macleay College	91.1 (89.2, 92.9)	84.9 (82.6, 87.2)	90.5 (88.7, 92.4)	86.5 (84.2, 88.8)	85.3 (82.8, 87.7)	85.2 (83.0, 87.5)
Marcus Oldham College	88.1 (86.3, 89.9)	87.9 (86.2, 89.7)	90.9 (89.3, 92.5)	92.0 (90.4, 93.6)	92.6 (91.0, 94.2)	90.7 (89.1, 92.3)
Melbourne Institute of Technology	72.8 (70.5, 75.2)	64.8 (62.4, 67.2)	72.5 (70.2, 74.8)	75.2 (72.8, 77.5)	76.8 (74.6, 79.1)	77.5 (75.4, 79.6)
Melbourne Polytechnic	83.3 (81.4, 85.2)	67.0 (64.6, 69.4)	81.0 (79.0, 83.0)	74.2 (71.8, 76.6)	73.1 (70.7, 75.4)	76.6 (74.4, 78.7)
Moore Theological College	93.0 (90.4, 95.6)	91.6 (88.8, 94.4)	95.1 (92.9, 97.3)	94.0 (91.4, 96.6)	95.7 (93.6, 97.8)	93.7 (91.2, 96.2)
National Art School	89.6 (88.0, 91.1)	82.1 (80.2, 84.1)	93.6 (92.4, 94.9)	89.1 (87.4, 90.8)	90.6 (89.1, 92.2)	91.9 (90.6, 93.3)
Paramount College of Natural Medicine	79.5 (74.5, 84.5)	60.9 (52.2, 69.5)	85.5 (81.2, 89.9)	80.8 (75.5, 86.0)	49.1 (40.0, 58.2)	73.5 (68.0, 79.0)
Perth Bible College	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Photography Studies College (Melbourne)	93.3 (91.3, 95.4)	87.5 (84.8, 90.2)	93.4 (91.3, 95.4)	93.2 (91.0, 95.3)	97.3 (95.9, 98.7)	94.1 (92.1, 96.0)
Raffles College Pty Ltd	84.7 (81.8, 87.6)	60.8 (57.0, 64.6)	85.0 (82.1, 87.8)	68.2 (64.3, 72.2)	73.4 (69.7, 77.2)	77.0 (73.8, 80.3)
SAE Institute	86.1 (85.0, 87.3)	78.7 (77.3, 80.1)	85.2 (84.0, 86.3)	85.9 (84.6, 87.1)	82.9 (81.5, 84.2)	80.1 (78.8, 81.5)
South Metropolitan TAFE	77.9 (73.0, 82.7)	56.1 (50.3, 61.8)	78.6 (73.9, 83.4)	71.3 (66.0, 76.6)	75.4 (70.2, 80.6)	75.6 (70.6, 80.6)
Study Group Australia Pty Limited	74.0 (68.7, 79.4)	52.8 (45.4, 60.2)	71.4 (66.0, 76.8)	66.9 (61.0, 72.9)	66.4 (59.8, 72.9)	64.7 (59.1, 70.3)
Sydney College of Divinity	86.6 (84.5, 88.6)	67.3 (63.5, 71.1)	92.0 (90.4, 93.6)	84.5 (82.2, 86.7)	82.0 (79.0, 85.0)	89.6 (87.8, 91.4)
Tabor College of Higher Education	93.7 (92.5, 94.9)	80.9 (78.8, 82.9)	96.2 (95.2, 97.1)	94.4 (93.2, 95.5)	83.7 (81.6, 85.8)	93.8 (92.6, 94.9)
TAFE NSW	84.2 (82.8, 85.6)	64.3 (62.6, 66.1)	78.0 (76.5, 79.6)	68.1 (66.2, 70.0)	70.5 (68.7, 72.3)	75.4 (73.8, 77.0)

NUHEI	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
TAFE Queensland	84.9 (81.9, 87.9)	68.9 (65.1, 72.8)	80.6 (77.3, 83.9)	72.6 (68.5, 76.7)	76.4 (72.7, 80.0)	75.7 (72.2, 79.3)
TAFE South Australia	80.6 (76.5, 84.7)	64.1 (59.1, 69.1)	81.6 (77.5, 85.6)	71.1 (65.6, 76.6)	66.7 (61.5, 71.8)	77.7 (73.3, 82.0)
The Australian College of Physical Education	81.6 (79.3, 83.9)	66.1 (63.2, 69.0)	77.6 (75.2, 80.1)	83.7 (81.4, 85.9)	87.9 (85.8, 90.0)	74.6 (72.0, 77.1)
The Australian Institute of Music	79.4 (77.4, 81.5)	72.5 (70.3, 74.7)	75.5 (73.4, 77.7)	67.1 (64.6, 69.6)	55.1 (52.6, 57.7)	69.8 (67.6, 72.1)
The JMC Academy	80.8 (78.7, 83.0)	70.7 (68.3, 73.1)	83.1 (81.1, 85.1)	80.6 (78.2, 83.0)	67.2 (64.5, 69.8)	78.2 (76.0, 80.4)
Think Education	77.1 (75.8, 78.4)	52.1 (50.3, 53.9)	78.6 (77.3, 79.9)	68.7 (67.1, 70.2)	66.4 (64.6, 68.2)	72.9 (71.5, 74.3)
Universal Business School Sydney	82.7 (80.1, 85.2)	73.1 (70.2, 75.9)	83.3 (80.9, 85.8)	81.3 (78.6, 83.9)	70.2 (67.1, 73.3)	79.3 (76.7, 81.9)
UOW College	76.7 (70.4, 83.1)	63.2 (56.4, 69.9)	74.4 (68.1, 80.8)	80.2 (74.0, 86.5)	87.1 (82.0, 92.1)	68.4 (61.9, 74.9)
Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia	72.7 (69.6, 75.9)	69.3 (66.1, 72.6)	61.9 (58.5, 65.4)	64.1 (60.6, 67.7)	57.0 (53.4, 60.6)	60.8 (57.4, 64.2)
William Angliss Institute	82.0 (79.6, 84.5)	62.5 (59.5, 65.5)	84.2 (81.9, 86.5)	74.5 (71.6, 77.5)	73.4 (70.7, 76.2)	80.8 (78.4, 83.2)
All NUHEIs	82.2 (81.8, 82.6)	65.4 (64.8, 65.9)	83.1 (82.7, 83.5)	76.5 (76.0, 76.9)	73.4 (72.9, 73.9)	79.3 (78.9, 79.7)

n/a = result not available, fewer than 25 survey responses received.

*Learner Engagement scores for institutions do not include responses from external mode students, consistent with practices on the QILT website. As a result, the Learner Engagement score for all NUHEIs in this table does not match the equivalent result in Table 9. See www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/student-experience for further details.

2.7 International comparisons of undergraduate student experience

The SES has been designed to enable benchmarking against similar student surveys conducted in other national contexts. The 'overall experience' question on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), for example, is highly similar to the quality of the entire educational experience item on the SES.¹ The NSSE collects information on student participation in programs and

activities that institutions provide for their personal development. It is administered widely in the USA, with 383,000 students from 636 institutions completing the 2017 NSSE.²

Figure 5 presents the percentage of surveyed students who rated their entire educational experience positively. Data from the 2011 UES should be treated with caution, as this was a pilot administration in which only 24 universities participated. It is also important to note that the 2012, 2013 and 2014 UES collections included data for every Australian university while data for the 2015 SES collection refers to all 40 universities and 39 NUHEIs, data

1 'How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?'

2 Indiana University. (2017). NSSE 2017 Overview. Retrieved 22 Jan., 2017, from nsse.indiana.edu/html/summary_tables.cfm.

from the 2016 SES refers to 40 universities and 55 NUHEIs and data from the 2017 SES refers to 41 universities and 58 NUHEIs. Note that by way of comparison, NSSE is only administered to a subset of institutions in the USA, which number more than 2,500 in total. If the institutions that participate in NSSE differ from those that do not, the results will not necessarily reflect an unbiased estimate of student ratings at the overall sector level. If, for example, the NSSE is administered to students of ‘better’ institutions, the results may be biased upward. Bearing these caveats in mind, Figure 5 shows that respondents to the NSSE are consistently more likely to rate their educational experience positively than respondents to the SES. In particular, it is notable that 85 per cent of United States senior year students rated the overall education experience positively, compared with 75 per cent of Australian later year undergraduate students.

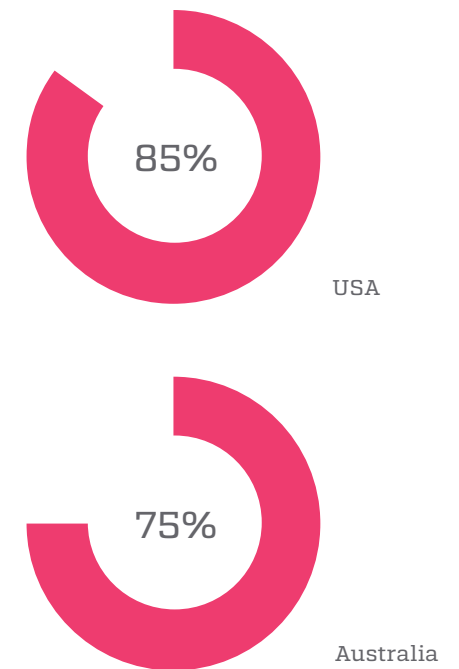
It is also interesting to note that the student ratings of NSSE first and senior-year students are much closer together than those of commencing and later-year students from the SES. The reason for this is not clear, but could relate to non-random participation in NSSE, in terms of both students and institutions, fundamental differences between the Australian and North American higher education sectors, or other methodological differences between the two surveys.

In 2014 to 2017, four CEQ scales were administered to a small sample of SES respondents to facilitate benchmarking with the UK National Student Survey (NSS), which contains several questions with similar wording.¹ Most notably, both the CEQ and NSS have an overall satisfaction item with near-identical wording, measured on a five-point Likert-type response scale. The NSS, administered mostly to final year undergraduates, is run across all publicly funded higher education institutions in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland,² reducing the potential for non-random selection inherent in the NSSE.

Figure 6 presents the percentage of NSS and SES CEQ respondents who were satisfied with the quality of their course. Comparing final/ later-year students, it can be seen that UK students are consistently more likely to express satisfaction with the quality of their course, with around 6 percentage points separating the two groups in 2017 (84 per cent and 78 per cent respectively). Given the large number of responses to both surveys,³ this difference is likely to be statistically significant; however it does not account for potential differences in the composition of the respective undergraduate student populations, nor methodological differences between the two surveys.

It is interesting, however, that both the SES and CEQ surveys show Australian-enrolled students are likely to rate their higher educational experience lower than their overseas counterparts.

Student rating of the quality of the entire educational experience – final year undergraduate students

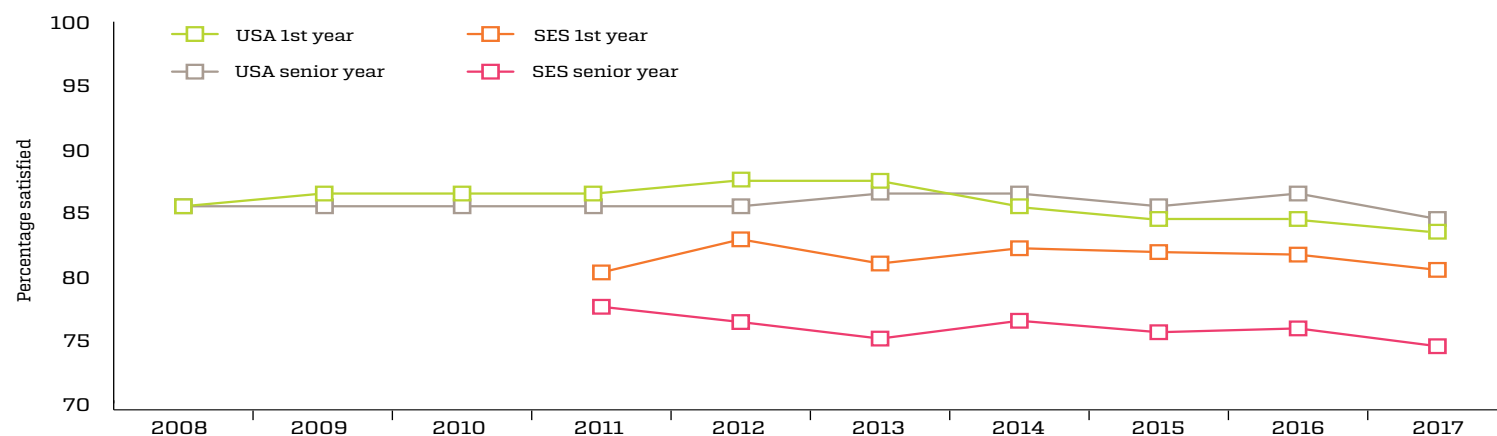


¹ ‘Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the [this] course.’

² HEFCE. (2013). The National Student Survey. Retrieved 16 Dec., 2014, from www.thestudentsurvey.com/the_nss.html.

³ 1,123 later-year undergraduate students were included in the analysis of the CEQ item in 2017.

Figure 5 Student ratings of the quality of overall educational experience, SES (Australia) and NSSE (USA), 2008–2017 (% positive rating)



Overall satisfaction rating – final year undergraduate students

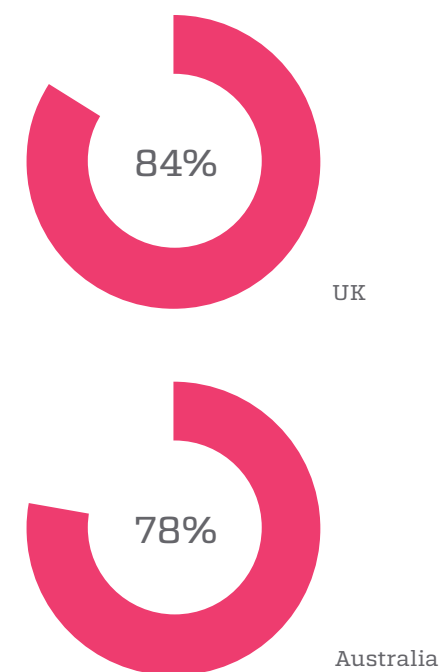
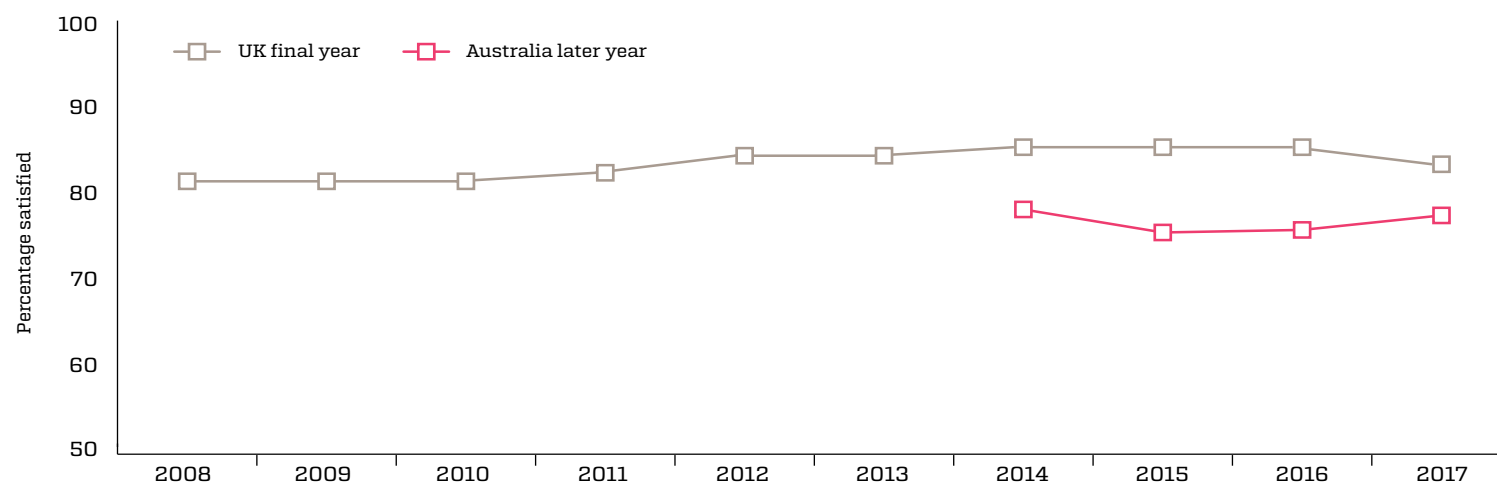


Figure 6 Satisfaction with the quality of overall educational experience, later year students, SES-CEQ (Australia) and NSS (UK), 2011–2017 (%)



2.8 Early departure of undergraduate students

In addition to the items asking students to rate different aspects of their educational experience, students were also asked to indicate whether they had seriously considered leaving their institution during 2017. The results of this question are presented by student subgroup in Table 13. Overall, the total percentage of undergraduates who indicated that they had considered leaving increased slightly from 18 per cent in 2016 to 20 per cent of respondents in 2017.

As might be expected, commencing students were more likely than later-year students to have considered leaving their institution with a difference of only 1 percentage point, consistent with 2016. This remains an unusually small difference and may be due to many commencing students who considered leaving having already done so by the time the SES was conducted in August, well into Semester 2. Differences between male and female students also remained very slight at 1 percentage point.

Indigenous students were more likely than non-Indigenous students to indicate that they had considered leaving in 2017 by 9 percentage points. While this is of concern, it should be noted that the relatively low number of responses from this cohort could mean that these results are not statistically significant. Students who reported having a disability were also more likely to have considered leaving their institution than students who did not report having a disability by 9 percentage points. Students who spoke a language other than English as their main language at home were more likely to consider leaving their institution than those who spoke English at home by 6 percentage points. International students were also less likely to consider departure than domestic students by 6 percentage points.

As was the case in the previous year, students over 40 years of age were more likely to have considered leaving than those under 25 by 5 percentage points, which may reflect increasing financial and care responsibilities of older students which can affect their study/life balance.

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds were more likely to have considered leaving in 2017 by 4 percentage points, with 23 per cent compared with 19 per cent for those with high SES and 21 per cent for those from medium SES backgrounds. Students from more Regional/Remote locations were also more likely to have considered leaving by 3 percentage points with 23 per cent compared with 20 per cent from metropolitan locations.

The percentage of students who had considered leaving their institution in 2017 is plotted against (self-reported) average grades in Figure 7. As would be expected, students who reported achieving lower grades were much more likely to consider early departure than students achieving high grades. This is most apparent for students achieving a grade of less than 50 per cent, of whom 44 per cent considered early departure.

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds were more likely to have considered leaving in 2017

Table 13 Percentage of undergraduate students who considered early departure by subgroup

	Group/subgroup	Per cent considering departure
Stage of studies	Commencing	20
	Later Year*	19
Gender	Male	19
	Female	20
Age	Under 25	19
	25 to 29	22
	30 to 39	23
	40 and over	24
Indigenous	Indigenous	29
	Non-Indigenous	20
Home language	English	21
	Other	15
Disability	Disability reported	28
	No disability reported	19
Study mode**	Internal/Mixed study mode	20
	External study mode	22
Residence status	Domestic student	21
	International student	15
First in family status†	First in family	21
	Not first in family	19
Previous higher education experience††	Previous experience – current institution	23
	Previous experience – another institution	19
	New to higher education	20

	Group/subgroup	Per cent considering departure
Socio-economic status	High	19
	Medium	21
	Low	23
Location	Metro	20
	Regional/remote	23
Total		20

*Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

**Grouping of study mode categories has changed from previous years. Internal/Mixed mode and External/Distance/OUA in 2016.

†Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

††Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

Undergraduate students who considered leaving their university in 2017 were then asked to indicate, from a list of 30 possible reasons, why they had considered doing so. These are summarised in Table 14. Students could select as many reasons as applied, so the percentages do not total 100. The most common reasons for considering departure relate to situational factors, such as health or stress (45 per cent), study/life balance (30 per cent), the need to do paid work (26 per cent), difficulties relating to workload (26 per cent), unspecified personal reasons (25 per cent) and financial difficulties (24 per cent). The fact that these reasons were indicated by such a large percentage of students in both the 2015, 2016 and 2017 SES and have increased in proportion, underscores the importance of student support in terms of assisting students to continue with their studies.

As in 2015 and 2016, in 2017 the most common (arguably) institutional factor indicated by students was that their expectations had not been met (23 per cent) and career prospects (19 per cent), which may indicate that further analysis of student expectations and the goals of their higher education experience would be beneficial in discussions around attrition and retention. Several dispositional factors were also relatively common, including a need to take a break (24 per cent) and boredom/lack of interest (with 22 per cent), and a change in direction (17 per cent).

Most cited reasons for considering early departure – undergraduate

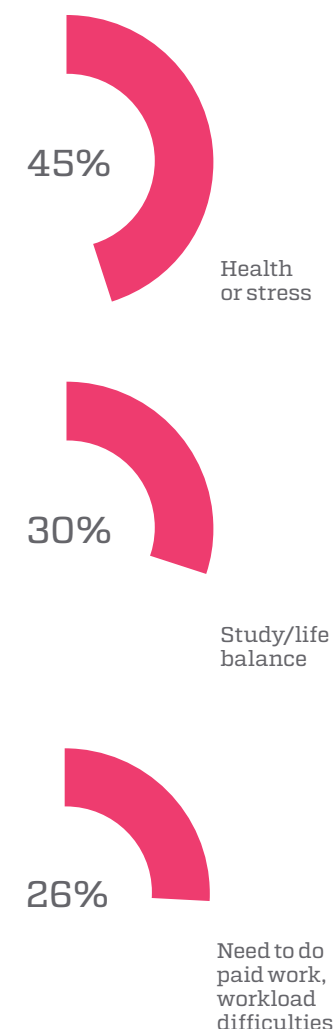


Figure 7 Percentage of undergraduate students who had considered early departure by average grades to date

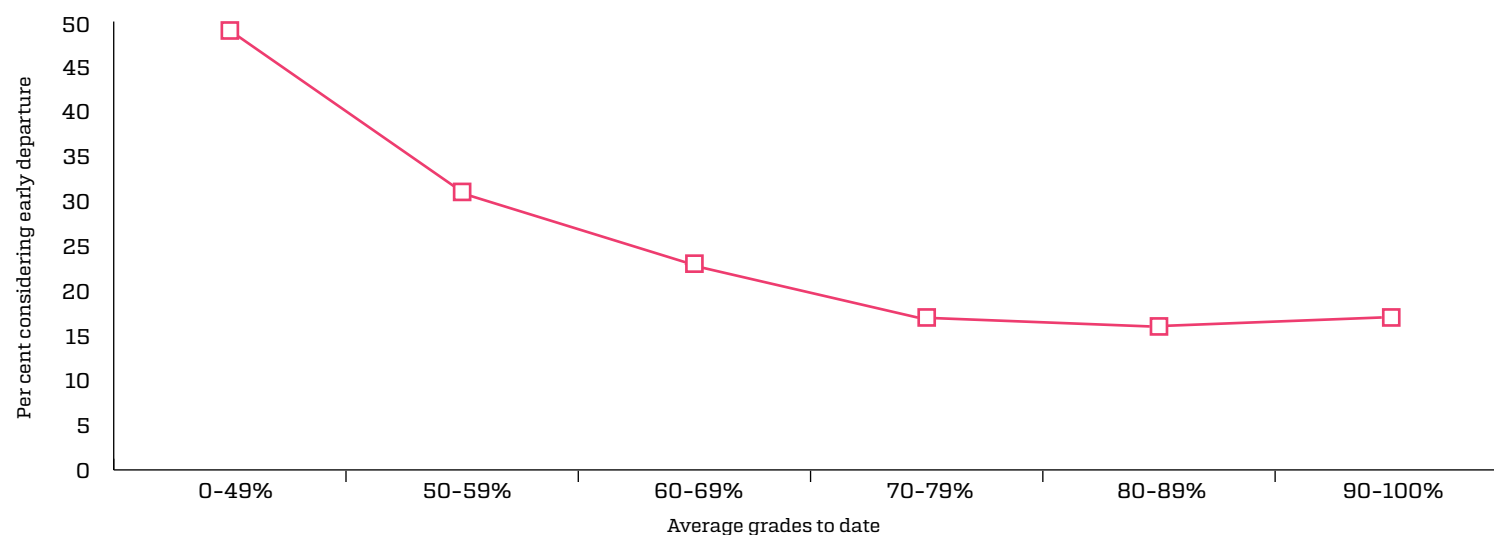


Table 14 Selected reasons for considering early departure among undergraduate students, 2016 and 2017

Departure reason	Per cent considering departure 2016	Per cent considering departure 2017
Health or stress	41	45
Study life balance	27	30
Workload difficulties	25	26
Need to do paid work	25	26
Financial difficulties	24	25
Personal reasons	24	24
Need a break	22	24
Expectations not met	22	23
Boredom/lack of interest	22	22
Career prospects	20	19
Family responsibilities	17	18

Departure reason	Per cent considering departure 2016	Per cent considering departure 2017
Academic support	17	17
Change of direction	17	16
Paid work responsibilities	16	16
Quality concerns	15	16
Other	13	13
Commuting difficulties	11	12
Fee difficulties	10	10
Gap year/deferral	10	10
Academic exchange	9	9
Administrative support	8	9
Social reasons	8	9
Institution reputation	8	8
Travel or tourism	7	8
Other opportunities	6	7
Standards too high	7	6
Moving residence	6	6
Graduating	5	5
Received other offer	5	5
Government assistance	3	3

3 Postgraduate coursework results from the 2017 SES

In this, the first year of collection of responses from postgraduate coursework students, the majority, 76 per cent, rated the quality of their entire educational experience in 2017 favourably. The percentage of positive results for the five SES focus areas and a key questionnaire item are presented by stage of studies in Table 15. Considering first the overall results, positive ratings ranged from 82 per cent for the Learning Resources focus area, down to 52 per cent for the Learner Engagement focus area. A relatively large proportion of postgraduate coursework students gave favourable ratings of both the Teaching Quality provided by their institution and their Skills Development, at 80 per cent. In terms of the Student Support provided by their institution, 73 per cent of survey respondents reported positive experiences.

When compared with undergraduate students, postgraduate coursework students rated their overall experience lower by 3 percentage points with 76 per cent compared with 79 per cent. However, there was a stark difference in the area of Learner Engagement with postgraduate coursework students rating this focus area 8 percentage points lower, which may reflect, in part, the different demographic profile of postgraduate coursework students who are more likely to be older and studying off campus and part time. Postgraduate coursework students' ratings were broadly similar to those of undergraduates in the other focus areas of Skills Development, Teaching Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources.

3.1 The postgraduate coursework student experience by stage of studies

As was the case for undergraduates, commencing postgraduate coursework students were generally slightly more positive than later year students with respect to Teaching Quality, Student Support, Learning Resources and the quality of their entire educational experience. Those in the later years of their studies rated Skills Development more highly as would be expected and Learner Engagement slightly more highly. The Student Support experienced by later year students may not necessarily reflect the same types of services or activities as those available to commencing students so this result should be interpreted with caution.

3.2 The postgraduate coursework student experience of specific student groups

2017 SES results by student demographic and contextual groups are presented in Table 16 for postgraduate coursework students. It should be noted that the results presented in this section are based on a series of separate analyses and thus do not reflect interactions between any of the characteristics.

In general, postgraduate coursework students from a non-English speaking background and International students rated their overall educational experience the same or 1 percentage point below English speakers and domestic students respectively. This represents a difference from undergraduates where these groups rated their experience 6 percentage points lower.

Table 15 The postgraduate coursework student experience, by stage of studies, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
Commencing	79	51	81	74	83	76
Later year*	82	53	79	72	81	75
Total	80	52	80	73	82	76

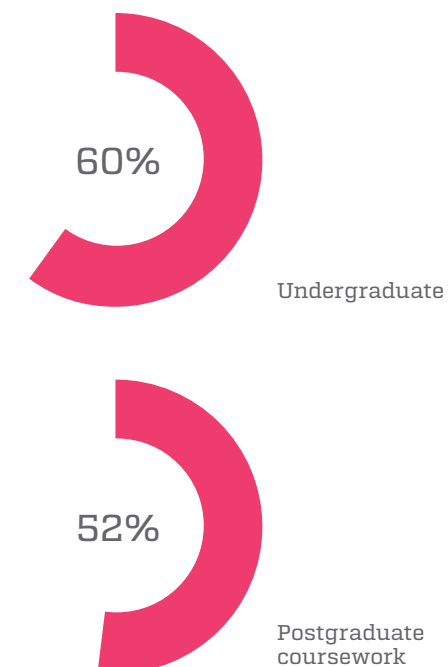
*Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

Postgraduate coursework students aged between 25 and 29 years also had lower ratings than other age groups, with 7 percentage points between that group and those aged 40 and over, who had the highest positive ratings of their overall educational experience which was similar to the pattern exhibited by undergraduate students.

As was the case for undergraduates, most differences in postgraduate coursework student ratings of experience by gender are fairly marginal, with female students slightly more likely to be positive about their educational experience than male students. A 3 percentage point difference between males and females was observed with respect to Learner Engagement which may relate to differences in study mode. With respect to study mode itself, internal or mixed mode students were far more likely to provide positive ratings of their level of learner engagement than those studying externally, with 40 percentage points between the groups. The differences between internal/mixed mode and external/distance study mode students in relation to the other four focus areas were relatively small other than a difference of 7 percentage points for Skills Development which appears to be most associated with differences in the development of team work and spoken language development for this group.

As was also the case with undergraduate students, there is also a clear negative association between age and Learner Engagement, with young postgraduate coursework students (aged under 25) much more likely to respond positively in relation to their level of engagement than students in the three older age groups, and students aged 40 and over in particular. This result is consistent with the fact that older students are more likely to be undertaking their studies in an external study mode which are, as previously mentioned, characterised by lower results for the Learner Engagement focus area. Older students are also presumably more likely to be established in work or careers, which would further limit Learner Engagement activities (as measured by the SEQ). Interestingly, though, older students were more likely to respond positively in relation to their overall experience, the Student Support provided by their institution, their Learning Resources and Teaching Quality than younger postgraduate coursework students but less likely to rate their Skills Development positively.

Learner Engagement focus area



Again, consistent with undergraduates, postgraduate coursework Indigenous students were less likely than non-Indigenous students to rate Learner Engagement positively by 11 percentage points, which may reflect a higher proportion of Indigenous students studying externally in 2017, compared to non-Indigenous students. Indigenous

students were, less likely to positively rate the Student Support provided by their institution or Teaching Quality with a difference of 4 percentage points. Differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in relation to the other three focus areas were smaller in magnitude and may not be statistically significant.

Table 16 The postgraduate coursework student experience, by demographic and contextual group, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Group/subgroup	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Gender	Male	79	54	79	73	81	75
	Female	81	51	81	73	82	76
Age	Under 25	83	62	80	72	83	75
	25 to 29	80	54	78	72	80	73
	30 to 39	78	44	80	74	81	76
	40 and over	78	35	84	76	83	80
Indigenous	Indigenous	79	41	76	69	80	75
	Non-Indigenous	80	52	80	73	82	76
Home language	English	79	49	80	72	80	76
	Other	82	57	81	76	85	76
Disability	Disability reported	75	49	77	71	77	72
	No disability reported	81	52	80	73	82	76
Study mode	Internal/Mixed	82	60	80	73	82	75
	External	75	20	80	75	81	78
Residence status	Domestic student	79	46	80	72	80	76
	International student	82	59	80	74	83	75
First in family status ^a	First in family	79	48	82	75	83	77
	Not first in family	80	54	81	74	83	76

	Group/subgroup	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Previous higher education experience**	Previous experience – current institution	81	57	80	72	81	75
	Previous experience – another institution	78	48	81	75	83	76
	New to higher education	81	52	80	77	86	78
Socio-economic Status	High	79	50	81	71	80	76
	Medium	79	44	80	72	81	77
	Low	78	42	79	73	80	76
Location	Metro	79	48	80	72	80	76
	Regional/remote	78	39	80	73	80	77
Total		80	52	80	73	82	76

* Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

** Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

Postgraduate coursework students who reported having a disability were somewhat less likely to provide positive ratings across all focus areas than students who did not report any disability, most notably in the areas of Skills Development and Learning Resources, which they rated lower by 6 percentage points and 5 percentage points respectively.

Few noteworthy differences were observed based on whether postgraduate coursework students were the first in their family to attend university, with the largest difference being that students who were the first in their family to attend university were less likely to rate Learner Engagement positively by 6 percentage points.

Considering whether postgraduate coursework students had Previous higher education experience, it is interesting to note that students who had previously been enrolled at the current or another higher education institution were less likely to report positively in terms of Student Support, Learning Resources and their entire educational experience, perhaps because these groups had different expectations based on this prior experience. Interestingly, students who had previously studied at another institution rated their Learner Engagement 9 percentage points lower than those whose experience was at the same institution. This may be due to the latter group retaining networks with other students which affected their likelihood of participating effectively in student centred learning activities.

Postgraduate coursework students who reported having a disability were somewhat less likely to provide positive ratings

There were few differences amongst postgraduate coursework students in relation to socio-economic status or location other than in the Learner Engagement focus area where those from medium and low socio-economic areas rated their Learner Engagement 6 to 8 percentage points lower than high SES students. Postgraduate coursework students from metropolitan areas also rated this focus area higher than those from regional/remote areas, which may be associated with relative distances between students contributing to greater difficulty in interacting with their peers.

3.3 The postgraduate coursework student experience by study area

In relation to different study areas (see Table 17), there is considerable variation in postgraduate coursework student ratings across study areas. Ratings of the overall educational experience ranged from a high of 85 per cent for Humanities, culture and social sciences and 84 per cent for Agriculture and environmental studies, to a low of 52 per cent for Dentistry representing a difference of over 30 percentage points. However, excluding Dentistry which had a small number of responses, the difference in overall educational experience declined to 14 percentage points between Humanities, culture and social sciences and Rehabilitation (70 per cent). This difference across study areas was broadly similar to that of undergraduates which was 16 percentage points.

Dentistry also attracted the lowest ratings in Teaching Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources from 51 to 58 per cent. If we exclude this study area the range of scores for these focus areas are similar to those for undergraduates lying between 13 and 19 percentage points for Skills Development and Learning Resources respectively. The widest range in focus area results was for Learner Engagement, with 34 percentage points separating the study areas with the highest and lowest results, Rehabilitation at 72 per cent, and Nursing at 38 per cent, which may be associated with the relative proportion of online or distance learning associated with the various study areas.

The narrowest range of results across study areas is seen in relation to Skills Development, with 13 percentage points separating the study area with the highest and lowest scores, Veterinary science at 90 percent and Teacher education at 77 per cent. As was indicated for undergraduate results, while confidence intervals are not shown in Table 17, it is important to interpret the results with respect to the remarks made in Appendix 1.4.4 Stratum-level precision concerning the precision of estimates in the SES. It is possible that some of the differences in this table, especially those seen in relation to study areas containing small numbers of observations, may not be statistically significant.

It also should be noted that broad disciplinary aggregations hide much of the detail that is relevant to schools, faculties and academic departments. More detailed SES results disaggregated by 45 study areas are available in Appendix 7.2 Higher Education Student Experience: 45 Study Areas.

Postgraduate coursework student rating of the quality of the entire educational experience by study area

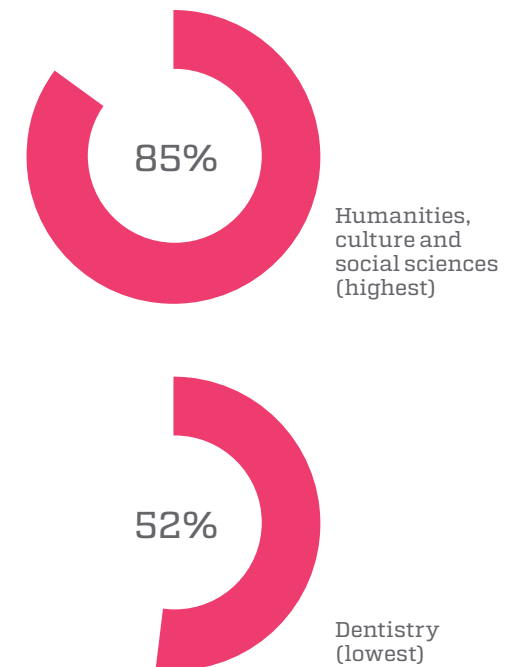


Table 17 The postgraduate coursework student experience, by study area, 2017 (% positive rating)

Study area	2017: SD	2017: LE	2017: TQ	2017: SS	2017: LR	2017: OEE
Science and mathematics	80	51	81	75	86	77
Computing and information systems	79	57	78	76	83	75
Engineering	79	57	78	71	86	73
Architecture and built environment	81	64	80	65	70	73
Agriculture and environmental studies	85	59	89	77	89	84
Health services and support	84	49	85	75	82	80
Medicine	83	65	73	67	77	73
Nursing	81	38	79	73	84	75
Pharmacy	85	58	82	73	85	74
Dentistry	79	58	58	51	55	52
Veterinary science	90	67	80	70	74	77
Rehabilitation	87	72	77	67	75	70
Teacher education	77	45	78	72	83	73
Business and management	80	53	79	73	81	75
Humanities, culture and social sciences	82	48	89	80	87	85
Social work	82	51	80	73	79	73
Psychology	84	54	84	76	78	77
Law and paralegal studies	79	44	82	70	79	76
Creative arts	81	58	82	68	81	76
Communications	80	54	84	74	86	75
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	85	58	84	77	89	80
Total	80	52	80	73	82	76

SD = Skills Development, LE = Learner Engagement, TQ = Teaching Quality, SS = Student Support, LR = Learning Resources. OEE = Overall Educational Experience

3.4 The postgraduate coursework student experience – universities and NUHEIs

As was indicated for undergraduate results, when comparing results for university and NUHEI postgraduate coursework students there are several important caveats to consider in relation to differences in demographics and study area profile. Any differences in results between NUHEI and university students may be attributable, at least in part, to these factors.

SES results across focus areas, as shown in Table 18, are broadly similar to those for undergraduates. Postgraduate coursework students in NUHEIs rated their overall education experience

more positively than university students by 4 percentage points, slightly larger than the 1 percentage point difference favouring undergraduates enrolled in NUHEIs.

The largest differences between NUHEI and university postgraduate coursework students across the five focus areas remained in relation to Learning Resources with NUHEI students being 10 percentage points less likely to express positive responses. NUHEI students were also less likely to respond positively about their Learner Engagement, by 9 percentage points. NUHEI students rated Student Support slightly more positively, with 3 percentage points separating them from university students. Skills Development and Teaching Quality ratings were the same for both groups.

Table 18 The postgraduate coursework student experience, NUHEI and university students, 2017 (% positive rating)

	Focus areas					Questionnaire item
	Skills Development	Learner Engagement	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Quality of entire educational experience
NUHEIs	80	44	80	76	72	79
Universities	80	53	80	73	82	75
All institutions	80	52	80	73	82	76

3.5 The postgraduate coursework student experience by institution

University student ratings

Student ratings across universities at postgraduate coursework level vary by institution, as shown by Figure 8 and Table 19. For example, universities where student ratings are clearly above 80 per cent include the University of Divinity (87 per

cent), the University of Notre Dame Australia (85 per cent) and the University of New England (82 per cent). Once again, it is important to acknowledge that factors beyond the quality of the educational experience such as course offerings and the composition of the student population might also impact on student ratings. Also, note where the confidence intervals overlap between two universities there is no significant difference in student ratings in a statistical sense.

Figure 8 Quality of entire educational experience for postgraduate coursework university students, 2017 (% positive rating)

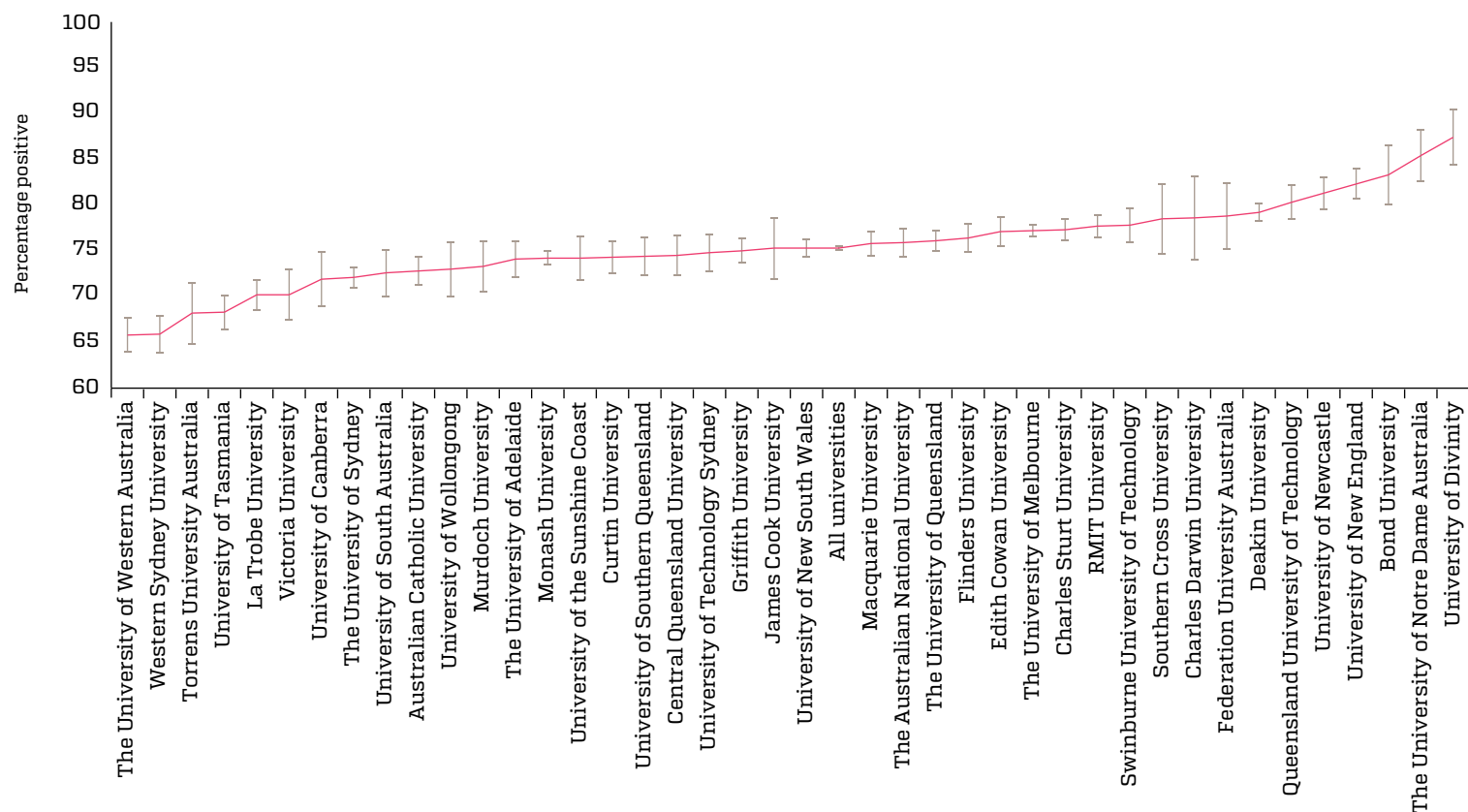


Table 19 The postgraduate coursework student experience, 2017 – by university (% positive rating, with 90% confidence intervals)

University	Skills Development	Learner Engagement*	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Australian Catholic University	75.8 (74.2, 77.4)	53.1 (50.8, 55.4)	76.1 (74.5, 77.7)	69.4 (67.3, 71.5)	80.1 (78.1, 82.0)	72.8 (71.2, 74.5)
Bond University	88.5 (85.6, 91.4)	72.5 (68.5, 76.5)	87.3 (84.3, 90.3)	82.3 (78.6, 85.9)	89.0 (86.1, 91.9)	83.3 (80.0, 86.7)
Central Queensland University	78.1 (76.0, 80.2)	56.7 (54.0, 59.3)	78.1 (76.1, 80.2)	76.6 (74.3, 78.9)	75.6 (73.2, 78.1)	74.5 (72.3, 76.7)
Charles Darwin University	83.9 (79.7, 88.0)	59.1 (49.3, 68.9)	80.8 (76.4, 85.2)	70.7 (64.5, 76.9)	80.8 (74.2, 87.5)	78.6 (74.0, 83.1)
Charles Sturt University	75.2 (74.0, 76.4)	57.6 (55.5, 59.8)	79.4 (78.3, 80.5)	79.4 (78.1, 80.6)	75.7 (73.9, 77.4)	77.3 (76.1, 78.4)
Curtin University	82.2 (80.6, 83.7)	62.6 (60.5, 64.6)	81.5 (80.0, 83.1)	73.1 (71.1, 75.1)	86.3 (84.8, 87.9)	74.3 (72.5, 76.0)
Deakin University	80.0 (78.9, 81.1)	63.3 (61.6, 64.9)	81.8 (80.7, 82.8)	78.3 (77.0, 79.6)	90.1 (89.1, 91.2)	79.2 (78.2, 80.3)
Edith Cowan University	81.4 (79.8, 83.0)	63.2 (61.0, 65.5)	83.7 (82.2, 85.2)	80.8 (78.9, 82.7)	88.7 (87.1, 90.3)	77.1 (75.4, 78.8)
Federation University Australia	80.3 (76.8, 83.8)	56.8 (51.8, 61.7)	83.3 (80.0, 86.6)	80.1 (76.0, 84.2)	80.7 (76.3, 85.1)	78.8 (75.1, 82.4)
Flinders University	81.1 (79.6, 82.5)	67.1 (65.0, 69.2)	78.6 (77.2, 80.1)	75.1 (73.3, 77.0)	85.1 (83.4, 86.8)	76.4 (74.8, 77.9)
Griffith University	80.1 (78.7, 81.4)	60.3 (58.3, 62.3)	80.2 (78.9, 81.5)	77.0 (75.4, 78.7)	83.4 (81.7, 85.0)	75.0 (73.6, 76.5)
James Cook University	75.2 (71.7, 78.6)	56.3 (51.4, 61.2)	78.5 (75.3, 81.8)	69.5 (65.1, 74.0)	82.2 (78.2, 86.1)	75.3 (71.9, 78.7)
La Trobe University	80.9 (79.4, 82.4)	57.6 (55.6, 59.6)	75.6 (74.0, 77.3)	70.0 (67.9, 72.0)	82.6 (81.0, 84.2)	70.2 (68.5, 72.0)
Macquarie University	80.8 (79.5, 82.1)	58.2 (56.4, 59.9)	82.4 (81.2, 83.7)	68.9 (67.2, 70.7)	83.3 (81.9, 84.7)	75.8 (74.4, 77.2)
Monash University	80.5 (79.7, 81.2)	55.8 (54.8, 56.8)	80.7 (80.0, 81.4)	74.9 (74.0, 75.8)	84.5 (83.7, 85.2)	74.2 (73.4, 75.0)
Murdoch University	78.1 (75.4, 80.8)	65.9 (62.4, 69.4)	76.4 (73.7, 79.1)	74.4 (71.1, 77.7)	81.3 (78.2, 84.4)	73.3 (70.5, 76.1)
Queensland University of Technology	82.3 (80.5, 84.2)	62.3 (59.7, 65.0)	84.7 (83.1, 86.4)	79.9 (77.6, 82.1)	89.4 (87.7, 91.1)	80.3 (78.4, 82.1)
RMIT University	82.7 (81.5, 83.9)	66.7 (65.2, 68.3)	81.8 (80.6, 83.0)	73.0 (71.4, 74.6)	84.3 (83.0, 85.5)	77.7 (76.4, 78.9)
Southern Cross University	80.9 (77.1, 84.7)	61.4 (53.7, 69.0)	80.6 (76.8, 84.5)	79.1 (74.8, 83.3)	69.7 (63.3, 76.1)	78.5 (74.6, 82.5)
Swinburne University of Technology	81.2 (79.4, 83.0)	63.4 (60.9, 65.9)	79.4 (77.5, 81.2)	74.2 (72.0, 76.4)	82.6 (80.5, 84.6)	77.8 (75.9, 79.7)
The Australian National University	80.6 (79.1, 82.1)	53.9 (52.1, 55.8)	82.1 (80.7, 83.6)	72.4 (70.5, 74.2)	83.1 (81.5, 84.6)	75.9 (74.3, 77.5)
The University of Adelaide	78.8 (76.9, 80.7)	56.1 (53.9, 58.4)	76.7 (74.7, 78.6)	72.9 (70.7, 75.2)	81.8 (79.9, 83.7)	74.1 (72.1, 76.0)
The University of Melbourne	84.3 (83.7, 84.8)	64.5 (63.8, 65.2)	82.6 (82.0, 83.1)	66.9 (66.1, 67.8)	81.6 (81.0, 82.2)	77.2 (76.5, 77.8)

University	Skills Development	Learner Engagement*	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
The University of Notre Dame Australia	90.6 (88.1, 93.0)	75.1 (71.5, 78.7)	90.7 (88.3, 93.1)	85.3 (81.9, 88.6)	75.7 (71.8, 79.5)	85.4 (82.5, 88.3)
The University of Queensland	82.1 (81.1, 83.1)	61.7 (60.4, 63.1)	81.8 (80.8, 82.8)	73.3 (72.0, 74.6)	86.2 (85.2, 87.2)	76.1 (74.9, 77.2)
The University of Sydney	81.1 (80.0, 82.2)	59.9 (58.5, 61.3)	77.2 (76.1, 78.4)	65.6 (64.2, 67.1)	79.8 (78.7, 81.0)	72.1 (70.9, 73.3)
The University of Western Australia	79.3 (77.6, 81.0)	66.8 (64.8, 68.8)	71.6 (69.7, 73.5)	67.2 (64.9, 69.4)	72.9 (70.9, 74.8)	65.8 (63.9, 67.8)
Torrens University Australia	81.2 (78.2, 84.2)	62.1 (58.0, 66.1)	72.1 (68.7, 75.4)	70.4 (66.7, 74.0)	63.9 (59.7, 68.0)	68.2 (64.8, 71.6)
University of Canberra	79.1 (76.5, 81.8)	62.2 (58.9, 65.6)	79.2 (76.5, 81.8)	73.5 (70.2, 76.8)	74.5 (71.2, 77.8)	71.9 (68.9, 74.8)
University of Divinity	79.0 (75.1, 82.9)	55.5 (50.7, 60.3)	90.2 (87.4, 93.1)	89.9 (86.5, 93.2)	87.2 (83.2, 91.2)	87.4 (84.3, 90.5)
University of New England	76.7 (74.7, 78.7)	59.7 (52.0, 67.5)	84.7 (83.0, 86.3)	82.9 (80.7, 85.0)	83.5 (79.8, 87.1)	82.3 (80.6, 84.1)
University of New South Wales	78.2 (77.2, 79.1)	51.4 (50.1, 52.7)	80.3 (79.4, 81.2)	69.6 (68.4, 70.8)	83.8 (82.8, 84.8)	75.3 (74.3, 76.3)
University of Newcastle	78.2 (76.2, 80.1)	66.2 (62.7, 69.7)	84.4 (82.7, 86.2)	75.4 (73.0, 77.9)	81.0 (78.1, 83.9)	81.3 (79.5, 83.1)
University of South Australia	81.4 (79.1, 83.7)	65.5 (62.4, 68.7)	80.2 (77.8, 82.5)	73.4 (70.5, 76.3)	86.8 (84.6, 89.1)	72.6 (70.0, 75.2)
University of Southern Queensland	71.7 (69.6, 73.9)	57.7 (53.3, 62.2)	75.5 (73.5, 77.6)	75.0 (72.6, 77.5)	83.8 (80.9, 86.7)	74.4 (72.3, 76.4)
University of Tasmania	75.1 (73.2, 76.9)	54.9 (52.3, 57.5)	71.7 (69.7, 73.6)	69.1 (66.8, 71.5)	69.8 (67.3, 72.4)	68.3 (66.4, 70.3)
University of Technology Sydney	79.5 (77.4, 81.5)	65.3 (62.9, 67.7)	80.4 (78.4, 82.4)	71.4 (68.9, 74.0)	86.6 (84.9, 88.4)	74.8 (72.7, 77.0)
University of the Sunshine Coast	77.8 (75.4, 80.2)	58.2 (55.4, 61.0)	77.6 (75.2, 80.0)	70.7 (67.8, 73.6)	71.3 (68.6, 74.0)	74.2 (71.8, 76.7)
University of Wollongong	81.1 (78.4, 83.8)	66.9 (63.2, 70.6)	79.1 (76.3, 81.8)	77.8 (74.7, 80.9)	86.5 (84.0, 89.1)	73.0 (70.0, 76.0)
Victoria University	80.2 (77.7, 82.7)	67.9 (65.0, 70.8)	78.7 (76.1, 81.2)	72.0 (68.8, 75.1)	75.7 (72.9, 78.4)	70.2 (67.4, 73.0)
Western Sydney University	80.6 (78.8, 82.4)	66.6 (64.4, 68.8)	73.1 (71.1, 75.1)	70.7 (68.4, 72.9)	86.8 (85.2, 88.5)	65.9 (63.8, 68.1)
All universities	80.4 (80.1, 80.6)	60.7 (60.4, 61.0)	80.1 (79.9, 80.4)	72.7 (72.4, 73.0)	82.5 (82.2, 82.7)	75.3 (75.0, 75.6)

*Learner Engagement scores for institutions do not include responses from external mode students, consistent with practices on the QILT website. As a result, the Learner Engagement score for all universities in this table does not match the equivalent result in Table 9. See www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/student-experience for further details.

NUHEI student ratings

Figure 9 and Table 20 show student ratings of the quality of the entire educational experience item and different focus areas for postgraduate coursework students from NUHEIs. Due to the smaller number of students enrolled in NUHEIs, the confidence intervals are wider than at university level, but clearly there are some NUHEIs where the postgraduate coursework experience is rated higher than at others. For example, a number of NUHEIs

have positive student ratings for entire educational experience clearly over 85 per cent, including the Australian College of Theology (95 per cent), Sydney College of Divinity (93 per cent), Marcus Oldham College (92 per cent) and Tabor College of Higher Education (90 per cent). The same caveats apply to student ratings at institution level.

Figure 9 Quality of entire educational experience for postgraduate coursework non-university higher education institution (NUHEI) students, 2017 (% positive rating)

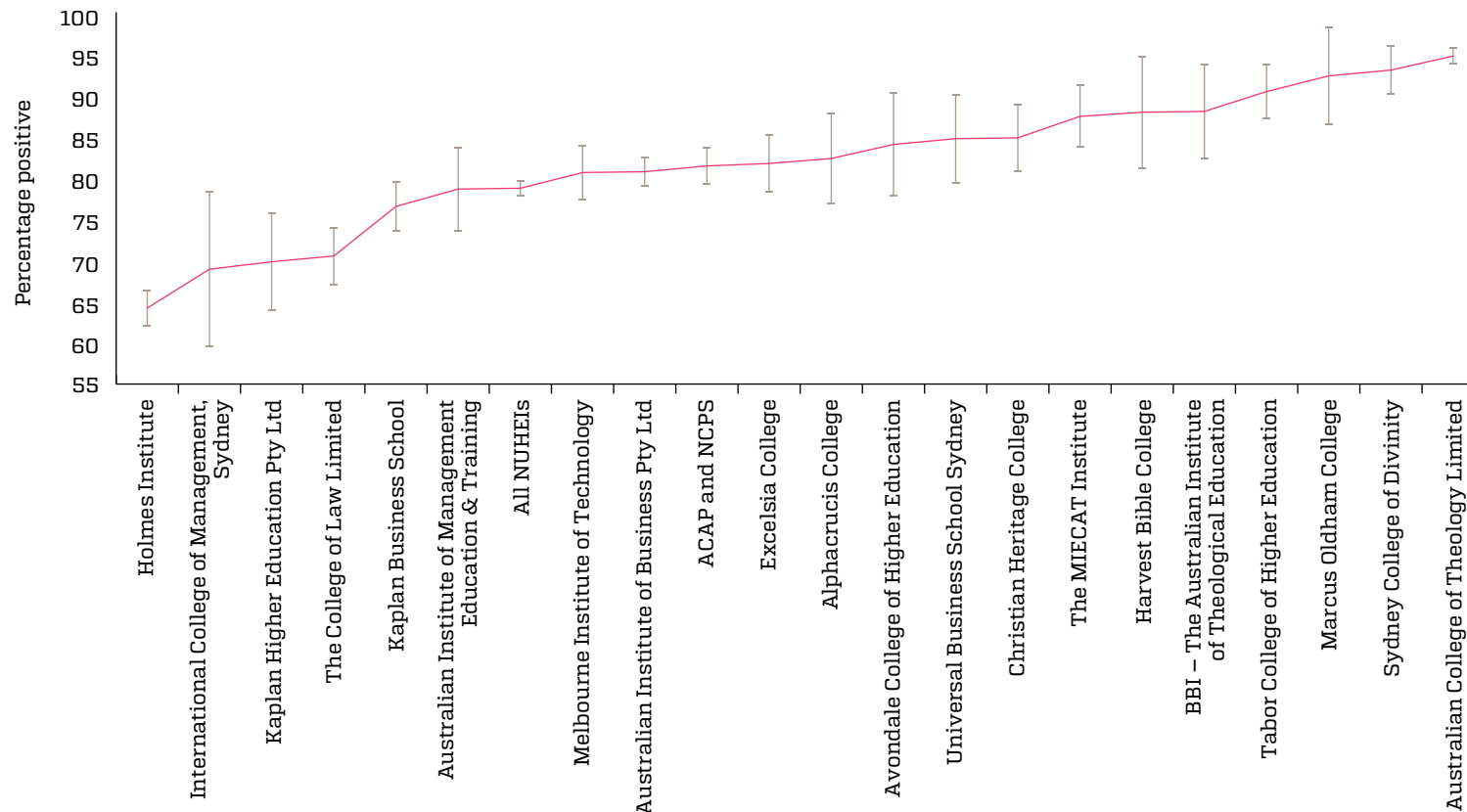


Table 20 **The postgraduate coursework student experience, 2017, by non-university higher education institution (NUHEI)**
(% positive rating, with 90% confidence intervals)

NUHEI	Skills Development	Learner Engagement*	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
ACAP and NCPS	83.5 (81.2, 85.8)	50.9 (47.6, 54.3)	86.2 (84.1, 88.3)	75.6 (72.6, 78.6)	82.9 (80.3, 85.5)	81.4 (79.1, 83.7)
Adelaide College of Divinity	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Alphacrucis College	84.4 (79.1, 89.7)	44.2 (35.5, 53.0)	87.3 (82.6, 92.1)	73.0 (66.2, 79.7)	75.5 (67.1, 83.9)	82.3 (76.8, 87.7)
Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Australian College of Theology Limited	86.6 (85.1, 88.1)	64.2 (61.8, 66.5)	96.9 (96.1, 97.7)	94.4 (93.3, 95.6)	93.5 (92.2, 94.9)	94.7 (93.7, 95.7)
Australian Institute of Business Pty Ltd	77.6 (75.6, 79.6)	n/a	71.1 (69.0, 73.2)	77.5 (75.3, 79.6)	72.9 (66.3, 79.5)	80.7 (78.9, 82.5)
Australian Institute of Management Education & Training	88.2 (84.1, 92.2)	38.9 (33.0, 44.9)	88.3 (84.3, 92.3)	72.4 (66.3, 78.6)	79.2 (70.8, 87.7)	78.6 (73.5, 83.6)
Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Avondale College of Higher Education	87.8 (82.0, 93.5)	n/a	83.7 (77.2, 90.2)	75.0 (66.6, 83.4)	n/a	84.0 (77.7, 90.3)
BBI – The Australian Institute of Theological Education	66.0 (57.5, 74.5)	n/a	94.0 (89.8, 98.2)	86.4 (79.5, 93.2)	n/a	88.0 (82.2, 93.8)
Box Hill Institute	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Christian Heritage College	86.7 (82.7, 90.7)	66.2 (59.8, 72.6)	89.8 (86.2, 93.4)	88.9 (84.9, 92.9)	75.0 (68.6, 81.4)	84.8 (80.7, 89.0)
Eastern College Australia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Excelsia College	87.3 (84.3, 90.4)	63.3 (56.1, 70.6)	81.7 (78.2, 85.2)	88.2 (85.0, 91.5)	90.0 (84.0, 96.0)	81.7 (78.2, 85.2)
Harvest Bible College	81.8 (73.8, 89.9)	24.2 (15.3, 33.2)	90.9 (84.9, 96.9)	83.3 (74.8, 91.9)	n/a	87.9 (81.1, 94.7)
Holmes Institute	75.5 (73.4, 77.6)	57.0 (54.7, 59.2)	69.2 (67.0, 71.3)	53.2 (50.7, 55.7)	48.5 (46.1, 50.9)	64.2 (62.0, 66.4)
Holmesglen Institute	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
International College of Management, Sydney	88.6 (82.1, 95.2)	68.9 (59.5, 78.3)	77.3 (68.6, 86.0)	76.2 (67.0, 85.3)	69.8 (60.1, 79.5)	68.9 (59.5, 78.3)

NUHEI	Skills Development	Learner Engagement*	Teaching Quality	Student Support	Learning Resources	Overall Educational Experience
Kaplan Business School	82.2 (79.4, 85.1)	65.3 (61.7, 68.9)	79.9 (76.9, 82.9)	82.8 (79.9, 85.6)	72.1 (68.7, 75.6)	76.5 (73.5, 79.6)
Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd	61.4 (55.1, 67.7)	n/a	57.8 (51.4, 64.1)	73.1 (67.2, 79.1)	50.0 (35.1, 64.9)	69.8 (63.9, 75.7)
Marcus Oldham College	76.9 (67.5, 86.3)	15.4 (7.3, 23.4)	96.2 (91.9, 100.0)	100.0 (99.5, 100.0)	n/a	92.3 (86.4, 98.3)
Melbourne Institute of Technology	83.0 (79.7, 86.3)	66.5 (62.6, 70.5)	80.6 (77.2, 83.9)	80.0 (76.4, 83.6)	79.9 (76.4, 83.4)	80.6 (77.3, 83.9)
Melbourne Polytechnic	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Perth Bible College	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sydney College of Divinity	88.3 (84.5, 92.1)	54.1 (45.9, 62.2)	93.8 (90.9, 96.6)	86.7 (82.4, 90.9)	89.0 (83.6, 94.5)	93.0 (90.0, 96.0)
Tabor College of Higher Education	85.1 (81.1, 89.0)	55.7 (48.5, 62.9)	93.9 (91.2, 96.5)	94.2 (91.4, 97.1)	94.8 (91.4, 98.3)	90.4 (87.1, 93.6)
The Australian Institute of Music	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
The College of Law Limited	69.0 (65.4, 72.6)	18.9 (14.4, 23.3)	77.3 (74.1, 80.5)	77.5 (74.1, 81.0)	75.1 (70.3, 80.0)	70.5 (67.0, 74.0)
The MIECAT Institute	87.1 (83.2, 90.9)	71.3 (66.2, 76.3)	95.3 (93.0, 97.7)	93.8 (90.9, 96.8)	77.6 (71.4, 83.8)	87.4 (83.6, 91.1)
Think Education	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Universal Business School Sydney	87.8 (82.8, 92.8)	75.3 (68.8, 81.7)	84.5 (79.1, 90.0)	76.5 (70.0, 83.1)	70.2 (63.3, 77.1)	84.7 (79.3, 90.1)
Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
All NUHEIs	80.0 (79.1, 81.0)	57.0 (55.6, 58.3)	80.3 (79.4, 81.3)	76.5 (75.5, 77.5)	72.0 (70.8, 73.3)	78.7 (77.7, 79.6)

n/a = result not available, fewer than 25 survey responses received.

* Learner Engagement scores for institutions do not include responses from external mode students, consistent with practices on the QILT website. As a result, the Learner Engagement score for all NUHEIs in this table does not match the equivalent result in Table 9. See www.qilt.edu.au/about-this-site/student-experience for further details.

3.6 Early departure of postgraduate coursework students

In addition to the items asking students to rate different aspects of their educational experience, postgraduate coursework students were also asked to indicate whether they had seriously considered leaving their institution during 2017. The results of this question are presented by student subgroup in Table 21. The total percentage of students who indicated that they had considered leaving in 2017 was lower for postgraduate coursework students, at 18 per cent of respondents, compared with 20 per cent for undergraduates.

Commencing postgraduate coursework students were no more likely than later-year students to have reported that they had considered leaving their institution. This may be related to most having had prior experience of tertiary education and so be unlikely to experience the transition issues traditionally associated with commencing undergraduate students.

Indigenous postgraduate students were much more likely than non-Indigenous students to indicate that they had considered leaving in 2017 by 13 percentage points. While this is of concern, it should be noted that the relatively low number of responses from this cohort could mean that these results are not statistically significant. Postgraduate coursework students who reported having a disability were also more likely to have considered leaving their institution than students who did not report having a disability by 12 percentage points. Students who spoke a language other than English as their main language at home were more likely to consider leaving their institution than those who spoke English at home by 5 percentage points. International students, on the other hand, were considerably less likely to have considered early departure by 6 percentage points compared with domestic students.

Students over forty years of age were more likely to have considered leaving than those under 25 by 7 percentage points, which may reflect increasing financial and care responsibilities of older students which can affect their study/life balance.

In terms of study mode, those studying externally were 5 percentage points more likely than internal/mixed mode students to have considered early departure. Postgraduate coursework students whose previous university experience was at the current institution were more likely to have considered departure than those whose experience was at another institution by 3 percentage points and more likely than those who were new to higher education by 7 percentage points.

Those from low SES areas were more likely than those from high SES areas to have considered early departure by 5 percentage points, 24 per cent compared with 19 per cent respectively. In terms of location, students from metropolitan areas were less likely to have considered leaving by 3 percentage points.

The percentage of postgraduate coursework students who had considered leaving their institution in 2017 is plotted against (self-reported) average grades in Figure 10. As would be expected, and was also the case for undergraduates, postgraduate coursework students who reported achieving lower grades were much more likely to consider early departure than students achieving high grades. This is most apparent for students achieving a grade of less than 50 per cent, of whom 49 per cent considered early departure.

Percentage of students who had considered early departure

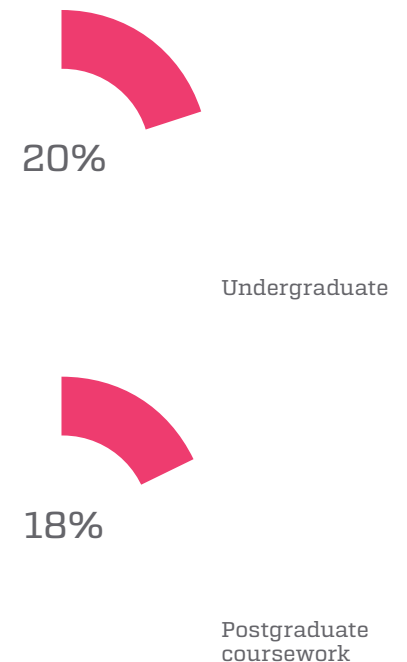


Table 21 Percentage of postgraduate coursework students who considered early departure by subgroup

	Group/subgroup	Per cent considering departure
Stage of studies	Commencing	18
	Later Year*	18
Gender	Male	18
	Female	18
Age	Under 25	15
	25 to 29	19
	30 to 39	20
	40 and over	22
Indigenous	Indigenous	31
	Non-Indigenous	18
Home language	English	20
	Other	15
Disability	Disability reported	30
	No disability reported	18
Study mode**	Internal/Mixed study mode	17
	External study mode	22
Residence status	Domestic student	21
	International student	15
First in family status [†]	First in family	20
	Not first in family	18
Previous higher education experience ^{††}	Previous experience – current institution	21
	Previous experience – another institution	18
	New to higher education	14

	Group/subgroup	Per cent considering departure
Socio-economic status	High	19
	Medium	21
	Low	24
Location	Metro	20
	Regional/remote	23
Total		18

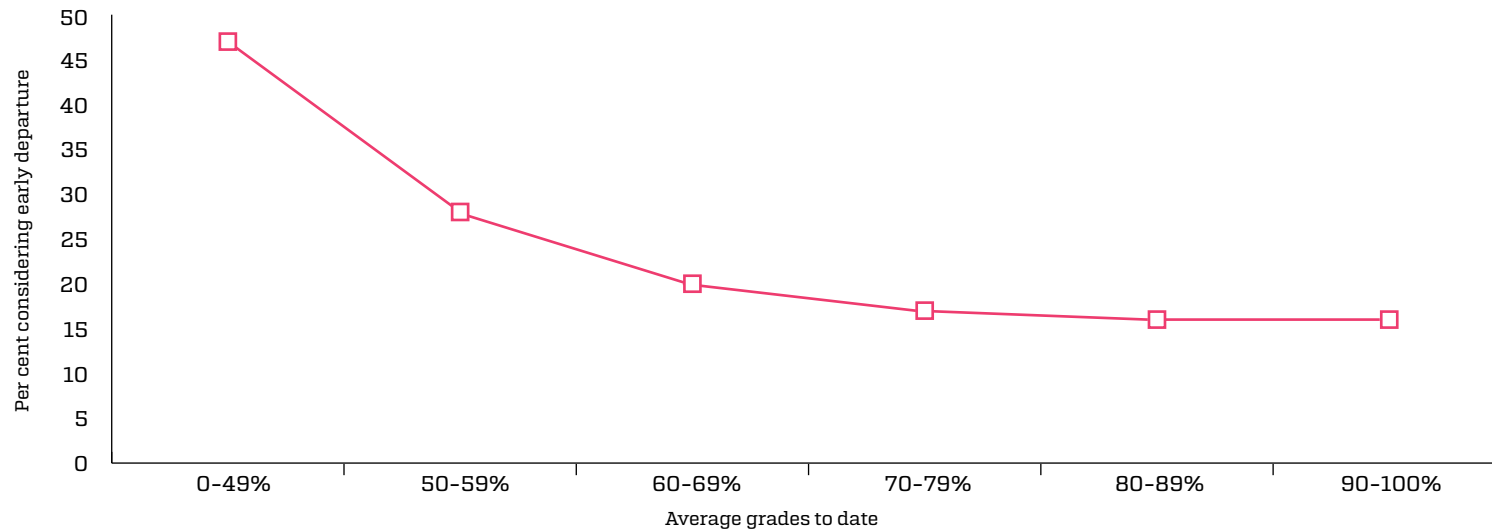
*Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

**Grouping of study mode categories has changed from previous years. Internal/Mixed mode and External/Distance/OUA in 2016.

†Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

††Previous higher education experience and First in family status include commencing students only.

Figure 10 Percentage of postgraduate coursework students who had considered early departure by average grades to date



Postgraduate coursework students who considered leaving their university in 2017 were then asked to indicate, from a list of 30 possible reasons, why they considered doing so. These are summarised in Table 22. Students could select as many reasons as applied, so the percentages do not total 100. The most common reasons for considering departure relate to situational factors, such as health or stress (35 per cent), study/life balance (27 per cent), difficulties relating to workload (25 per cent), financial difficulties (21 per cent), the need to do paid work and paid work responsibilities (both 20 per cent). The fact that these reasons were indicated by such a large percentage of students underscores the importance of student support in terms of assisting postgraduate coursework students to continue with their studies.

Of concern is that one area of difference between postgraduate coursework students and undergraduates is the proportion of those who indicated that their expectations were not met and quality concerns as reasons for early departure with 30 per cent and 22 per cent respectively compared with 23 per cent and 16 per cent for undergraduates. As was the case for undergraduates, this may indicate that further analysis among postgraduate coursework students of their goals and expectations would be beneficial in discussions around attrition and retention. However, in contrast to undergraduates, only 11 per cent of postgraduate coursework students cited boredom/lack of interest and 7 per cent a change of direction as reasons for considering early departure compared with 22 per cent and 17 per cent of undergraduates respectively.

Table 22 Selected reasons for considering early departure among postgraduate coursework students, 2017

Departure reason	Per cent considering departure 2017
Health or stress	35
Expectations not met	30
Study life balance	27
Workload difficulties	25
Academic support	24
Quality concerns	22
Financial difficulties	21
Need to do paid work	20
Paid work responsibilities	20
Family responsibilities	19
Career prospects	16
Personal reasons	15
Need a break	13
Fee difficulties	13
Other	12

Departure reason	Per cent considering departure 2017
Administrative support	12
Boredom/lack of interest	11
Academic exchange	8
Change of direction	7
Institution reputation	7
Graduating	7
Commuting difficulties	5
Other opportunities	5
Received other offer	5
Social reasons	4
Standards too high	4
Moving residence	4
Gap year/deferral	3
Government assistance	3
Travel or tourism	2



Appendices

Appendix 1

Methodology

1.1 Methodological Summary

1.1.1 Operational overview of the SES

A national approach to data collection has been in place since 2012. From 2013, this methodology was extended to a centralised sampling strategy based on administrative data from the Higher Education Management System (HEIMs) and since 2014, this included a fixed, centralised deployment schedule.

This research has been undertaken in accordance with the Privacy Act (1988) and the Australian Privacy Principles contained therein, the Privacy (Market and Social Research) Code 2014, the Australian Market and Social Research Society's Code of Professional Practice, and ISO 20252 standards.

Table 23 contains an overview of the relevant collections from 2012 to 2017. The in-scope population definition for 2017 was changed from previous implementations of the survey and consisted of commencing and later-year onshore undergraduate and new in 2017, postgraduate coursework students. In 2015, the number of institutions almost doubled to 79 and the in-scope population increased as private providers were invited to take part in the SES for the first time. This trend has continued in 2017 with 58 NUHEIs taking part in the SES, taking the total to 99 institutions across Australia. Note that Torrens University Australia was granted University status and is included in this group for this report. Issues with the timing of the SES resulted in a decrease in the overall response rate in 2017.

1.2 Survey Methodology

1.2.1 Survey population

With the exception of the expansion of the scope to NUHEIs, the definitions used for undergraduate commencing and later-

year students in the SES have been essentially unchanged from 2013. However, in 2017, postgraduate coursework students were included in the SES for the first time.

In 2017, records conforming to the agreed definition of commencing student and later year students were extracted from the national HEIMS Submission 1 Student File. Individual institutions were asked to confirm, where possible, that the selected students were still enrolled.

Commencing students

For the 2017 SES collection, commencing students were defined as first year higher education students who were enrolled in an undergraduate course, were studying onshore, had commenced study in the relevant target year; and had been enrolled for at least one semester. This definition is unchanged from the 2015 and 2016 SES and also identical to that used for the 2013 and 2014 UES. In 2012 the 'UES' definition was provided to participating institutions and relevant records were extracted by the institution and provided to the data collection agency. It is unknown if this definition was operationalised in the same way by each institution.

Postgraduate students in universities were also assigned commencing and later year categories using the same algorithm and sampled in the same manner as for university undergraduate students. This will be reviewed in 2018 to assess the applicability of this sampling methodology to the postgraduate coursework context, particularly in relation to the length of courses. Where a student was included concurrently as an undergraduate student and also a postgraduate coursework student, the higher educational attainment level was prioritised in the sample.

Table 23 SES operational overview: 2012–2017* undergraduate and postgraduate coursework

Project element	2012	2013	2014	2015	2015	2015	2016	2016	2016	2017	2017	2017
Number of participating institutions	40 unis	40 unis	40 unis	40 unis	39 NUHEIs	79 institutions	40 unis	55 NUHEIs	95 institutions	41 universities	58 NUHEIs	99 institutions
Number of 'in scope' students	445,332	342,404	330,772	368,698	22,707	391,405	370,847	31,092	401,939	546,239	48,750	594,989
Data collection period	July-October	August-November	August-October	August-October	August-October	August-October	August-October	August-October	August-October	August-October	August-October	August-October
Primary data collection mode	Online	Online	Online	Online	Online**	Online	Online	Online	Online	Online	Online	Online
Overall response rate	21.1%	29.3%	30.1%	37.6%	39.2%	37.7%	45.6%	46.2%	45.6%	36.16%	36.92%	36.23%
Number of completed surveys (students)	96,102	100,225	99,112	136,830	8,552	145,382	164,764	13,695	178,459	189,082	17,039	206,121
Number of completed surveys (courses)	n/a	108,940	108,322	148,574	8,621	157,195	178,941	13,796	192,737	201,405	17,164	218,569
Analytic unit	Student	Course	Course	Course	Course	Course	Course	Course	Course	Course	Course	Course

*In 2014, 15 NUHEIs participated in a trial of the then UES, but were not included in the in-scope population for reporting purposes, see 2014 University Experience Survey National Report.

**To maintain consistency with methodology used for the Graduate Outcomes Survey, institutions were able to access Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing to top-up underperforming strata. This data is not included in the SES National Report.

Later year students

For all SES and UES collections, undergraduate later year students were defined narratively as final year students who were enrolled in an undergraduate course, generally in their third year of study, and studying onshore.

As was the case for undergraduate commencing students, in 2012, institutions were responsible for extracting in-scope later year student records based on this loose definition. In 2013, two options for defining 'completing' were trialled as there was no indicator in HEIMS that can be used to identify a final year student.

The main difference between the two options consists of a correction for the duration of the course. This approach using the course length correction appears to appropriately identify the majority of completing students for most institutions. As such, this option has been used since 2015 to identify completing students, with specific adjustments required to accommodate the idiosyncrasies of a small number of universities with less typical course structures.

The 2012 definition of final year students noted that these students should have commenced study prior to the target year. This component of the definition was problematic for courses that are 12 months in duration. From 2013, students who were enrolled in these shorter courses were included in the sample as completing students.

In order to meet the sampling requirements to support representativeness for smaller non-university providers and also those who did not provide data through HEIMS, most NUHEIs undertook the SES as a census of all in-scope higher education students. 'Later year' for these students was defined as 'not a commencing student'.

As was the case for commencing postgraduate coursework students, this process was followed for later year students in 2017 and will be reviewed in 2018 to assess its applicability to the postgraduate coursework context.

1.2.2 Sampling design

Sample frame

As with the 2013 and 2014 UES, and 2015 and 2016 SES, the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework sample frames for the 2017 SES were based on a 'top-down' approach using population data from HEIMS to create the sample frames for most institutions. Compared with the 'bottom-up' approach utilised for the 2012 UES, whereby institutions provided extracts from their student data systems to the survey administrators to serve as a basis for the sample frame, the approach adopted for the 2013 and 2014 UES and the 2015–2017 SES implementations reduces the likelihood of accidental bias being introduced due to the sample selection process and ensures a nationally consistent approach to sampling. While it would have been ideal to use validated Submission 2 data for this purpose, this was not possible

due to the timeline for data collection. To address any potential sample quality issues resulting from this time lag, each institution was asked to confirm, where possible, whether or not the selected students were still enrolled. For institutions which did not submit a valid Submission 1 file to HEIMS, a comparable, alternative method was employed to collect sample data.

Approach to sampling

For the 2012 and 2013 UES, the approach to sampling was broadly consistent whereby the number of students for each stratum was calculated using the approach described in the 2012 UES National Report.¹ All students were selected for strata, up to 1,333 students, effectively a census of these strata. For strata larger than 1,333 students, a random sample of 1,333 students was drawn in the hope that this would yield at least 200 responses. According to the report, this value was derived from a desire for error bands of ± 5 per cent at a 95 per cent level of confidence.²

An analysis of this approach suggested that it had a number of shortcomings. In general, large strata were substantially oversampled and often achieved completed surveys well in excess of the target of 200, with the result that students from large strata were substantially over-represented. This had the flow-on effect of increasing the gender imbalance in the sample of secured responses, as many of the large strata consisted of course offerings where males are traditionally under-represented, such as nursing and education. Lastly, the sampling approach did not take into consideration the differential response rates across strata.

1 Radloff, A., Coates, H., Taylor, R., James, R. & Krause, K. (2012). 2012 University Experience Survey National Report. Retrieved 15 Dec., 2014, from docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/ues2012nationalreport.pdf.

2 These error bands were calculated on the basis of average scores, not percentage positive results.

In 2014, the approach taken to sampling was refined, with strata defined on the basis of institution and study area.¹ From 2015, required sample sizes were calculated at the stratum level taking into account the number of records available and the goal of reporting stratum-level results at a level of precision of ± 7.5 percentage points at a 90 per cent level of confidence.² In order to establish the required sample sizes, a target number of completed surveys was calculated for each stratum in order to achieve the desired level of precision. The number of students to be sampled in 2017 from each stratum to achieve this target was estimated using the prior response rate for that stratum from the 2016 SES, or the overall response rate for the institution if no stratum-level response rate was available (i.e. no in-scope students fell into the stratum in the 2016 collection).

The sample selection was validated against population parameters to ensure that appropriate proportions of gender, qualification, mode of attendance, study area and citizenship characteristics were present in the sample (see Appendix 1.4.2).

1.3 Data collection and processing

1.3.1 Data collection

In 2017, the primary mode for the SES continues to be online, with the addition of an option for institutions to 'top-up' with telephone surveying. This additional telephone data is not included in the current report in order to maintain methodological consistency over time. The online survey was programmed and hosted by the Social Research Centre. Students were provided with a unique login to complete the survey.

¹ Study area definitions are presented in Appendix 7: Study area definitions.

² The original precision target was ± 5 percentage points at a 90 per cent level of confidence; however it became apparent that, when the required sample sizes were compared with the response rates achieved in 2013, it would not be possible to achieve the required number of responses for a substantial proportion of the strata.

A broad range of promotional methods and materials were developed to build awareness of QILT and the SES in the higher education sector and encourage participation amongst the student population. There were two main phases of student engagement. The first was an awareness-building campaign focusing on pre-survey engagement, which ensured that students were aware of the survey well in advance of the start of fieldwork. The response maximisation phase commenced after the survey was deployed and centred on scheduled invitation and reminder correspondence encouraging completion of the survey, and a national incentive strategy.

A change in 2017 involved the testing of SMS and telephone reminders earlier in the field period with specific groups targeted for early intervention based on demographic characteristics identified as high risk for non-response.

As had been the case in previous years, a key focus of the 2017 SES was working collaboratively with institutions, wherever possible, to maximise participation rates in the survey. Many institutions undertook supplementary activities to promote the SES and encourage student participation. The most commonly employed methods were pre-awareness letters and emails, notifications on learning management systems, emails from the Vice-Chancellor, social media posts, institutional websites and internal staff emails.

Additional populations

As has been the case since 2013, institutions were offered the option of including out of scope populations to the SES for use in their internal benchmarking and continuous improvement processes. In total 14 institutions chose to include extra populations in their 2017 SES collection, with five adding middle year postgraduate students, two including middle year students, four off-shore cohorts, two including enabling or foundation courses and one adding online students.

Data from these populations are provided to institutions through their institutional data files and Tableau reports for analysis. However, these responses are not included in national reporting.

1.3.2 Data processing

Definition of the analytic unit

The analytic unit for the 2012 UES was the student. The data file contained one record for each respondent to the survey. For the 2013 UES, changes to the instrument allowed students in double degrees to respond separately for each course element, which were treated as two separate responses for analytical purposes. The analytic unit for the 2015-2017 SES, as well as the 2013 and 2014 UES, is the course.

From 2013, a response was defined as valid and complete if the student had completed units in the course, there was a minimum of one valid SES focus area score, and, in the case of double degrees for which the student had at least one valid SES focus area score for each course and the courses were in two different study areas. When double degree students had completed units in both components and they were in the same study area, the first record was selected for analysis. Where the two components of a double degree fell into different study areas, the study area with the lowest population was selected for primary analysis but both study areas are included in analysis of study areas. Of the 206,121 university and non-university students who completed the 2017 SES, 12,448 (6 per cent) provided a valid response for their second course element, resulting in 218,569 valid responses.

Data cleaning and preparation

To ensure consistency in the cleaning process, records were first merged from all separate institution level files (as collected on the online platform) into one master file. Sample variables were merged from the original population file for checking and to fill any sample data missing from the online collection platform as a result of students prematurely exiting the online questionnaire.

Where a course name matched multiple course codes, the student was assigned to the course with the highest enrolment where no conflicts between the different courses existed. Where an appropriate course code for the course name supplied by the student could not be found, queries were sent to the Survey Manager of the relevant institution. In cases where the Survey Manager advised that a combined course did not exist for two degrees listed by a student, they were treated as two unrelated concurrent degrees.

A new checking process was introduced in 2016 and continued in 2017, using a subset of the SES data file distribution to allow institutions to review course changes made by students from original HEIMs data, should they wish to do so. This was undertaken in order to ensure that institutions agreed that the changes and subsequent coding as derived above were correct and also whether those responses should remain in scope for the SES (for example that they had been enrolled in the new course for more than one semester) and/or whether commencing or later year status was maintained.

Following this process in 2017, the scope status of the student (i.e. whether they were enrolled in a degree eligible for the SES) was re-derived based on revised course level data. Students who had switched from an eligible undergraduate course to an ineligible course, such as postgraduate research, were excluded. All items in the body of the questionnaire were re-filtered to their respective bases to ensure there were no errant responses. After cleaning, normalised SES variables, SES scale variables and consolidated demographic variables were derived. In the case of double degrees, SES focus area variables were derived separately for each course. After the data were finalised, the student level file was split to course level.

- Where a student was enrolled in a single degree, the student level record became the course level record.
- Where a student was enrolled in a double degree and had completed units in only one course, the student level record became the course level record.
- Where a student was enrolled in a double degree (including two concurrent unrelated degrees) and had completed units in both courses, two course level records were created: the student level record minus course-specific items completed for the second degree, and the student level record with course-specific items completed for the first degree replaced with those completed for the second degree.

The Social Research Centre is currently reviewing the results of his process to evaluate the practice of allowing course changes by students as part of the SES, and will work with the sector to test and implement change if warranted to improve accuracy and minimise the administrative burden on institutions.

1.4 Data quality

1.4.1 Response rates

Starting from 2015, quality assurance in the UES/SES emphasises stratum-level response rates rather than overall response rates. Institutions are given targets for each study area and encouraged to promote student engagement and participation at this level.

Nonetheless, overall response rates remain a relevant measure of survey administration effectiveness. The overall response rate for the 2017 SES was 36.2 per cent. Table 24 shows response rates by institution type and study level. Note that response rates are calculated on the basis of the final sample, once opt-outs, disqualified and out of scope records have been removed.

The SES 2017 overall response rate of 36.2 per cent represents a decline of 9.4 percentage points from 2016, as shown in Table 25. Almost all universities registered a decline in their response rate compared with 2016, by up to 27 percentage points. Of the 47 NUHEIs who participated in both 2016 and 2017, 38 had lower response rates than in 2016, but nine institutions improved response rates, one institution by 22 percentage points. It should be noted that some NUHEIs have quite small populations which can mean that a relatively small shift in the number of responses can translate into large shifts in response rates. Response rates by institution are shown in Tables 26 and 27.

Table 24 2017 SES response rates

	Initial population	Final sample	Responses	Response rate (%)
Universities	546,239	522,831	189,082	36.2
NUHEIs	48,750	46,145	17,039	36.9
Undergraduate	415,438	398,872	148,126	37.1
Postgraduate	179,551	170,104	57,995	34.1
Total	594,989	568,976	206,121	36.2

Table 25 Participation and response rates in the SES, 2012–2017

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017*
Total response rate (%)	21.1	29.3	30.1	37.7	45.6	36.2
University response rate (%)	21.1	29.3	30.1	37.6	45.6	36.2
NUHEI response rate (%)	n/a	n/a	n/a	39.2	46.2	36.9

*Includes postgraduate coursework level.

In 2017, a number of factors combined to reduce the effectiveness of response maximisation strategies. Due to unavoidable issues relating to IT security, the launch of the 2017 SES was delayed by almost one week. The lack of certainty related to this delay affected the ability of many institutions to deploy effective response maximisation strategies as they had in the previous year. In addition to the uncertainty of the SES launch, a number of institutions used the opportunity to deploy other surveys in the usual SES time window, leading to some populations being over surveyed. It was also the case that the ‘Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities’ report was released in the same time window, which may have overshadowed the SES in the minds of university management, staff and students.

The addition of postgraduate coursework students had been communicated to institutions. However, due to the uncertainty surrounding the deployment of the SES, many institutions were unable to implement response maximisation strategies targeting this group. This, coupled with traditionally lower survey engagement from this group as evidenced previously in optional additional populations, may also have contributed, in part, to the decrease in response rates.

Finally, issues with whitelisting and greylisting of email invitations and reminders to institutional email addresses also contributed to a substantial degree to a decrease in responses for institutions which had not provided alternate email addresses or SMS contact details for students.

Table 26 SES response rates, 2014–2017 – universities

University	2014	2015	2016	2017
Australian Catholic University	20.9	46.1	44.0	47.3
Bond University	42.8	46.9	54.5	37.8
Central Queensland University	38.6	47.7	55.9	33.9
Charles Darwin University	37.3	45.2	51.7	46.0
Charles Sturt University	35.4	39.4	49.1	36.1
Curtin University	28.1	31.4	42.1	34.7
Deakin University	30.1	31.2	45.0	40.5
Edith Cowan University	33.4	39.8	45.2	37.5
Federation University Australia	29.3	36.4	42.2	38.3
Flinders University	32.9	40.3	49.4	39.3
Griffith University	26.8	38.1	46.9	37.1
James Cook University	36.5	41.2	48.8	32.1
La Trobe University	26.7	40.2	44.6	38.0
Macquarie University	29.5	38.4	39.4	38.4
Monash University	36.9	44.7	53.3	45.1
Murdoch University	35.6	45.6	47.6	37.1
Queensland University of Technology	25.0	37.0	41.4	27.4
RMIT University	25.0	30.3	46.2	29.9
Southern Cross University	32.4	36.8	44.5	27.6
Swinburne University of Technology	22.6	34.3	44.8	35.1
The Australian National University	33.5	38.8	46.2	36.7
The University of Adelaide	38.4	46.1	56.3	45.8
The University of Melbourne	29.6	43.4	52.3	46.3
The University of Notre Dame Australia	27.1	39.8	52.7	44.2

University	2014	2015	2016	2017
The University of Queensland	38.6	42.9	52.4	43.6
The University of South Australia	30.8	37.8	44.4	26.3
The University of Sydney	29.6	36.2	45.5	23.8
The University of Western Australia	30.8	37.4	48.1	28.4
Torrens University Australia			39.6	25.8
University of Canberra	27.8	36.4	44.6	36.4
University of Divinity	50.4	55.2	60.8	51.2
University of New England	37.0	41.2	46.0	39.7
University of New South Wales	27.7	37.5	42.4	40.4
University of Newcastle	30.3	37.8	40.2	33.3
University of Southern Queensland	35.0	44.3	53.0	42.1
University of Tasmania	35.7	38.8	44.8	44.2
University of Technology Sydney	25.7	31.0	40.5	23.6
University of the Sunshine Coast	37.3	48.1	53.5	46.6
University of Wollongong	29.3	36.6	42.5	26.6
Victoria University	26.8	27.0	35.1	32.0
Western Sydney University	24.2	29.1	42.2	31.1
Total	30.1	37.6	45.6	36.2

Table 27 SES response rates, 2014–2017 – NUHEI

Institution	2014	2015	2016	2017
Academy of Design Australia	n/a	60.0	52.1	45.1
Academy of Information Technology	n/a	50.0	72.7	35.8
ACAP and NCPS	n/a	41.6	44.2	46.6
Adelaide Central School of Art	n/a	n/a	75.6	63.8
Adelaide College of Divinity	n/a	62.0	62.2	51.2
Alphacrucis College	60.5	48.6	47.3	39.1
Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts	n/a	n/a	48.8	51.5
Australian College of Christian Studies	66.7	57.1	32.3	30.6
Australian College of Theology Limited	n/a	43.2	46.4	53.0
Australian Institute of Business Pty Ltd	n/a	n/a	n/a	36.5
Australian Institute of Management Education & Training	n/a	n/a	n/a	41.1
Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors	n/a	47.7	50.4	29.3
Avondale College of Higher Education	48.5	44.1	54.2	55.9
BBI – The Australian Institute of Theological Education	n/a	n/a	n/a	44.6
Box Hill Institute	n/a	n/a	48.3	29.9
Campion College Australia	n/a	n/a	79.7	80.5
Canberra Institute of Technology	n/a	n/a	n/a	40.5
Chisholm Institute	n/a	n/a	45.0	40.7
Christian Heritage College	62.5	47.8	59.6	50.5
Collarts (Australian College of the Arts)	n/a	n/a	59.9	46.4
Eastern College Australia	63.4	56.5	61.1	60.9
Endeavour College of Natural Health	n/a	44.6	45.1	40.9
Excelsia College	n/a	44.7	66.2	77.4
Harvest Bible College	n/a	n/a	n/a	58.3
Holmes Institute	n/a	18.6	30.9	21.1

Institution	2014	2015	2016	2017
Holmesglen Institute	56.4	45.5	54.1	43.2
International College of Management, Sydney	n/a	n/a	42.7	15.6
Jazz Music Institute	n/a	43.5	44.4	40.3
Kaplan Business School	n/a	32.7	47.8	38.0
Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd	n/a	71.7	69.7	34.7
Macleay College	n/a	n/a	64.7	49.6
Marcus Oldham College	64.1	69.6	73.9	69.9
Melbourne Institute of Technology	40.9	n/a	51.2	36.7
Melbourne Polytechnic	41.4	31.8	44.0	36.5
Moore Theological College	n/a	n/a	n/a	46.4
National Art School	n/a	56.8	59.2	55.7
Paramount College of Natural Medicine	n/a	45.5	64.9	51.1
Perth Bible College	n/a	n/a	n/a	53.3
Photography Studies College (Melbourne)	n/a	66.1	62.7	69.6
Raffles College Pty Ltd	34.4	n/a	63.5	46.1
SAE Institute	n/a	42.6	40.8	42.4
South Metropolitan TAFE	32.7	n/a	51.9	30.4
Study Group Australia Pty Limited	n/a	n/a	38.1	31.5
Sydney College of Divinity	42.1	n/a	49.0	37.8
Tabor College of Higher Education	64.3	55.4	63.0	53.6
TAFE NSW	n/a	n/a	55.3	39.9
TAFE Queensland	n/a	32.2	58.8	42.9
TAFE South Australia	n/a	37.1	55.3	77.3
The Australian College of Physical Education	n/a	29.2	40.3	32.7
The Australian Institute of Music	n/a	38.6	40.5	25.9
The College of Law Limited	n/a	n/a	n/a	20.7

Institution	2014	2015	2016	2017
The JMC Academy	n/a	n/a	n/a	40.5
The MIECAT Institute	n/a	n/a	n/a	66.4
Think Education	n/a	n/a	52.7	30.5
Universal Business School Sydney	n/a	n/a	46.3	33.2
UOW College	n/a	29.7	43.4	27.3
Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia	n/a	68.8	n/a	67.5
William Angliss Institute	n/a	n/a	45.5	31.7
Total	47.9	39.2	46.2	36.9

*n/a = did not participate in the SES data collection.

1.4.2 Response characteristics

In terms of minimising Total Survey Error, response rates are less important than the representativeness of the respondent profile. To investigate the extent to which those who responded to the SES are representative of the in-scope population, respondent characteristics are presented alongside population parameters in Table 28 and 29.

As was the case in 2016, it is evident that many of the characteristics of respondents in 2017 very closely match those of the in-scope population, especially with respect to stage of studies, Indigenous status, disability status, first in family to attend a higher education institution and study mode. language spoken at home and citizenship status are also surprisingly similar, given that students who speak a language other than English at home and international students are traditionally less likely to participate in

similar surveys. As is still the case since 2012, the largest potential source of non-response bias is in relation to gender, with male students substantially under-represented in the sample of secured responses by 7.1 percentage points (up from 6.2 percentage points in 2016) and 3.7 percentage points for postgraduate coursework students. Younger students are also somewhat less likely to respond with undergraduates under 25 under-represented by around 2.6 percentage points and postgraduate coursework students by 4.1 percentage points with postgraduate coursework students aged 40 and over over-represented by 3.8 percentage points. For both undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students, domestic students are somewhat over-represented by 1.5 and 2.8 percentage points respectively. Postgraduate coursework students whose home language is not English are also under-represented by around 2.9 percentage points.

Table 28 2017 Undergraduate SES response characteristics and population parameters by subgroup*

	Group/subgroup	SES respondents: n	SES respondents: %	In-scope population: n	In-scope population: %
Stage of studies	Commencing	87,907	59.3	239,467	57.6
	Later year**	60,219	40.7	175,971	42.4
Gender	Male	53,154	35.9	178,373	43.0
	Female	94,871	64.1	236,840	57.0
Age	Under 25	113,234	76.4	328,380	79.1
	25 to 29	12,906	8.7	38,611	9.3
	30 to 39	12,021	8.1	28,777	6.9
	40 and over	9,959	6.7	19,629	4.7
Indigenous	Indigenous	1,973	1.3	5,562	1.3
	Non-Indigenous	146,153	98.7	409,876	98.7
Home language	Home language – English	126,989	85.7	354,259	85.3
	Home language – Other	21,137	14.3	61,179	14.7
Disability	Disability reported	8,844	6.0	21,223	5.1
	No disability reported	139,280	94.0	394,210	94.9
Study mode†	Internal study mode	135,527	91.5	380,515	91.6
	External/multi-modal study mode	12,599	8.5	34,923	8.4
Residence status	Domestic student	125,663	84.8	346,148	83.3
	International student	22,453	15.2	69,225	16.7
First in family status††	First in family	34,140	45.2	92,329	45.6
	Not first in family	41,353	54.8	110,314	54.4
Socio-economic status	High	39,340	31.7	110,200	32.2
	Medium	63,796	51.4	174,623	51.1
	Low	20,979	16.9	56,892	16.6
Location	Metro	94,886	76.5	268,572	78.7
	Regional/remote	29,068	23.5	72,618	21.3
Total		148,126	100.0	415,438	100.0

*Some subgroups may not add to 100 per cent due to missing data.

**Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

†Grouping of study mode categories has changed from previous years. Internal/Mixed mode and External/Distance/OUA in 2016.

††First in family status includes commencing students only.

Table 29 Postgraduate coursework SES response characteristics and population parameters by subgroup*

	Group/subgroup	SES respondents: n	SES respondents: %	In-scope population: n	In-scope population: %
Stage of studies	Commencing	31,145	53.7	92,956	51.8
	Later year**	26,850	46.3	86,595	48.2
Gender	Male	23,908	41.2	80,593	44.9
	Female	34,069	58.8	98,910	55.1
Age	Under 25	21,752	37.5	74,670	41.6
	25 to 29	14,669	25.3	48,634	27.1
	30 to 39	11,850	20.4	32,972	18.4
	40 and over	9,708	16.7	23,223	12.9
Indigenous	Indigenous	343	0.6	1,104	0.6
	Non-Indigenous	57,652	99.4	178,447	99.4
Home language	Home language – English	40,065	69.1	119,674	66.7
	Home language – Other	17,930	30.9	59,877	33.3
Disability	Disability reported	1,954	3.4	5,136	2.9
	No disability reported	56,041	96.6	174,414	97.1
Study mode†	Internal study mode	45,723	78.8	142,317	79.3
	External/multi-modal study mode	12,272	21.2	37,234	20.7
Residence status	Domestic student	32,827	56.6	96,596	53.8
	International student	25,167	43.4	82,898	46.2
First in family status††	First in family	10,265	41.9	28,911	40.7
	Not first in family	14,237	58.1	42,196	59.3
Socio-economic status	High	13,099	41.6	38,557	41.6
	Medium	14,628	46.5	42,836	46.3
	Low	3,752	11.9	11,189	12.1
Location	Metro	25,090	79.9	74,872	81.1
	Regional/remote	6,319	20.1	17,503	18.9
Total		57,995	100.0	179,551	100.0

*Some subgroups may not add to 100 per cent due to missing data.

**Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

†Grouping of study mode categories has changed from previous years. Internal/Mixed mode and External/Distance/OUA in 2016.

††First in family status includes commencing students only.

The sample also closely matched the in-scope population in terms of study area (see Tables 30 and 31). Again, consistent with 2016, the largest difference between the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework sample and population was observed in relation to the Business and management study area (4.5 percentage points and 3.5 percentage points respectively). Much smaller differences were observed in other undergraduate study areas. This would indicate that the general drop in response rates in 2017 has affected traditionally low responding areas more intensely which may be an indicator of the efficacy of the targeted response maximisation strategies impacted in this cycle.

Similar to 2016, the largest undergraduate study area in the higher education population was Business and management with 21.7 per cent. Humanities, culture and social sciences with 11.5 per cent was the second highest overall. Science and mathematics was third largest overall with 10.2 per cent. In total, these three study areas constitute 43.4 per cent of the undergraduate SES higher education population.

The postgraduate coursework population was also dominated heavily by Business and management students, representing 32.5 per cent of the population followed by Teaching with 12.7 per cent.

1.4.3 Weighting

In the 2012 UES, weighting analysis was undertaken to ensure that reported results were representative of the overall population. In 2013, weighting was trialled to correct the serious gender imbalance in the sample of secured responses, but was found to have no substantial impact on the results at a national level. There was ongoing under-representation of male respondents in the 2014 UES and the 2015 - 2017 SES. However, it is evident that post-stratification weighting as undertaken does not significantly affect the results at a national level. This observation suggests that the under-representation of male respondents to the SES has not introduced any serious bias at a national level. This finding is consistent with the results obtained since 2013 and is presumably related to the fact that the respondents are consistent with the in-scope population on most characteristics and study areas in particular. To minimise complexity for the reader, it was decided to analyse the SES data without applying weights. All results presented in this report, aside from those in Table 32 and Table 33, are based on unweighted data.

The notion of corrective weighting has been revisited each year and will be analysed in more detail as part of the 2017 SES methodological reporting process.

Table 30 2017 undergraduate SES student response characteristics and population parameters by study area

Study area	SES respondents: n	SES respondents: %	In-scope population: n	In-scope population: %
Science and mathematics	16,685	10.4	48,309	10.2
Computing and information systems	5,982	3.7	18,067	3.8
Engineering	9,669	6.0	28,466	6.0
Architecture and built environment	3,445	2.1	11,367	2.4
Agriculture and environmental studies	2,200	1.4	5,255	1.1
Health services and support	13,462	8.4	38,053	8.1
Medicine	1,349	0.8	4,211	0.9
Nursing	13,088	8.2	34,948	7.4
Pharmacy	1,127	0.7	3,018	0.6
Dentistry	624	0.4	1,379	0.3
Veterinary science	818	0.5	2,040	0.4
Rehabilitation	2,555	1.6	6,068	1.3
Teacher education	11,983	7.5	32,315	6.8
Business and management	27,611	17.2	102,649	21.7
Humanities, culture and social sciences	20,089	12.5	54,457	11.5
Social work	3,321	2.1	8,311	1.8
Psychology	6,494	4.0	16,586	3.5
Law and paralegal studies	5,685	3.5	16,689	3.5
Creative arts	8,497	5.3	23,165	4.9
Communications	5,201	3.2	15,173	3.2
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	484	0.3	1,623	0.3
Total	160,369	100.0	472,149	100.0

Table 31 2017 postgraduate coursework SES student response characteristics and population parameters by study area

Study area	SES respondents: n	SES respondents: %	In-scope population: n	In-scope population: %
Science and mathematics	1,562	2.7	4,377	2.4
Computing and information systems	4,286	7.4	13,946	7.7
Engineering	3,999	6.9	13,084	7.2
Architecture and built environment	1,583	2.7	5,175	2.9
Agriculture and environmental studies	775	1.3	1,775	1.0
Health services and support	3,470	6.0	10,440	5.8
Medicine	1,744	3.0	5,529	3.0
Nursing	2,044	3.5	6,792	3.7
Pharmacy	250	0.4	1,072	0.6
Dentistry	173	0.3	707	0.4
Veterinary science	237	0.4	530	0.3
Rehabilitation	540	0.9	1,661	0.9
Teacher education	8,195	14.1	23,025	12.7
Business and management	16,875	29.0	59,014	32.5
Humanities, culture and social sciences	4,155	7.1	10,444	5.8
Social work	2,431	4.2	5,747	3.2
Psychology	1,780	3.1	4,047	2.2
Law and paralegal studies	2,236	3.8	8,559	4.7
Creative arts	758	1.3	2,258	1.2
Communications	931	1.6	2,686	1.5
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	176	0.3	569	0.3
Total	58,200	100.0	181,437	100.0

Table 32 Comparison of 2017 undergraduate raw and weighted percentage satisfied scores by subgroup

		Quality of entire educational experience		Quality of teaching	
Group	Subgroup	Raw	Weighted	Raw	Weighted
Stage of studies	Commencing	81	80	81	80
	Later year*	75	75	76	75
Gender	Male	76	76	76	76
	Female	80	79	81	80
Indigenous	Indigenous	78	78	80	79
	Non-Indigenous	79	78	79	78
Home language	Home language – English	79	78	79	79
	Home language – Other	76	75	76	76
Disability	Disability reported	76	75	78	77
	No disability reported	79	78	79	78
Study mode**	Internal study mode	78	78	79	78
	External/multi-modal study mode	81	80	81	80
Residence status	Domestic student	79	79	80	79
	International student	75	74	76	75
First in family status†	First in family	82	81	82	81
	Not first in family	81	81	81	81
Socio-economic Status	High	80	79	80	79
	Medium	79	79	80	79
	Low	78	78	79	79
Location	Metro	79	79	80	79
	Regional/remote	79	79	80	79
Total		79	78	79	78

*Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

**Grouping of study mode categories has changed from previous years. Internal/Mixed mode and External/Distance/OUA in 2016.

†First in family status includes commencing students only.

Table 33 Comparison of undergraduate raw and weighted percentage satisfied scores by study area

Study area	Quality of entire educational experience		Quality of teaching	
	Raw	Weighted	Raw	Weighted
Science and mathematics	81	80	82	81
Computing and information systems	71	71	69	69
Engineering	73	73	71	70
Architecture and built environment	75	75	74	73
Agriculture and environmental studies	80	79	81	81
Health services and support	80	79	81	81
Medicine	83	79	78	74
Nursing	76	75	77	77
Pharmacy	81	80	79	78
Dentistry	71	71	70	69
Veterinary science	78	76	78	77
Rehabilitation	87	86	88	87
Teacher education	78	77	78	78
Business and management	76	76	75	74
Humanities, culture and social sciences	82	82	85	85
Social work	82	81	83	83
Psychology	83	83	85	84
Law and paralegal studies	79	79	81	81
Creative arts	79	78	81	81
Communications	81	80	81	81
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	78	77	83	82
Total	79	78	79	78

Table 34 **Strata meeting desired level of precision for higher education students,* 2016–2017 – 21 study areas**

Focus area	2016: n	2016: %	2017: n	2017: %	Change p.p.
Learner Engagement	581	79.0	508	68.6	-10.4
Teaching Quality	640	87.1	589	79.6	-7.5
Learning Resources	613	83.4	563	76.1	-7.3
Student Support	579	78.8	504	68.1	-10.7
Skills Development	636	86.5	594	80.3	-6.3
Total strata	735		740		

*±7.5 percentage points at a 90 per cent level of confidence.

1.4.4 Stratum-level precision

One of the major methodological improvements for the 2014 UES was the change in focus from the institution level to the stratum level (study areas within institutions) for both sampling and response maximisation. The original intention of these methodological refinements was to reduce gender bias by targeting male-dominated study areas for response maximisation activities. This approach has also been employed across the 2015-2017 SES.

Table 34 shows that a combined total of five more strata achieved the desired level of precision across the five focus areas in 2017 compared with 2016 which is a relatively positive outcome given the drop in response rate. This is in part due to the inclusion of postgraduate coursework students and a small increase in the number of NUHEIs participating in 2017.

For the new postgraduate coursework segment we see a relatively high number of strata which reached the desired level of precision with 584. It is envisaged that this will increase once this population are more fully engaged in the SES through institution level response maximisation activities.

Table 35 **Postgraduate coursework strata reportable at a minimum precision of +/-7.5% – 21 study areas by institution type**

	2017 overall	
Scale	n	%
Learner Engagement	261	44.7
Teaching Quality	329	56.3
Learning Resources	300	51.4
Student Support	237	40.6
Skills Development	327	56.0
Total strata	584	

1.4.5 Precision of national estimates

As the 2017 SES data constituted a representative sample of the in-scope student population, it is reasonable to use statistical methods to analyse the sample of secured responses to make inferences about the population. To gauge the variability of the estimated results due to sampling variation, Tables 36 and 37 and Tables 38 and 39 present student ratings of the quality of the entire educational experience and the quality of teaching items by subgroup and study area, respectively, with 90 per cent confidence intervals around the point estimates. These confidence intervals have been calculated as 1.645 times the standard error. Because the number of responses constitutes more than 10 percent of the student population, standard errors have been adjusted by a finite population correction. This correction reduces the size of the confidence intervals surrounding the estimates. The calculation of these confidence intervals is detailed in Appendix 5: Construction of confidence intervals.

As expected in a large national sample, the confidence intervals are generally narrow. At a national level for undergraduate students, for example, the 90 per cent confidence interval remains consistent with 2016 at around 0.3 percentage points for the quality of entire educational experience and quality of teaching (see bottom row of Table 36 and Table 38). Similarly, for postgraduate coursework students the 90 percent confidence interval is also relatively small at around 0.4 and 0.5 percentage points respectively (see bottom row of Table 37 and Table 39). Confidence intervals for undergraduate estimates tend to be

wider for smaller cohorts such as indigenous students, those who reported a disability, external/distance students, NESB and international students. Similarly, undergraduate confidence intervals tend to be wider when responses are broken down into the 21 study areas (see Table 38). The study areas with the widest confidence intervals were Tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation, Dentistry, and Veterinary Science with widths of more than 3.6–5.2 percentage points overall observed in relation to both the quality of the entire educational experience and teaching quality items.

Similarly for postgraduate coursework students smaller demographic groups such as indigenous students, those with a reported disability and low socio-economic status exhibited wider confidence intervals for the quality of the entire educational experience with 6.6 percentage points, 2.7 percentage points and 2.0 percentage points respectively.

As seen in Table 39, in relation to study areas, it is again smaller study areas which exhibit the widest confidence intervals for both the quality of the entire educational experience and quality of teaching with Dentistry, Tourism, hospitality, personal services, sport and recreation, Pharmacy and Veterinary science with intervals between 11.1 and 6.6 percentage points.

It is also important to note that greater variability would likely be observed if this same exercise was performed on the data of a single institution. Notwithstanding this point, analysis has given evidence that at sector wide level, the results presented in this report are likely to be close to the unknown population parameters.

Table 36 Percentage positive ratings by student sub-group with 90 per cent confidence intervals, undergraduates

Group	Subgroup	Quality of entire educational experience	Quality of teaching
Stage of studies	Commencing	80.7 (80.5, 80.8)	81.0 (80.9, 81.2)
	Later year*	75.4 (75.1, 75.6)	76.1 (75.9, 76.4)
Gender	Male	76.1 (75.9, 76.4)	76.4 (76.2, 76.7)
	Female	79.9 (79.7, 80.0)	80.5 (80.4, 80.7)
Indigenous	Indigenous	78.1 (76.9, 79.3)	79.6 (78.4, 80.8)
	Non-Indigenous	78.5 (78.4, 78.7)	79.1 (78.9, 79.2)
Home language	Home language – English	79.0 (78.8, 79.1)	79.5 (79.3, 79.6)
	Home language – Other	75.7 (75.2, 76.1)	76.5 (76.0, 76.9)
Disability	Disability reported	75.8 (75.3, 76.4)	77.9 (77.4, 78.5)
	No disability reported	78.7 (78.6, 78.8)	79.1 (79.0, 79.3)
Study mode**	Internal study mode	78.3 (78.2, 78.5)	78.9 (78.8, 79.1)
	External/multi-modal study mode	80.8 (80.3, 81.2)	80.8 (80.3, 81.2)
Residence status	Domestic student	79.2 (79.0, 79.3)	79.6 (79.5, 79.8)
	International student	74.7 (74.3, 75.1)	75.7 (75.3, 76.1)
First in family status†	First in family	81.5 (81.3, 81.8)	82.0 (81.7, 82.2)
	Not first in family	81.0 (80.8, 81.3)	81.2 (80.9, 81.4)
Socio-economic status	High	79.6 (79.3, 79.9)	79.7 (79.4, 79.9)
	Medium	79.3 (79.1, 79.5)	79.8 (79.6, 80.0)
	Low	78.2 (77.9, 78.6)	79.5 (79.1, 79.8)
Location	Metro	79.3 (79.1, 79.4)	79.6 (79.4, 79.8)
	Regional/remote	79.0 (78.7, 79.3)	79.9 (79.7, 80.2)
Total		78.5 (78.4, 78.7)	79.1 (78.9, 79.2)

*Later year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs a census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

**Grouping of study mode categories has changed from previous years. Internal/Mixed mode and External/Distance/OUA in 2016.

†First in family status includes commencing students only.

Table 37 **Percentage positive ratings by student sub-group with 90 per cent confidence intervals, postgraduate coursework**

Group	Subgroup	Quality of entire educational experience	Quality of teaching
Stage of studies	Commencing	75.8 (75.5, 76.1)	77.0 (76.7, 77.3)
	Later year*	75.4 (75.0, 75.7)	75.3 (74.9, 75.6)
Gender	Male	74.8 (74.5, 75.2)	74.2 (73.8, 74.6)
	Female	76.1 (75.8, 76.4)	77.6 (77.3, 77.9)
Indigenous	Indigenous	75.3 (72.1, 78.5)	75.4 (72.2, 78.6)
	Non-Indigenous	75.6 (75.4, 75.8)	76.2 (76.0, 76.5)
Home language	Home language – English	75.6 (75.4, 75.9)	76.5 (76.3, 76.8)
	Home language – Other	75.5 (75.1, 76.0)	75.5 (75.0, 75.9)
Disability	Disability reported	72.3 (71.0, 73.6)	74.8 (73.5, 76.1)
	No disability reported	75.7 (75.5, 76.0)	76.3 (76.0, 76.5)
Study mode**	Internal study mode	75.1 (74.8, 75.3)	76.0 (75.8, 76.3)
	External/multi-modal study mode	77.6 (77.0, 78.1)	76.8 (76.3, 77.3)
Residence status	Domestic student	76.3 (76.0, 76.6)	77.4 (77.1, 77.7)
	International student	74.7 (74.3, 75.1)	74.6 (74.3, 75.0)
First in family status†	First in family	76.5 (76.0, 77.1)	78.1 (77.6, 78.7)
	Not first in family	75.6 (75.2, 76.1)	77.1 (76.6, 77.6)
Socio-economic status	High	76.3 (75.8, 76.8)	77.6 (77.1, 78.1)
	Medium	76.5 (76.0, 77.0)	77.6 (77.2, 78.1)
	Low	76.2 (75.3, 77.1)	76.5 (75.6, 77.5)
Location	Metro	76.3 (75.9, 76.6)	77.4 (77.0, 77.7)
	Regional/remote	76.8 (76.1, 77.5)	77.9 (77.2, 78.6)
Total		75.6 (75.4, 75.8)	76.2 (76.0, 76.4)

*Later Year includes Middle Year students where for NUHEIs where census was conducted (see Methodological Summary, 1.1.3 Survey Population – Later Year Students).

**Grouping of study mode categories has changed from previous years. Internal/Mixed mode and External/Distance/OUA in 2016.

†First in family status includes commencing students only.

Table 38 Percentage positive ratings by study area with 90 per cent confidence intervals, undergraduate

Study area	Quality of entire educational experience	Quality of teaching
Science and mathematics	80.7 (80.3, 81.1)	82.2 (81.8, 82.6)
Computing and information systems	71.3 (70.5, 72.1)	69.1 (68.3, 69.9)
Engineering	73.2 (72.6, 73.8)	71.0 (70.4, 71.6)
Architecture and built environment	74.7 (73.7, 75.7)	73.8 (72.7, 74.8)
Agriculture and environmental studies	79.8 (78.7, 80.8)	81.2 (80.2, 82.3)
Health services and support	79.7 (79.2, 80.1)	81.2 (80.8, 81.7)
Medicine	82.8 (81.5, 84.2)	78.0 (76.5, 79.5)
Nursing	76.2 (75.7, 76.7)	77.2 (76.7, 77.7)
Pharmacy	81.0 (79.5, 82.5)	79.5 (77.9, 81.0)
Dentistry	70.6 (68.3, 72.9)	69.8 (67.5, 72.1)
Veterinary science	78.0 (76.2, 79.8)	78.4 (76.6, 80.2)
Rehabilitation	87.3 (86.4, 88.1)	87.7 (86.9, 88.6)
Teacher education	77.6 (77.1, 78.1)	78.4 (77.9, 78.8)
Business and management	76.3 (75.9, 76.7)	74.6 (74.2, 74.9)
Humanities, culture and social sciences	82.4 (82.0, 82.7)	84.9 (84.6, 85.3)
Social work	81.7 (80.8, 82.5)	83.0 (82.2, 83.9)
Psychology	83.4 (82.9, 84.0)	84.8 (84.3, 85.4)
Law and paralegal studies	79.1 (78.4, 79.9)	81.0 (80.3, 81.7)
Creative arts	78.5 (78.0, 79.1)	81.5 (80.9, 82.0)
Communications	80.6 (79.8, 81.3)	81.2 (80.5, 82.0)
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	78.5 (75.9, 81.1)	82.8 (80.5, 85.2)
Total	78.5 (78.4, 78.7)	79.1 (78.9, 79.2)

Table 39 Percentage positive ratings by study area with 90 per cent confidence intervals, postgraduate coursework

Study area	Quality of entire educational experience	Quality of teaching
Science and mathematics	76.5 (75.1, 77.9)	76.2 (74.8, 77.7)
Computing and information systems	75.2 (74.3, 76.1)	71.8 (70.9, 72.8)
Engineering	73.2 (72.2, 74.1)	72.7 (71.8, 73.7)
Architecture and built environment	73.4 (71.8, 74.9)	75.9 (74.4, 77.4)
Agriculture and environmental studies	84.3 (82.6, 85.9)	87.4 (86.0, 88.9)
Health services and support	80.0 (79.1, 80.9)	81.9 (81.0, 82.8)
Medicine	72.8 (71.4, 74.3)	71.2 (69.7, 72.7)
Nursing	74.7 (73.4, 76.0)	75.4 (74.1, 76.8)
Pharmacy	74.0 (70.0, 78.0)	79.8 (76.1, 83.5)
Dentistry	52.0 (46.6, 57.5)	52.9 (47.4, 58.5)
Veterinary science	77.2 (73.9, 80.6)	78.8 (75.5, 82.1)
Rehabilitation	70.3 (67.7, 73.0)	72.3 (69.7, 74.9)
Teacher education	72.7 (72.0, 73.3)	75.8 (75.1, 76.4)
Business and management	75.2 (74.7, 75.6)	74.0 (73.6, 74.5)
Humanities, culture and social sciences	84.7 (83.9, 85.4)	86.0 (85.3, 86.7)
Social work	73.0 (71.9, 74.1)	76.5 (75.4, 77.6)
Psychology	77.1 (75.9, 78.3)	79.8 (78.6, 81.0)
Law and paralegal studies	76.5 (75.2, 77.7)	79.4 (78.2, 80.6)
Creative arts	76.3 (74.2, 78.3)	77.9 (75.9, 79.9)
Communications	75.1 (73.2, 77.0)	79.5 (77.7, 81.2)
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	80.1 (76.0, 84.3)	76.7 (72.3, 81.1)
Total	75.6 (75.4, 75.8)	76.2 (76.0, 76.4)

Appendix 2

Student Experience Questionnaire (SEQ)

2.1 The Student Experience Questionnaire

Core instrument

The construct model underpinning the SES, as a conceptualisation of the student experience, is based on five conceptual domains including Teaching Quality, Learner Engagement, Student Support, Learning Resources, and Skills Development.

The instrument used to collect data for the SES, the Student Experience Questionnaire (SEQ), focuses on aspects of the higher education experience that are measurable, linked to learning and development outcomes, and potentially able to be influenced by institutions. These focus areas are operationalised by means of summated rating scales, underpinned by forty-six individual questionnaire items. These items are supplemented by two open-response items that

allow students to provide textual feedback on the best aspects of their higher education experience and those most in need of improvement. The SES also contains two additional sets of items, demographic and contextual, to facilitate data analysis and reporting. A full list of standard SEQ items is presented below.

Institution-specific items

As has been the case since 2013, institutions were offered the option of including non-standard, institution-specific items as part of the 2017 SES. In total, 26 institutions chose to do so, up from 25 in the 2016 SES. Frequent inclusions were the Workplace Relevance Scale that was included by 13 institutions, and a Net Promoter Score item that was added by four institutions.

These institution-specific items were only presented to students after they had completed the SEQ, resulting in a clear demarcation between the two survey modules.

Table 40 2017 SEQ Item Summary: Skill Development items

Stem	Item	Response scale
To what extent has your <course> developed your:	a) critical thinking skills? b) ability to solve complex problems? c) ability to work with others? d) confidence to learn independently? e) written communication skills? f) spoken communication skills? g) knowledge of the field(s) you are studying? h) development of work-related knowledge and skills?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable

Table 41 2017 SEQ Item Summary: Learner Engagement items

Stem	Item	Response scale
At your institution during 2017, to what extent have you:	a) felt prepared for your study? b) had a sense of belonging to <institution>?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable
Thinking about your <course> in 2017, how frequently have you:	a) participated in discussions online or face-to-face? b) worked with other students as part of your study? c) interacted with students outside study requirements? d) interacted with students who are very different from you?	Never / Sometimes / Often / Very often
At your institution during 2017, to what extent have you:	a) been given opportunities to interact with local students?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable

Table 42 2017 SEQ Item Summary: Teaching Quality items

Stem	Item	Response scale
Thinking about your <course>	a) overall how would you rate the quality of your entire educational experience this year?	Poor / Fair / Good / Excellent
Thinking of this year, overall at <institution>	a) how would you rate the quality of the teaching you have experienced in your <course>?	Poor / Fair / Good / Excellent
During 2017, to what extent have the lecturers, tutors and demonstrators in your <course>:	a) engaged you actively in learning? b) demonstrated concern for student learning? c) provided clear explanations on coursework and assessment? d) stimulated you intellectually? e) commented on your work in ways that help you learn? f) seemed helpful and approachable? g) set assessment tasks that challenge you to learn?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much
In 2017, to what extent has [your study/your <course>] been delivered in a way that is...	a) well structured and focused? b) relevant to your education as a whole	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much

Table 43 2017 SEQ Item Summary: Student Support items

Stem	Item	Response scale
At <institution> during 2017, to what extent have you:	a) received support from your institution to settle into study? b) experienced efficient enrolment and admissions processes? c) felt induction/orientation activities were relevant and helpful?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much
During 2017, to what extent have you found administrative staff or systems (e.g. online administrative services, frontline staff, enrolment systems) to be:	a) available? b) helpful?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable
During 2017, to what extent have you found careers advisors to be:	a) available? b) helpful?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable
During 2017, to what extent have you found academic or learning advisors to be:	a) available? b) helpful?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much
During 2017, to what extent have you found support services such as counsellors, financial/legal advisors and health services to be:	a) available? b) helpful?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable
During 2017, to what extent have you...	a) been offered support relevant to your circumstance? b) received appropriate English language skill support?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable

Table 44 2017 SEQ Item Summary: Learning Resources items

Stem	Item	Response scale
Thinking of this year, overall how would you rate the following learning resources provided for your <course>?	a) Teaching spaces (e.g. lecture theatres, tutorial rooms, laboratories) b) Student spaces and common areas c) Online learning materials d) Computing/IT resources e) Assigned books, notes and resources f) Laboratory or studio equipment g) Library resources and facilities	Poor / Fair / Good / Excellent / Not applicable

Table 45 2017 SEQ Item Summary: Open-response items

Stem	Item	Response scale
What have been the best aspects of your <course>?		Open response
What aspects of your <course> most need improvement?		Open response

Table 46 2017 SEQ Item Summary: Other items

Stem	Item	Response scale
In what year did you first start your current <course>?		Before 2012 / 2012 / 2013 / 2014 / 2015 / 2016 / 2017
When do you expect to complete your current <course>?		2017 / 2018 or later
Where has your study been mainly based in 2017?		On one campus / On two or more campuses / Mix of external, distance and on-campus / External / Distance
Thinking about your <course>, how much study do you do online?		None / About a quarter / About half / All or nearly all
Which number between 0 and 100 represents your average grade so far in 2017?		No results / 0-49% / 50-59% / 60-69% / 70-79% / 80-89% / 90-100%
At <institution> during 2017, to what extent have...	a) Your living arrangements negatively affected your study? b) Your financial circumstances negatively affected your study? c) Paid work commitments negatively affected your study?	Not at all / Very little / Some / Quite a bit / Very much / Not applicable
During 2017, have you seriously considered leaving <institution>?		Yes, I have seriously considered leaving / No, I have not seriously considered leaving

Stem	Item	Response scale
Please indicate your reasons for seriously considering leaving your current university in 2017. Select all that apply.		Academic exchange / Academic support / Administrative support / Boredom/lack of interest / Career prospects / Change of direction / Commuting difficulties / Difficulty paying fees / Difficulty with workload / Expectations not met / Family responsibilities / Financial difficulties / Gap year/deferral / Government assistance / Graduating / Health or stress / Institution reputation / Moving residence / Need a break / Need to do paid work / Other opportunities / Paid work responsibilities / Personal reasons / Quality concerns / Received other offer / Social reasons / Standards too high / Study/ life balance / Travel or tourism / Other reasons

Appendix 3

Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)

Course Experience Questionnaire

As part of the 2013 UES, six scales from the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) were administered on a trial basis to students from 14 institutions. This trial resulted in a recommendation that the Good Teaching Scale (GTS), Generic Skills Scale (GSS), Clear Goals and Standards Scale (CGS) and Overall Satisfaction Item (OSI) be used to facilitate international benchmarking. It was further recommended that the CEQ scales should only be

presented to a small sample of students of a sufficient size to yield national-level estimates that are precise within ± 2.2 percentage points of the true population value at a 95 per cent confidence level. This national approach to administering the CEQ for benchmarking purposes was implemented in the 2014 UES and the 2015–2017 SES.

As with the UEQ, sampled students in double degrees were provided with the opportunity to complete the CEQ for each course element individually. A list of CEQ items administered in the 2017 SES is presented in Table 47.

Table 47 CEQ items administered in the 2017 SES

Stem	Item*
Good Teaching Scale	The staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work.
	The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was going.
	The teaching staff of this course motivated me to do my best work.
	My lecturers were extremely good at explaining things.
	The teaching staff worked hard to make their subjects interesting.
	The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having with my work.
Generic Skills Scale	The course helped me develop my ability to work as a team member.
	The course sharpened my analytic skills.
	The course developed my problem-solving skills.
	The course improved my skills in written communication.
	As a result of my course, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems.
	My course helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work.

Stem	Item*
Overall Satisfaction Item	Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this course.
Clear Goals and Standards	It was always easy to know the standard of work expected.
	I usually had a clear idea of where I was going and what was expected of me in this course.
	It was often hard to discover what was expected of me in this course.
	The staff made it clear right from the start what they expected from students.

*R = Reverse coded for scoring purposes.

Response scale: Strongly disagree / Disagree / Neither agree nor disagree / Agree / Strongly agree

Appendix 4

Production of scores

A series of steps are taken to produce the focus area percentage positive results used in this report. A selection of the SPSS syntax used to produce these scores is presented below.

To begin, all SEQ items are rescaled into the conventional reporting metric. Four-point scales are recoded onto a scale that runs from 0, 33.3, 66.6 and 100, and five-point scales recoded onto a scale that runs from 0, 25, 50, 75 and 100. These rescaled items are denoted with an 'r' suffix. The SPSS syntax to recode the SEQ items to the conventional reporting metric is shown in Figure 11.

Scores for each focus area are then computed as the mean of the constituent item scores. A focus area score is only computed for respondents who have a valid item score for at least six skill development items, five learner engagement items, eight teaching quality items, six student support items and five learning resources items respectively. The SPSS syntax used to generate focus area average scores is shown in Figure 12. The recoded item scores are not retained in the analysis file.

Because the reporting metric for the 2017 SES is percentage of students that rated their experience, calculated variables must be created for each focus area. The percentage of students that rated their experience positively reflects the percentage of students who achieve a threshold focus area score of 55 or greater. At the individual response level, a positive response is represented by a binary variable taking the value of one if the students gives a positive response to a particular facet of their higher education experience and zero otherwise. The SPSS syntax used to generate these variables is presented in Figure 13.

At the item level, a positive rating reflects a response in the top two categories of both the four- and five-point response scales. As with the focus area calculated variables discussed previously, a positive rating with a particular SEQ item is represented by a binary variable taking the value of one if the student provides a positive response and zero otherwise. An excerpt of the SPSS syntax used to generate these item variables is presented in Figure 14.

Extensive consultation with the higher education sector indicated a near-universal preference for the reporting of percentage positive results over focus area average scores. Percentage positive results were seen as being a more understandable measure, especially for less expert users of the SES data, and are straightforward for institutions to replicate and benchmark against. As such, percentage positive results are presented throughout this report. One consequence of this is that the results presented in the 2013 and 2014 UES reports and the 2015–2017 SES reports are not directly comparable to those presented in the 2011 and 2012 reports.

Figure 11 **SPSS syntax to recode SEQ items into the conventional reporting metric**

```
RECODE qlovledu (1=0) (2=33.3) (3=66.6) (4=100)
(ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO qlovledur.

RECODE partidiscus (1=0) (2=33.3) (3=66.6) (4=100)
(ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO partidiscusr.

...

RECODE qllibres (1=0) (2=33.3) (3=66.6) (4=100)
(ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO qllibresr.

RECODE supsettle (1=0) (2=25) (3=50) (4=75) (5=100) (ELSE
= SYSMIS) INTO supsettler.

RECODE effenrolm (1=0) (2=25) (3=50) (4=75) (5=100) (ELSE
= SYSMIS) INTO effenrolmr.

...

RECODE englang (1=0) (2=25) (3=50) (4=75) (5=100) (ELSE =
SYSMIS) INTO englangr.
```

Figure 12 **SPSS syntax used to compute SES focus area scores**

```
COMPUTE DEVELOPMENT=MEAN.6(expthinkr, expprbslvr,
expwrkothr, expconfindr, expwritingr,
expspeakr, expknowlr, expwrkskillr).

COMPUTE ENGAGEMENT=MEAN.5(opplocr, sensebelongr,
feelpreparedr, partidiscusr, workothersr,
interactothr, interactdiffrr).

COMPUTE TEACHING=MEAN.8(qlteachr, qlovledur,
stdstrucr, stdreleivr, tchactivengr, tchconlnr,
tchclexpecr, tchstimintr, tchfeedbckr, tchhelpappr,
tchasschlgr).

COMPUTE SUPPORT=MEAN.6(englangr, offsupr, indorienr,
supsettler, admavailr, admhelpr, caravailr, carhelpr,
acdavailr, acdhelpr, supavailr, suphelpr, effenrolmr).

COMPUTE RESOURCES=MEAN.5(qltchspcr, qlstdspcr,
qlonlmatr, qlcompitr, qltxtbookr, qlequipr, qllibresr).
```

Figure 13 **SPSS syntax used to compute SES focus area scores**

```
RECODE DEVELOPMENT (55 THRU 100=1)
(MISSING=SYSMIS) (ELSE=0) INTO DEVELOPMENT_SAT.

RECODE ENGAGEMENT (55 THRU 100=1)
(MISSING=SYSMIS) (ELSE=0) INTO ENGAGEMENT_SAT.

RECODE TEACHING (55 THRU 100=1) (MISSING=SYSMIS)
(ELSE=0) INTO TEACHING_SAT.

RECODE SUPPORT (55 THRU 100=1) (MISSING=SYSMIS)
(ELSE=0) INTO SUPPORT_SAT.

RECODE RESOURCES (55 THRU 100=1) (MISSING=SYSMIS)
(ELSE=0) INTO RESOURCES_SAT.
```

Figure 14 **SPSS syntax used to compute item variables**

```
RECODE qlovledu (1=0) (2=0) (3=1) (4=1) (ELSE=SYSMIS)
INTO qlovledu_sat.

RECODE partidiscus (1=0) (2=0) (3=1) (4=1) (ELSE=SYSMIS)
INTO partidiscus_sat.

RECODE qllibres (1=0) (2=0) (3=1) (4=1) (ELSE=SYSMIS)
INTO qllibres_sat.

RECODE supsettle (1=0) (2=0) (3=0) (4=1) (5=1)
(ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO supsettle_sat.

RECODE effenrolm (1=0) (2=0) (3=0) (4=1) (5=1)
(ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO effenrolm_sat.

RECODE englang (1=0) (2=0) (3=0) (4=1) (5=1)
(ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO englang_sat.
```

Appendix 5

Construction of confidence intervals

The 90 per cent confidence intervals presented in this report were calculated using the Finite Population Correction (FPC) to account for the relatively large size of the sample relative to the in-scope population. The FPC is generally used when the sampling fraction exceeds 5 per cent. In order to calculate the standard errors for the survey estimates, no non-response bias was assumed and thus simple random sample survey errors were used. This approach is similar to the one employed to construct confidence intervals for the UES estimates presented on the MyUniversity website.

Because percentage agreement scores are reported for the 2016 SES, the formula for the confidence interval of a proportion is used.

Where \hat{p} is the estimated proportion of satisfied responses (i.e. the top two response categories), N is the size of the population in the relevant subgroup, n is the number of valid responses in the relevant subgroup, FPC is the Finite Population Correction and $SE(\hat{p})$ is the standard error.

The 90 per cent confidence interval of each estimated proportion is then calculated as the proportion plus or minus its 90 per confidence interval bound.

The use of simple random sample survey errors assumes a simple random sample at the national level of estimation. Because the SES was conducted using stratified sampling at the institution by subject area level (see Appendix 1.2.2: Approach to sampling) standard errors calculated at the national level will be larger. As such, weighted stratified estimates would be more efficient and potentially more representative than those presented in this report. The confidence intervals presented in Table 36 to Table 39 are conservative and should be treated as indicative only.

Figure 15 **Formula for the confidence interval of a proportion**

$$90\% \text{ CI bound } (\hat{p}) = 1.645 \times FPC \times SE(\hat{p}) = 1.645 \times \sqrt{\frac{N-n}{N-1}} \times \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}}$$

Appendix 6

Study area definitions

Table 48 21 and 45 study areas concordance with ASCED field of education

Study Area (21)		Study Area (45)		ASCED Field of Education
0	Non-award	0	Non-award	000000
1	Science and mathematics	1	Natural & Physical Sciences	010000, 010300, 010301, 010303, 010500, 010501, 010503, 010599, 010700, 010701, 010703, 010705, 010707, 010709, 010711, 010713, 010799, 019900, 019999
		2	Mathematics	010100, 010101, 010103, 010199
		3	Biological Sciences	010900, 010901, 010903, 010905, 010907, 010909, 010911, 010913, 010915, 010999
		4	Medical Science & Technology	019901, 019903, 019905, 019907, 019909
2	Computing & Information Systems	5	Computing & Information Systems	020000, 020100, 020101, 020103, 020105, 020107, 020109, 020111, 020113, 020115, 020117, 020119, 020199, 020300, 020301, 020303, 020305, 020307, 020399, 029900, 029901, 029999
3	Engineering	6	Engineering – Other	030000, 030100, 030101, 030103, 030105, 030107, 030109, 030111, 030113, 030115, 030117, 030199, 030500, 030501, 030503, 030505, 030507, 030509, 030511, 030513, 030515, 030599, 031100, 031101, 031103, 031199, 031700, 031701, 031703, 031705, 031799, 039900, 039901, 039903, 039905, 039907, 039909, 039999
		7	Engineering – Process & Resources	030300, 030301, 030303, 030305, 030307, 030399
		8	Engineering – Mechanical	030700, 030701, 030703, 030705, 030707, 030709, 030711, 030713, 030715, 030717, 030799
		9	Engineering – Civil	030900, 030901, 030903, 030905, 030907, 030909, 030911, 030913, 030999
		10	Engineering – Electrical & Electronic	031300, 031301, 031303, 031305, 031307, 031309, 031311, 031313, 031315, 031317, 031399
		11	Engineering – Aerospace	031500, 031501, 031503, 031505, 031507, 031599

Study Area (21)		Study Area (45)		ASCED Field of Education
4	Architecture and built environment	12	Architecture & Urban Environments	040000, 040100, 040101, 040103, 040105, 040107, 040199
		13	Building & Construction	040300, 040301, 040303, 040305, 040307, 040309, 040311, 040313, 040315, 040317, 040319, 040321, 040323, 040325, 040327, 040329, 040399
5	Agriculture and environmental studies	12	Architecture & Urban Environments	040000, 040100, 040101, 040103, 040105, 040107, 040199
		13	Building & Construction	040300, 040301, 040303, 040305, 040307, 040309, 040311, 040313, 040315, 040317, 040319, 040321, 040323, 040325, 040327, 040329, 040399
6	Health services and support	16	Health Services & Support	060000, 060900, 060901, 060903, 060999, 061500, 061501, 061700, 061705, 061707, 061709, 061711, 061713, 061799, 061900, 061901, 061903, 061905, 061999, 069900, 069901, 069903, 069905, 069907, 069999
		17	Public Health	061300, 061301, 061303, 061305, 061307, 061309, 061311, 061399
7	Medicine	18	Medicine	060100, 060101, 060103, 060105, 060107, 060109, 060111, 060113, 060115, 060117, 060119, 060199
8	Nursing	19	Nursing	060300, 060301, 060303, 060305, 060307, 060309, 060311, 060313, 060315, 060399
9	Pharmacy	20	Pharmacy	060500, 060501
10	Dentistry	21	Dentistry	060700, 060701, 060703, 060705, 060799
11	Veterinary science	22	Veterinary Science	061100, 061101, 061103, 061199
12	Rehabilitation	23	Physiotherapy	061701
		24	Occupational Therapy	061703
13	Teacher education	25	Teacher Education – Other	070000, 070100, 070107, 070109, 070111, 070113, 070115, 070117, 070199, 070300, 070301, 070303, 079900, 079999
		26	Teacher Education – Early Childhood	070101
		27	Teacher Education – Primary & Secondary	070103, 070105

Study Area (21)		Study Area (45)		ASCED Field of Education
14	Business and management	28	Accounting	080100, 080101
		29	Business Management	080300, 080301, 080303, 080305, 080307, 080309, 080311, 080313, 080315, 080317, 080319, 080321, 080323, 080399
		30	Sales & Marketing	080500, 080501, 080503, 080505, 080507, 080509, 080599
		31	Management & Commerce – Other	080000, 080900, 080901, 080903, 080905, 080999, 089900, 089901, 089903, 089999
		32	Banking & Finance	081100, 081101, 081103, 081105, 081199
		40	Economics	091900, 091901, 091903
15	Humanities, culture and social sciences	33	Political Science	090100, 090101, 090103
		34	Humanities inc History & Geography	090000, 090300, 090301, 090303, 090305, 090307, 090309, 090311, 090313, 090399, 091300, 091301, 091303, 091700, 091701, 091703, 099900, 099901, 099903, 099905, 099999
		35	Language & Literature	091500, 091501, 091503, 091505, 091507, 091509, 091511, 091513, 091515, 091517, 091519, 091521, 091523, 091599
16	Social work	36	Social Work	090500, 090501, 090503, 090505, 090507, 090509, 090511, 090513, 090515, 090599
17	Psychology	37	Psychology	090700, 090701, 090799
18	Law and paralegal studies	38	Law	090900, 090901, 090903, 090905, 090907, 090909, 090911, 090913, 090999
		39	Justice Studies & Policing	091100, 091101, 091103, 091105, 091199
19	Creative arts	42	Art & Design	100000, 100300, 100301, 100303, 100305, 100307, 100309, 100399, 100500, 100501, 100503, 100505, 100599, 109900, 109999
		43	Music & Performing Arts	100100, 100101, 100103, 100105, 100199
20	Communications	44	Communication, Media & Journalism	100700, 100701, 100703, 100705, 100707, 100799
21	Tourism, Hospitality, Personal Services, Sport and recreation	41	Sport & Recreation	092100, 092101, 092103, 092199

Note: SES targets for collection are based on 45 study areas as above. The QILT website and this report use 21 study areas as the basis of analysis.

Field of Education listings are available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics website (ASCED Field of Education Broad, Narrow and Detailed fields).

Appendix 7

Additional tables

7.1 Results for individual questionnaire items

The tables below show the percentage scores for the underlying items for each focus area.

In relation to the undergraduate estimates for the underlying items for the skills development focus area, results have remained relatively unchanged between 2016 and 2017.

Between the items, the development of spoken communication skills is relatively low for commencing students (52 per cent in 2016 and 50 per cent in 2017), and improves by 10 percentage points for later year students, which is encouraging. However, this is the lowest rated item in this focus area overall and for later year students. Work related knowledge and skills also attracted relatively low overall scores at 63 per cent in 2016 and 62 per cent in 2017. Notably, later year students do not report an increase in work related knowledge and skills over the course of

their higher education qualification in either year, whereas all other skillsets show increases of between 2 and 10 percentage points between commencing and later years.

Estimates for postgraduate coursework students who were surveyed for the first time in 2017 showed a similar pattern of responses with the development of spoken language rating 52 per cent compared with 54 per cent for undergraduates but with later year postgraduate coursework students rating this item 5 percentage points lower than undergraduates. Similarly, for the ability to work effectively with others postgraduate coursework students rated this item 4 percentage points lower than undergraduates, with later year student ratings lower by 6 percentage points. Postgraduate coursework students rated the development of their written communication skills more highly than undergraduate students by 3 percentage points, most notably for commencing students where the difference is 4 percentage points.

Table 49 Percentage positive scores for Skills Development items, by stage of studies, 2016 and 2017 undergraduates

Item	2016: C	2016: LY	2016: T	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Developed critical and analytical thinking	68	73	70	68	73	70
Developed ability to solve complex problems	59	66	62	58	65	61
Developed ability to work effectively with others	62	68	65	60	67	63
Developed confidence to learn independently	71	77	73	71	77	73
Developed written communication skills	60	70	64	59	69	63
Developed spoken communication skills	52	62	56	50	60	54
Developed knowledge of field studying	77	79	78	77	79	78
Developed work-related knowledge and skills	63	63	63	62	62	62

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

As was the case in the Skills Development focus area, undergraduate student results for the underlying items in the Learner Engagement focus area remained relatively consistent from 2016 to 2017 with decreases of between 1 and 2 per cent on all items for commencing and later year students with the lowest performing items remaining around interactions with other students outside study requirements.

In general, items relating to interaction with other students outside study or who are very different from themselves attracted the lowest scores for undergraduates in this focus area, of between 45 and 51 per cent respectively. However, working with other students as part of their study, attracted higher overall scores of 67 and 69 per cent in 2016 and 2017 respectively, which is an area which institutions arguably are better able to influence. This item also increased from commencing to later year by 5 to 6 percentage points in 2016 and 2017 respectively, as did students reporting participation in online or face to face discussions (5 percentage points).

Consistent with 2016, later year undergraduates rated their participation in discussions online or face to face and whether they had worked with other students as part of their study higher than

commencing students by 5 and 6 percentage points respectively. However, later year undergraduates felt less of a sense of belonging to their university, rating this item 3 percentage points lower than commencing students.

The highest scoring item in the Learner Engagement focus area indicated that 68 per cent of undergraduate respondents felt prepared for their study. However, this implies that one third of students did not feel prepared for their study, and while this score increased somewhat for later year students, this increase was only 3 and 4 percentage points in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

Postgraduate coursework students rated most items relating to interactions with other students much lower than undergraduate students with their rating of having been given opportunities to interact with local students 17 percentage points lower at 39 per cent. This group did, however, feel more prepared for study than undergraduate students by 6 percentage points overall but as discussed in relation to undergraduate students, this means that 22 per cent of postgraduate coursework students indicated that they did not feel prepared for their study.

Table 50 Percentage positive scores for Skills Development items, by stage of studies, 2017 postgraduate coursework

Item	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Developed critical and analytical thinking	70	73	71
Developed ability to solve complex problems	61	65	63
Developed ability to work effectively with others	57	61	59
Developed confidence to learn independently	73	77	75
Developed written communication skills	63	70	66
Developed spoken communication skills	50	55	52
Developed knowledge of field studying	80	80	80
Developed work-related knowledge and skills	68	66	67

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

Table 51 Percentage positive scores for Learner Engagement items, by stage of studies, 2016 and 2017 undergraduate

Item	2016: C	2016: LY	2016: T	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Felt prepared for your study	66	69	67	64	68	66
Had a sense of belonging to your university	54	51	53	53	50	51
Participated in discussions online or face-to-face	58	63	60	57	62	59
Worked with other students as part of your study	65	70	67	63	69	65
Interacted with students outside study requirements	45	47	46	43	45	44
Interacted with students who are very different from you	53	52	52	51	51	51
Been given opportunities to interact with local students	58	57	58	56	56	56

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

Table 52 Percentage positive scores for Skills Development items, by stage of studies, 2017 postgraduate coursework

Item	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Felt prepared for your study	70	74	72
Had a sense of belonging to your university	47	49	48
Participated in discussions online or face-to-face	59	59	59
Worked with other students as part of your study	58	61	59
Interacted with students outside study requirements	36	38	37
Interacted with students who are very different from you	44	44	44
Been given opportunities to interact with local students	40	38	39

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

Undergraduate student ratings of the quality of teaching and the quality of the entire educational experience have remained consistently high at around 79 to 80 per cent. However, commencing students are more likely to rate these items positively, with a drop of 6 and 5 percentage points from commencing to later year ratings for both items in 2016 and 2017 respectively. The score for study being well structured and focused likewise was lower by 7 and 6 percentage points between commencing and later year students in 2016 and 2017 respectively. Across 2016 and 2017 we also observe lower scores for later year students by 4 percentage points for the relevance to education as a whole, and 3 percentage points in relation to clear explanations on coursework and assessment, and 5 percentage points in relation to setting challenging assessment tasks between commencing and later year undergraduate students.

The item related to teachers commenting on work in ways that help students to learn continues to have the lowest overall undergraduate rating for this focus area, although scores increased from 52 per cent in 2015 to 54 per cent in 2016 they decreased again to 52 per cent in 2017.

Postgraduate coursework students also gave the lowest rating in this focus area to the item relating to teachers commenting on student work in ways that help them to learn with 59 per cent, which is a higher rating than undergraduates by 7 percentage points. In general, postgraduate coursework students rated all of the items relating to teacher behaviours in this focus area more highly than undergraduates. However, their overall rating of the quality of teaching and the quality of their overall educational experience is lower than for undergraduates which may imply that the overall assessment of teaching quality is influenced by something other than the behaviours in this focus area for this group.

Table 53 Percentage positive scores for Teaching Quality items, by stage of studies, 2016 and 2017 undergraduate

Item	2016: C	2016: LY	2016: T	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Study well structured and focused	70	63	67	68	62	66
Study relevant to education as a whole	74	70	72	73	69	71
Teachers engaged you actively in learning	68	64	66	66	63	65
Teachers demonstrated concern for student learning	62	59	61	60	58	59
Teachers provided clear explanations on coursework and assessment	68	64	66	66	63	65
Teachers stimulated you intellectually	70	67	69	68	67	68
Teachers commented on your work in ways that help you learn	54	54	54	52	53	52
Teachers seemed helpful and approachable	72	70	71	71	69	70
Teachers set assessment tasks that challenge you to learn	79	75	77	78	73	76
Quality of teaching	83	77	80	81	76	79
Quality of entire educational experience	82	76	80	81	75	79

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

Table 54 **Percentage positive scores for Teaching Quality items, by stage of studies, 2017 postgraduate coursework**

Item	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Study well structured and focused	68	66	67
Study relevant to education as a whole	77	74	75
Teachers engaged you actively in learning	69	67	68
Teachers demonstrated concern for student learning	64	61	63
Teachers provided clear explanations on coursework and assessment	68	69	68
Teachers stimulated you intellectually	72	69	70
Teachers commented on your work in ways that help you learn	59	59	59
Teachers seemed helpful and approachable	74	71	73
Teachers set assessment tasks that challenge you to learn	78	75	77
Quality of teaching	77	75	76
Quality of entire educational experience	76	75	76

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

In terms of undergraduate student support, the items in this focus area also exhibit consistency from 2016 to 2017 with most items changing by 1 or 2 percentage points. Efficient enrolment and admissions processes had the highest score in this group remaining consistent with 72 per cent over 2016 and 2017. Item scores which decreased over this time were around whether students received support from the institution to settle into study by 2 percentage points and whether induction activities were relevant and helpful and the availability of careers advisors and academic learning advisors. Interestingly the item related to whether undergraduate students were offered relevant support to their circumstances which had decreased by 3 percentage points between 2015 and 2016 increased by 6 percentage points in 2017 to 50 per cent.

All item scores decreased between undergraduate commencing to later year students, however some of these such as induction/ orientation activities and support to settle into study, which have

quite large differences of 6-8 percentage points, are unsurprising as these activities are most often targeted to commencing students. However, many other support services such as academic support, careers advisors etc. are less focussed around transition into higher education yet still show decreases between commencing and later year students of 2 to 5 percentage points.

Postgraduate coursework student ratings of student support services students also rated the efficiency of enrolment processes relatively highly with 57 per cent, which was 3 percentage points higher than the rating by undergraduate students. However, ratings of the availability and helpfulness of careers advisors were comparably low with 48 per cent and 47 per cent respectively. The availability and helpfulness of academic learning advisors, while attracting a relatively high rating of 64 per cent, saw a of 3 percentage point lower rating between commencing and later year postgraduate coursework students.

Table 55 Percentage positive scores for Student Support items, by stage of studies, 2016 and 2017 undergraduate

Item	2016: C	2016: LY	2016: T	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Experienced efficient enrolment and admissions processes	73	70	72	72	70	72
Induction/orientation activities relevant and helpful	61	54	58	59	53	57
Received support from university to settle into study	63	54	60	61	53	58
Administrative staff or systems: available	64	59	62	64	59	62
Administrative staff or systems: helpful	61	56	59	62	57	60
Careers advisors: available	52	48	50	50	47	49
Careers advisors: helpful	51	47	49	51	47	49
Academic or learning advisors: available	63	59	62	62	59	61
Academic or learning advisors: helpful	65	61	63	65	61	63
Support services: available	54	51	53	55	52	54
Support services: helpful	54	52	53	56	54	55
Offered support relevant to circumstances	46	41	44	52	48	50
Received appropriate English language skill support	44	39	42	46	42	44

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

Undergraduate student ratings of learning resources generally remained consistently high between 2016 and 2017, with the lowest scoring item relating to the quality of student spaces and common areas (77%), which represented an 8 percentage point drop between commencing and later year students. Later year undergraduates also rated the quality of teaching spaces and the quality of laboratory or studio equipment lower than commencing students by 7 percentage points.

In general, lower figures for undergraduates were observed for NUHEIs in all items, particularly in relation to the quality of laboratory or studio equipment, the quality of student spaces and common areas and teaching spaces.

Again, the gaps between the ratings of commencing and later year students is quite pronounced with differences ranging from 4 to 8 percentage points. It is unclear whether these differences relate to differences in commencing and later year student expectations relating to learning resources, or the actual quality of these resources.

Postgraduate coursework student ratings of learning resources were also high, with 85 per cent of expressing a positive rating of online learning materials and library resources and facilities. The lowest rating was also in relation to student spaces and common areas with 76 per cent and the quality of laboratory or studio equipment which is 4 percentage points lower than the rating by undergraduates.

Table 56 Percentage positive scores for Student Support items, by stage of studies, 2017 postgraduate coursework

Item	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Experienced efficient enrolment and admissions processes	74	76	75
Induction/orientation activities relevant and helpful	63	62	62
Received support from university to settle into study	60	59	60
Administrative staff or systems: available	65	63	64
Administrative staff or systems: helpful	64	62	63
Careers advisors: available	48	47	48
Careers advisors: helpful	48	46	47
Academic or learning advisors: available	65	62	64
Academic or learning advisors: helpful	66	63	64
Support services: available	54	53	53
Support services: helpful	55	54	54
Offered support relevant to circumstances	51	52	52
Received appropriate English language skill support	49	48	48

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

Table 57 **Percentage positive scores for Learning Resources items, by stage of studies, 2016 and 2017 undergraduate**

Item	2016: C	2016: LY	2016: T	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Quality of teaching spaces	89	83	87	88	81	85
Quality of student spaces and common areas	82	73	78	80	72	77
Quality of online learning materials	88	83	86	86	82	84
Quality of computing/IT resources	84	79	82	83	78	81
Quality of assigned books, notes and resources	82	77	80	80	76	78
Quality of laboratory or studio equipment	85	78	82	84	77	82
Quality of library resources and facilities	89	84	87	88	84	86

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

Table 58 **Percentage positive scores for Learning Resources items, by stage of studies, 2017 postgraduate coursework**

Item	2017: C	2017: LY	2017: T
Quality of teaching spaces	83	81	82
Quality of student spaces and common areas	77	75	76
Quality of online learning materials	85	84	85
Quality of computing/IT resources	82	80	81
Quality of assigned books, notes and resources	82	80	81
Quality of laboratory or studio equipment	79	76	78
Quality of library resources and facilities	86	85	85

C = Commencing, LY = Later year, T = Total

7.2 The university student experience, 45 study areas

Table 59 Undergraduate student experience, by 45 study areas, 2017 (% positive rating)*

Study area – 21 categories	Study area – 45 categories	SD	LE	TQ	SS	LR	OEE
Science and mathematics	Natural & Physical Sciences	78	59	83	72	87	81
	Mathematics	75	54	81	71	82	82
	Biological Sciences	84	64	85	75	90	83
	Medical Science & Technology	81	64	82	73	87	79
Computing and information systems	Computing & Information Systems	73	57	74	71	82	71
Engineering	Engineering – Other	77	64	74	69	82	73
	Engineering – Process & Resources	87	75	77	72	82	74
	Engineering – Mechanical	80	66	73	66	79	70
	Engineering – Civil	81	68	74	69	79	74
	Engineering – Electrical & Electronic	80	65	74	70	84	72
	Engineering – Aerospace	83	66	79	71	82	75
Architecture and built environment	Architecture & Urban Environments	80	66	78	67	73	74
	Building & Construction	79	61	75	71	82	77
Agriculture and environmental studies	Agriculture & Forestry	78	64	81	72	86	79
	Environmental Studies	84	61	83	72	85	80
Health services and support	Health Services & Support	82	58	83	74	83	80
	Public Health	79	55	81	72	87	79
Medicine	Medicine	90	80	82	76	82	83
Nursing	Nursing	85	60	77	75	85	76
Pharmacy	Pharmacy	86	67	82	77	86	81
Dentistry	Dentistry	86	64	73	71	72	71
Veterinary science	Veterinary Science	82	71	80	70	79	78
Rehabilitation	Physiotherapy	90	78	88	77	87	87
	Occupational Therapy	90	74	90	81	89	88

Study area – 21 categories	Study area – 45 categories	SD	LE	TQ	SS	LR	OEE
Teacher education	Teacher Education – Other	79	57	76	70	82	74
	Teacher Education – Early Childhood	85	54	80	72	80	79
	Teacher Education – Primary & Secondary	82	61	79	73	82	78
Business and management	Accounting	76	53	75	71	77	76
	Business Management	79	58	77	73	83	77
	Sales & Marketing	81	63	76	70	82	77
	Management & Commerce – Other	76	57	75	72	83	75
	Banking & Finance	77	56	78	73	85	77
	Economics	82	63	85	70	83	82
Humanities, culture and social sciences	Political Science	80	55	85	73	85	82
	Humanities inc History & Geography	79	57	89	72	81	85
	Language & Literature	85	52	85	76	84	82
Social work	Social Work	81	50	86	77	86	83
Psychology	Psychology	85	58	83	69	82	79
Law and paralegal studies	Law	81	49	79	76	85	78
	Justice Studies & Policing	73	52	73	68	83	74
Creative arts	Art & Design	84	64	81	70	88	78
	Music & Performing Arts	79	66	82	73	80	78
Communications	Communication, Media & Journalism	82	74	85	73	73	79
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	Sport & Recreation	81	67	82	74	85	81
	Tourism, Hospitality & Personal Services	76	59	82	70	77	79
Total		81	60	80	73	83	79

*All higher education providers. Includes responses to each component of a double degree where the response falls into different study areas at the 45 study area level.

SD = Skills Development, LE = Learner Engagement, TQ = Teaching Quality, SS = Student Support, LR = Learning Resources, OEE = Overall Educational Experience.

Table 60 Postgraduate coursework student experience, by 45 study areas, 2017 (% positive rating)*

Study area – 21 categories	Study area – 45 categories	SD	LE	TQ	SS	LR	OEE
Science and mathematics	Natural & Physical Sciences	82	57	81	73	88	77
	Mathematics	72	38	79	75	81	74
	Biological Sciences	84	57	85	77	87	77
	Medical Science & Technology	80	49	79	74	85	77
Computing and information systems	Computing & Information Systems	79	57	78	76	83	75
Engineering	Engineering – Other	80	58	77	71	85	73
	Engineering – Process & Resources	82	54	82	73	93	73
	Engineering – Mechanical	81	56	80	80	90	76
	Engineering – Civil	80	55	80	75	88	76
	Engineering – Electrical & Electronic	74	57	76	70	89	74
	Engineering – Aerospace	70	28	78	71	77	73
Architecture and built environment	Architecture & Urban Environments	81	65	80	64	67	73
	Building & Construction	80	58	80	70	87	74
Agriculture and environmental studies	Agriculture & Forestry	81	47	84	77	85	80
	Environmental Studies	87	64	91	77	91	86
Health services and support	Health Services & Support	85	57	83	72	77	77
	Public Health	83	42	87	78	88	83
Medicine	Medicine	83	65	73	67	77	73
Nursing	Nursing	81	38	79	73	84	75
Pharmacy	Pharmacy	85	58	82	73	85	74
Dentistry	Dentistry	79	58	58	51	55	52
Veterinary science	Veterinary Science	90	67	80	70	74	77
Rehabilitation	Physiotherapy	90	72	83	71	80	76
	Occupational Therapy	80	75	63	56	64	55

Study area – 21 categories	Study area – 45 categories	SD	LE	TQ	SS	LR	OEE
Teacher education	Teacher Education – Other	78	35	82	75	87	78
	Teacher Education – Early Childhood	83	45	81	72	80	75
	Teacher Education – Primary & Secondary	73	58	72	68	79	66
Business and management	Accounting	78	51	77	71	76	72
	Business Management	82	54	80	75	81	78
	Sales & Marketing	83	62	79	69	84	74
	Management & Commerce – Other	80	53	78	70	86	74
	Banking & Finance	80	49	77	72	86	74
	Economics	84	56	89	77	88	85
Humanities, culture and social sciences	Political Science	81	46	90	82	87	86
	Humanities inc History & Geography	82	47	87	76	85	77
	Language & Literature	82	51	80	73	79	73
Social work	Social Work	84	54	84	76	78	77
Psychology	Psychology	79	46	82	70	79	76
Law and paralegal studies	Law	75	22	81	69	73	79
	Justice Studies & Policing	72	45	77	69	82	73
Creative arts	Art & Design	86	33	93	91	94	93
	Music & Performing Arts	81	58	81	68	82	74
Communications	Communication, Media & Journalism	83	60	85	68	78	81
Tourism, Hospitality, Personal services, Sport and recreation	Sport & Recreation	80	54	84	74	86	75
	Tourism, Hospitality & Personal Services	85	66	81	73	88	76
Total		80	52	80	73	82	76

*All higher education providers. Includes responses to each component of a double degree where the response falls into different study areas at the 45 study area level.

SD = Skills Development, LE = Learner Engagement, TQ = Teaching Quality, SS = Student Support, LR = Learning Resources, OEE = Overall Educational Experience.

