
Glossary

Each year the education departments of all states and territories in Australia, and the Australian Government Department of Education and Training collect data on government and non-government schools, and their students. Since 1994 the date for collection has been the first Friday in August, as close as possible with the national Census of Population and Housing conducted every five years. The 2014 census of NSW Government schools was conducted on August 1st. Initial results were published in CESE Bulletin Issue 13, Inbrief Mid-year Census, 2014.

In 1996, there were changes to the collection dates for some of the information reported in this bulletin. Data on students by age, gender and year of schooling, for all students and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, are collected at the mid-year census. Data on students of non-English speaking background are collected in Term 1.

This Bulletin consolidates data from the Department's Term 1 and midyear data collections. It also reports on non-government data collected by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

Government and non-government school data form part of the National Schools Statistics Collection which is reported annually by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in Schools Australia (Catalogue No. 4221.0).

1. Primary and Secondary Schools

Primary schools enrol students in Kindergarten to Year 6; secondary schools generally enrol students in Years 7 to 12, although some secondary schools only enrol students in the senior years, i.e. Years 11 to 12 or the junior years, i.e. Years 7 to 10.

2. Central/Community Schools

Central/community schools have primary and secondary departments and may be established where there is an enrolment in secondary classes of 20 or more. Enrolments in primary departments and secondary departments are included with the appropriate student data.

3. Schools for Specific Purposes

Schools for specific purposes (SSPs) are for students with specific needs. Students in SSPs are reported according to the type of specific need rather than by their year of schooling. Students with multiple disabilities are reported according to their main disability.

Most schools for specific purposes have permanent enrolments and include schools for students with intellectual (mild, moderate and severe) and physical disabilities, visual or hearing impairment, behaviour disorders or emotional disturbance, and students in juvenile justice centres. Some SSPs have no permanent enrolments because the children temporarily attending them are enrolled and counted in their own schools. These are mainly hospital schools.

4. Support Classes

Some students with specific needs are enrolled in support classes in primary, secondary and central schools. Students enrolled in support classes are reported according to the type of specific need rather than by their year of schooling. Support classes for students of mixed abilities are classified according to the predominant type of specific need present in the class. Support class enrolments are included with other primary and secondary enrolments in some tables; other tables combine enrolments in support classes in ordinary schools with enrolments in SSPs.

5. Distance Education

Distance education centres (DECs) provide schooling for students who are isolated or whose special circumstances prevent them from attending a regular school. They operate either as separate schools or as units within regular primary, central and high schools. Students enrolled in DECs are counted in their corresponding years of schooling.

In conjunction with the Open High School, DECs also provide individual subject enrolment, widening study opportunities for secondary students. These students are enrolled and counted at their home schools.

6. Part-time Students

Students in Years 11 or 12 can enrol to study as a part-time student or a full-time student. For the annual census, a part-time student is enrolled in less than 10 units, regardless of where those units are studied. All Kindergarten to Year 10 students are considered to be full-time.

7. Full-time Equivalent Enrolments

Following the introduction of part-time study in secondary schools in 1993, student enrolments are generally reported in full-time equivalent units (FTE). The FTE for students studying less than 10 units, the minimum workload, is determined by the formula: $0.1 \times$ the number of units studied and represented as a proportion of the full-time enrolment of 1.0 FTE.

8. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students

Students are counted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders (A&TSI) if they are identified and accepted as such by the community with which they are associated, and they identify themselves on the School Enrolment Form.

9. Apparent Retention Rates (ARR)

Retention rates are 'apparent' as they do not track individual students through their final years of secondary schooling. What they measure is the ratio of the total number of full-time school students in a designated year (e.g. Year 12 in 2014)

divided by the total number of full-time students in a previous year (e.g. Year 7 in 2009). This would be the Year 7 to 12 apparent retention rate in 2014.

Care should be taken in the interpretation of apparent retention rates, which can exceed 100%, because the method of calculation does not take into account a range of factors such as migration, interstate movements of students, transfers to and from non-government schools, part-time schooling, students repeating a year of schooling, or students pursuing other education and training pathways.

10. Students of Language Background other than English (LBOTE)

Students are counted as being of language background other than English if in their home a language other than English is spoken by the students, parents or guardians.

11. Attendance

Government school systems in Australia measure attendance rates throughout the first semester (terms 1 and 2). This is the time period specified for data collection in National Education Agreements between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. Schools for Special Purposes' attendance data is not collected.

The attendance rate is defined as the number of actual full time equivalent 'student days attended' over the collection period as a percentage of the total number of possible student days attended over the collection period (Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia KPM 7(b)).

12. Class Size

The audit of class sizes in NSW government primary schools is undertaken in March each year. The audit does not include schools for specific purposes, distance education centres or intensive English centres.

The number of classes, average class sizes and enrolment numbers exclude support classes in primary and central schools.

13. Higher School Certificate (HSC)

The Higher School Certificate is the highest educational award in secondary education in New South Wales. It is awarded to students who have satisfactorily completed Years 11 and 12 at secondary school. To be eligible, students must meet HSC course requirements and sit for the statewide HSC examinations.

14. Colleges

The secondary schools in some areas have been transformed into colleges in order to provide broader opportunities and better facilities for students. A college is the amalgamation of all the secondary schools within a specific area. Each former secondary school has become a campus of their college. A senior college campus is generally for students in Years 11

and 12 but in some cases, may include Year 10 students. The colleges have formed cooperative ventures with TAFE Institutes and universities. They offer a wide range of options from specialist senior Higher School Certificate courses to school re-entry courses.

15. Family Occupation and Education Index

The Family Occupation and Education Index (FOEI) is a school-level index of educational disadvantage related to socio-economic background. It has been selected as the basis of the equity loading for socio-economic background in the Department's new Resource Allocation Model.

FOEI is constructed from parental education and occupation information collected from student enrolment forms and recorded in the Enrolment Registration Number system. FOEI uses a statistical regression model to produce a weighted combination of school-level parental education and occupation variables based on the extent to which each variable uniquely predicts average school performance.

16. Statistical Area 4 Groupings

Groups of ASGS Statistical Area 4 (SA4) boundaries in New South Wales combined into 11 groups for reporting and publication of Department data.

Name of SA4 Groupings	SA4 Name
Sydney-North	» Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby, » Sydney - Northern Beaches, » Sydney - Ryde
Sydney-Inner	» Sydney - City and Inner South, » Sydney - Eastern Suburbs, » Sydney - Inner West
Sydney-South	» Sydney - Inner South West, » Sydney - Sutherland
Sydney-South West	» Sydney - Outer South West, » Sydney - South West
Sydney-West	» Sydney - Blacktown, » Sydney - Parramatta
Sydney-North West	» Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury, » Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains
North East NSW	» Coffs Harbour - Grafton, » Mid North Coast, Richmond - Tweed
North West NSW	» Hunter Valley exc Newcastle, » Far West and Orana, » New England and North West
South West NSW	» Central West, » Murray, » Riverina
South East NSW	» Capital Region, » Illawarra, » Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven
Central Coast, Newcastle	» Central Coast, » Newcastle and » Lake Macquarie