

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016**

**Outcome: Skills and Training**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000089**

Senator Simms, Robert asked on 10 February 2016, Proof Hansard page 110

***Characteristics of VET and higher education students***

**Question**

Ms Furnell: The collection that came out last year for the first time did give us a fuller picture of students engaging with VET undertaking studies, so we have a bigger picture. For some of that data, I do not have all the cross-tabulations that you may be interested in but, as Dr Banerjee was saying, the VET group, from the full picture, is: some 52 per cent are employed and some 35 per cent are outside major cities, from various groups such as Indigenous Australians, perhaps people with a disability or from a lower socioeconomic or non-English-speaking background. There are quite a lot. Non-English-speaking background, for example, is something like 15 per cent. Lower socioeconomic groups is about 20 and Indigenous Australians is 3.7. So some of those groups are quite significant within the VET system. I do not have the comparable university statistics to hand, so I cannot make that comparison, but generally there are obviously a wide range of people engaging in VET and across Australia. Senator SIMMS: Am I able to get a breakdown of that information on notice? That would be useful.

Ms Furnell: If you would like to give us the details you are seeking, we can do the tabulation for you.

Senator SIMMS: Certainly. I can provide that and put that on notice. That would be good. Thank you.

**Answer**

The table at Attachment A compares selected student demographics between Vocational Education and Training, and Higher Education.

**Table 1: Selected student demographics, Vocational Education and Training, and Higher Education 2014<sup>1</sup>**

Student Demographic	Vocational Education and Training (National VET Provider Collection)		Higher Education (Department of Education statistics)	
	Students (number)	Proportion of all Students (per cent)	Students (number)	Proportion of onshore domestic students (per cent)
Identified as Indigenous	146,500	3.7	15,000	1.5
Identified with disability	201,000	5.1	55,600	5.5
Lowest socio-economic quantile <sup>2</sup>	798,500	20.4 (in bottom quintile)	165,500	16.3 (in bottom quartile)
Main language spoken at home not English	527,100	13.5	<i>Not available</i>	
Non-English speaking background	<i>Not available</i>		39,000	3.8
Inner and outer regional, remote or very remote <sup>3</sup>	1,373,200	35.1	204,500	20.2
Identified as employed <sup>4</sup>	2,035,800	52.1	<i>Comparable data not available<sup>5</sup></i>	

<sup>1</sup> Vocational Education and Training (VET) statistics are based on total VET activity (government subsidised, fee-for-service domestic and international, offshore delivery by Australian providers and VET in Schools), while the Higher Education statistics are based on domestic onshore students only.

<sup>2</sup> The National VET Provider Collection categorises student socio-economic status according to SEIFA IRSD quintiles, while the Department of Education Higher Education statistics distributes socio-economic data according to SEIFA EOI quartiles.

<sup>3</sup> Regional and remote areas are based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 Australian Statistical Geography Standard.

<sup>4</sup> Over 1 million VET students did not declare their labour force status.

<sup>5</sup> The ABS Survey of Education and Work (May 2015) estimates 70.7 per cent of Certificate and Diploma level students are employed, compared to 65.3 per cent of Degree and Graduate Diploma/Certificate students.