

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

Outcome 2 – Schools and Youth

DEEWR Question No. EW0414_13

Senator Scullion asked on 31 May 2012 , Hansard page 47

Question

Gap in completion rates

Senator SCULLION: Thank you for that. Given that not only the government but parliament have a priority to halve the gap in the year 12 or equivalent completion rates by 2020, are we seeing more students completing year 12 to go on to tertiary education? Ms Paul: We are. Senator SCULLION: Excellent. Ms Paul: I do not have the figures in front of me. I do not know if you do? Mr Davies: No. Ms Paul: We are. I can take that on notice. Senator SCULLION: Perhaps you can take that number on notice. I would appreciate that.

Answer

Year 12 Attainment – Indigenous target

The measure for the COAG target - of halving the gap for Indigenous people aged 20-24 in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020 - is the Census. A baseline was set at the 2006 Census and we will be able to measure progress toward this target following the October 2012 release of Census data.

Based on the 2006 Census, the national Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate for Indigenous 20 to 24 year olds is 47.4 per cent. There is a gap of about 36 percentage points between the rate for Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people.

The Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education has provided the following information:

Transition from school to higher education

Individual students are not tracked from high school to university. Higher education Commencing Student data however indicates trends with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people commencing higher education.

Higher education Commencing Student data for the years 2006 to 2009 shows increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students commencing higher education (Table 1, below).

Table 1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commencing Student numbers and proportion of Total Domestic Commencing Students

Year	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commencing Students *	Total Domestic Commencing Students	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commencing Students from Total Domestic Commencing Students
2009	4819	315968	1.5%
2008	4314	288228	1.5%
2007	4027	281625	1.4%
2006	3844	270236	1.4%

* Source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student commencement numbers in the *Context Paper for the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*, September 2011, figure 1.2, page 12.

2006 Census data showed that the proportion of the total Australian population aged between 15 and 64 who were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was 2.2%. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people commencing higher education has remained below this figure (refer Table 1).

Transition from school to Vocational Education and Training

The number of Indigenous young people with Year 12 continuing to VET study at Certificate III or above rose from 1,166 in 2002 to 1,463 in 2007, and then to 1,884 in 2010.

Table 2: Indigenous persons, aged 15–19 years, with Year 12, enrolled at Certificate III or above

Indigenous	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	1,166	1,193	1,159	1,314	1,318	1,463	1,572	1,653	1,884

Source: NCVET Students and courses, 2010