

Australian vocational education and training statistics

VET qualification completion rates 2024

National Centre for Vocational Education Research



Description

VET qualification completion rates 2024 reports on comparative performance of the 2020-commencing cohort, data are sourced from [Total VET students and courses](https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-students-and-courses) <<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-students-and-courses>> .

Qualifications generally have a volume of learning of between one to two years, with those undertaken as part of a recognised apprenticeship or traineeship taking longer due to on-the-job learning requirements. VET students predominantly study part-time, which can extend their training time further.

Completion rates are presented as either observed or projected:

- Observed rates are presented four years after the commencement year and can be used to compare performance between commencing cohorts. This timeframe is accepted as a good balance between timeliness and the stability of the rates.
- Projected rates are generated for commencing years where enough time has passed to assume unsuccessful outcomes, but enough records remain outstanding that they impact the comparability of the rate. These rates are comprised of observed ‘to date’ completions and a projected ‘top up’ component.

The proportion completed as at the latest submission, i.e. as at 31 December 2024, referred to as ‘to date’ are also presented, but cannot be compared across years, as those in earlier years have had more time to complete.

A range of [factors](https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/infographics/what-factors-explain-the-likelihood-of-completing-a-vet-qualification) influence the likelihood of completing a VET qualification <<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/infographics/what-factors-explain-the-likelihood-of-completing-a-vet-qualification>> ¹. Completion rates vary across states and territories, training packages and occupations, due to variations in training system delivery, policy settings, student demographics, reporting arrangements, and broader economic conditions.

Report

Commentary in this publication is static and will not update with any user selections

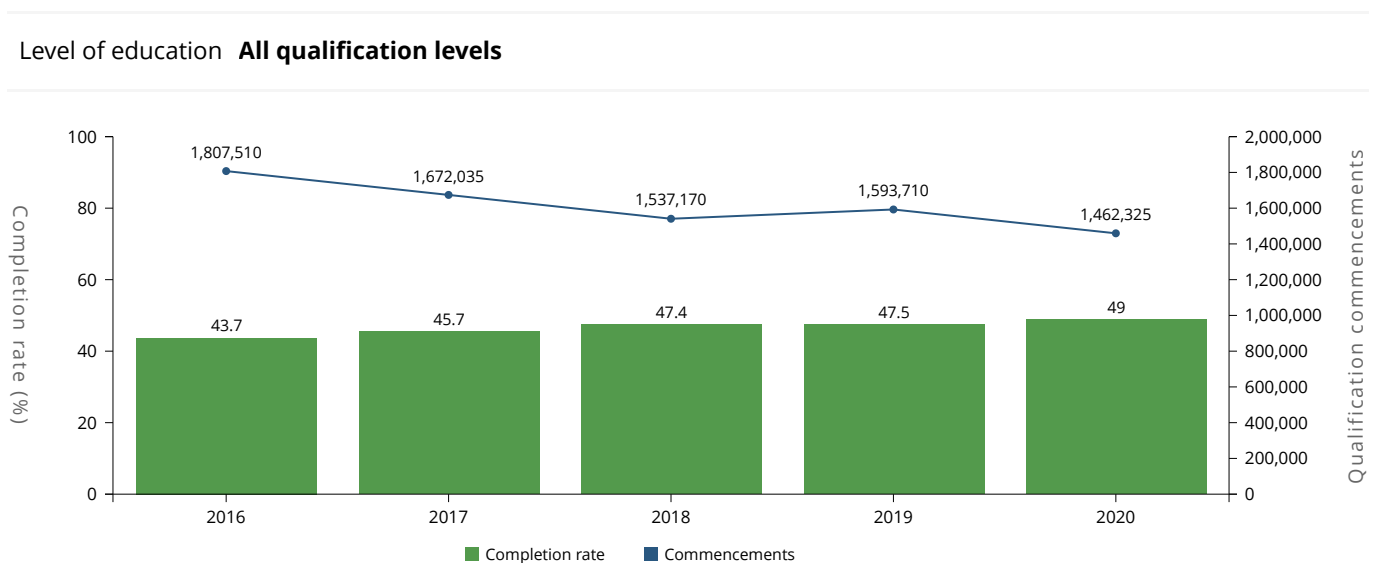
Observed completion rates

The completion rate (after four years) for all nationally recognised qualifications commencing in 2020 was 49.0%, up from 47.5% for those commencing in 2019.

This headline completion rate applies to qualifications spanning diverse VET settings, objectives, and cohorts. For some programs - such as those focused on rehabilitation or employability - completion may not be the main intention or success measure. The [DataBuilder <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/data/databuilder>](https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/data/databuilder) presents disaggregated completion rates.

Completion rates varied by qualification level. The highest completion rate for 2020-commencing qualifications was 55.5% for diploma-level or higher qualifications, and lowest for Certificate I qualifications, at 40.4%.

Figure 1: Qualification commencements and completion rates (after 4 years), commencing in 2016 to 2020 - All qualification levels



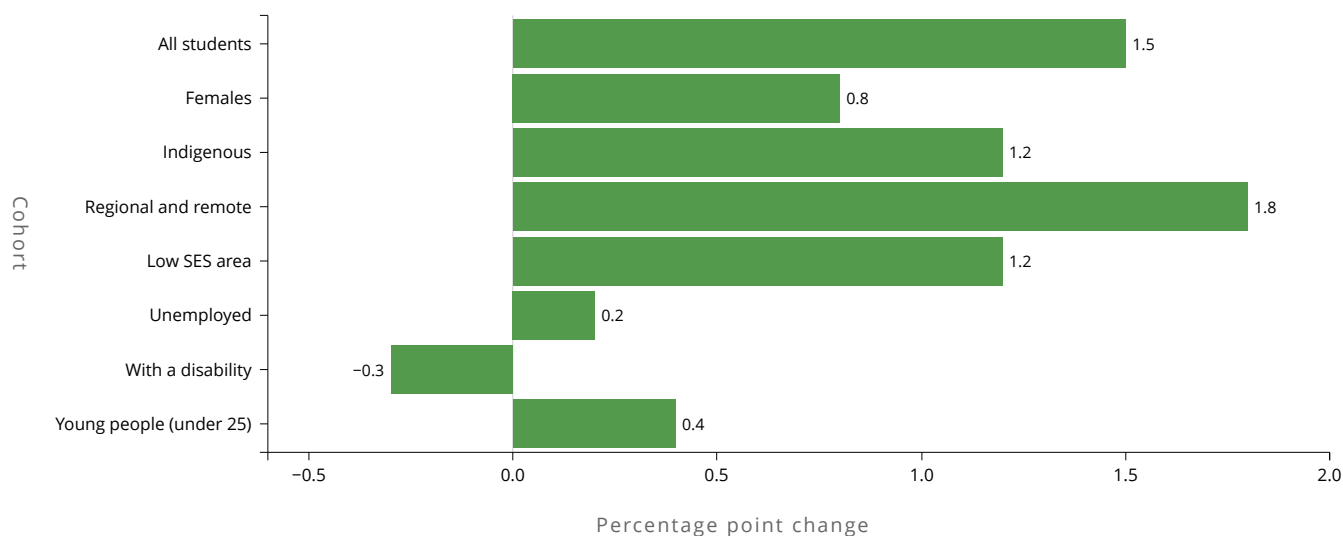
2016 is the first cohort for which a commencement status can reliably be derived using the new Longitudinal Data Construct, as it is the first year for which a full year of preceding data exists.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted completion rates for this cohort. The pandemic seems to have impacted how many commencements occurred in 2020 and led to delays in training and assessment for any students still studying (for example, 2019 commencing students). Commonwealth and state and territory responses to the pandemic, including the announcement of JobTrainer, are recognised as supporting continued engagement in training during the pandemic.

The completion rate (after four years) increased for most priority cohorts when comparing 2019 and 2020 commencements across all qualification levels. The exception to this was commencements by students with a disability, which declined 0.3 percentage points. Directional changes in priority cohorts were observed within the individual qualification levels, with some seeing decreases and others increases.

Figure 2: Percentage point change in four-year completion rate for priority cohorts, 2020 vs 2019 commencing years - All qualification levels

Level of education **All qualification levels**

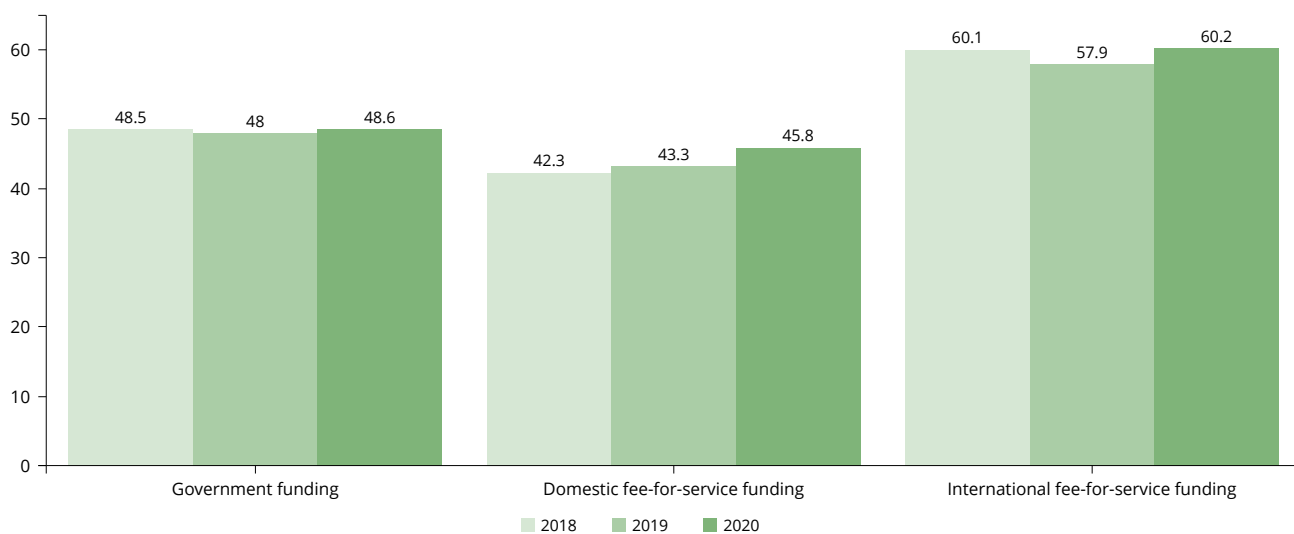


Completion rates varied depending on the source of funding. The completion rate (after four years) for 2020-commencing

- *Government funded* qualifications was 48.6% (an increase of 0.6 percentage points from 2019)
- *Domestic fee-for-service* qualifications was 45.8% (an increase of 2.5 percentage points from 2019)
- *International fee-for-service* qualifications was 60.2% (an increase of 2.3 percentage points from 2019)

Figure 3: Completion rates (after 4 years) for qualifications commencing in 2018 to 2020, by funding source - All qualification levels (%)

Level of education **All qualification levels**



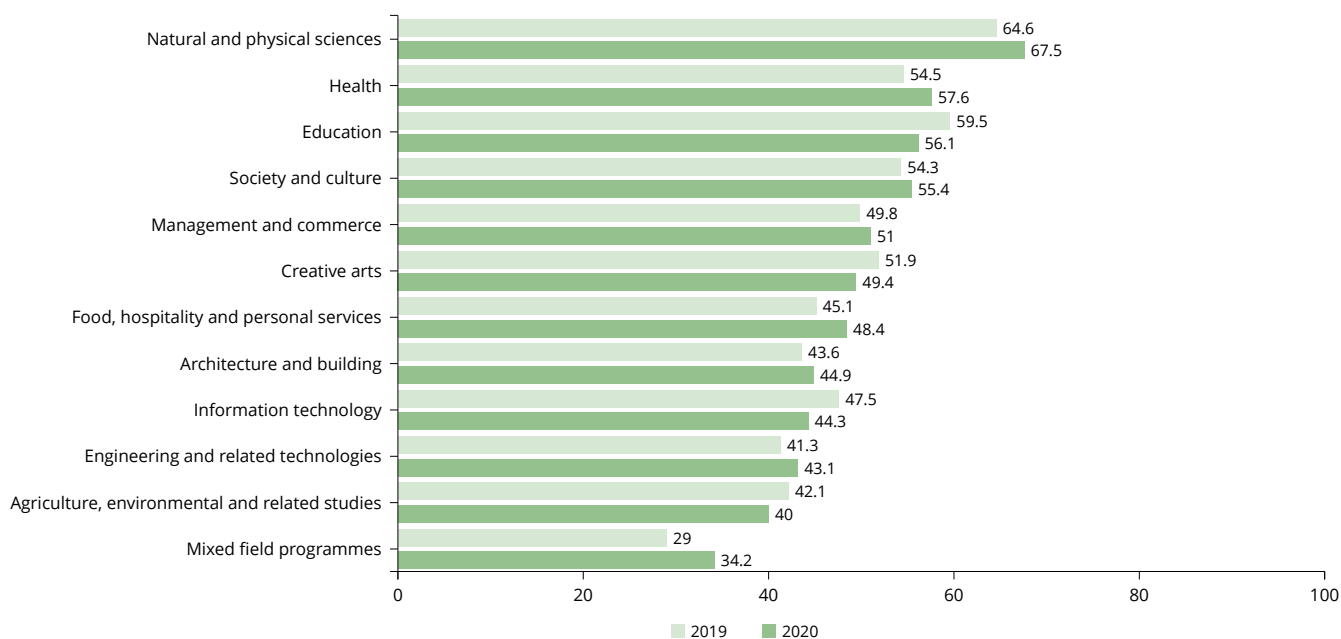
Government funding consists of three distinct categories. Visit NCVER's DataBuilder to view the completion rates for funding source groups and sub-categories.

While Fee-Free TAFE activity falls within scope of reporting, it is not separately collected and therefore cannot be identified in the data.

For 2020 commencing qualifications, overall completion rates (after four years) were highest for *Natural and physical sciences* qualifications, at 67.5%. The lowest rates were for *Mixed field programmes*, at 34.2%.

Figure 4: Completion rates (after 4 years) for qualifications commencing in 2019 to 2020, by field of education - All qualification levels (%)

Level of education **All qualification levels**



n/a indicates there were no commencements for that combination. np indicates the rounded commencement number is 5 or fewer so the rate is not presented.

The chart is ordered by highest completion rate (after 4 years) in 2020 to lowest for the selected qualification level.

There has been a gradual increase in the time taken to complete a qualification (Table 1) and this may be related to the pandemic or a shift in the training mix. The proportion of completions occurring one year after commencement has declined from 90.2% for the 2016-commencing cohort to 86.1% for the 2020-commencing. Almost 99% of completions have occurred three years after commencement for all cohorts.

Table 1: Proportion of completions up to four years after commencement, 2016 to 2020 (%)

Commencing year	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
2016	58.4	31.8	6.2	2.7	0.9
2017	56.7	32.8	6.8	2.4	1.3
2018	53.6	34.8	6.8	3.2	1.7
2019	52.8	33.7	8.2	4	1.3
2020	49.2	36.9	9.2	3.3	1.4

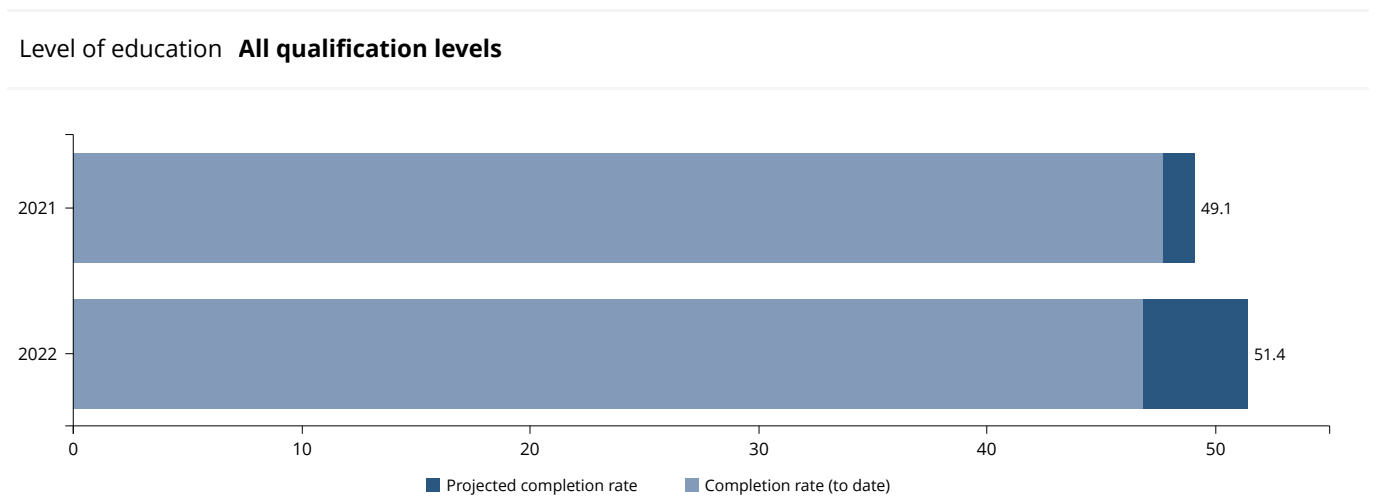
Projected completion rates

Projected completion rates consist of both an observed component (qualifications that have already completed, i.e. 'to date') and an estimated component.

The estimated component is the proportion of qualifications still in training that may complete based on similar activity. The more qualifications considered to still be active or 'in training', the greater the proportion of estimated completions.

Based on the latest data received, the completion rate for 2022-commencing qualifications is projected to be 51.4%, with 46.8% already completed. Projections are subject to change as further data are received.

Figure 5: Completion rates to date and projected completion rates for qualifications commencing in 2021 to 2022 - All qualification levels (%)



Projections cannot be made for the 2023- and 2024-commencing cohorts.

The rates to date or the proportion of completions as at the latest submission, i.e. as at 31 December 2024, are available via the DataBuilder. These rates should not be used to compare the different commencing cohorts, instead they can be used for point-in-time insights for individual commencing cohorts.

Methodological and reporting improvements for 2024

Observed completion rates in this publication will differ from previously published rates as they are derived from an improved underlying dataset and methodology. Differences between overall rates are presented in the following table.

Please refer to the explanatory notes for more information on the methodology.

Table 2: Comparison of completion rate (after 4 years) between the previous and new methodology

Commencing year	Original completion rate	New completion rate
2016	43.4	43.7
2017	45.9	45.7
2018	47.6	47.4
2019	47.3	47.5

1. Ong, A & Circelli, M 2018, What factors explain the likelihood of completing a VET qualification? NCVER, Adelaide

© National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2025



For details and exceptions visit the [NCVER Portal](#).

This document should be attributed as NCVET 2025, *VET qualification completion rates 2024*, NCVET, Adelaide.

This work has been produced by NCVET on behalf of the Australian Government, and state and territory governments, with funding provided through the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

The views and opinions expressed in this document are those of NCVET and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government or state and territory governments.

ISSN 2981-8346

TD/TNC 162.02

Published by NCVET, ABN 87 007 967 311