

# Chapter 4: Enrolment and Attendance

This chapter reports on student enrolment, attendance, and apparent retention in 2022, using the nationally agreed key performance measures (KPMs) for schooling specified in the *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2020*.

## 4.1 Enrolment rate

### Key Facts:

- At the 2021 census, the national enrolment rate for 6–15-year-olds was 99.3%. Enrolment rates were 99.0% or higher in all states and territories except the Northern Territory, which had an enrolment rate of 98.6%.
- Data from the National Schools Statistics Collection indicates that in 2022, the proportion of 6–15-year-olds enrolled in school in Australia was 98.6%, down from 99.0% in 2021.

This section reports on the number of students enrolled, as a proportion of the Australian population in the corresponding age group, as a KPM for schooling.<sup>1</sup> The KPM is specified as the number of students aged 6–15 years enrolled in school, expressed as a proportion of the 6–15-year-old population. As this approximates the age range of students for whom schooling is compulsory, the enrolment rate for this group is close to 100%.

### Key Performance Measure 1(a)

Proportion of children aged 6–15 years who are enrolled in school

Data for this KPM is drawn from the 5-yearly Australian Census of Population and Housing.<sup>2</sup> At the most recent census (2021), the national enrolment rate for 6–15-year-olds was 99.3%. Enrolment rates were 99.0% or higher in all states and territories except the Northern Territory, which had an enrolment rate of 98.6%. At approaching 100%, KPM1(a) provides evidence that longstanding policies for universal access to schooling and for compulsory education for this age group are implemented in practice.

<sup>1</sup> Section 2.1 of this report outlines the structure of Australian schooling, including age requirements for compulsory enrolment in school for children and teenagers living in each of the states and territories. Section 2.2 provides data on the number of students enrolled by school sector, by school level, by state and territory, and over time.

<sup>2</sup> The Census of Population and Housing is Australia's largest statistical collection undertaken by the ABS. It is conducted every 5 years.

Before 2019, an annual measure for the enrolment KPM, based on the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), was also reported. From 2019, this measure was deleted as a measure of the KPM because of statistical inconsistencies. However, data drawn from this source is reported in the National Report on Schooling data portal. Based on this measure, the national enrolment rate for 6–15-year-olds in 2022 was 98.6%, down from 99.0% in 2021.

Table 4.1 shows this KPM for the Census years 2011, 2016 and 2021; and the annual measure based on the NSSC.

**Table 4.1**

**Proportion of the population aged 6–15 years enrolled in school, Australia, 2012–2022**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
KPM1(a) Proportion of 6–15-year-olds enrolled in school, Australia (%) (Census of population and housing)	-	-	-	-	99.4	-	-	-	-	99.3	-
Number of children aged 6–15 years enrolled in school (NSSC)	2,801,751	2,844,983	2,889,292	2,930,612	2,974,656	3,022,905	3,071,847	3,131,591	3,174,506	3,198,158	3,215,223
Population, Australia (aged 6–15 years)	2,799,226	2,833,866	2,875,596	2,919,394	2,970,505	3,024,364	3,081,581	3,143,378	3,196,673	3,229,459	3,259,377
Proportion of 6–15-year-olds enrolled in school, Australia (%)	100.1	100.4	100.5	100.4	100.1	100.0	99.7	99.6	99.3	99.0	98.6

Sources: ABS, *Australian Census of Population and Housing*, 2011, 2016, 2021; ABS, *Schools Australia*, 2012-2022; ABS, *National, state and territory population June 2022* (release date 15/12/2022).

Data disaggregated by state and territory, and other disaggregations for the census years 2011, 2016, and 2021 is available in the National Report on Schooling data portal.

## 4.2 Student attendance

### Key Facts:

In Australia in 2022:

- The attendance rate for students in Years 1-10 declined to 86.5% from 90.9% in 2021. This decline, which was due to the impact of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, high Influenza season outbreaks and floods in certain regions across Australia, was remarkably consistent across all states/territories and school sectors.
- The national student attendance level (the percentage of students with above 90 per cent attendance) declined to 49.9% from 71.2% in 2021. The large decline is due to a small shift in attendance, which corresponds to an exaggerated movement in the student attendance level.

Like enrolment rates, the national KPMs for attendance in the *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2020* relate to students in the compulsory years of schooling. However, attendance measures are specified in terms of school year (Years 1–10) rather than by student age. Where KPM 1(a) reports on the proportion of children enrolled in school, KPMs 1(b) and 1(c) report on the proportion of available time that students spend at school once enrolled.

#### Key Performance Measure 1(b)

Attendance rate: The number of actual full-time equivalent student-days attended by full-time students in Years 1–10 in Semester 1 as a percentage of the total number of possible student-days attended in Semester 1

#### Key Performance Measure 1(c)

Attendance level: The proportion of full-time students in Years 1–10 whose attendance rate in Semester 1 is equal to or greater than 90 per cent

All school sectors in all states and territories use a common reference period – Semester 1 in each school year – for the collection of attendance data for national reporting. This is consistent with the [National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting](#), which came into operation for the 2014 data collection period and onwards. Data is reported from 2014 for the attendance rate and from 2015 for the attendance level.

## Attendance rates

Table 4.2 reports KPM 1(b) by state and territory and school sector for 2022.

**Table 4.2**

### Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by state and territory and school sector, Australia, 2022 (%)

School sector	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
Government	85.2	87.4	85.6	84.8	84.7	83.9	74.3	85.1	85.6
Catholic	88.1	87.8	88.1	87.0	89.2	86.9	76.5	85.3	87.9
Independent	88.7	89.1	89.5	87.6	88.6	87.9	85.4	88.8	88.8
All	86.4	87.7	86.7	85.6	86.1	85.1	76.0	85.9	86.5

Notes:

Excludes part-time students. For data definitions, see the [National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting](#).

Source: ACARA, National Student Attendance Data Collection, National Report on Schooling data portal.

Table 4.3 reports KPM 1(b) nationally, by school sector, for 2014–2022.

**Table 4.3**

### Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by school sector, Australia, 2014–2022 (%)

School sector	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Government	91.9	92.0	91.9	91.8	91.3	90.7	N/A	90.0	85.6
Catholic	93.9	93.6	93.6	93.4	92.9	92.4	N/A	92.3	87.9
Independent	94.3	93.9	93.8	93.7	93.5	93.1	N/A	93.0	88.8
All	92.7	92.6	92.5	92.4	91.9	91.4	N/A	90.9	86.5

Notes:

See notes for Table 4.2.

National attendance data for 2020 was collected but not published as it was not considered nationally consistent because of differing arrangements in states and territories due to COVID-19.

Attendance rates for NSW and Australia for 2018 onward are not fully comparable to previous years, due to changes in the calculation method for NSW government schools in 2018.

2021 and 2022 attendance data in NSW is not comparable with previous years due to changes to the attendance calculations to align with the revised 2020 National Standards for student attendance data reporting.

Source: ACARA National Student Attendance Data Collection, National Report on Schooling data portal.

The average school attendance rate for Years 1–10 across Australia in 2022 was 85.6% for government schools, 87.9% for Catholic schools, 88.8% for independent schools and 86.5% for schools overall. This was a fall of 4.4 percentage points in the national KPM from 90.9% in 2021, with decreases occurring at the national level in all three school sectors.

The [Key Performance Measures Dashboard](#) in the National Report on Schooling data portal reports a downward trend over the period 2014–2022 of -0.6 percentage points per annum. The lower attendance rates in 2022 can thus be seen as consistent with a long-term trend.

This interpretation should be made with some caution, as part of the fall from 2019 to 2022 may have resulted from increased student absences due to illness or suspected illness as COVID-19 continued to spread. Attendance rates in Semester 1 2022 declined due to the impact of the COVID-19 Omicron variant as well as high Influenza season outbreaks and floods in certain regions experienced across Australia at that time.

All states and territories reported reduced attendance rates in 2022, with decreases ranging from 3.4 percentage points in Qld to 5.7 percentage points in the ACT. The average attendance rate for Years 1–10 in 2022 exceeded 85% in all states and territories except the NT, where, as in previous years, the much lower average attendance rate (57.8%) for the high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students led to an average rate for all students of 76.0%.<sup>3</sup>

Across all states and territories, attendance rates increased with socio-educational advantage (SEA).<sup>4</sup> The average attendance rate for schools in the lowest SEA quartile was 83.7%, compared to 88.8% for students in schools in the highest SEA quartile. This difference was more pronounced in the NT than in other states and territories, with average attendance rates of 65.1% among students in schools in the lowest SEA quartile, compared to 86.3% for students in schools in the highest SEA quartile.

A common characteristic across all states and territories was lower average attendance rates in Years 7–10 than in Years 1–6. At the national level in 2022, the average attendance rate for Years 7–10 was 84.7% compared with 87.8% for Years 1–6. There was little difference in the 2022 national average attendance rate for girls (86.7%) and boys (86.3%). Average attendance rates were higher in major cities (87.5%) than in remote areas (79.3%), and lowest in very remote areas (63.1%).<sup>5</sup>

Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have continued to decline, especially in remote and very remote communities and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4.4 shows comparative attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students in Years 1–10 by state and territory, and the gaps between them, in 2014, 2021 and 2022.

The decrease in attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students between 2021 and 2022 (4.9 percentage points) was larger than that for non-Indigenous students (4.2 percentage points). This increased the gap in attendance by 0.7 percentage points to 12.9 percentage points nationally. Above average gaps in attendance rates were again recorded in the NT, WA, and SA.

Geographic differences were much more marked for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than for non-Indigenous students. For non-Indigenous students, the average attendance rate in schools in major cities was 87.8%, in remote schools 85.7% and in very remote schools 85.4%. But for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, these rates were 77.4% (major cities), 65.2% (remote) and 52.2% (very remote), a difference of 10.4 percentage points between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in major cities, 20.5 percentage points in remote areas, and a gap of 33.2 percentage points between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students in schools in very remote areas.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> As at August 2022, 40.4% of full-time students in Years 1–10 in the NT were identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, compared with 6.5% of full-time students in Years 1–10 across Australia (ABS, *Schools, 2022*, table 42 (b)). For measuring attendance, years 1–10 includes ungraded primary and ungraded secondary students.

<sup>4</sup> In 2022, additional reporting of student attendance by socio-educational quartile was introduced. These measures are not based directly on student level attendance but have been calculated by distributing school level attendance using the SEA quartiles as reported on My School.

<sup>5</sup> Student attendance rates disaggregated by year level, sex and geolocation are available in the National Report on Schooling data portal, Student Attendance data set.

<sup>6</sup> National Report on Schooling data portal, Student Attendance data set.

The average attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was lower for older year groups: 77.8% for Years 1–6 but 69.4% for Years 7–10. Attendance rates for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in remote and very remote areas were lower than for older students in other locations, with an average national attendance rate of only 39.0% for Year 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in very remote areas. As a result, the attendance gap is larger at higher year levels in these areas.

**Table 4.4**

**Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by state and territory and Indigenous status, Australia, 2014, 2021 and 2022 (%)**

State/territory	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
<b>2014</b>									
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	87.5	86.8	85.2	81.1	77.4	88.5	70.2	85.2	83.5
Non-Indigenous	93.9	93.1	92.8	92.6	92.7	92.4	90.9	92.5	93.2
All students	93.6	93.0	92.2	92.1	91.7	92.1	82.3	92.3	92.7
Gap Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/non-Indigenous (percentage points)	6.4	6.3	7.6	11.5	15.3	3.9	20.7	7.3	9.7
<b>2021</b>									
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	82.2	84.5	81.3	77.3	72.8	84.9	61.6	83.2	79.4
Non-Indigenous	91.6	92.6	90.9	91.2	91.2	89.9	91.7	91.9	91.6
All students	91.0	92.4	90.1	90.5	89.9	89.3	79.7	91.6	90.9
Gap Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/non-Indigenous (percentage points)	9.4	8.1	9.7	13.9	18.5	5.0	30.1	8.7	12.2
<b>2022</b>									
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	77.3	79.6	76.8	72.5	66.4	79.9	57.8	77.0	74.5
Non-Indigenous	87.1	87.9	87.7	86.4	87.6	85.7	87.9	86.2	87.4
All students	86.4	87.7	86.7	85.6	86.1	85.1	76	85.9	86.5
Gap Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/non-Indigenous (percentage points)	9.8	8.3	10.9	13.9	21.2	5.8	30.1	9.2	12.9
Change in gap 2014–21 (percentage points)	3.0	1.8	2.1	2.4	3.2	1.1	9.4	1.4	2.5
Change in gap 2014–22 (percentage points)	3.4	2.0	3.3	2.4	5.9	1.9	9.4	1.9	3.2
Change in gap 2021–22 (percentage points)	0.4	0.2	1.2	0.0	2.7	0.8	0.0	0.5	0.7

Notes:

See notes for Table 4.2.

Source: ACARA National Student Attendance Data Collection, National Report on Schooling data portal.

## Attendance levels

The attendance level is a measure of the proportion of full-time students in Years 1–10, whose attendance rate in Semester 1 is greater than or equal to 90%. A number of studies have shown that learning outcomes and educational achievement decline markedly when student attendance slips below 90%.<sup>7</sup> KPM 1(c) aims to identify populations or groups for whom attendance is generally satisfactory. Conversely, it identifies groups whose lower levels of attendance may put them at a disadvantage.

Table 4.5 shows KPM 1(c) by state and territory, by school sector, for 2022.

**Table 4.5**

**Student attendance levels: proportion of students in Years 1–10 whose attendance rate is equal to or greater than 90%, by state and territory and school sector, Australia, 2022 (%); Change 2021–2022 (percentage points)**

School sector	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
<b>2022</b>									
Government	44.3	54.4	49.5	46.7	47.6	44.1	36.5	40.6	48.2
Catholic	51.0	49.6	51.0	44.6	60.0	47.4	35.4	33.8	50.5
Independent	54.4	57.2	59.9	47.6	56.7	51.0	49.9	51.3	55.6
All	47.3	53.9	51.4	46.5	51.0	45.7	38.2	41.3	49.9
<b>Change 2021–2022</b>									
Government	-23.6	-20.6	-14.1	-19.1	-17.7	-18.4	-12.8	-30.3	-19.8
Catholic	-25.0	-28.7	-23.9	-31.7	-14.6	-23.2	-18.0	-39.9	-25.5
Independent	-24.3	-27.4	-16.7	-30.9	-19.1	-26.1	-16.9	-26.8	-23.6
All	-23.8	-23.1	-16.1	-23.3	-17.4	-20.3	-13.9	-31.4	-21.3

Notes:

See notes for Table 4.2.

Sources: National Report on Schooling data portal, Student attendance, ACARA National Student Attendance Data Collection.

In 2022, 49.9% of Australian students in Years 1–10 attended school for at least 90% of school days, falling from 71.2% in 2021, with declines in attendance rates in all school sectors and in all states and territories. Declines in attendance rates were larger for non-government schools compared to government schools, and larger in the ACT, NSW, Vic, and SA than for other states and territories.

It is likely that the overall fall in this KPM resulted from the spread of COVID-19 and its impact on school operations in 2022. This included public health advice that students with cold and flu symptoms should not attend school. The reason for the large decline in the student attendance level is that a small shift in attendance corresponds to an exaggerated movement in the student attendance level.

This KPM is intended to monitor progress in Australia's priority to close the gaps in educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The measure for 2022 confirms that a much lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander than non-Indigenous students were present at school for 90% or more of the expected number of days.

Table 4.6 shows KPM 1(c) by state and territory, by Indigenous status, for 2022 and the gap in this measure between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Hancock, KJ., Shepherd, C., Lawrence, D., & Zubrick, S. (2013), *Student Attendance and Educational Outcomes: Every day counts*, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research.

Table 4.6

**Student attendance levels: proportion of students in Years 1–10 whose attendance rate is equal to, or greater than, 90%, by state and territory and Indigenous status, Australia, 2022 (%); Change 2021–2022**

State/territory	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	26.8	34.8	30.4	22.7	18.9	33.6	15.0	24.2	26.6
Non-Indigenous	48.8	54.2	53.5	47.9	53.5	47.1	53.3	41.9	51.5
All students	47.3	53.9	51.4	46.5	51.0	45.7	38.2	41.3	49.9
Gap Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/non-Indigenous (percentage points)	22.0	19.4	23.2	25.2	34.7	13.5	38.3	17.7	24.8
<b>Change 2021–2022</b>									
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	-17.7	-15.5	-12.5	-14.4	-13.2	-18.1	-6.6	-23.9	-14.7
Non-Indigenous	-24.3	-23.3	-16.5	-23.8	-17.8	-20.5	-19.0	-31.6	-21.7
All students	-23.8	-23.1	-16.1	-23.3	-17.4	-20.3	-13.9	-31.4	-21.3
Gap Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/non-Indigenous (percentage points)	-6.5	-7.8	-4.0	-9.3	-4.6	-2.4	-12.4	-7.8	-7.0

Notes:

See notes for Table 4.2.

Sources: National Report on Schooling data portal, Student attendance, ACARA National Student Attendance Data Collection.

In 2022, 26.6% of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attended school for 90% of the time or more, with a gap of 24.8 percentage points between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students. The gaps in SA, WA and the NT were above the national average.

The decline in attendance levels between 2021 and 2022 was larger for non-Indigenous students than for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, resulting in a reduction of the gap of 7.0 percentage points since 2021. Between 2021 and 2022, KPM 1c for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreased, but the gap also narrowed in all jurisdictions, with the NT, WA and SA experiencing the largest reduction in the attendance level gap.



## 4.3 Apparent retention

### Key Facts:

- Apparent retention rates estimate the progression of students through school over several years through several year levels. The national apparent retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12 decreased by 2.6 percentage points to 79.0% in 2022.
- The apparent retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreased by 4.1 percentage points, from 60.5% in 2021 to 56.4% in 2022.
- Over the ten-year period from 2012 to 2022, Year 10 to Year 12 apparent retention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has increased, with a net rise of 3.1 percentage points since 2012. For non-Indigenous students, apparent retention rates were the same in 2012 and 2022. This has resulted in a narrowing of the gap between apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students by 3.1 percentage points.

Apparent retention rates estimate the progression of students through school over several years through several year levels. They measure the proportion of a year group or cohort that is still enrolled in that cohort after one or more calendar years.

These rates are designated as 'apparent' because they are based on aggregate enrolment data and do not record the progression of individual students. Apparent retention rates do not distinguish between students progressing at a 'normal' rate of one grade per calendar year and students who repeat a grade or are promoted, thus moving between cohorts; students who choose to adopt flexible study patterns in senior years; or students who join or leave a cohort through migration.

As such, apparent retention rates measure the net change in the size of a cohort as students leave or join it. This provides a measure of student progression for the majority of a year group. This measure is more reliable at the national level than at state and territory level, and less reliable for geographic areas with mobile populations and for individual schools.

KPM 1(e) in the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2020 measures the apparent retention of students from Year 10 to Year 12.

### Key Performance Measure 1(e)

Apparent retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12

Table 4.7 and Figure 4.1 show KPM 1(e) by school sector for the period 2012–2022.

Table 4.7

**Apparent retention rates (uncapped), Year 10 to Year 12, by school sector, Australia, 2012–2022 (%)**

School sector	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Government	74.8	76.7	78.6	79.2	79.5	79.8	79.2	78.0	78.2	77.2	73.5
Catholic	84.2	85.4	86.8	86.3	86.4	86.5	85.4	84.9	85.5	85.4	84.4
Independent	89.0	88.9	90.9	90.0	89.7	90.9	91.1	91.0	90.5	90.8	90.3
All	79.3	80.7	82.5	82.7	82.9	83.3	82.8	82.0	82.1	81.6	79.0

## Notes:

The apparent retention rate measures the number of full-time school students in a designated year level of schooling as a percentage of their respective cohort group in a base year. The base year for apparent retention rates Year 10 to Year 12 is Year 10, two years before. Enrolments are as at the annual Schools Census in the first week of August each year. Part-time students are not included. Ungraded students are not included.

Since 2015, ABS *Schools*, has included apparent retention rates that are capped at 100%, as well as the uncapped apparent retention rates reported historically. This report continues to publish uncapped apparent retention rates because, due to student movements and international migration, it is quite possible for a state, school sector or school to have higher enrolments in Year 12 than in Year 10 two years before, resulting in apparent retention rates above 100%. Uncapped rates are more suitable for undertaking time series analysis of the data than capped rates.

Declines in the numbers of full fee-paying overseas students (FFPOS), resulting from the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigration, may have impacted the numerator and/or the denominator for this measure for 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia*, 2022 and previous releases.

See also National Report on Schooling data portal.

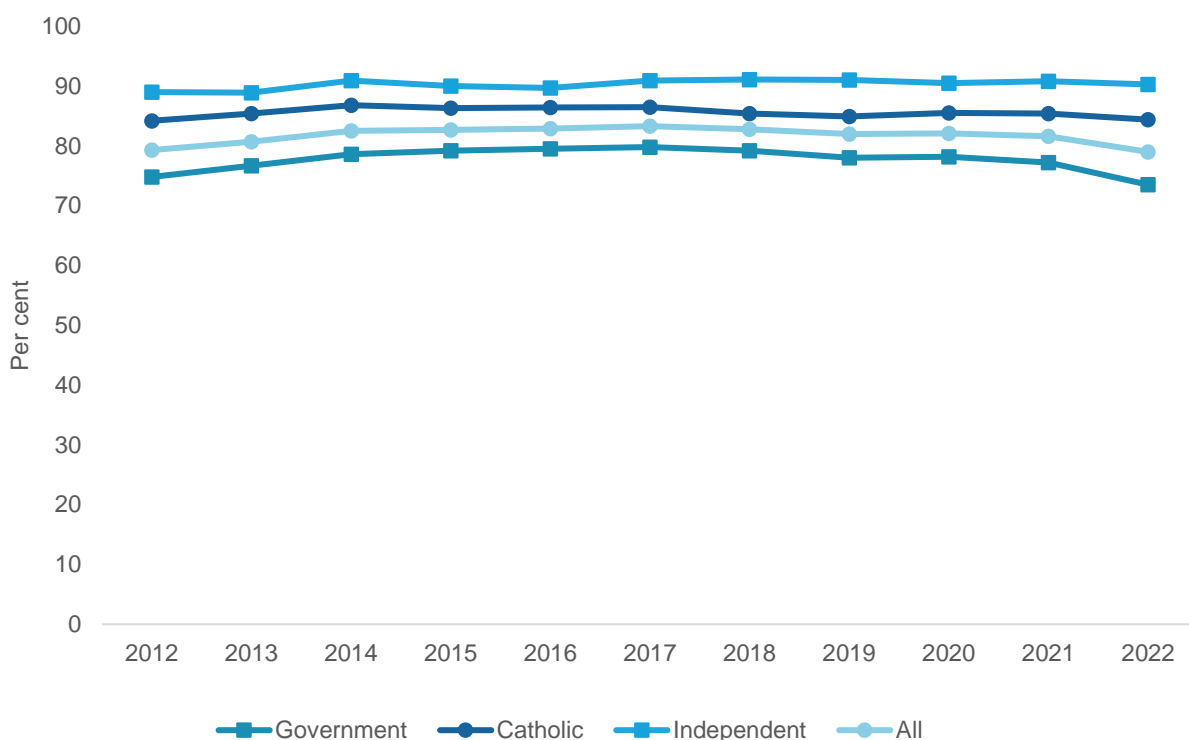
This series records an overall upward movement in apparent retention from Year 10 to Year 12, following the implementation of strengthened participation requirements for 15- and 16-year-olds in 2010.<sup>8</sup> The Key Performance Measures data set in the National Report on Schooling data portal reports a long-term upward trend in this measure of 0.2 percentage points per annum for the period 2008–2022.

After 5 successive years of growth from 2012, the national apparent retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12 fell in 2018 and 2019; then rose by 0.1 percentage point in 2020 before falling by 0.5 percentage points in 2021 and a further 2.6 percentage points in 2022.

<sup>8</sup> These included the mandatory requirement for all young people to participate in schooling until they complete Year 10, and the requirement to participate full time in schooling or other education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until the age of 17. These were implemented progressively in all states and territories between 2006 and 2010.

Figure 4.1

## Apparent retention rates (uncapped), Year 10 to Year 12, by school sector, Australia, 2012–2022 (%)



Source: ABS, *Schools*, 2022 and previous releases.

In 2022, apparent retention rates from Year 10 to Year 12 decreased in all sectors, with larger declines in the government sector (3.7 percentage points) than the Catholic and independent sectors (1.0 and 0.5 percentage points respectively). The gap in the rates between the government and independent sectors narrowed from 14.2 percentage points in 2012 to 10.2 percentage points in 2016, but, by 2022, this had widened to 16.8 percentage points, resulting in a net increase in this gap of 2.6 percentage points over the 10-year period 2012–2022.

Sector-specific apparent retention rates should be interpreted with caution, as the rates do not distinguish between students continuing to Year 12 within a sector and students moving between sectors to complete their senior secondary schooling.

Caution is also advised when comparing apparent retention rates between states and territories, as they do not distinguish students progressing from Year 10 to 12 within a state from students moving between jurisdictions or from overseas.

Table 4.8 shows KPM 1(e) by state and territory.

Table 4.8

**Apparent retention rates (uncapped), Year 10 to Year 12, by state and territory, Australia, 2012, 2021 and 2022 (%) and changes 2021–2022 and 2012–2022 (percentage points)**

State/territory	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
2012	75.5	81.2	82.2	86.3	77.8	67.1	62.1	89.3	79.3
2021	76.3	83.9	83.2	87.1	85.6	74.5	67.5	89.7	81.6
2022	73.2	82.1	81.0	86.0	82.0	71.7	62.6	87.8	79.0
Change 2021–2022	-3.1	-1.8	-2.2	-1.1	-3.6	-2.8	-4.9	-1.9	-2.6
Change 2012–2022	-2.3	0.9	-1.2	-0.3	4.2	4.6	0.5	-1.5	-0.3

Notes:

See notes for Table 4.7.

For a more detailed time series of apparent retention rates and trend analysis by state and territory, see the National Report on Schooling data portal.

Source: ABS, *Schools*, 2022 and previous releases.

In 2022, apparent retention rates ranged from 62.6% in the NT to 87.8% in the ACT.

Factors that may contribute to differences between states and territories in apparent retention rates from Year 10 to Year 12 include:

- Rates at the state and territory level can be inflated or deflated by interstate migration, including students transferring from one state to another to undertake senior secondary schooling. These movements are not taken into account when calculating rates.
- Differential rates of international immigration, including the temporary entry of overseas students for Years 11 and 12, inflate apparent retention rates in the jurisdictions where these incoming students are concentrated.
- The age distribution of the school population affects the year level (Year 11 or Year 12) to which most students must remain at school in order to meet age-based participation requirements. This varies between states and territories because of historical differences in enrolment requirements and practices. States and territories with younger year cohorts have the potential to achieve relatively high Year 10 to Year 12 apparent retention rates because a higher proportion of their student population is required to remain at school until Year 12.
- State and territory retention rates are also affected by factors that are independent of schooling, such as differences in prevailing economic circumstances, including youth employment, and the availability and promotion of training and employment pathways that are recognised as approved alternatives to senior secondary schooling. States with more employment and training opportunities for 16- and 17-year-olds may record lower rates of retention to Year 12.

At the national level, despite the declines in 2021 and 2022, the positive long-term trend in retention from Year 10 to Year 12 over the last 10 years is in line with the policy intent of all Australian governments.

Table 4.9 and Figure 4.2 report this KPM for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students for the period 2012-2022.

Table 4.9

**Apparent retention rates (uncapped), Year 10 to Year 12, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students (%) and gap between rates (percentage points) Australia, 2012–2022**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	53.3	55.8	60.4	60.6	60.9	63.0	62.6	60.0	61.5	60.5	56.4
Non-Indigenous	80.4	81.9	83.6	83.8	84.0	84.3	83.9	83.2	83.3	82.7	80.4
Gap	27.1	26.1	23.2	23.2	23.1	21.3	21.3	23.2	21.8	22.2	24.0

Notes:

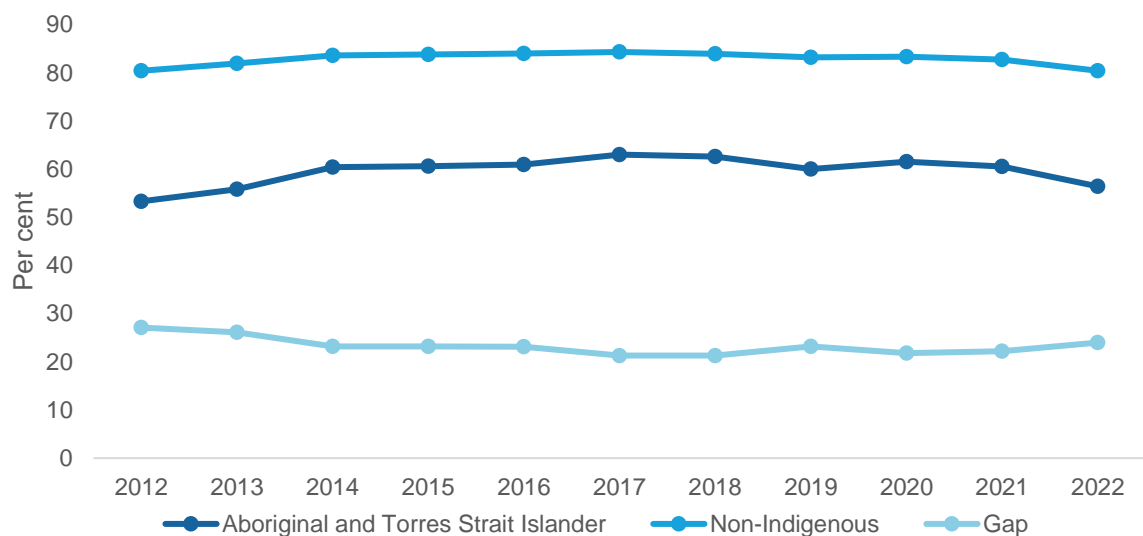
See notes for Table 4.7.

Apparent retention rates can be affected by changes over time in whether individuals identify (or are identified) as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Source: ABS, *Schools*, 2022 and previous releases.

Figure 4.2

**Apparent retention rates (uncapped), Year 10 to Year 12, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Australia, 2012–2022 (%)**



Source: ABS, *Schools*, 2022 and previous releases.

The apparent retention rate for Year 10 to Year 12 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students fell from 60.5% in 2021 to 56.4% in 2022. The fall of 4.1 percentage points followed a fall of 1.0 percentage point in 2021.

However, over the last ten years, Year 10 to Year 12 retention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has increased, with a net rise of 3.1 percentage points since 2012. For non-Indigenous students, apparent retention rates were net unchanged over this period, leading to a narrowing of the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students by 3.1 percentage points.

With the gap at 24.0 percentage points in 2022, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are still less likely to proceed to Year 12 than other students. However, as noted above, retention rates for 'all students' are inflated by students entering the cohort since Year 10, both as permanent migrants and as temporary international students. This also applies to rates for non-Indigenous students but not to rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who, by definition, are Australian residents. The gap would therefore be smaller if recent immigrants and overseas students were excluded from the Year 12 count.<sup>9</sup>

Table 4.10 reports KPM 1(e) by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and state and territory for 2012, 2021 and 2022. The table displays variations between states and territories in apparent retention rates for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students and in the percentage point gap between these rates.

**Table 4.10**

**Apparent retention rates (uncapped), Year 10 to Year 12, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students (%) and gap between rates (percentage points), by state and territory 2012, 2021 and 2022**

2012	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	48.1	56.3	62.4	70.0	45.4	41.2	40.3	65.4	53.3
Non-Indigenous	76.6	81.5	83.6	86.9	79.7	69.2	75.1	89.8	80.4
Gap	28.5	25.2	21.2	16.9	34.3	28.0	34.8	24.4	27.1
2021	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	49.8	67.6	68.9	76.3	65.5	63.6	44.1	80.7	60.5
Non-Indigenous	77.9	84.2	84.3	87.6	86.8	75.5	82.7	89.9	82.7
Gap	28.1	16.6	15.4	11.3	21.3	11.9	38.6	9.2	22.2
2022	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	45.0	62.4	64.1	74.4	62.5	62.0	42.7	79.5	56.4
Non-Indigenous	75.1	82.4	82.5	86.6	83.2	72.8	75.7	88.1	80.4
Gap	30.1	20.0	18.4	12.2	20.7	10.8	33.0	8.6	24.0
<b>Change in gap 2021–2022</b>	2.0	3.4	3.0	0.9	-0.6	-1.1	-5.6	-0.6	1.8
<b>Change in gap 2012–2022</b>	1.6	-5.2	-2.8	-4.7	-13.6	-17.2	-1.8	-15.8	-3.1

Notes:

See notes for tables 4.7 and 4.9.

Source: ABS, *Schools*, 2022 and earlier releases.

<sup>9</sup> These students are not separately identified in the NSSC. There may be instances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students returning from living overseas who were also not counted in the Year 10 cohort 2 years before.

In 2022, the apparent retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students declined in all states and territories. The gap in apparent retention between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students widened between 2021 and 2022 in NSW, Vic, Qld, and SA, and narrowed in WA, Tas, the NT and the ACT.

As well as factors affecting the state-by-state comparison of apparent retention rates for 'all students', variations between jurisdictions in retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may be due to:

- the number and proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within each population – small numbers in some states and territories can affect results for these jurisdictions
- changes over time in whether individuals identify (or are identified) as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- movement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students between states and territories (for example, through scholarship programs for senior schooling)
- the age profile of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in relation to age participation requirements
- the extent of training and employment programs that provide alternative options to senior schooling
- the geographic distribution of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, especially its concentration in rural and remote communities.

Additional data on apparent retention from Year 10 to Year 12 is available in the Key Performance Measures data set and (including for other year groups) the Apparent Retention data set, in the National Report on Schooling data portal.