

## 8.1 Year 12 Certification Rates

**Key Facts:**

In Australia in 2022:

- The proportion of the Year 12 population that met the requirements of a Senior Secondary Certificate or equivalent was 76.3% – a return to 2020 levels after increasing to 79.1% in 2021.
- Year 12 certification rates still show gaps by location. They were higher in major cities (79.4%) than in inner regional areas (67.6%), outer regional areas (69.2%) and remote/very remote areas (55.5%).
- Year 12 certification was higher for the population living in high socio-economic status areas (82.9%) than those in medium and low socio-economic status areas (75.2% and 69.7% respectively).

Over the period from 2012 to 2022:

- Year 12 certification rates increased by 3.3 percentage points.
- There was a reduction in the gender gap and remote area gap for Year 12 certifications, but the gap between Year 12 certification rates in high socio-economic status areas compared to low socio-economic status areas has widened.

Certification rates are estimated by calculating the number of students who meet the requirements of a Senior Secondary Certificate or equivalent expressed as a percentage of the potential Year 12 population. These rates are derived from data supplied to the Australian Government Department of Education by state and territory curriculum, assessment, and certification authorities.<sup>1</sup> The potential Year 12 population is an estimate of a single year age group which could have attended Year 12 that year, calculated as the estimated resident population (ERP) aged 15 to 19 divided by five.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 8.1 shows Year 12 certification rates for 2022, by gender and geolocation. Nationally, 76.3% of the Year 12 population met the requirements of a Senior Secondary Certificate or equivalent in 2022, down from 79.1% in 2021. Year 12 certification rates were higher for females (80.6%) than for males (72.2%); and higher in major cities (79.4%) than in inner regional areas (67.6%), outer regional areas (69.2%) and remote/very remote areas (55.5%).

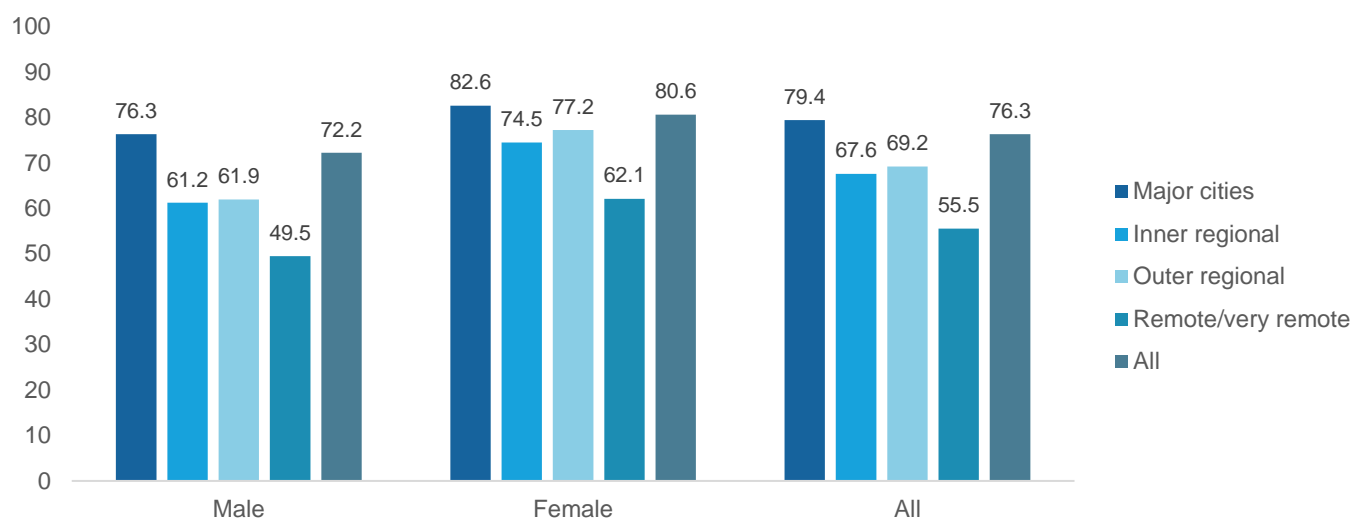
The gender difference in Year 12 certification rates was largest among the Year 12 population living in outer regional areas (15.3 percentage points higher for females than for males), and smallest among those living in major cities (6.3 percentage points higher for females). Differences in Year 12 certification rates according to geolocation were larger for males (26.8 percentage points higher in major cities than in remote or very remote areas) than for females (20.5 percentage points higher in major cities than in remote or very remote areas).

<sup>1</sup> This indicator should be interpreted with caution as assessment, reporting and criteria for obtaining a year 12 or equivalent certificate varies across jurisdictions; and students completing their secondary education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes are included in reporting for some jurisdictions and not others.

<sup>2</sup> Certification rates from 2017 have been calculated using ERP based on the 2016 Census of Population and Housing. Rates for 2016 and prior are calculated using ERP based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

Figure 8.1

## Year 12 certification rates, by gender and geolocation, 2022 (%)

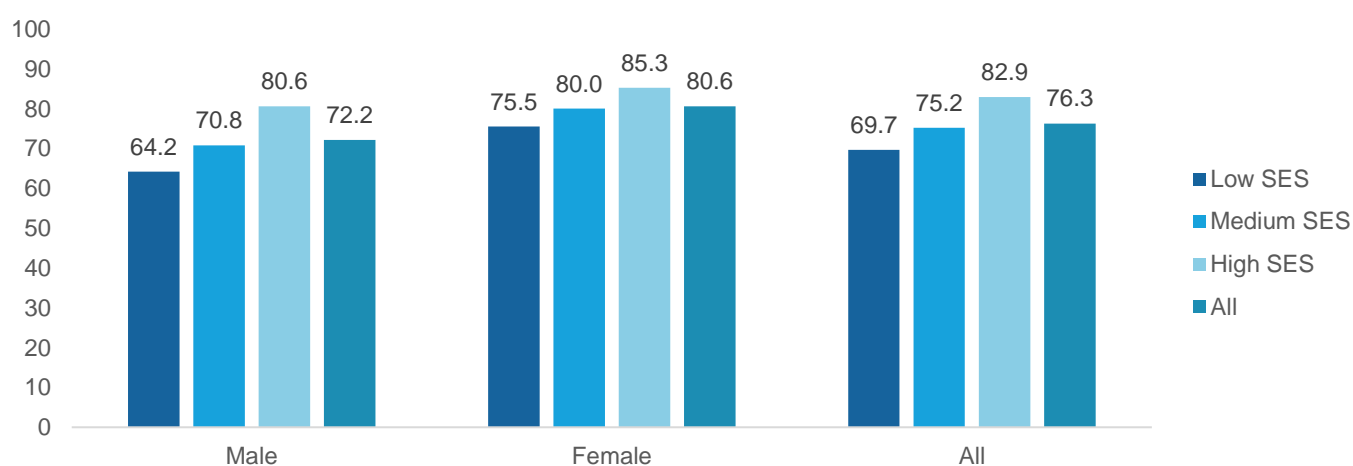


Sources: Australian Government Department of Education, derived from data supplied by state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities; ABS, *National, state and territory population*.

Year 12 certification rates in 2022, by socio-economic status (SES) and gender, are presented in Figure 8.2. Among the Year 12 population living in low SES areas, Year 12 certification rates were 69.7%, compared to 75.2% in medium SES areas and 82.9% in high SES areas. Differences in Year 12 certification rates by socio-economic status were larger for males (16.4 percentage points higher in high SES areas compared to low SES areas) than for females (9.8 percentage points higher in high SES areas compared to low SES areas).

Figure 8.2

## Year 12 certification rates, by gender and socio-economic status, 2022 (%)



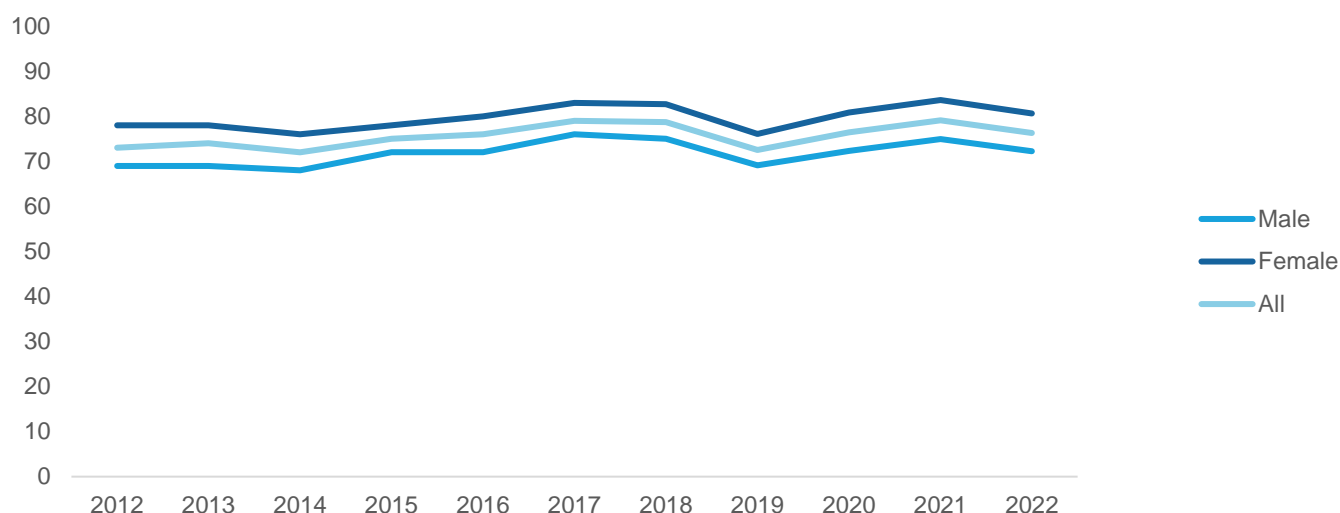
Notes: The ABS Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage has been used to calculate socio-economic status (SES) on the basis of postcode of students' home addresses. Low SES is the average of the lowest three deciles, medium SES is the average of the middle four deciles and high SES is the average of the top three deciles. The aggregation of all postcode locations into three SES categories – high, medium and low – means that there may be significant variation within the categories – the low category, for example, will include locations ranging from those of extreme disadvantage to those of moderate disadvantage.

Sources: Australian Government Department of Education, derived from data supplied by state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities; ABS, *National, state and territory population*.

Figure 8.3 shows the change in Year 12 certification rates over the period from 2012 to 2022. Overall, Year 12 certification rates increased by 3.3 percentage points, from 73.0% in 2012 to 76.3% in 2022. The gender difference in Year 12 certification rates decreased slightly during this time, from 9.0 percentage points in 2012 to 8.4 percentage points in 2022.

**Figure 8.3**

**Year 12 certification rates, by gender 2012-2022 (%)**



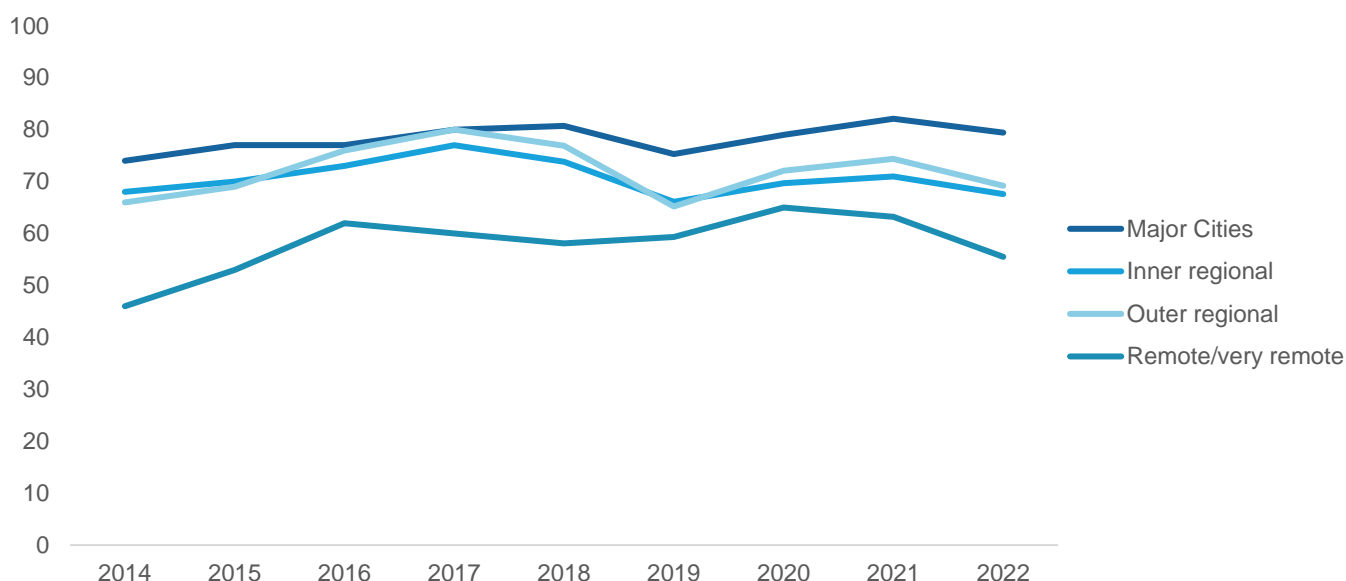
Note: In 2014, Western Australia had a “half cohort” complete year 12 making the Year 12 certifications for WA in 2014 significantly lower than for other years. This was also the case for Qld in 2019. These half cohorts resulted from a change to the pre-year one entry age (in 2002 and 2007 respectively) leading to approximately half the normal intake of students for that year level. This also affects Year 12 certification rates for Australia in 2014 and 2019.

Sources: Australian Government Department of Education, derived from data supplied by state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities; ABS, *National, state and territory population*.

Year 12 certification rates by geolocation for 2014 to 2022 are presented in Figure 8.4. While the difference in Year 12 Certification rates in major cities compared to remote and very remote areas is still substantial (23.9 percentage points higher in major cities in 2022), increases in certification rates among the Year 12 population in regional and remote areas (from 46.0% in 2014 to 55.5% in 2022) has resulted in a 4.1 percentage point reduction in this difference since 2014.

Figure 8.4

## Year 12 certification rates, by geolocation, 2014-2022 (%)



Notes: See note for Figure 8.3.

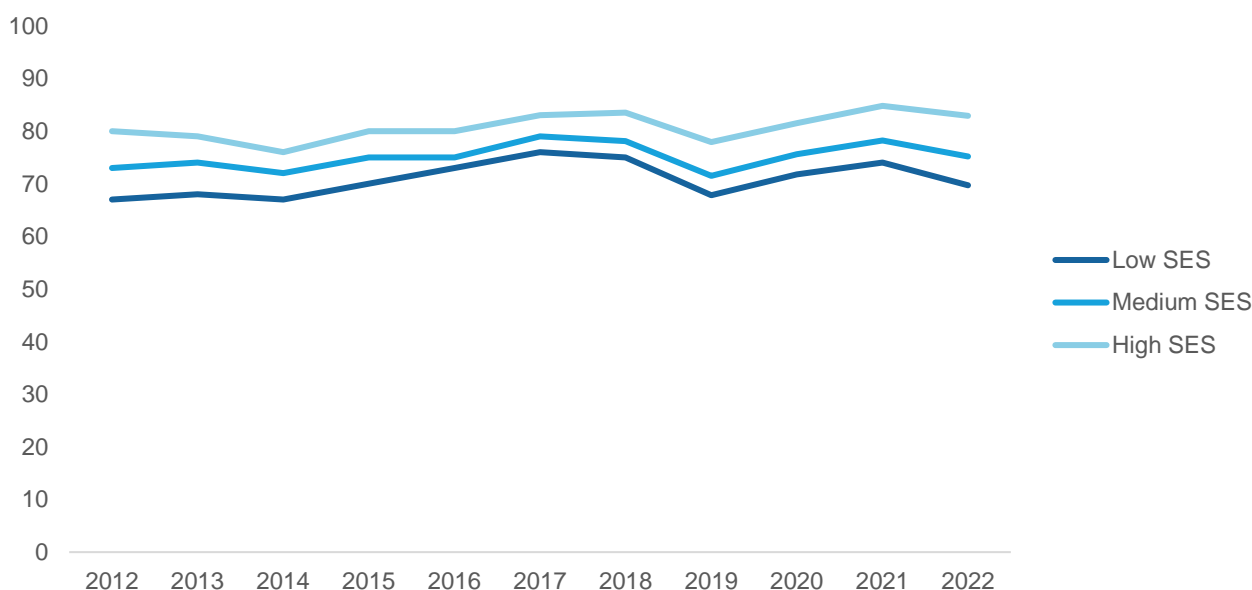
Data for 2009-2013 is available on the [ACARA website](#). From 2009 to 2013, geolocation is reported as the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) remoteness classification.

Sources: Australian Government Department of Education, derived from data supplied by state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities; ABS, *National, state and territory population*.

Differences between Year 12 certification rates in high and low SES areas have remained stable since 2012. Figure 8.5 shows that in 2012 Year 12 certification rates were 13.0 percentage points higher in high SES areas compared to low SES areas. With Year 12 certification rates in high SES areas increasing from 79.0% to 82.9% during this period, the difference in Year 12 certification rates between low and high-SES areas increased to 13.2 percentage points in 2022.

Figure 8.5

## Year 12 certification rates, by socio-economic status, 2012-2022 (%)



Note: See note for Figure 8.3.

Sources: Australian Government Department of Education, derived from data supplied by state and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities; ABS, *National, state and territory population*.