

Senior School Retention and SACE Completion



Our education system aims to ensure that all young people are on a pathway towards continued success in further education, training or employment (*Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians December 2008*).

Given this goal, it is important to describe the learning and earning pathways taken by senior school students, including the completion of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) and vocational education and training (VET).

The education department, SACE Board and the Department for Industry and Skills have recently collaborated to share data. In conjunction with the department's existing data holdings, identified student level SACE and VET data has allowed the department to track individual students through school enrolment, SACE and VET systems.

In Australia school retention and year 8 to completion (SACE) rates have been previously reported based on 'apparent' rates. Apparent rates are the number of school students or completers in a year level of education as a percentage of the respective 'commencing' cohort group; such as the proportion of year 8 students continuing to year 12.

This data sheet summarises the findings from tracking individual students in tables 1 to 11 for the most recently available reporting year.

The measures reported in this document are:

- **Student enrolments**
- **Students in Flexible Learning Options (FLO)** – FLO supports young people to re-engage with learning and successfully return to school, or move to further education, training or employment
- **Year level exits** – The count of students from a year level who were not enrolled in the sequential year level the following year
- **Retention rates**
 - **Year 8 to year 12**
 - **Year 10 to 12**
- **Transition rates** – A measure of the customary rate of progression, that is, one year level per year: 8 to 9, 9 to 10, 10 to 11 and 11 to 12
- **SACE completion**
 - **Year 8 to SACE completion**
 - **Year 12 and 13 to SACE completion**
- **VET participation**

Measures include all students irrespective of whether they are full-time or part-time.

Student Enrolments and Exits

Table 1: Student enrolments (Term 1 census)

	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
2017	11863	11631	12135	13945	12676	847

A higher number of student enrolments are observed in year 11 and 12 due to new student enrolments, part-time students and year level repeaters.

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Table 2: Students with a Flexible Learning Option (FLO) enrolment

	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
2017	110	377	790	1734	1488	473

Adult re-entry students have been excluded from FLO counts.

Table 3: Student year level exits – The count of students without an active enrolment in the consecutive year level (Term 1 census)

	Year 8 to 9	Year 9 to 10	Year 10 to 11	Year 11 to 12
2016 to 2017	594	868	1142	3611

Student exits may include students who have left the school system either to seek employment or further study, or have left to an interstate, overseas or a non-government school. Note that the compulsory school age is 16, typically year 11, and compulsory education age is 17, typically year 12.

Retention Rates

Table 4: Year 8 to 12 retention (Term 1 census)

Year 8	Year 8 enrolments	Year 12	Year 12 retention count	Year 8 to 12 retention rate (%)
2009	12236	2013	8527	70
2010	11876	2014	8505	72
2011	11656	2015	8725	75
2012	11678	2016	8978	77
2013	11551	2017	8821	76

Table 5: Year 10 to 12 retention (Term 1 census)

Year 10	Year 10 enrolments	Year 12	Year 12 retention count	Year 10 to 12 retention rate (%)
2011	12587	2013	9259	74
2012	12401	2014	9296	75
2013	12185	2015	9529	78
2014	12222	2016	9695	79
2015	12131	2017	9563	79

Student exits may include students who have left the school system either to seek employment or further study, or have left to an interstate, overseas or a non-government school.

Transition rates

Table 6: Transition rates – Student retention for consecutive years and year levels (Term 1 census)

	Year 8 to 9 (%)	Year 9 to 10 (%)	Year 10 to 11 (%)	Year 11 to 12 (%)
2012-13	94	93	89	68
2013-14	95	93	90	69
2014-15	95	93	91	73
2015-16	94	92	91	74
2016-17	95	94	92	75

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SACE Completion

Table 7: Year 12 and 13 to SACE completion (Term 1 and term 3 census – distinct student count)

Year of SACE completion	Year 12/13 enrolments	SACE completion	Year 12/13 to SACE completion rate (%)
2015	13637	7367	54
2016	14001	7777	56
2017	13774	7814	57

Table 8: SACE completion for year 12 and 13 students aged 17 and 18 as at 30 June in reporting year (Term 1 and term 3 census – distinct student count)

Year of SACE completion	Year 12/13 enrolments – 17 and 18 year olds	SACE completion – 17 and 18 year olds	Year 12/13 to SACE completion rate – 17 and 18 year olds (%)
2015	11575	6747	57
2016	11836	7033	59
2017	11664	7167	61

Table 9: Year 8 to SACE completion* (Term 1 census)

Year 8	Year 8 enrolments	Reporting year	SACE completion of year 8s by reporting year	Year 8 to SACE completion rate (%)
2011	11656	2015	5785	50
2012	11678	2016	6075	52
2013	11551	2017	6112	53

*Between 10 and 15% of the year 8 cohort will exit the government education system to enrol in an interstate, overseas or a non-government school by the start of year 12. SACE outcomes of these students are unknown.

Vocational Education and Training

Table 10: Year 12 and 13 students who completed SACE or participated in VET during the reporting year (Term 1 and term 3 census – distinct student count)**

	Year 12/13 enrolments	SACE completion (may include VET)	Participated in VET (no SACE completion)	Education outcome unknown
2016	14001	7777	2488	3736

Table 11: Proportion of year 12 and 13 students on a learning pathway during the reporting year**

	Year 12/13 students with SACE or VET participation (%)	Year 12/13 students with education outcome unknown (%)
2016	73	27

**Preliminary analysis. The Department for Education is working across agencies to better track and understand senior student pathways.

Source for all tables and figures: Department for Education Enrolment Census 2009–2017, SACE Board Enrolment Data 2014–2017, Department for Industry and Skills VET data 2015–2017