



Fields of Education in the Higher Education sector

The Field of Education¹ classification was introduced in the AEI International Student Data with the release of the year-to-date January 2008 data. The classification has also been applied to historical AEI data. This snapshot outlines some key analyses that can be made for the Higher Education sector using this new approach.

At the broad level

In 2007², four in five (80.8%) of all international student enrolments³ in the Higher Education sector were in the top five fields of education:

- ◆ 48.0% in Management and Commerce;
- ◆ 10.0% in Information Technology;
- ◆ 8.2% in Society and Culture;
- ◆ 7.5% in Engineering and Related Technologies; and
- ◆ 7.0% in Health.

All the major Broad Fields of Education, with the exception of Information Technology, experienced growth between 2005 and 2007. Health recorded the largest growth of 51.0%. Enrolments in Information Technology fell by 24.1%.

At the detailed level

Management and Commerce

Enrolments in Management and Commerce grew 17.3% over the three years to 2007 with 84,342 enrolments in 2007, accounting for almost half of all higher education enrolments. A significant portion of this increase is due to the growth in 'Accounting' and 'Business and Management'.

China and India accounted for half (52.0%) of all 2007 enrolments in this field, a reflection of their strong growth in enrolments over the 2005 to 2007 period. Note that traditional markets such as Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Thailand experienced declines over the same period.

Information Technology (IT)

IT experienced a 24.1% decline in enrolments between 2005 and 2007. The fall is reflected across the various IT disciplines and in nine of the top ten source nationalities.

Enrolments from India accounted for more than one-third (35.1%) of IT enrolments. Enrolments from China, Indonesia and Malaysia accounted for a further one-third. All these markets have experienced declines since 2005.

Society and Culture

The growth in enrolments between 2005 and 2007 has been modest (2.2%). Declines in high volume courses have been offset by growth in 'Law' and other detailed fields of education, largely due to the growth in the enrolments from China.

Engineering and Related Technologies

Enrolments in the Engineering and Related Technologies field grew 3.5% overall between 2005 and 2007. The recent mining boom has seen enrolments in detailed fields such as 'Mining Engineering', and 'Process and Resources Engineering' grow by 242.9% and 121.1% respectively in the three years to 2007, albeit from a small base. Enrolments from China remained strong, while there were small declines in enrolments from India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore.

Health

Enrolments in Health grew 51.0% in the three years to 2007, largely driven by increases in 'General Nursing' and 'Pharmacy'. The growth in nursing can be largely attributed to the increasing number of enrolments from India, China and the Republic of Korea.

Enrolments from Malaysia accounted for 43.0% of those in pharmacy in 2007. Enrolments from Hong Kong, China and the Republic of Korea have also grown strongly since 2005.

International student enrolments in Higher Education: Top 5 Fields of Education, 2005 to 2007

Broad Field Of Education	Detailed Field Of Education	Year			Growth on 2005	Per cent of 2007
		2005	2006	2007		
Management and Commerce	Accounting	18,066	23,156	25,262	39.8%	14.4%
	Management and Commerce	16,232	17,995	19,085	17.6%	10.9%
	Business and Management	9,223	10,382	11,188	21.3%	6.4%
	Other	28,409	28,003	28,807	1.4%	16.4%
Information Technology	Information Technology	12,607	10,873	9,734	-22.8%	5.5%
	Information Systems	5,306	4,585	3,497	-34.1%	2.0%
	Other	5,241	4,562	4,348	-17.0%	2.5%
Society and Culture	Society and Culture	4,024	3,882	3,715	-7.7%	2.1%
	Economics	2,194	2,024	1,915	-12.7%	1.1%
	Law	1,377	1,453	1,550	12.6%	0.9%
	Other	6,584	6,999	7,309	11.0%	4.2%
Engineering and Related Technologies	Engineering and Related Technologies	5,480	5,823	6,223	13.6%	3.5%
	Other	7,317	6,989	7,027	-4.0%	4.0%
Health	General Nursing	2,736	3,819	5,065	85.1%	2.9%
	Pharmacy	999	1,154	1,365	36.6%	0.8%
	Other	4,410	5,200	5,872	33.2%	3.3%
Other Broad Fields	Other Detailed Fields	32,533	33,049	33,675	3.5%	19.2%
Total		162,738	169,948	175,637	7.9%	100.0%

¹ Classification based on the 'Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED), 2001' (ABS Catalogue No. 1272.0).

² Calculated from the February 2008 AEI International Student Data pivot table.

³ AEI data on enrolments relate only to international students in Australia on a student visa.

More information is available at: <http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/MIP/Statistics/Default.htm>.

For further information about this Research Snapshot or the Research Snapshot Series contact: Jon Havelock, International Research and Analysis Unit on telephone (02) 6240 8737 or email jon.havelock@deewr.gov.au. The Research Snapshot Series can be accessed from <http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/PublicationsAndResearch/Snapshots/Default.htm>.