

# Australian and international student success rates in Group of Eight universities

October 2008

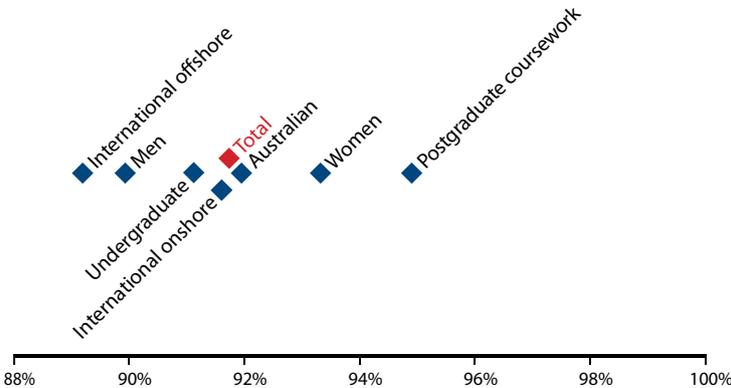
The following analysis compares the academic performance of three cohorts of students in Group of Eight (Go8) universities: Australian students, international students on campus in Australia (onshore) and international students overseas (offshore).

Analysis of data supplied by Go8 universities shows that in 2007 students passed 91.8% of the courses they attempted.

In Go8 universities:

- international students succeed at the same high rate as domestic students;
- women have slightly higher progress rates than men; and
- international onshore students have slightly higher progress rates than international offshore students.

**Figure 1: Go8 student progress rates by groups, 2007**



## International and Australian students

Overall, international students on campus in Australia (91.6%) succeeded at the same level as Australian students (92.0%) and at a slightly higher rate than international students offshore (89.2%).

**Table 1: Go8 international and Australian students, student progress rates, 2007**

Cohort	Population	Student progress rate
International onshore	46,852	91.6%
International offshore	7,939	89.2%
Australian	140,903	92.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195,694</b>	<b>91.8%</b>

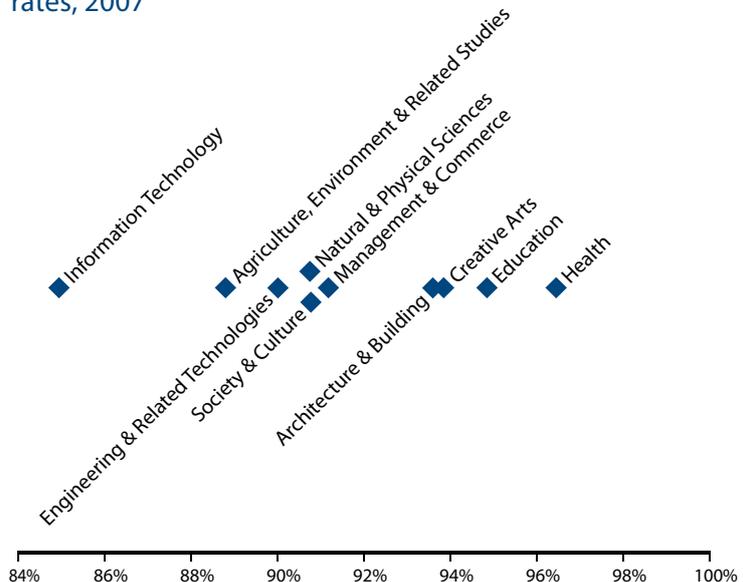
## Broad fields of education

Student progress rates were compared for students in Natural & Physical Sciences, Information Technology, Engineering & Related Technologies, Architecture & Building, Agriculture, Environment & Related Studies, Health, Education, Management & Commerce, Society & Culture and Creative Arts.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 2: Broad fields of education: Go8 student progress rates, 2007**

Field	Population	Student progress rate
Management & Commerce	44,365	91.1%
Society & Culture	43,627	90.7%
Health	28,006	96.4%
Natural & Physical Sciences	21,998	90.7%
Engineering & Related Technologies	21,349	90.0%
Creative Arts	11,160	93.8%
Education	7,779	94.8%
Architecture & Building	6,158	93.5%
Information Technology	5,035	84.9%
Agriculture, Environment & Related Studies	3,557	88.7%

**Figure 2: Broad Fields of Education: Go8 student progress rates, 2007**



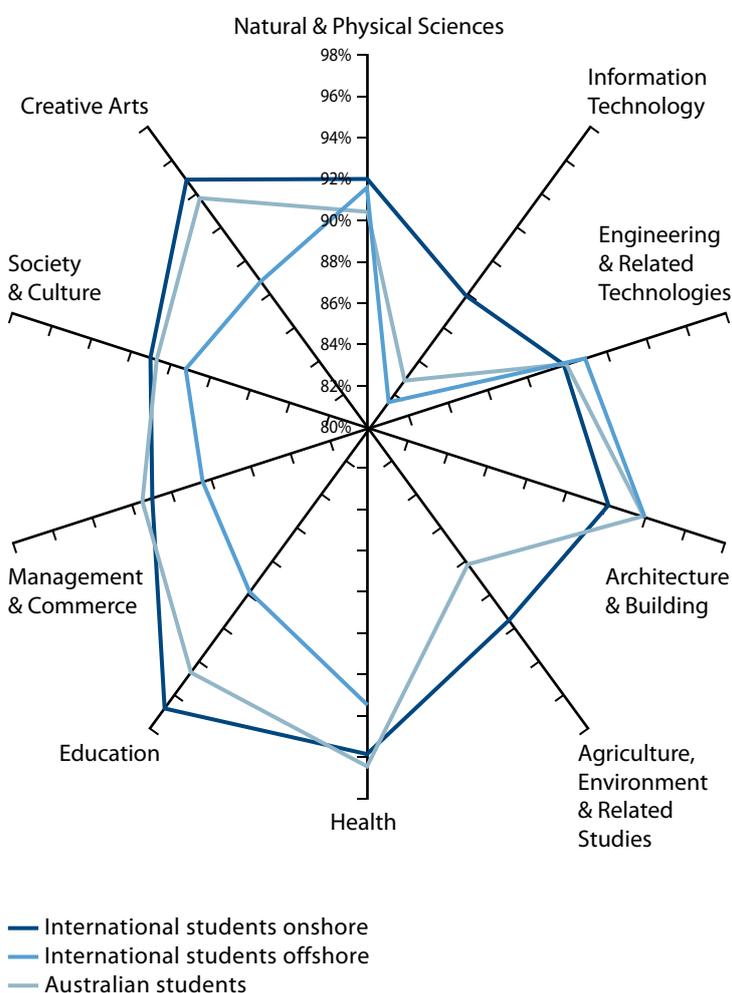
<sup>1</sup> There is an eleventh field, Food, Hospitality & Personal Services, but there were no students in this field in Go8 universities in 2007.

Table 3: Broad fields of education: international and Australian Go8 students, 2007

Field	Population			Student progress rate		
	International onshore	International offshore	Australian	International onshore	International offshore	Australian
Management & Commerce	19,090	3,039	22,236	91.0%	88.5%	91.5%
Society & Culture	5,876	805	36,946	90.9%	89.3%	90.7%
Health	4,455	825	22,726	96.1%	93.6%	96.6%
Natural & Physical Sciences	3,318	1,130	17,550	91.9%	91.7%	90.4%
Engineering & Related Technologies	5,456	912	14,981	89.8%	91.0%	90.0%
Creative Arts	1,782	282	9,096	94.8%	88.8%	93.8%
Education	857	358	6,564	96.8%	90.0%	94.8%
Architecture & Building	1,473	51	4,634	92.2%	94.0%	94.0%
Information Technology	2,125	426	2,484	88.0%	81.6%	82.9%
Agriculture, Environment & Related Studies	512	–	3,044	91.6%	–	88.3%

Overall, across all fields of education, Go8 students passed 91.8% of the courses they attempted. Across these 10 broad fields of education, student progress rates were compared between international students onshore, international students offshore and Australian students.

Figure 3: Broad fields of education: international onshore, international offshore and Australian students, in Go8 universities, comparative success rates by field of study, 2007



### Home countries

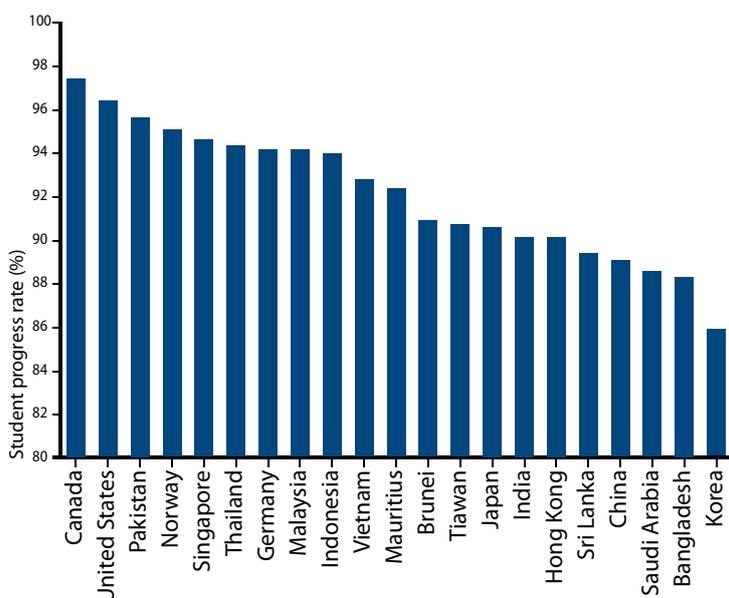
The Go8 universities reported international country codes for 46,438 international students on campus in Australia. The students came from 179 countries, with 90 countries each the source of fewer than 10 students.

There were 21 home countries with 200 students or more in Go8 universities, and these 21 countries made up 91% of the international student population, studying onshore in Australia.

Table 4: Home country of Go8 international students onshore: student progress rates, 2007

Country	Population	Student progress rate
China	14,291	89.1%
Malaysia	5,724	94.2%
Singapore	4,231	94.7%
Hong Kong	3,515	90.1%
Indonesia	2,953	94.0%
United States	2,211	96.4%
India	1,738	90.2%
Korea	1,427	85.9%
Vietnam	895	92.8%
Thailand	858	94.4%
Japan	739	90.6%
Taiwan	699	90.7%
Canada	637	97.5%
Germany	464	94.2%
Sri Lanka	395	89.4%
Brunei	284	90.9%
Pakistan	268	95.7%
Mauritius	258	92.4%
Norway	237	95.1%
Saudi Arabia	214	88.6%
Bangladesh	200	88.3%

**Figure 4: Home country of Go8 international students onshore: student progress rates, 2007**



## Gender

The population included 105,987 female students and 89,707 male students.

**Table 5: Gender of Go8 student population, 2007**

Cohort	Female	Male	Total
International onshore	25,082	21,770	46,852
International offshore	4,318	3,621	7,939
Australian	76,587	64,316	140,903
<b>Total</b>	<b>105,987</b>	<b>89,707</b>	<b>195,694</b>

54% of international students onshore were women; 54% of international students offshore were women and 54% of Australian students were women. In total, 54% of students in the study were women.

International female students onshore passed 93.1% of the courses attempted while international male students onshore passed 89.9%. International female students offshore passed 90.9% of courses attempted while international male students offshore passed 87.2%. Australian female students passed 93.5% of what they attempted while Australian male students passed 90.1%.

Overall, female students passed 93.3% of courses attempted compared to male students who passed 89.9%.

**Table 6: Gender: Go8 student progress rates, 2007**

Cohort	Female	Male	Total
International onshore	93.1%	89.9%	91.6%
International offshore	90.9%	87.2%	89.2%
Australian	93.5%	90.1%	92.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93.3%</b>	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>91.8%</b>

## Level of study

The population included 164,214 undergraduate students and 31,480 postgraduate coursework students.

**Table 7: Level of study: Go8 population, 2007**

Cohort	Undergraduate	Postgraduate coursework	Total
International onshore	31,133	15,719	46,852
International offshore	6,711	1,228	7,939
Australian	126,370	14,533	140,903
<b>Total</b>	<b>164,214</b>	<b>31,480</b>	<b>195,694</b>

34% of international students onshore were postgraduate coursework students, 15% of international students offshore were postgraduate coursework students and 10% of Australian students were postgraduate coursework students. In total, 16% of students in the survey were postgraduate coursework students.

International postgraduate coursework students onshore passed 95.0% of courses attempted compared to international undergraduate students onshore (89.9%). International postgraduate coursework students offshore passed 95.3% of courses attempted compared to international undergraduate students offshore (88.1%). Australian postgraduate coursework students passed 94.8% of courses attempted compared to Australian undergraduate students (91.6%).

Overall, postgraduate coursework students passed 94.9% of courses attempted while undergraduate students passed 91.2%.

**Table 8: Level of study: Go8 student progress rates, 2007**

Cohort	Undergraduate	Postgraduate coursework	Total
International onshore	89.9%	95.0%	91.6%
International offshore	88.1%	95.3%	89.2%
Australian	91.6%	94.8%	92.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91.2%</b>	<b>94.9%</b>	<b>91.8%</b>

## Conclusions

- International students enrolled at Go8 universities succeed at the same high rates as Australian students—passing 91.6% of courses attempted in 2007.
- Success rates for international students are slightly higher if they study onshore, as opposed to offshore.
- Success rates for international students are highest for those studying postgraduate by coursework with 95% of such students passing.
- Students from certain countries are less likely to succeed than others and further work may be required to understand the reasons behind this.

The analysis for this backgrounder was conducted by Alan Olsen of Strategy Policy and Research in Education Limited. [www.spre.com.hk](http://www.spre.com.hk)