

Australian engineering education report reveals gains despite ongoing challenges

The Australian Council of Engineering Deans (ACED) and Engineers Australia have released the [Australian Engineering Education Statistics 2012 – 2022 Report](#), providing a comprehensive overview of Australia's engineering education landscape. The report captures key data on graduate numbers, quality indicators, student demographics, inclusion and diversity, academic staff, and ACED member profiles, offering valuable insights into the sector's trajectory over the past decade.

The recently released 2023 data shows growth in domestic student interest, with bachelor's commencements in engineering reaching an all-time high. An 8.3% rise in enrolments since 2022, alongside a 9% increase compared to pre-pandemic levels, highlights the resilience of the profession. Diversity initiatives are also making strides, with women now representing a record 19.14% of domestic engineering graduates, marking a positive shift towards greater gender inclusion.

The international student market has shown strong post-Covid recovery, with enrolments increasing by 40% across all levels compared to 2022. Bachelor's commencements grew by 21%, and postgraduate coursework enrolments surged by 69%, reflecting renewed confidence in Australian engineering education from global markets. Current enrolments are nearing pre-COVID peaks, reaffirming Australia's global standing as a preferred destination for engineering studies.

While these trends are encouraging, the report also highlights areas that require ongoing attention. Domestic Higher Degree by Research (HDR) commencements have declined nearly 50% from their 2014 peak, revealing challenges in attracting students to advanced research pathways. Despite a lag in overall completions, HDR completions have shown promising growth, with an 11% increase for domestic students and a 12% rise for international students, indicating a strong foundation for future innovation and R&D contributions.

Quotes:

Acting Engineers Australia Chief Engineer Bernadette Foley: "As Australia's engineering education landscape evolves, this report provides a valuable resource for guiding strategic initiatives. With strong domestic interest, increasing diversity, and a resurgence in international enrolments, the future of Australian engineering education shows significant promise, balanced by challenges that will require continued focus and collaborative efforts from academia, government and industry."

ACED Executive Officer Professor Doug Hargreaves: "Australia's engineering education sector is seeing strong growth, with record domestic commencements and a robust recovery in international enrolments. The rise in female graduates to a record 19% is encouraging, but challenges remain, particularly in advanced research pathways. ACED remains committed to working with government and industry to ensure sustainable progress in Australian engineering education."

ACED: The Australian Council of Engineering Deans exists to promote and advance engineering education, research and scholarship on behalf of the Australian higher education system.

Engineers Australia: As Australia's national engineering body, we champion our 127,000 plus members, providing resources, connections and growth for high-value work in our communities.

Ends.

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