

2019 Student Performance Data report

This report includes year-on-year comparison of 2019's incomplete data – it will be counted finally complete after the August Single Data Return (SDR) – with completed data from previous years. All data is drawn from Tertiary Education Commission records as of May 2020.

EPI Data: Overall

By May 2020 Unitec's SCC, according to internal records, was 82%. This meets the institutional target set for 2019. It is higher than ITP sector benchmarking since 2015, but lower than Unitec's SCC for 2015-2017 (83.5%) and 2018 (83%).

In terms of QCR we are tracking under our target of 55% for 2019, sitting at 53.7% according to internal data records. Analysis shows that 38% of students (ie 1369 students) not completing a qualification have passed all courses they did undertake, so failure is not the full story. This deserves investigation.

First year retention rate has dropped below that of 2017-2018, and fell 1.2% short of the Unitec target for 2019 (70.8% compared to the 72% target). With the 2022 target set at 75% there is work to be done to understand how to meet it.

Unitec achieved beyond its progression rate target for Level 1-4 courses in 2019 (31.4%; target 30.5%) but this continues a downward trend from 2015 (36.6%). Where these programmes are part of Bridgepoint, according to their 2019 End of Year Programme Evaluation reports Unitec's Category 3 status and the impact of visa restrictions, loss of pathway scholarships and inability to enrol PELT students is challenging our ability to reverse this.

We are only part-way-way through receiving results on our 2019 graduates – awaiting a survey of those who completed study in semester 2. To date percentage of graduates in employment and/or higher study is lying 2% below our Unitec target (83% compared to a target of 85%) – with those in higher study decreasing slightly since 2017 and those in employment increasing slightly since 2018. It will remain to be seen how Covid-19 affects these overall results.

EPI Data: Schools

Bridgepoint, Healthcare & Social Practice and Environmental and Animal Sciences have come within less than 1% of the SCC targets they set for 2022. Other schools need from 1.5% (Community Studies) to 3.2% (Architecture) improvement. Trades & Services – mindful that their reporting does not match TEC's year – is 12.6% below their target set for 2022. As the School of Engineering & Applied Technology, with a below-target SCC of 78.9%, moves its programmes to the Schools of Computing & Information Technology and to Building Construction, a close watch will need to be kept on the impact this has on the targets of those two Schools (currently aiming for 89.2% and 90% respectively).¹ With two programmes being shared between them, data will need to be separated.

Meanwhile, Trades & Services needs only an improvement of 0.8% in QCR to meet their 2022 target (Creative Industries and Building Construction have exceeded it). In other Schools improvement needed ranges from 2.8% (Architecture) to 13.3% (Bridgepoint). Meanwhile, needed improvement in first year retention ranges from 1.1% (Computing, Electrical & Information Technology) to 22.5% (Environmental and Animal Science). Progression rate is not available because TEC data, which we draw from for this EPI, is structured according to institution and priority groups. We do have targets

¹ In the Semester 2 target setting exercise, the Engineering School set a 2022 target of 81% for SCC.

for six schools, but no internal data as yet. In terms of GESC (graduate progression into employment and/or further study) it is too early to say. Initial results, based on graduates from Semester 1 suggest a downward trend across all Schools except for Healthcare & Social Practice and Trades & Services. For a truer picture we will need to wait for our semester 2 graduates to be surveyed (report due June 2020).

EPI Data: Priority groups

Successful Course Completion

While SCC in 2019 sits just over target for Pacific (71.2% compared to a target of 71%) and just under for Under 25s (79.1% compared to a target of 82%), SCC for Māori sits significantly under target – 71.6% compared to the target of 82%. Internally our variance is increasing for Māori (11.5% in 2019, up from 10.3% in 2018). The ITP sector benchmark was 10.7% in 2018. For Pacific, variance increased slightly (12.9% in 2019 compared to 12.7% in 2018), but for Under 25s closed to 6.2% (from 7.2% in 2018) despite a continuing slow decline in SCC, though this was because SCC for Over 25s dipped slightly. For both of these groups our variance is greater than ITP sector benchmarks, however (variance there for Pacific being 9.2% and for Under 25s being 2.3%).

In terms of Māori, SCC for seven Schools in 2019 ranged from 55.1% to 70%. Bridgepoint, Trades & Services and Environmental & Animal Sciences had SCC in the 50% for Pacific students and Engineering & Applied Technology, Bridgepoint and Trades & Services, with 500+ students Under 25 impacted that overall SCC. By contrast, Creative Industries and Healthcare & Social Practice, with significant student headcount in these three priority groups consistently perform in the 80%, even 90% (Creative Industries achieving 91.8% for under 25s in 2019). What can Unitec learn from them to meet its target of parity in SCC in 2022?

Meanwhile, SCC for International students across Unitec continues to exceed our target – 91.8% SCC against a target of 82%. This is a variance of 12.1% when compared to Domestic SCC. SEAts helps in this result, as credited in Interim and End of Year PEPs, proving correlation between attendance and achievement; 2019 PEPs and Āta-kōrero note that poor attendance is impacting Domestic SCC.

Qualification Completion Rate

In 2019 QCR declined for Māori (to 42%), with the greatest variance with non-Māori in five years opening up (13%). This compares unfavourably with the ITP sector (with a variance of 3.8% in 2018). Meanwhile variance between Pacific and non-Pacific narrowed to 7.9% but QCR remains low at 47%. Creative Industries, with QCR of 68% for Māori and 66.7% for Pacific is 12% and 6% higher than any other School, respectively.

A drop in QCR for under 25s and a corresponding rise for over 25s created a 12.1% variance after the gap had been closed in 2017 and 2018. This is now a significant variance compared to the ITP sector benchmark where QCR for under 25s is in fact higher than for over 25s.

Anecdotally Schools note that where employment is strong (eg in building and trades) this impacts QCR. Investigation is needed to track reasons other than failure for QCR figures, including verifying employment as a replacement for qualification completion.

In 2019 QCR for International students remained higher than for Domestic (56.3% as opposed to 53%), though it was 7.2% down on the figure for 2018.

First Year Retention

In terms of First Year Retention, figures for Māori improved slightly to 62.2%. Variance is closing because of this and a slight drop in retention of non-Māori. This result is, however, below the 2019 Unitec target of 72%.

For Pacific the concerning wide gap that opened up in 2018 (17.2% variance with non-Pacific) has closed by 4.4% in 2019 as first year retention improved to 60.4% and met the target of 60%. Improving figures in Architecture (by 14.1% with 29 Pacific students), Computing & Information Technology (by 25.3% with 14 Pacific students), Building Construction (by 6.2% with 80 Pacific students), and Community Studies (8.1% with 56 students) helped effect this. Variance remains at 12.8%, significantly greater than the ITP sector benchmark of 4.6%.

Retention of Under 25s continued to improve in 2019 and sits at 71.6%, close to our target of 72%, slightly better than the result of 69.8% for over 25s. Architecture, for whom 62% of their students are under 25 and Creative Industries with 77.4% under 25 are particularly strong with 80% and 79.2% first year retention respectively.

Retention of International students also continues to rise (87.3% in 2019). Again tracking through SEATs enables prompt follow-up.

Progression

January SDR progression data for Māori at Unitec in 2019 exceeded our target by 9.1%, reaching 43.1% (12% higher than that for non-Māori). The result for Pacific was even better, reaching 45.9% – 15.4% above target and 15.9% higher than for non-Pacific. In the School of Environmental & Animal Sciences the rate of progression for their Pacific students has been 100% over 2018-2019. Progression for Under 25s increased by 4.3% to 44.7% (23.1% higher than for over 25s). By contrast, progression for International students dropped by 8.1% to 73.2% in 2019. More information to understand the why of these changes and more time to track the impact of the appointment of Priority Group Directors and creation of Success Strategies is needed – as it is for all Priority Group EPIs.

Graduates Employed, Studying or Combining

Mindful that the results from our semester 2 graduates will not arrive until mid-2020 and the institutional response rate of graduates from semester 1 was 36.8%, Māori GESC sits at 93.3% (driven by increased rates of further study), Pacific GESC at 84.8% (driven by increased employment), Under 25 GESC at 77.6%, which is a continuing decline since 2015, and International GESC recovered to 73.7% from 62.2% (driven by a 16.2% rise in further study). For the last group the relevance of Qualification to Employment has been rising over the last three years. Interestingly, results for Māori and Pacific students are higher than for non-Māori and non-Pacific; focus group work would be needed to uncover specific factors to be maximising.