



LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY
STUDENT EQUITY
REPORT 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction	1
Report Focus.....	2
Definition of Equity Indicators	3
Student Equity Achievements at La Trobe in 2008	3
Campus and Faculty Priorities for 2009 and 2010	6
Low SES trend data 2004 – 2008	7
Low SES Students 2008 All Faculties.....	15
Students from Non English Speaking Background (NESB) 2008 All Faculties.....	17
Students with a Disability or Long Term Medical Condition 2008 All Faculties.....	19
Students from Regional Areas 2008 All Faculties	21
Students from Remote Areas 2008 All Faculties.....	23
Low Socio Economic Status (SES) 2008 All Campuses	25
Students from Non English Speaking Background (NESB) 2008 All Campuses	27
Students with a Disability or Long Term Medical Condition 2008 All Campuses	29
Students from Regional Areas 2008 All Campuses	31
Students from Remote Areas 2008 All Campuses.....	33
Gender and Field of Education 2008	35
Appendix 1: Definitions of Equity Groups.....	36
Appendix 2: La Trobe University Equity Grants 2008.....	37

1. Executive Summary

Included in this report is an analysis of the University's performance in the area of student equity in 2008, and a comparison with the 2008 state and national averages for the sector. (Sector averages data is not available from DEEWR until late in the following year, which is why this report was not produced until February 2010.) This analysis considers student equity data by faculty and by campus, using statistics provided by the University's Management Information Unit and DEEWR. The information in this report relates only to domestic students.

Following the release of the Bradley Review in 2008, the federal government acknowledged that Australia's workforce demand for university graduates over the coming decade would be much greater than the current supply. The government has focussed on initiatives for students from low SES and regional backgrounds in order to meet the shortfall in projected graduates in the coming years.

Trend data for low SES and regional students shows that La Trobe has been attracting these students above sector average rates for many years. The low SES student participation data relates to both commencing and continuing students, and shows a consistent and gradual upward trend at La Trobe over the five year period 2004 – 2008. The retention and success data for these students was also at or above sector averages.

The regional student data indicates a consistent trend of around one in every three students at La Trobe coming from a regional area, compared with around one in every five students at the state and national level. La Trobe's students from regional areas are more likely than their metropolitan counterparts to persevere and succeed in their studies. Regional students at La Trobe are also above the sector averages for retention and success.

This year's Student Equity report also includes, for the first time, trend data on students who are both low SES and from regional/remote areas. About one in every ten students at La Trobe is from this dual equity grouping. This data shows that La Trobe enrolled these students at more than twice the state average, and also well above the national average. Once enrolled, these students tended to persevere and succeed in their studies at the same level as other students at La Trobe for three of the five years considered (2004 – 2008), and had only slightly lower outcomes in the other two years. These students persevered at levels similar to the sector averages and succeeded at a level slightly above the national average.

In 2008 La Trobe also maintained its position above the sector average for enrolment, retention and success ratios of students with a disability or long-term medical condition. La Trobe was close to or above the state average for all indicators relating to students from remote areas. However La Trobe continues to lag behind sector averages for domestic students from a Non-English Speaking Background (NESB).

This report also includes a list of equity group priorities nominated by each faculty and campus in 2008, as well as an overview of the various equity initiatives which occurred in 2008 to support the access and participation of students from each equity group.

Introduction

In its commitment to student equity and diversity, La Trobe University makes an important contribution to the well-being of the general community and ensures that people from all sectors of the community are able to receive the personal, social and financial benefits of a tertiary education. This commitment affords the

opportunity for people from all backgrounds to contribute to society according to their fullest potential, offering their skills, achievements and diverse perspectives within the University and the wider community.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) states on its website that: higher education providers receiving support from the Australian Government are responsible under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 for ensuring equity of access. Supporting equity is an integral part of their general operations.¹ The DEEWR monitors equity measures for the student groups identified as being historically disadvantaged in relation to higher education. Appendix 1 contains definitions of these groups.

The importance of equity initiatives in higher education becomes apparent when one considers that between 1996 and 2006, four times the number of jobs were created in the professional sector compared with jobs created in the trades sector.² Following the release of the Bradley Review in 2008, the federal government acknowledged that Australia's workforce requirements for university graduates over the coming decade would be much greater than the current supply. The government has focussed on initiatives for students from Low SES and from regional backgrounds in order to meet the shortfall in projected graduates in the coming years.

Report Focus

Included in this report is an analysis of the University's performance in the area of student equity in 2008, and a comparison with the state and national averages for the sector. (Sector averages data is not available from DEEWR until late in the following year, which is why this report was not produced until 2010.) This analysis considers provides trend data for Low SES and regional students, as well as 2008 student equity data by faculty, and by campus. This year's report does not include analysis of faculty equity data on each campus. The 2007 Student Equity report contained this analysis, and is available at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/equality/staff/equity-reports.html>

Unless otherwise stated, the statistics relate to both undergraduate and postgraduate domestic students. Unfortunately sector average data is unavailable for postgraduate equity-group students, so this cohort has not been considered as a separate group for equity analysis. Statistics have been provided by the University's Management Information Unit for faculty and campus data, and by DEEWR for sector averages.

¹http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/programmes_funding/programme_categories/special_needs_disadvantage/default.htm.

² Healy, G., (2008) *The Australian, Call to Increase Capacity*, 30/4/08

2. Definition of Equity Indicators

Access	Relates to the number of new commencing students in a given year. Expressed as a percentage of all new commencing students.
Participation	Relates to the total number of students in a particular equity group enrolled across all courses in a given year. Expressed as a percentage of all students.
Retention	The target retention indicator is 1.0, which would show that students in the equity group are persevering with their studies at the same rate as other students. A Retention ratio of less than 1.0 indicates equity group students are withdrawing at a greater rate than the general student population.
Success	The target success indicator is 1.0, which would show that students in the equity group are passing their units of study at the same rate as other students. A Success ratio of less than 1.0 indicates equity group students are failing at a greater rate than the general student population.

3. Student Equity Achievements at La Trobe in 2008

Higher Education Equity Support Program (HEESP)

In 2008 there were 12 grants of up to \$10,000 each paid to faculties, campuses and departments to research or develop initiatives to provide greater support or encourage university access to students from equity groups. Details of these grants are available at Appendix 2.

Schools Access La Trobe (SALT)

In 2007 the Future Students Centre commenced the program "Schools Access La Trobe" which targeted 150 under-represented schools (i.e. high schools which had less than 50% of their Year 12 cohort progressing to university) or schools in low SES postcode areas, located within campus catchments. The program allowed students to gain entry into a limited range of degree programs at La Trobe based on a recommendation from the school, and a slightly reduced ENTER score.

This program continued in 2008 with Yrs 10-12 students from 16 SALT schools being brought on-campus for a 'Talk and Tour' experience. The cost of bus travel to and from the campus was paid for through a HEESP grant. In addition to these on-campus experiences, university staff visited 32 SALT schools and provided information to Yrs 10 - 12 students on university courses and entry pathways.

The VCE Preparatory Scholarships Scheme

This scheme continued in 2008 with the Equity Support Program funding participation in a VCE Summer School for 139 students from 53 SALT schools. The Summer School lectures were provided by Access Education, which is the largest provider of VCE preparation and exam revision programs in Victoria.

Transition and Student Engagement programs

Programs funded under the HEESP were run at Bendigo, Mildura and Shepparton campuses where the proportion of students from equity groups is close to 100%. A well co-ordinated program of events (academic orientation, social and sporting) was designed and delivered in order to facilitate friendship building, social inclusion and retention amongst first year students. Shepparton campus also provided all first year students with an interactive CD resource "Transition 2008: resources for new students" which was locally developed and contained 'vox pop' segments from existing students and staff at Shepparton.

Equity Scholarships

In 2008 La Trobe awarded 422 new scholarships, funded by the Commonwealth Government for a three or four year period, to students from low SES backgrounds. La Trobe University also funded an additional 99 scholarships which targeted these students. All of these scholarships were awarded on the basis of financial hardship, rather than academic merit, and were valued between \$2,000 and \$5,000 per annum.

Equity Computer Scheme

This scheme provided a free reconditioned computer to students who were experiencing financial hardship, to assist them with their studies. Each computer was internet ready with relevant software suitable for tertiary level students. La Trobe University provided 75 reconditioned computers to commencing or continuing undergraduate students whose application for an equity scholarship was deemed eligible, but was unsuccessful due to the limited number of scholarships available.

Travel Bursary Scheme

This scheme assisted regional campus students who were required to attend the Bundoora campus as part of their study program. This scheme provided up to \$500 per student to assist with travel and accommodation costs.

Students with a Disability

The levels of access and participation for students with a disability have remained above the national averages over the past five years. In 2008 there were 710 students who sought support from the Equality & Diversity Centre to arrange some adjustment to their study program. The disability support team continued to provide a wide range of services to students with a disability to assist them to be successful in their study at La Trobe.

Students from Non-English Speaking Background (NESB)

In 2008 the University remained below sector averages for access, participation and success of NESB students. It must be noted that the DEEWR definition of non-English speaking background only includes those students who have been in Australia for less than ten years, and speak a language other than English at home. La Trobe University does have a culturally diverse student cohort which is not reflected under the DEEWR definition for NESB students. The Equality and

Diversity Centre has produced a Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit of information to assist staff working with students or staff from other cultures. This is available in hard copy and via website (www.latrobe.edu.au/cdip).

La Trobe has a range of initiatives which support students from Non-English speaking background. These include an accredited elective unit in English Language, and a range of assistance in the form of on-line resources, workshops and one-to-one appointments. La Trobe is also one of only a few universities in Australia to provide a Muslim prayer room and washrooms. During 2008 two initiatives funded under the Higher Education Equity Support Program (HEESP) focussed on investigating barriers to university participation by NESB students.

Support Program for Students with a Refugee Background

This program involved the establishment of a 'Refugee Contact Officer' on each campus of La Trobe University. The role of Contact Officer was added to existing roles of Equality and Diversity staff on three campuses, and to Student Services staff roles on the remaining two campuses. In 2008 there were 25 students who registered with the Refugee Contact Officers across the university. The Contact Officers met with students at the commencement of each semester to ensure they were aware of all student support services available, and provided other advice as required. Students received additional financial support in the form of a \$100 gift voucher for text books or \$100 worth of transport tickets (metro students) or petrol card (rural students) to assist with travel to and from university. Ongoing financial assistance each semester is dependent on attending Academic Skills Support Services for any students who are deemed at risk of failure.

Victorian Tertiary Aspirations Network

The Student Diversity Officer from the Equality and Diversity Centre was a founding member of this network of student equity staff from all Victorian universities, which was formed in the latter part of 2008. The group's aim is to collaborate to ensure broader coverage of outreach to under-represented schools in Victoria. Their first task was to identify which under-represented schools were being serviced by a university and which were not having any contact with the university sector. The group met regularly to plan a range of aspirational activities for school students in 2009.

4. Campus and Faculty Priorities for 2009 and 2010

In April 2008 each campus and faculty was asked to consider equity data provided for 2007, and nominate one equity group target which they would like to focus on over the next two years. The table below provides the target equity group nominated by each faculty or campus, the 2007 access or participation rate for the nominated group, and the desired target by 2009.

Campus / Faculty	Equity Group	2007 Equity Data	Desired Priority Target 2009
Law & Management	NESB Participation at Bendigo	1.2%	3.8%
Humanities & Social Sciences	Low SES Access	17.3%	19.3%
Science, Technology & Engineering	Women in Info. Tech. Access	14.6%	No target provided
Health Sciences	Regional Access at Bendigo	73.9%	No target provided
Education	No group nominated		No target provided
Bendigo Campus	NESB Access	1.2%	2.2%
Albury Wodonga Campus	Low SES Participation Indigenous Access*	25.3% 0.2%	No target provided
Shepparton Campus	All groups		No target provided
Mildura Campus	Indigenous Access*	1.9%	No target provided

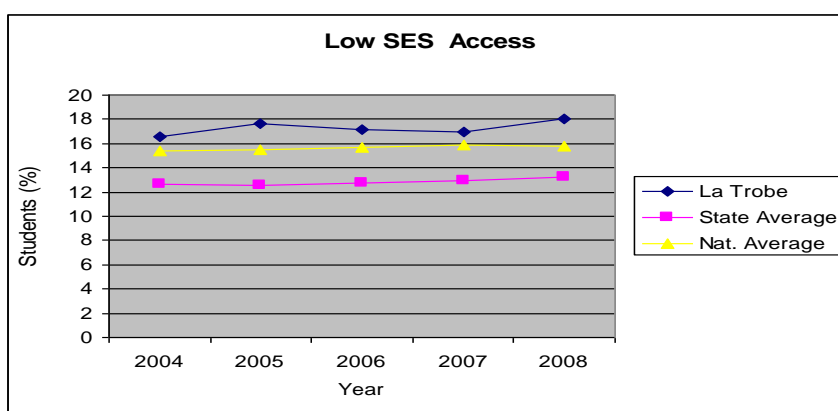
* Indigenous Australian outreach and recruitment is overseen by the Indigenous Education Unit, and is not monitored by the Equality and Diversity Centre.

5. Student Equity Trends 2004-2008

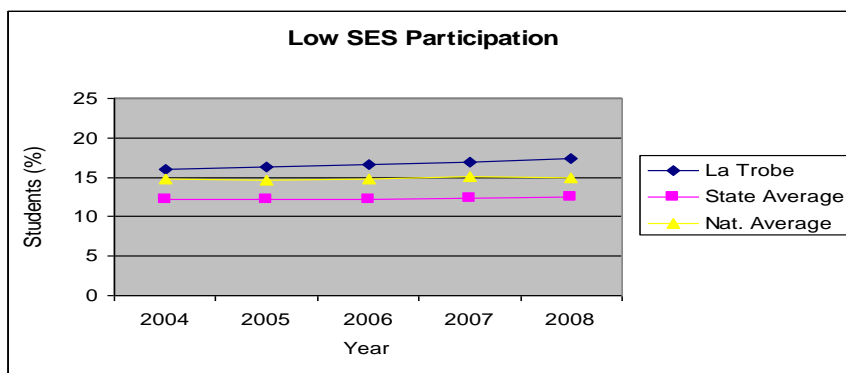
Low SES trend data 2004 – 2008

The low SES student access data shows an uneven trend for commencing students, with slight gains made and then lost again in a subsequent year. However the 2008 commencing rate for low SES students was above the previous four years, indicating a gradual improvement in low SES student enrolments.

The low SES student participation data relates to both commencing and continuing students, and shows a consistent and gradual upward trend over the five year period. For both access and participation rates, La Trobe remained above the sector averages for the whole five year period.



Low SES Access					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
La Trobe	16.53	17.69	17.15	16.98	18.07
State Average	12.67	12.53	12.72	12.93	13.19
Nat. Average	15.40	15.46	15.69	15.92	15.82

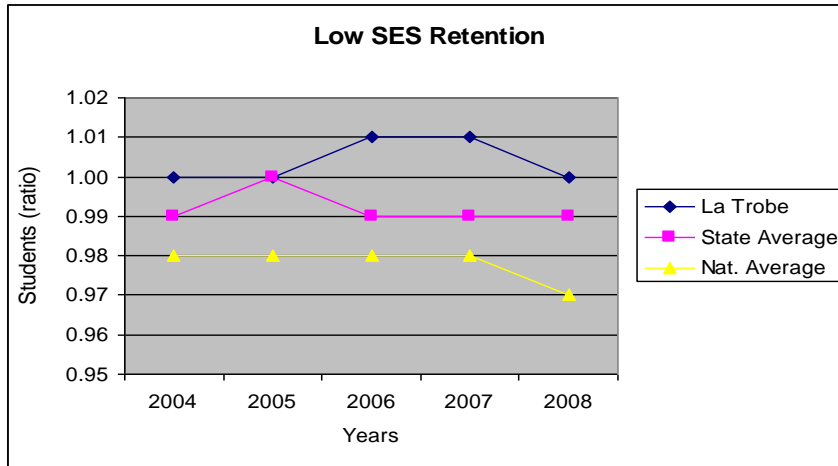


Low SES Participation					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
La Trobe	15.95	16.32	16.65	16.88	17.39
State Average	12.27	12.17	12.16	12.33	12.49
Nat. Average	14.80	14.68	14.78	15.02	14.95

Low SES retention data 2004 – 2008

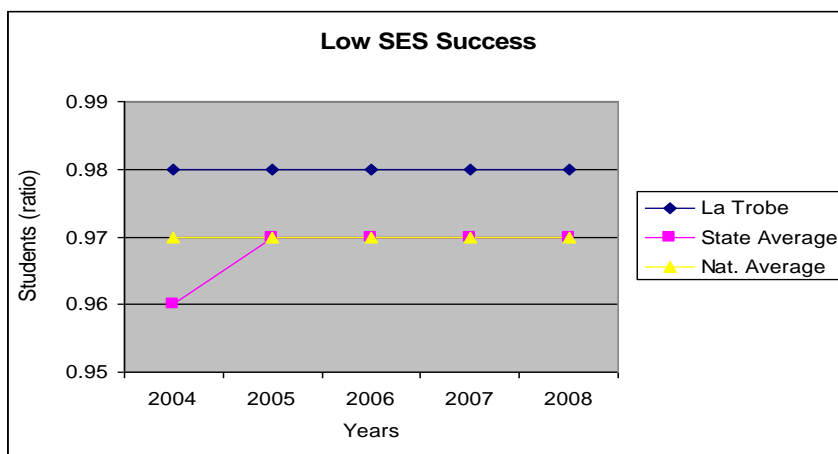
The low SES student retention data shows that these students have persevered with their studies at the same or slightly better rate than medium and high SES students. The retention of low SES students at La Trobe has been equal to or slightly better than the sector averages throughout the five year period.

The success data indicates that low SES students are only slightly less likely than medium or high SES students to be successful in their studies; however the success levels at La Trobe have been slightly above sector averages throughout the five year period.



Low SES Retention					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
La Trobe	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.01	1.00
State Average	0.99	1.00	0.99	0.99	0.99*
Nat. Average	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.97*

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable



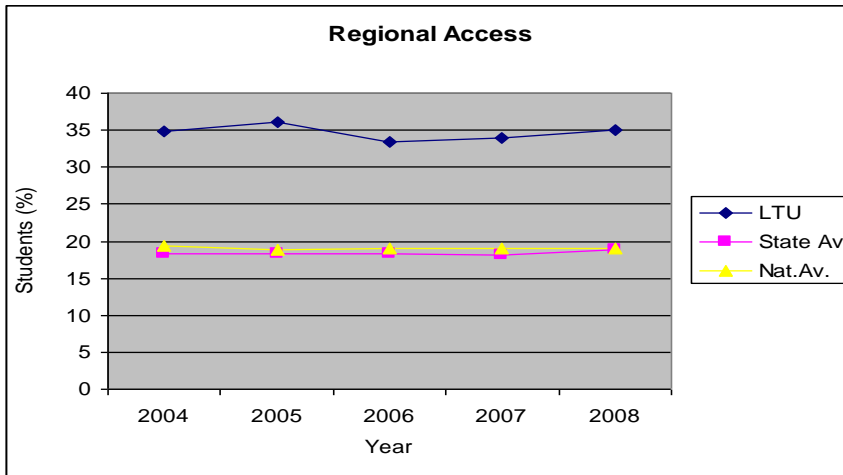
Low SES Success					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
La Trobe	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98
State Average	0.96	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97
Nat. Average	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97

Regional Student Trend Data 2004 – 2008

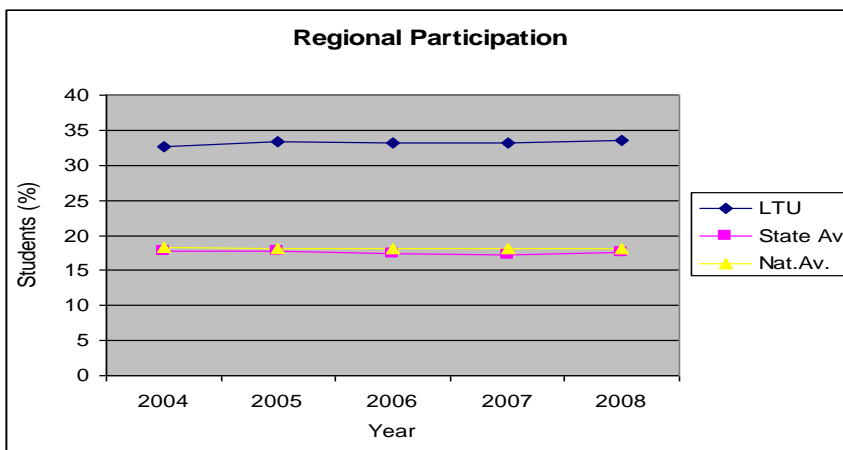
The regional student access data for La Trobe shows an uneven trend for commencing students, with a decline in 2006 followed by a slight gradual improvement in 2007 and 2008.

The regional student participation data relates to both commencing and continuing students, and shows a gradual and (mostly) upward trend over the five year period.

As would be expected given the regional location of La Trobe campuses, La Trobe remained above the sector averages for the whole five year period.



Regional Students Access					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
LTU	34.85	36.12	33.49	34.02	34.97
State Av	18.34	18.37	18.31	18.14	18.78
Nat. Av.	19.38	18.91	18.99	19.07	19.08

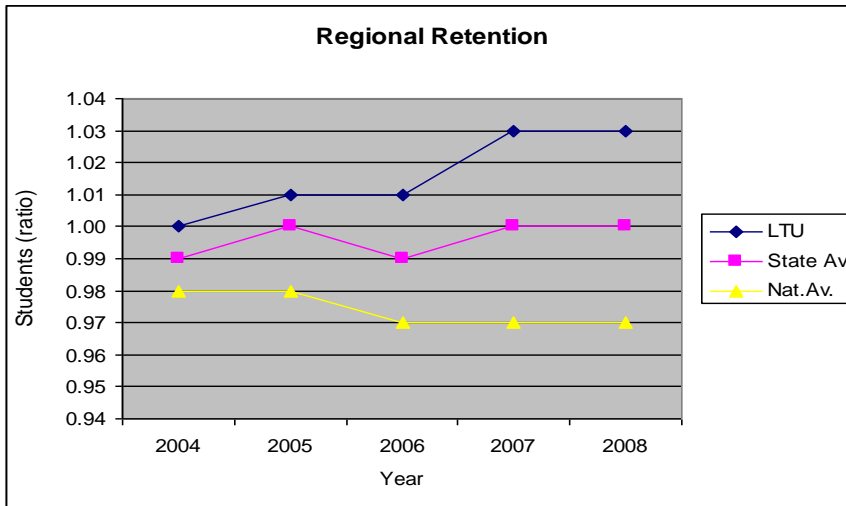


Regional Students Participation					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
LTU	32.67	33.37	33.11	33.23	33.61
State Av	17.67	17.71	17.38	17.24	17.55
Nat. Av.	18.24	18.09	18.08	18.08	18.09

Regional Student Retention Data 2004 – 2008

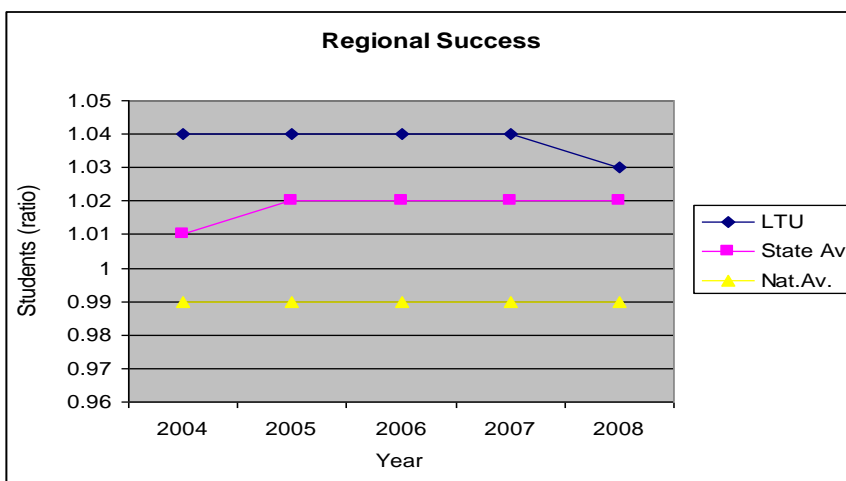
The regional student retention data for La Trobe shows that since 2005 these students have persevered with their studies at a better rate than their metropolitan counterparts. The retention ratio for these students at La Trobe has remained above the sector averages throughout the five year period.

The success data indicates that regional students are more likely than their metropolitan counterparts to be successful in their studies. The regional student success levels at La Trobe have been above sector averages throughout the five year period.



Regional Students Retention					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
LTU	1.00	1.01	1.01	1.03	1.03
State Av	0.99	1.00	0.99	1.00	1.00*
Nat. Av.	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.97	0.97*

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable

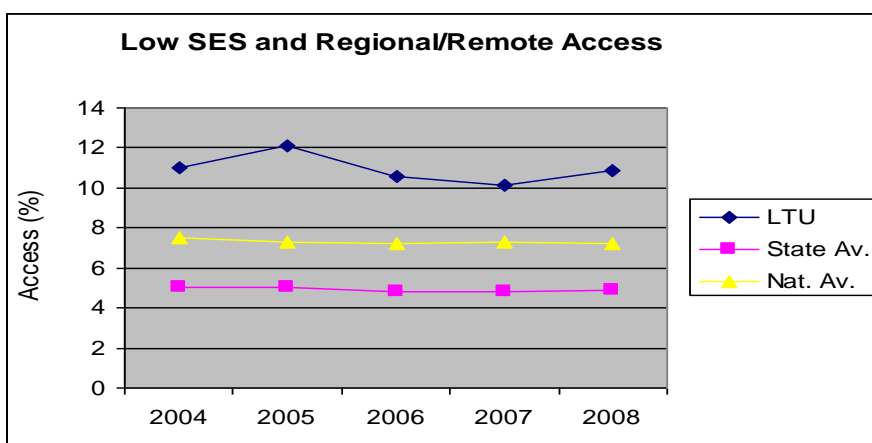


Regional Students Success					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
LTU	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.03
State Av	1.01	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02
Nat. Av.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99

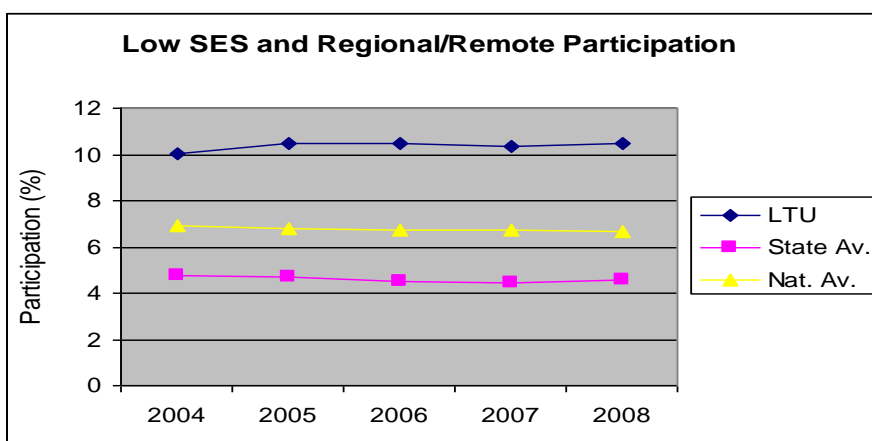
Low SES and Regional/Remote Student Data 2004 – 2008

The data for commencing students who were both low SES and from regional or remote areas shows an uneven trend, with slight improvement in enrolments being followed by slight decline and then again slight improvement.

The participation data, which relates to all domestic enrolments from these equity groups, also shows an uneven trend, although the changes are less pronounced than for commencing students. The data indicates that La Trobe was more than twice as likely as other Victorian institutions to enrol students who were both low SES and from regional or remote areas. La Trobe was also well above the national average for enrolments from these students.



Low SES and Regional/Remote Access					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
LTU	10.99	12.14	10.59	10.17	10.85
State Av.	5.02	5.01	4.8	4.82	4.91
Nat. Av.	7.54	7.29	7.2	7.26	7.21

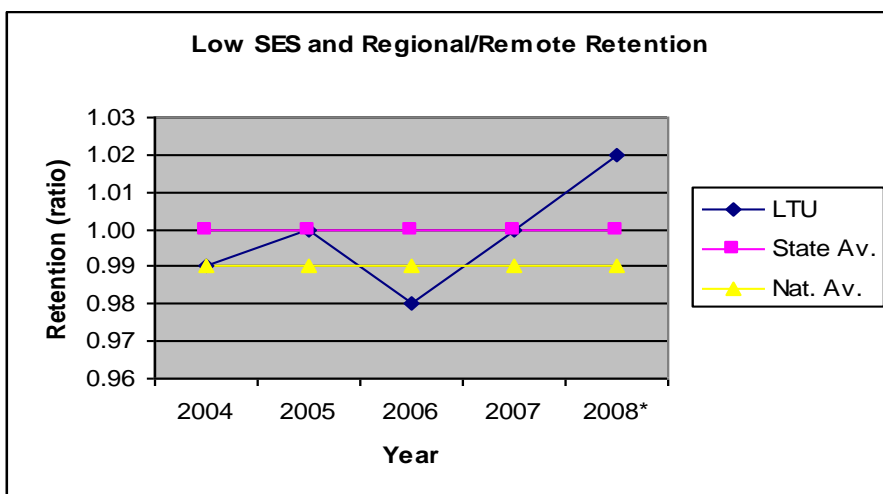


Low SES and Regional/Remote Participation					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
LTU	10.03	10.49	10.47	10.32	10.49
State Av.	4.75	4.69	4.53	4.47	4.54
Nat. Av.	6.91	6.77	6.73	6.71	6.67

The retention data shows that low SES regional/remote students persevered with their studies at the same rate as other students for three of the five years, and were slightly less likely to persevere in two of the five years. Overall, the retention levels at La Trobe were slightly below the state average and slightly above the national average.

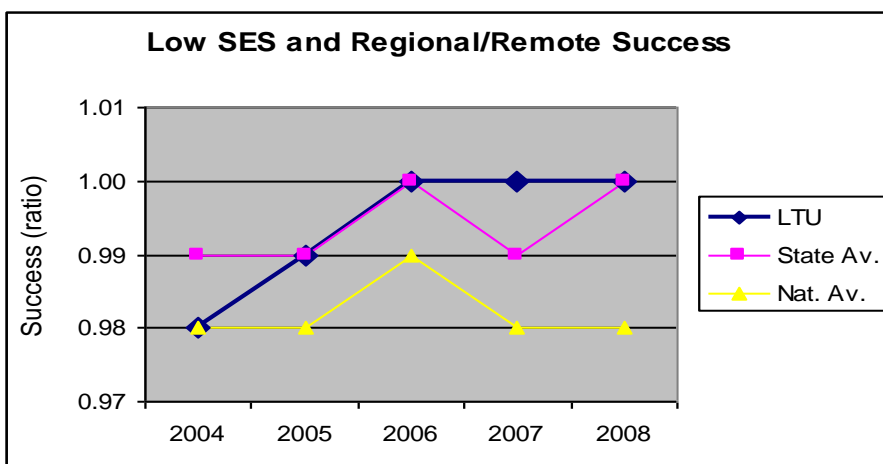
The success data shows that low SES regional/remote students have, for the last three years, passed their units of study at the same rate as other students.

Overall, the success levels at La Trobe were around the state average and slightly above the national average.



Low SES and Regional/Remote Retention*					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
LTU	0.99	1.00	0.98	1.00	1.02
State Av.	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Nat. Av.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable



Low SES and Regional/Remote Success					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
LTU	0.98	0.99	1.00	1.00	1.00
State Av.	0.99	0.99	1.00	0.99	1.00
Nat. Av.	0.98	0.98	0.99	0.98	0.98

6. Student Equity Performance Indicators 2008

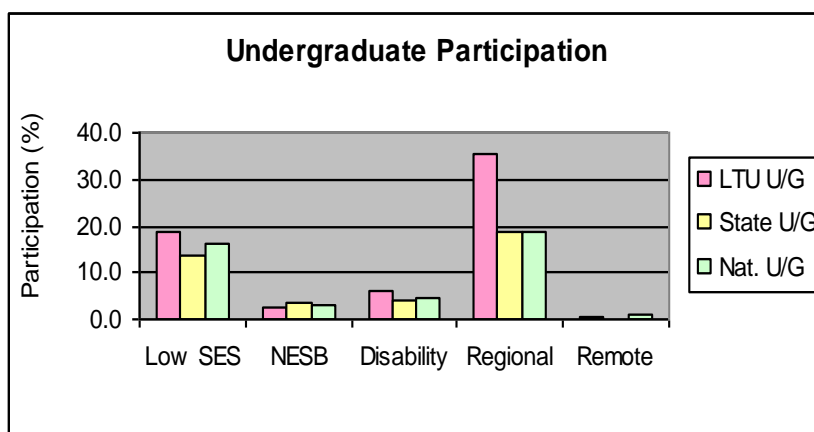
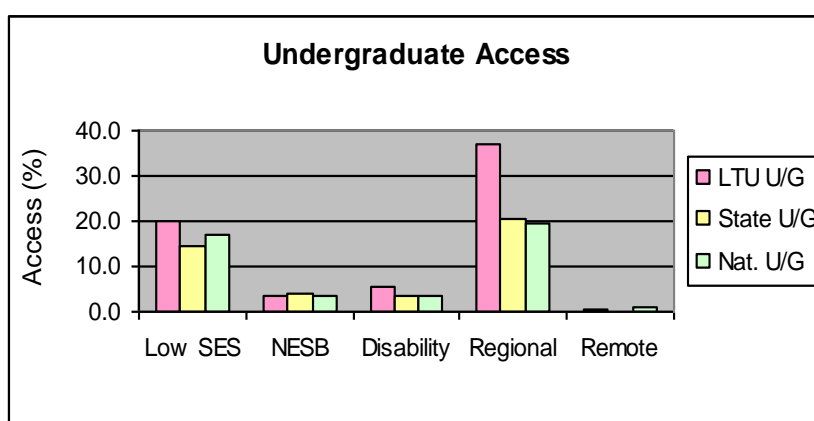
Equity Groups by Undergraduate Access and Participation 2008

In 2008 La Trobe University maintained its position above the sector averages for all commencing and participation undergraduate students from low socio-economic backgrounds, students with disabilities or medical conditions and students from regional areas.

La Trobe was the same as, or above the state average for undergraduate access and participation rates for students from remote areas. As Victoria has very few areas classified as remote, comparison with the national average is not relevant

La Trobe was again below the state averages for undergraduate access and participation for students from non English speaking backgrounds, indicating a need for further initiatives to attract and retain this group of students.

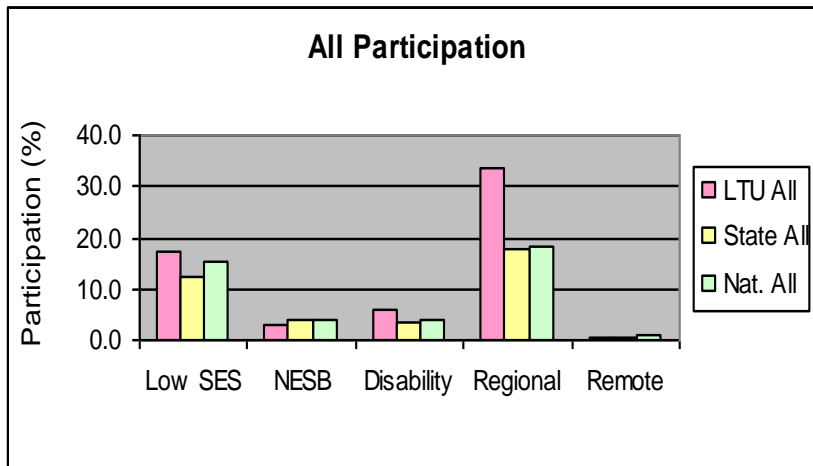
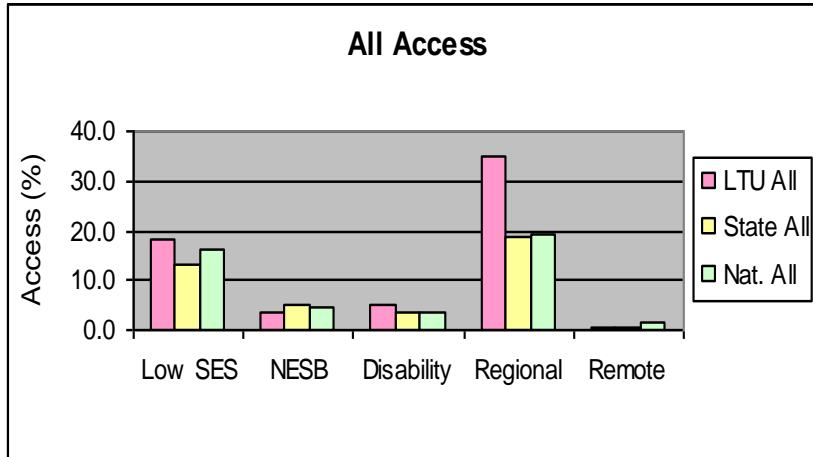
	Undergraduate Access			Undergraduate Participation		
	LTU U/G	State U/G	Nat. U/G	LTU U/G	State U/G	Nat. U/G
Low SES	19.8	14.7	17.0	18.8	13.8	16.1
NESB	3.4	4.2	3.6	2.4	3.3	3.2
Disability	5.3	3.5	3.5	6.3	3.9	4.3
Regional	36.8	20.4	19.5	35.5	18.9	18.6
Remote	0.3	0.2	1.1	0.3	0.2	1.0



Equity Groups by All students (U/Grad & P/Grad) Access and Participation 2008

The combined data for undergraduate and postgraduate students shows a similar pattern to the undergraduate data above.

Unfortunately, sector averages data specific to postgraduate equity groups is unavailable.



	All Access			All Participation		
	LTU All	State All	Nat. All	LTU All	State All	Nat. All
Low SES	18.2	13.3	16.1	17.4	12.5	15.1
NESB	3.6	5.1	4.4	2.8	4.2	3.9
Disability	5.0	3.3	3.4	5.8	3.6	4.1
Regional	35.0	18.8	19.1	33.6	17.6	18.1
Remote	0.3	0.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	1.1

Student Equity Performance by Faculty 2008

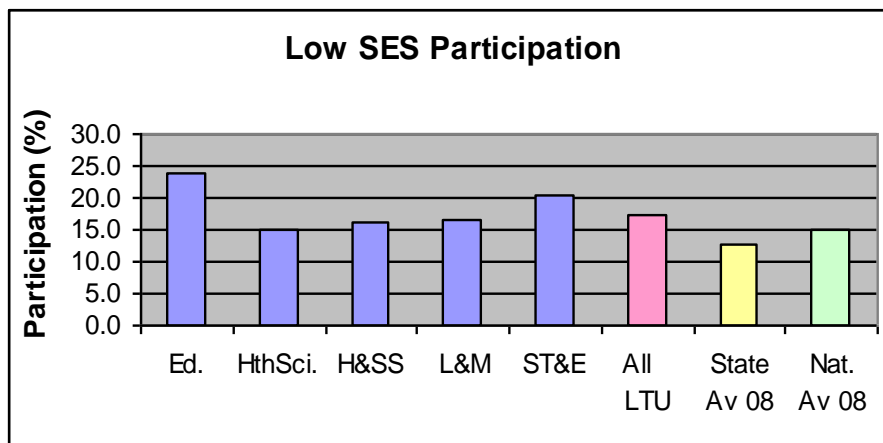
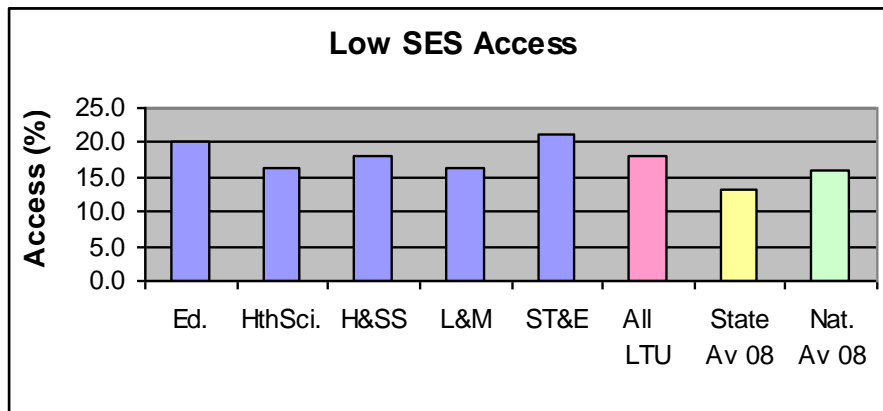
Low SES Students 2008 All Faculties

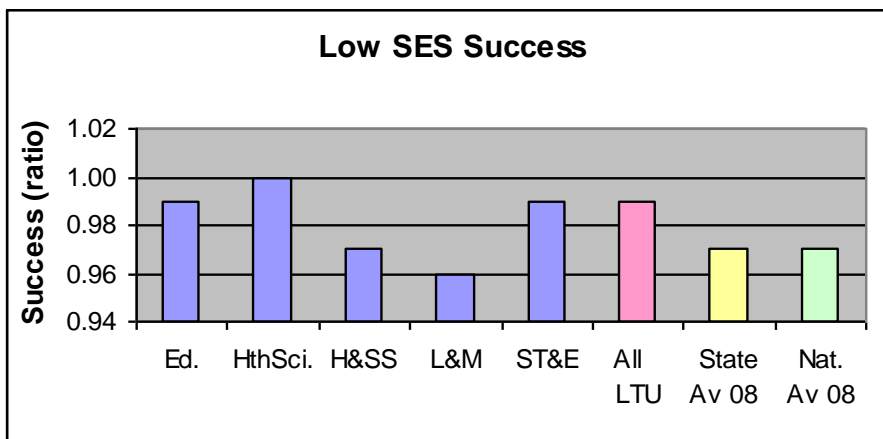
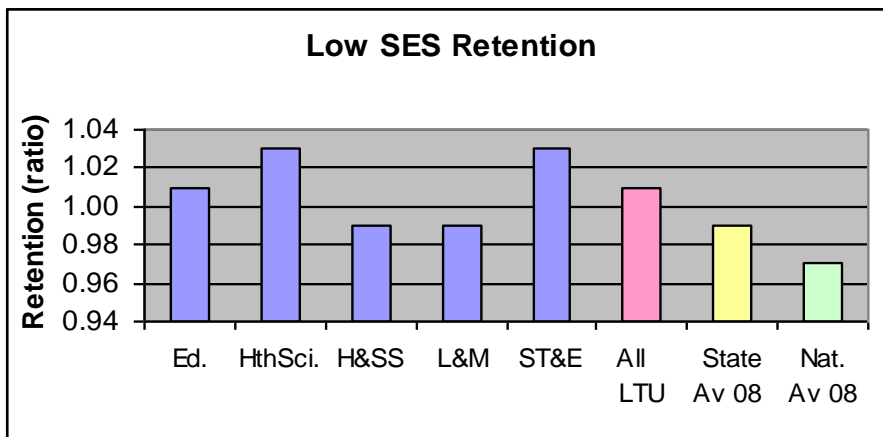
The Access data indicates that in 2008 the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering attracted the highest proportion (21.1%) of commencing students from a low socio-economic background. In all faculties, enrolments from low SES students were above both the state and national averages.

The participation data demonstrates that all faculties, excepting Health Sciences, had continuing enrolments above the state and national averages.

The retention ratio indicates that low SES students in Education, Health Sciences and Science Technology and Engineering, were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. Those enrolled in Humanities and Social Sciences, and Law and Management, were slightly less likely than other students to remain in their studies, however they were still above the national average and on par with the state average.

Health Sciences was the only faculty where low SES students passed their units of study at the same rate as other students. The faculties of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science Technology and Engineering had success levels that were only slightly below that of other students. The only faculty where Low SES student success levels fell slightly below the sector averages was Law and Management.





	Ed.	Hth Sci.	H&S S	L&M	ST&E	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	20.3	16.4	18.1	16.4	21.1	18.2	13.26	16.05
Participation (%)	24.0	15.0	16.3	16.6	20.3	17.4	12.53	15.09
Retention (ratio)	1.01	1.03	0.99	0.99	1.03	1.01	0.99*	0.97*
Success (ratio)	0.99	1.00	0.97	0.96	0.99	0.99	0.97	0.97

Low SES student no's

Access	220	414	277	217	278	1411
Participation	525	991	711	755	795	3844

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

Students from Non English Speaking Background (NESB) 2008 All Faculties

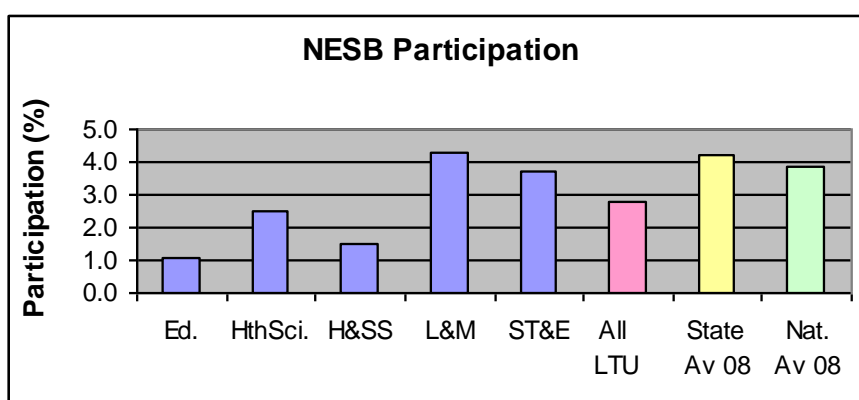
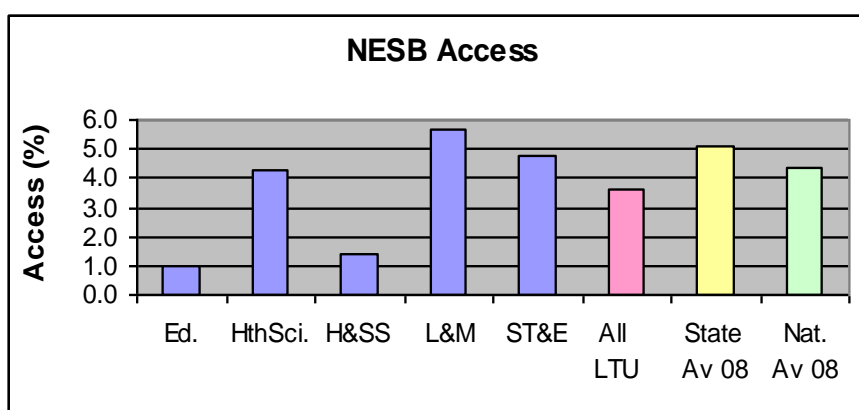
In 2008 the Faculty of Law and Management attracted the highest proportion (5.7%) of commencing students from non-English speaking backgrounds, followed by the faculties of Science, Technology and Engineering (4.8%). The Faculty of Health Sciences showed a significant increase in access for NESB student enrolment, increasing from 1.9% in 2007 to 4.3% in 2008. The faculties mentioned above were close to, or above, sector averages for the number of NESB commencing students. The Education and the Humanities and Social Sciences Faculties were well below sector averages for NESB student access.

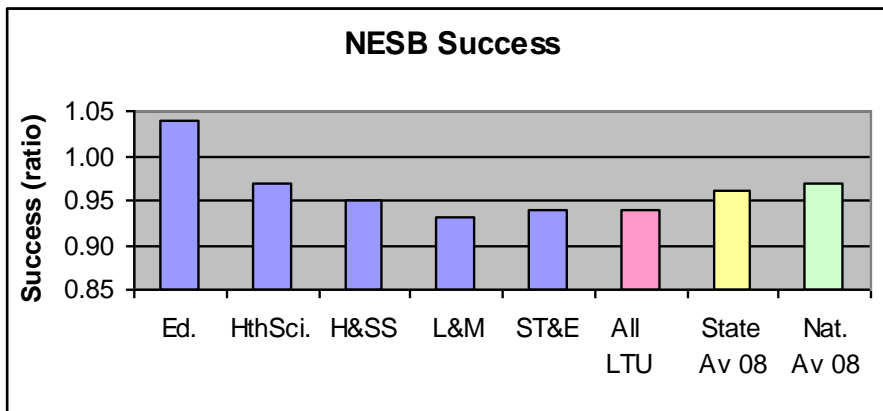
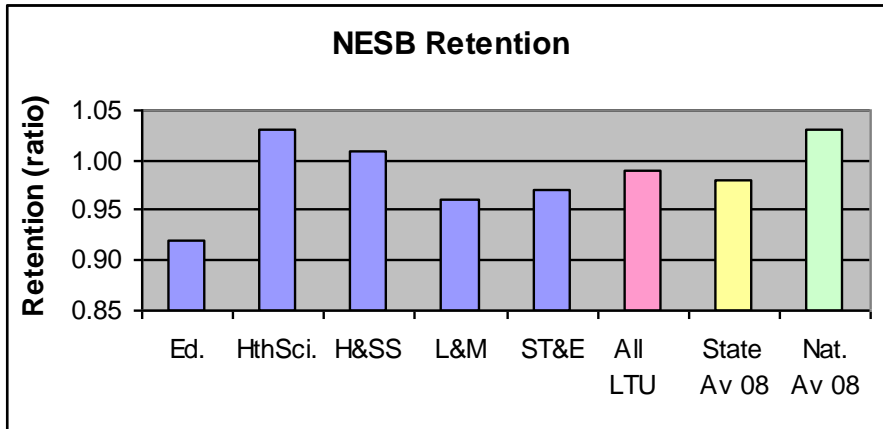
The access and participation data indicates a need for strategies to overcome barriers for NESB student enrolment into the fields of education and the humanities.

The retention ratio indicates that NESB students in the Faculties of Health Sciences and Humanities were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. In these faculties retention levels were above the state average and close to, or equal with the national average.

The retention of NESB students in the Faculty of Education improved significantly from 2007 (0.72) to 2008 (0.92), but was still below the state and national averages. However, NESB students in this faculty were achieving higher success levels than NESB students in other faculties.

Health Sciences NESB students had success levels above the state average and equal to the national average. The success levels of NESB students enrolled in the faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences, Law and Management, and Science, Technology and Engineering were slightly below the sector averages, indicating a need to consider additional study supports for this group of students.





	Ed.	Hth Sci.	H&SS	L&M	ST&E	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	1.0	4.3	1.4	5.7	4.8	3.6	5.1	4.39
Participation (%)	1.1	2.5	1.5	4.3	3.7	2.8	4.22	3.88
Retention (ratio)	0.92	1.03	1.01	0.96	0.97	0.99	0.98*	1.03*
Success (ratio)	1.04	0.97	0.95	0.93	0.94	0.94	0.96	0.97

NESB student no's

Access	11	108	21	76	63	282
Participation	25	165	66	196	145	614

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

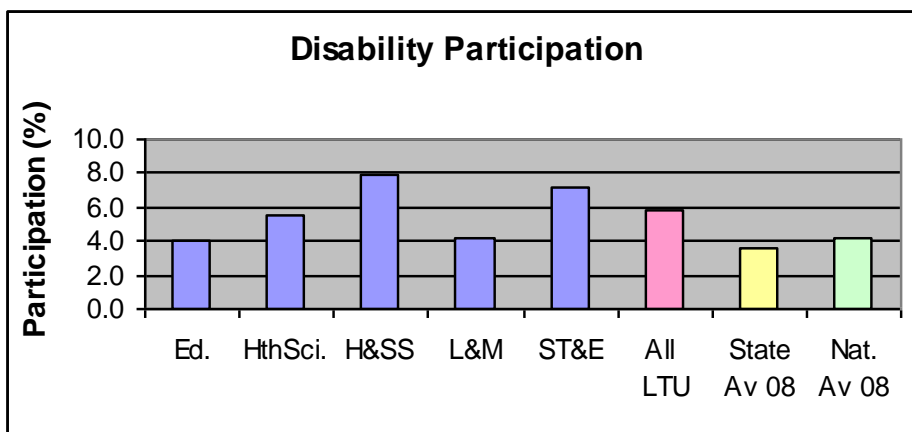
Students with a Disability or Long Term Medical Condition 2008 All Faculties

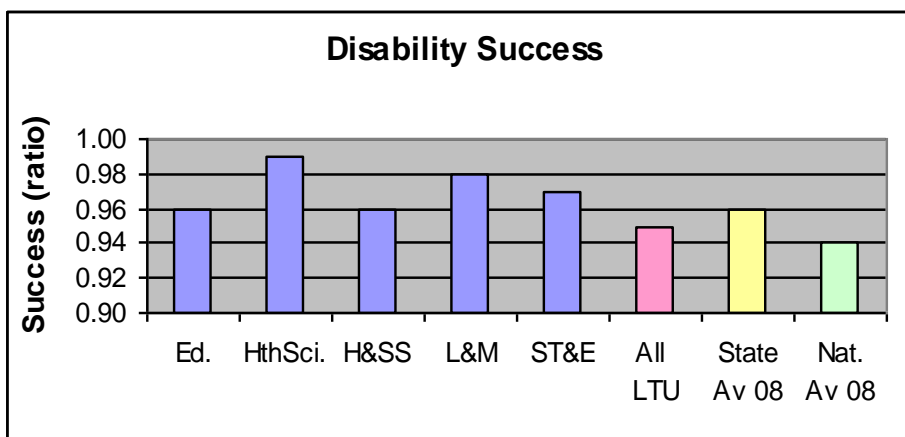
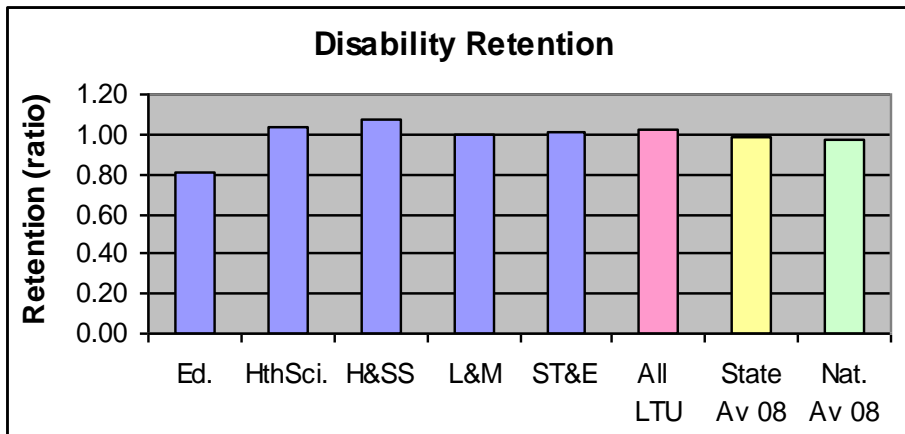
In 2008 the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering attracted the highest proportion (6.7%) of commencing students from this equity group, followed by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (5.9%). All other faculties were above sector averages, except for Law and Management, which was equal to the state average and slightly below the national average for access for students with disabilities.

All faculties were above sector averages for students with disabilities enrolled across all years of study, except the Faculty of Education, which was above the state average but slightly below the national average.

The retention ratio indicates that students with disabilities in Humanities and Social Sciences, Health Sciences, and Science, Technology and Engineering, were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. Those in Law and Management were just as likely to persevere as students without a disability, whereas those enrolled in Education were less likely to continue their studies compared to other students. Retention ratios for this equity group were above state and national averages for all faculties except Education.

The success ratio indicates a slightly lower success rate for students with disabilities than other students. However, all faculties had success levels which were equal to, or above, sector averages.





	Ed.	Hth Sci.	H&SS	L&M	ST&E	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	3.8	4.8	5.9	3.3	6.7	5.0	3.34	3.43
Participation (%)	4.0	5.5	7.9	4.2	7.1	5.8	3.65	4.13
Retention (ratio)	0.81	1.03	1.07	1.00	1.01	1.02	0.98*	0.97*
Success (ratio)	0.96	0.99	0.96	0.98	0.97	0.95	0.96	0.94

Disability student no's

Access	41	122	90	44	88	385
Participation	87	365	346	193	278	1273

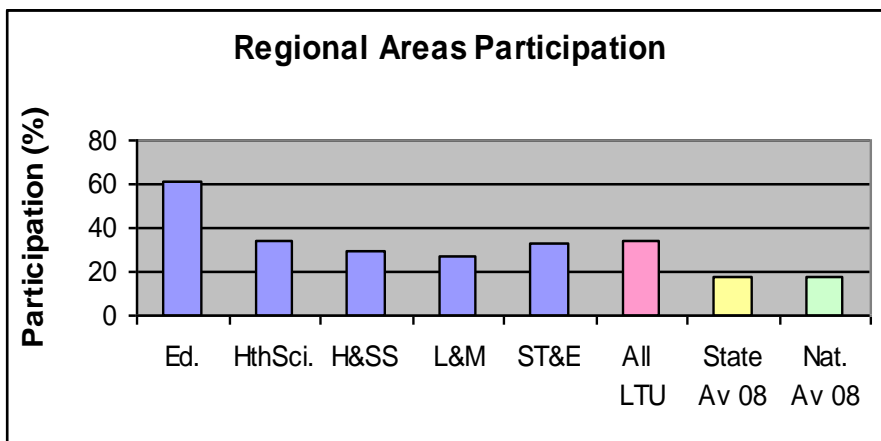
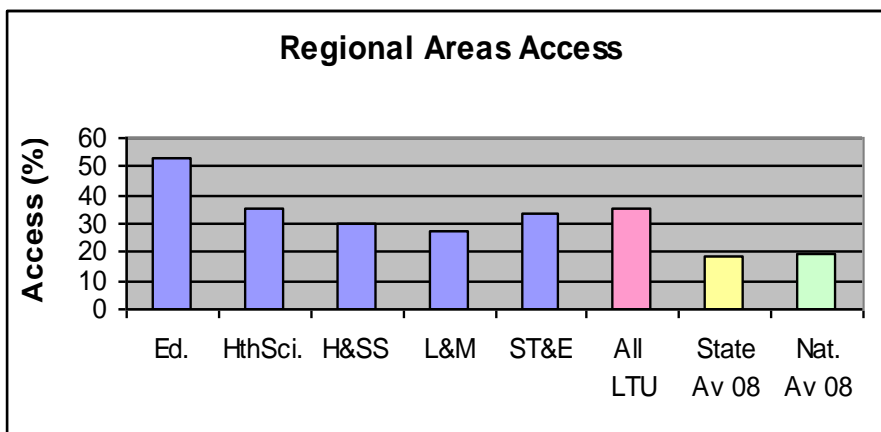
* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

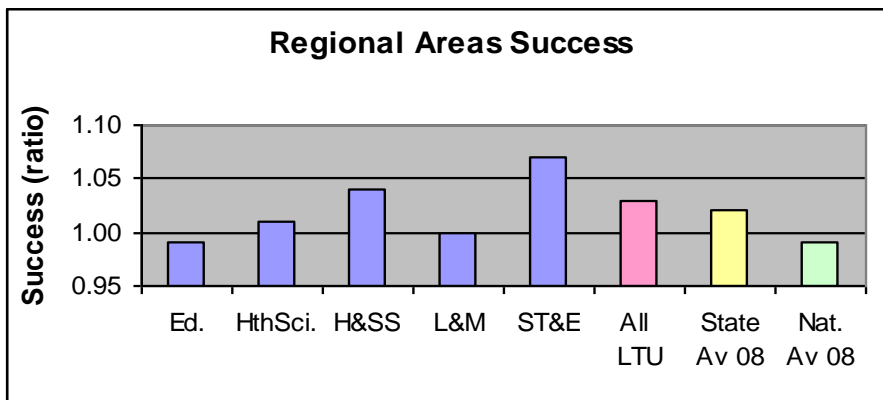
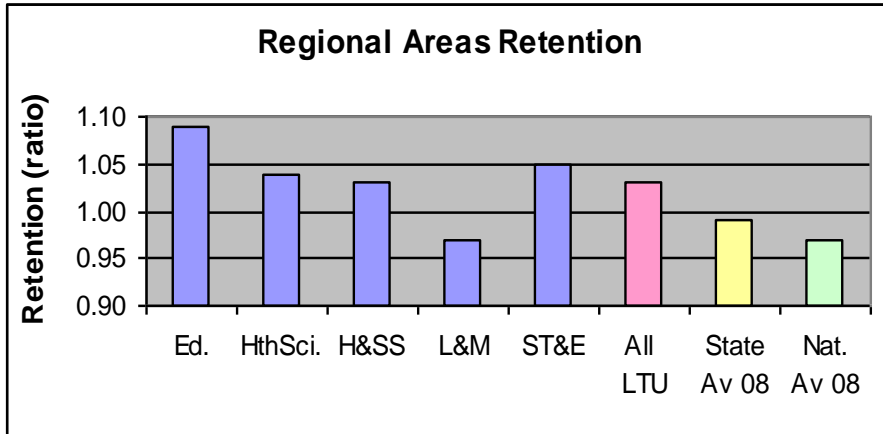
Students from Regional Areas 2008 All Faculties

In 2008 the Faculty of Education attracted the highest proportion (53.1%) of commencing students from this equity group, followed by the Faculty of Health Sciences (33.7%). All faculties were well above the sector averages for access and participation for students from regional areas.

The retention ratio indicates that in all faculties except Law and Management, students from regional areas were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. In Law and Management regional students were not as likely to persevere as other students, however their retention level was still equal to the national average.

The success ratio indicates that students from regional areas were just as likely, or more likely than other students to succeed in their units of study, except in the Faculty of Education. However this Faculty still had strong levels of success, which equalled the national average.





	Ed.	Hth Sci.	H&SS	L&M	ST&E	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	53.1	35.0	30.3	27.1	33.1	35.0	18.78	19.08
Participation (%)	60.7	33.7	29.2	26.7	33.1	33.6	17.55	18.09
Retention (ratio)	1.09	1.04	1.03	0.97	1.05	1.03	1.00*	0.97*
Success (ratio)	0.99	1.01	1.04	1.00	1.07	1.03	1.02	0.99

Regional student no's

Access	576	882	464	360	436	2723
Participation	1327	2223	1274	1216	1295	7423

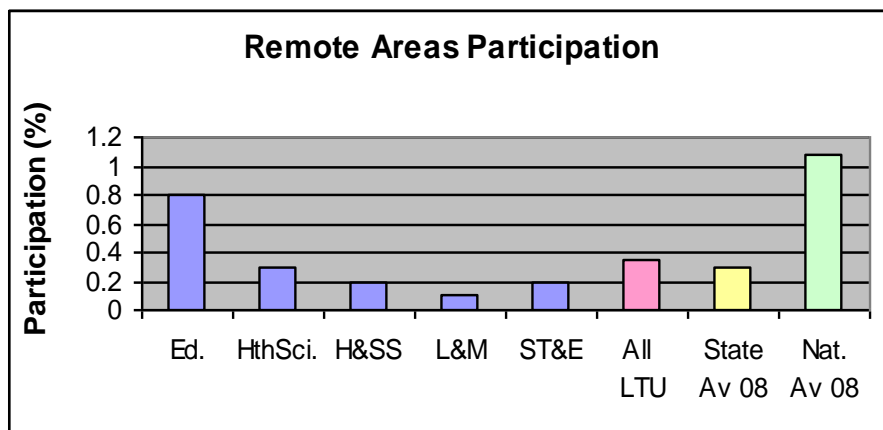
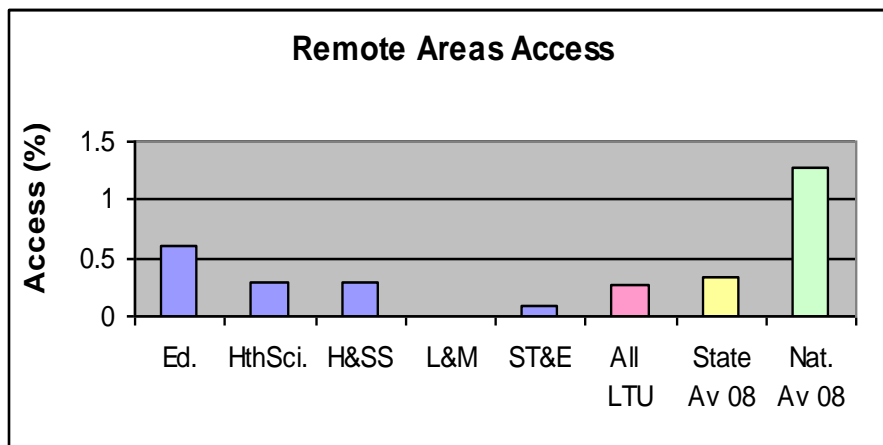
* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

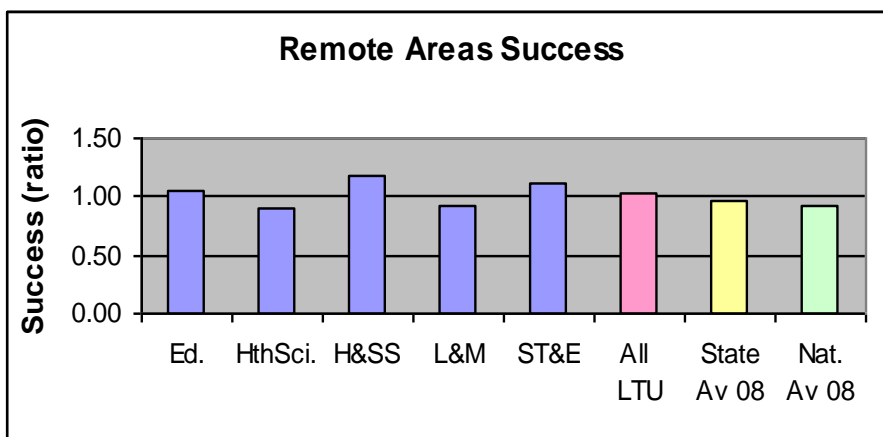
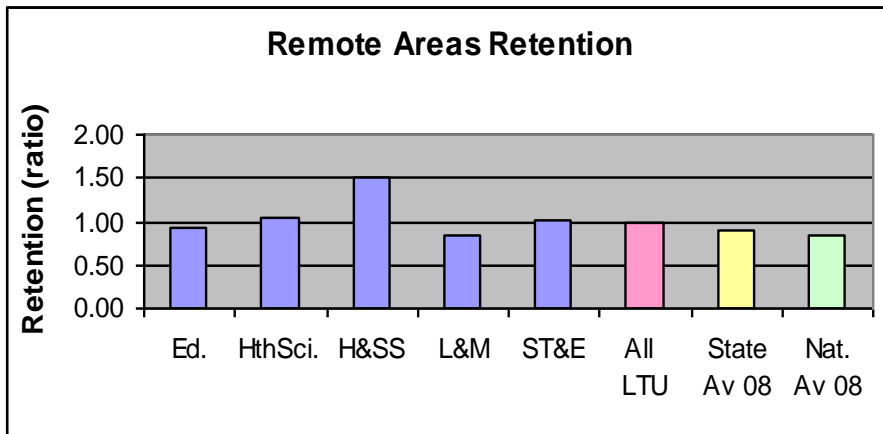
Students from Remote Areas 2008 All Faculties

In 2008 the Faculty of Education attracted the highest proportion (0.6%) of commencing students from remote areas. Both the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Health Sciences were similar to the state average for access for students from remote areas. Other faculties were below the state average. All faculties were below the national average for remote area students' access and participation, reflecting the fact that Victoria has less areas designated as 'remote' than the other states.

The high retention ratios indicate that in all faculties except Law and Management and Education, students from remote areas were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. All faculties had retention levels well above the sector averages.

The success ratio indicates that students from remote areas enrolled in the Faculties of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science, Technology and Engineering were more likely to succeed in their units of study than other students. Although students from remote areas in Health Sciences and in Law and Management were less likely to succeed than other students, they still achieved success levels close or equal to the national average.





	Ed.	Hth Sci.	H&SS	L&M	ST&E	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	0.6	0.3	0.3	0	0.1	0.3	0.34	1.28
Participation (%)	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.30	1.08
Retention (ratio)	0.94	1.04	1.52	0.84	1.01	0.99	0.90*	0.85*
Success (ratio)	1.04	0.91	1.17	0.93	1.11	1.03	0.96	0.92

Remote student no's

Access	7	7	5	0	1	22
Participation	18	20	7	6	8	77

- 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

Student Equity Performance by Campus 2008

Low Socio Economic Status (SES) 2008 All Campuses

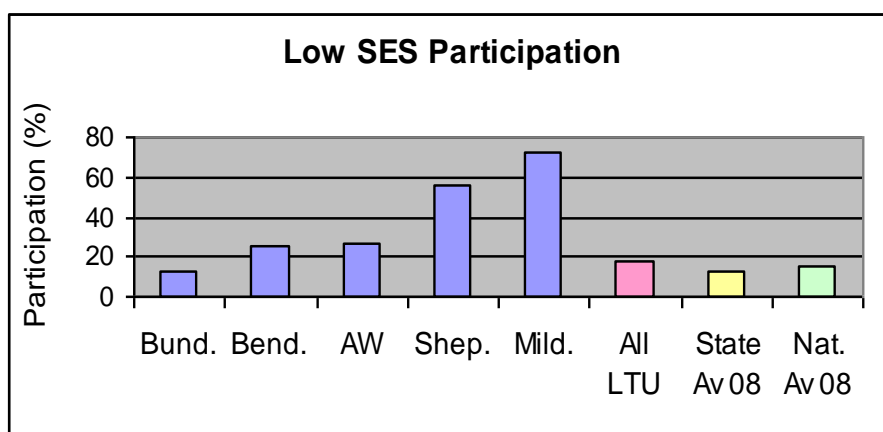
In 2008 there were 18.2% (1,411) of commencing students and 17.4% (3,844) of all students at La Trobe from Low SES backgrounds.

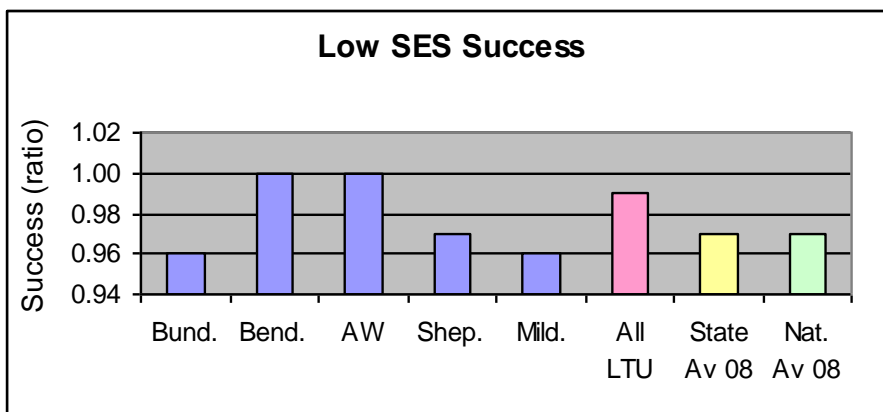
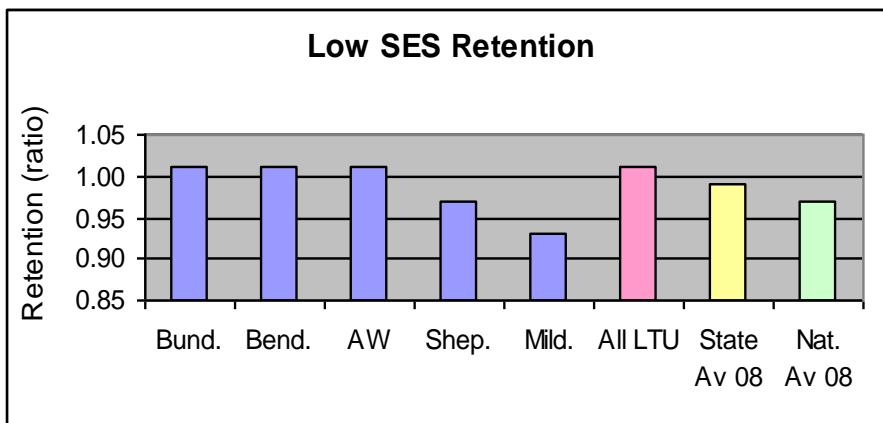
The percentage of low SES students commencing and continuing varied widely at individual campuses. Shepparton attracted low SES students at around three times the national average, whilst Mildura attracted approximately four and a half times that of the national average. In contrast Bundoora Campus had only 13.2% of its students drawn from Low SES areas in 2008, which is slightly above the state average but is below the national average.

The retention ratio indicates that low SES students at Bundoora, Bendigo and Albury Wodonga were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. These retention levels were above the sector averages.

At Mildura and Shepparton campuses, low SES students were less likely than other students to persevere with their studies. The retention level for low SES students at Shepparton was equal to the national average and only slightly below the state average. The retention level in Mildura was also below the sector averages.

At Bendigo and Albury Wodonga, low SES students were just as likely as other students to be successful in their studies. However at Bundoora, Shepparton and Mildura low SES students were slightly less successful at passing their units of study than other students. At Bundoora and Mildura low SES students' success rates were also slightly less than sector averages.





	Bund.	Bend.	AW	Shep.	Mild.	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	14.1	23	28.1	46.4	74.3	18.2	13.26	16.05
Participation (%)	13.2	25.5	26.9	55.8	71.9	17.4	12.53	15.09
Retention (ratio)	1.01	1.01	1.01	0.97	0.93	1.01	0.99*	0.97*
Success (ratio)	0.96	1.00	1.00	0.97	0.96	0.99	0.97	0.97

Low SES student no's

Access	711	338	121	71	101	1411
Participation	1975	993	254	201	240	3844

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

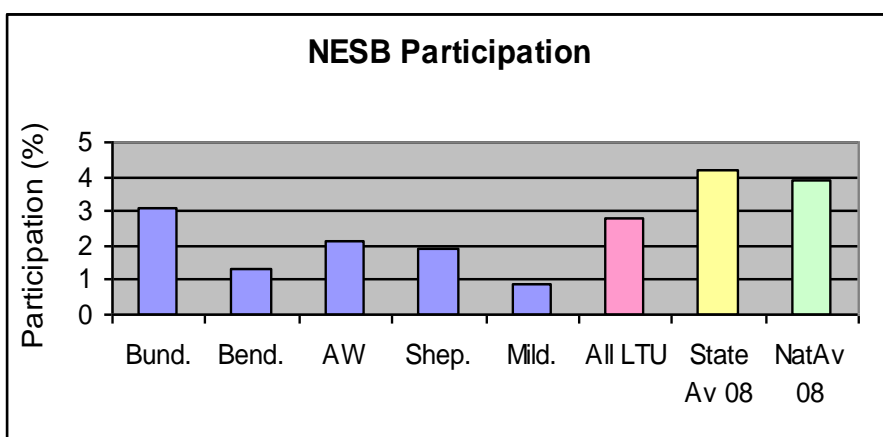
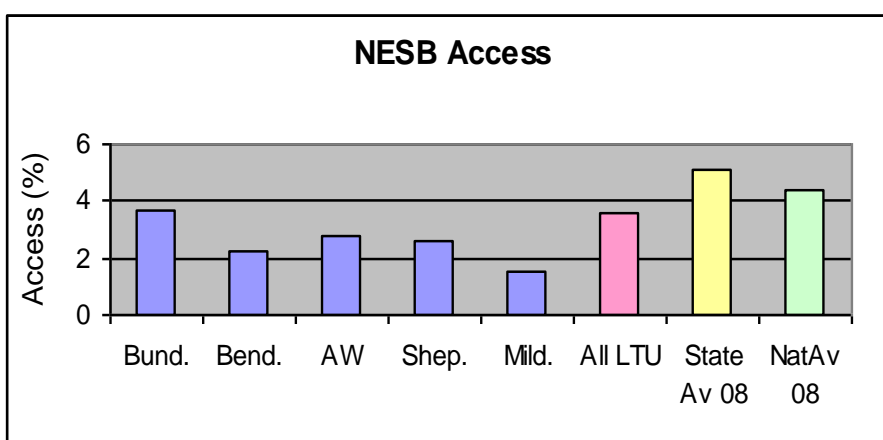
Students from Non English Speaking Background (NESB) 2008 All Campuses

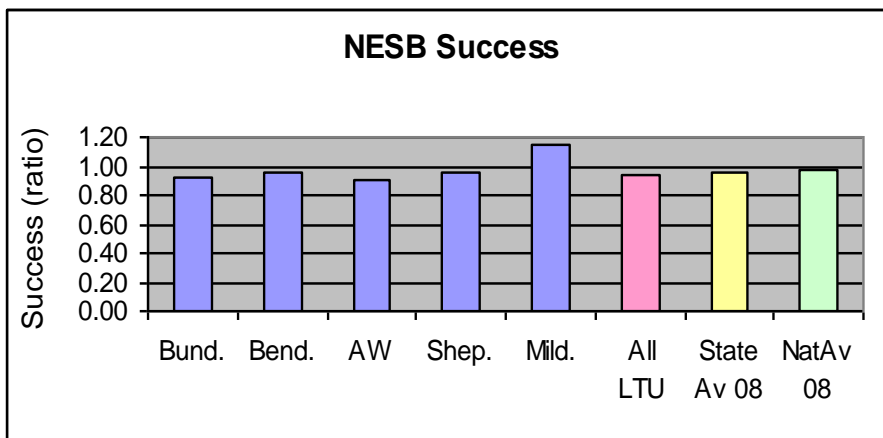
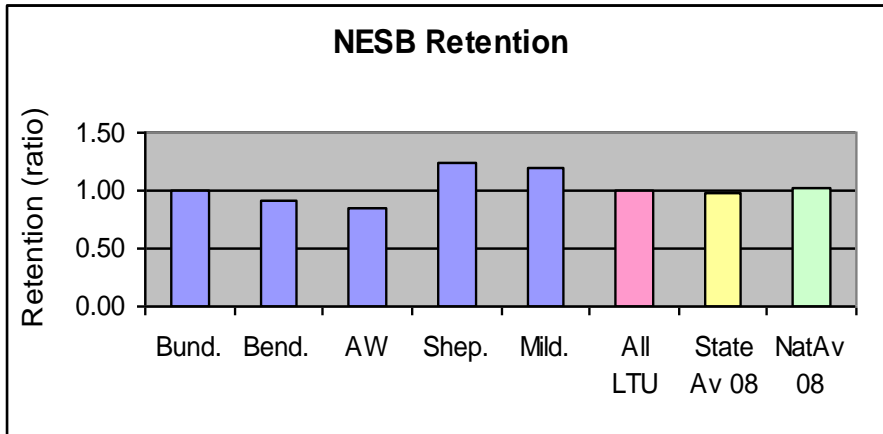
In 2008 there were 3.6% (282) of commencing students and 2.8% (614) of all students at La Trobe from non-English Speaking Background. Although both the access and participation data for NESB students has increased at all campuses since 2007, each campus was still below the state and national averages. This indicates the need for greater outreach into migrant communities.

The retention levels indicate that those few NESB students who did enrol at Shepparton and Mildura were more likely to persevere with their studies than other students. Retention levels at Bundoora were above the state average but below the national average. At Bendigo and Albury Wodonga campuses retention levels were below the sector averages.

Across all campuses except Mildura, NESB students were less likely than other students to succeed, although at Bendigo and Shepparton success levels were similar to sector averages.

Overall the data indicates a need to consider additional study support initiatives for this group of students.





	Bund.	Bend.	AW	Shep.	Mild.	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	3.7	2.2	2.8	2.6	1.5	3.6	5.1	4.39
Participation (%)	3.1	1.3	2.1	1.9	0.9	2.8	4.22	3.88
Retention (ratio)	0.99	0.92	0.85	1.25	1.20	0.99	0.98*	1.03*
Success (ratio)	0.93	0.96	0.91	0.96	1.14	0.94	0.96	0.97

NESB student no's

Access	187	33	12	4	2	282
Participation	456	50	20	7	3	614

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

Students with a Disability or Long Term Medical Condition 2008 All Campuses

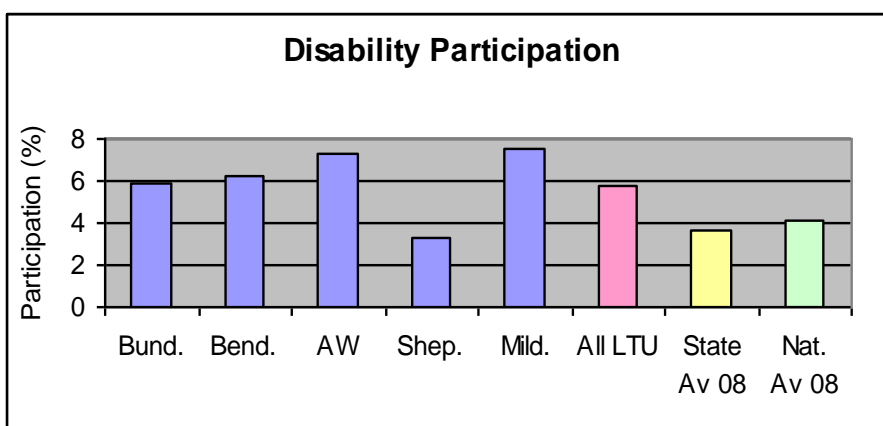
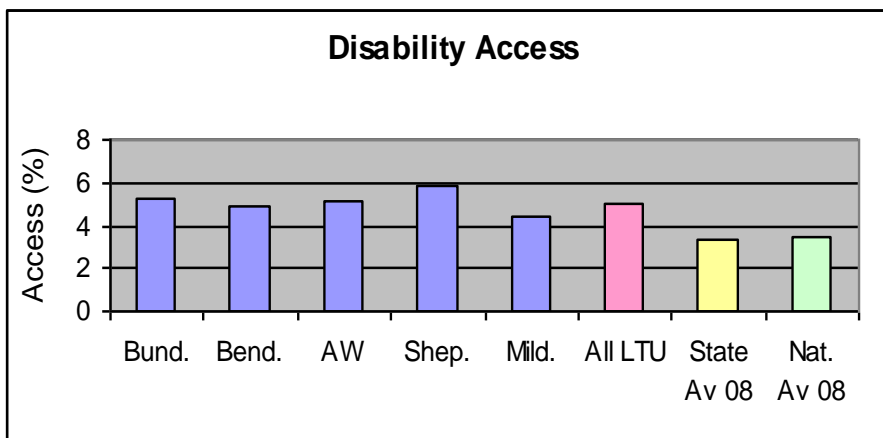
In 2008, 5% of all commencing students at La Trobe had a disability or a long term medical condition.

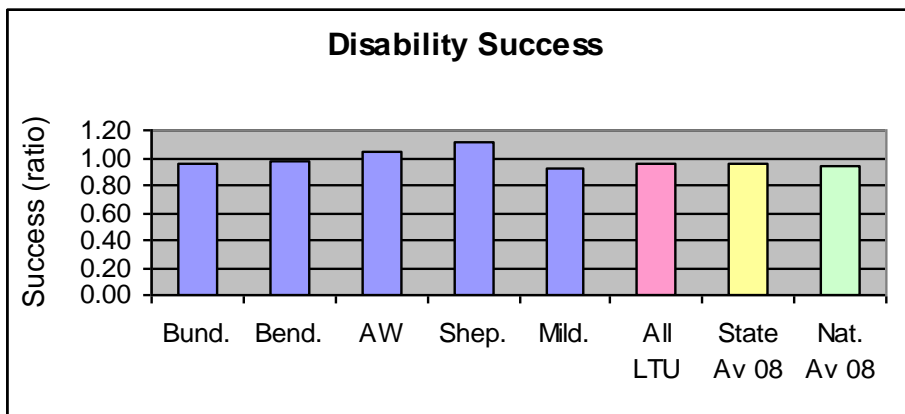
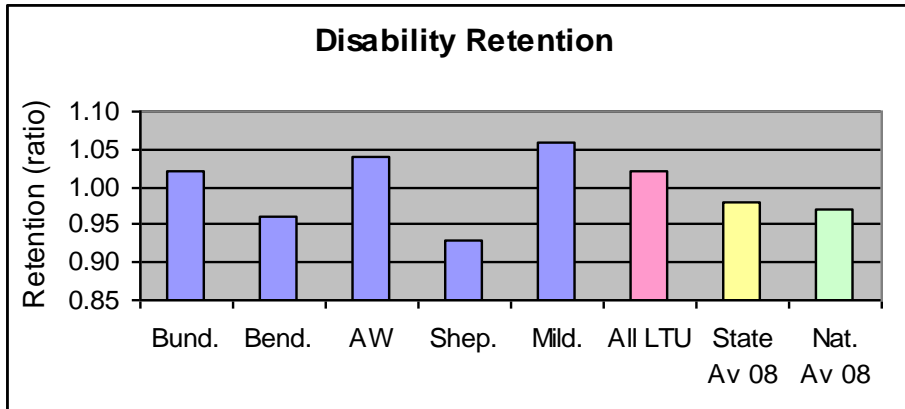
The percentage of commencing students with a disability was well above the state and national average at every campus.

The percentage of all enrolled students with a disability was also above the state and national average for all campuses except Shepparton.

The retention ratio indicates that students with a disability at Bundoora, Albury Wodonga and Mildura were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. At Bendigo and Shepparton these students were slightly less likely than other students to persevere. Although the retention ratio for Bendigo was close to sector averages, the perseverance of these students at Shepparton was below sector averages.

The success ratio indicates that this group of students were slightly less likely than other students to succeed in their studies at all campuses except Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton. However success levels were around or above sector averages at all campuses.





	Bund.	Bend.	AW	Shep.	Mild .	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	5.2	4.9	5.1	5.9	4.4	5.0	3.34	3.43
Participation (%)	5.9	6.2	7.3	3.3	7.5	5.8	3.65	4.13
Retention (ratio)	1.02	0.96	1.04	0.93	1.06	1.02	0.98*	0.97*
Success (ratio)	0.96	0.98	1.05	1.12	0.93	0.95	0.96	0.94

Disability student no's

Access	260	72	22	9	6	385
Participation	885	242	69	12	25	1273

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

Students from Regional Areas 2008 All Campuses

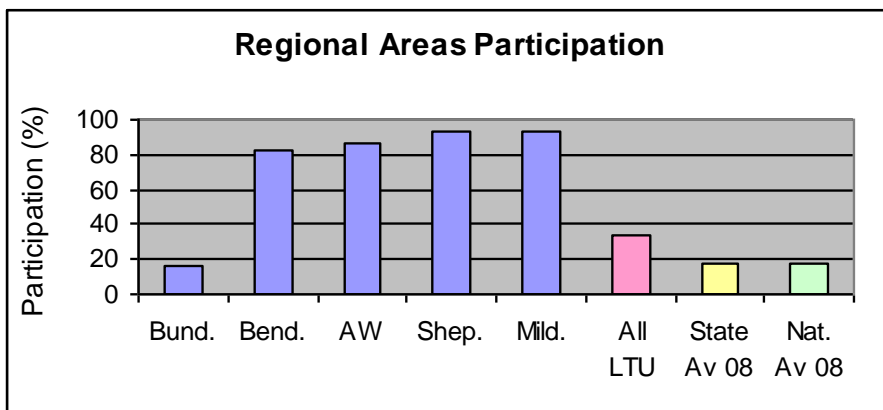
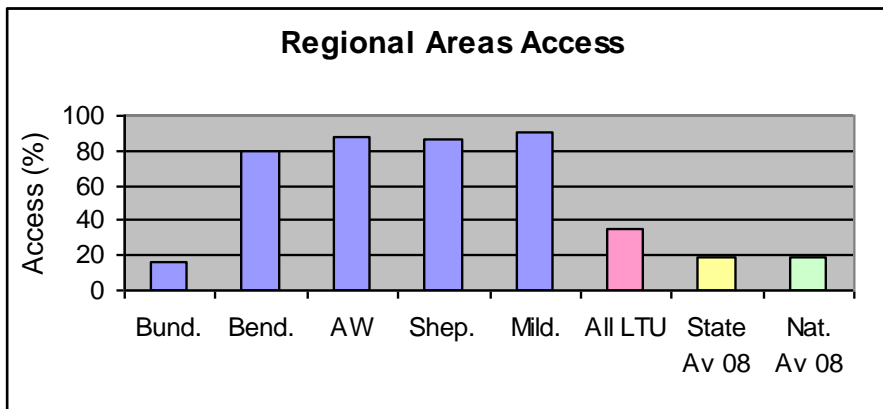
In 2008 there were 34.97% (2,723) of commencing students and 33.6% (7,423) of all students at La Trobe University who came from regional areas.

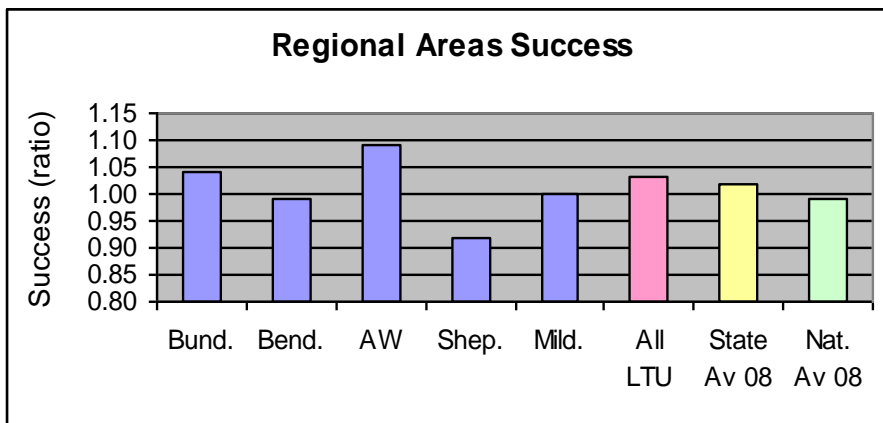
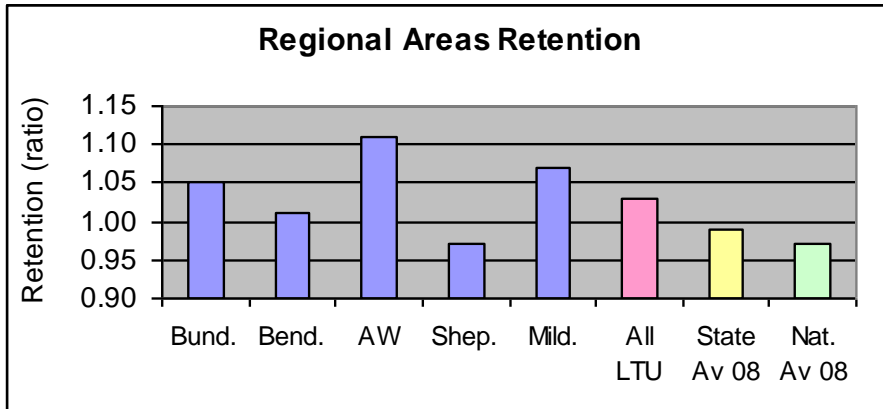
As would be expected, the percentage of commencing and all students from regional areas was well above the sector averages at all the regional campuses. At Bundoora campus the level was below the state and national average.

The retention ratio indicates that at Bundoora, Bendigo, Albury-Wodonga and Mildura, regional students were more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. The retention level was also above the state and national average on all campuses except Shepparton where it equaled the national average.

The success ratio indicates that rural students at Bundoora, Albury-Wodonga and Mildura were equally likely, or more likely than other students to succeed in their studies. Regional students at Bendigo were slightly less likely than other students to succeed, however they were still equal to the national average.

At Shepparton campus, regional students were less likely to succeed than non-regional students, (who make up only 7% of the student population). The success level at Shepparton was also below the state and national average, indicating a need to consider additional study support initiatives for these students.





	Bund.	Bend.	AW	Shep.	Mil. d.	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	16.3	79.2	87.2	86.3	91.2	35.0	18.78	19.08
Participation (%)	16.7	82.1	86.9	93.1	93.4	33.6	17.55	18.09
Retention (ratio)	1.05	1.01	1.11	0.97	1.07	1.03	0.99*	0.97*
Success (ratio)	1.04	0.99	1.09	0.92	1.00	1.03	1.02	0.99

Regional student no's

Access	822	1165	376	132	124	2723
Participation	2492	3198	820	335	312	7423

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

Students from Remote Areas 2008 All Campuses

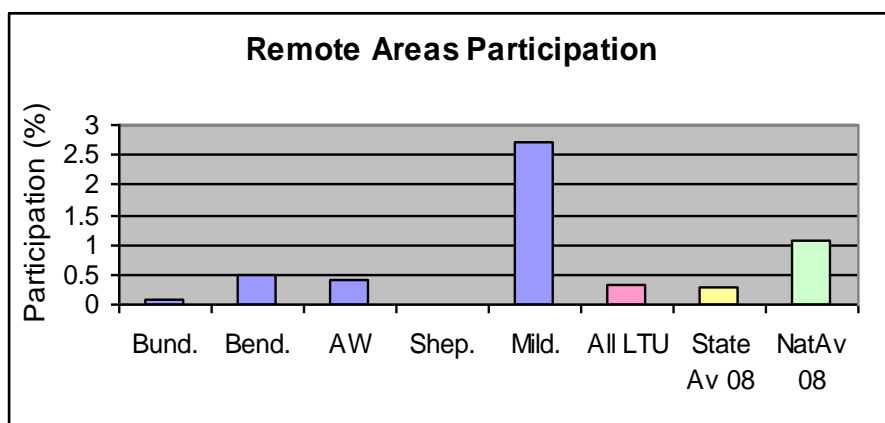
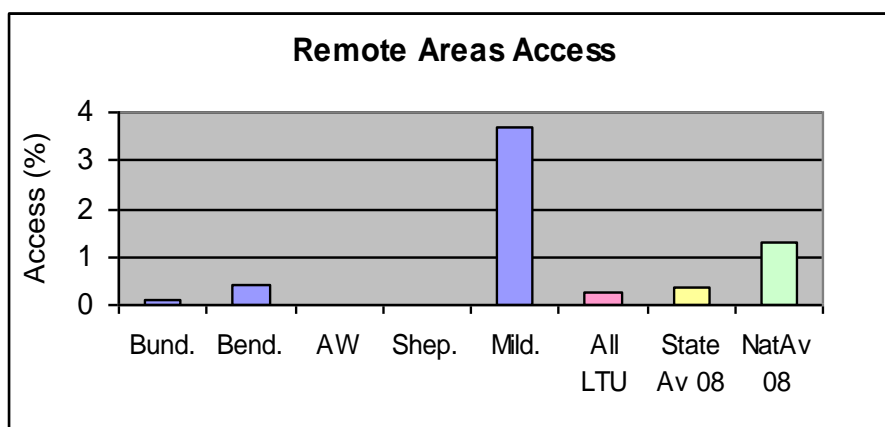
The state averages for access and participation for this student group are low, reflecting the fact that Victoria has less areas designated as 'remote' than the other states.

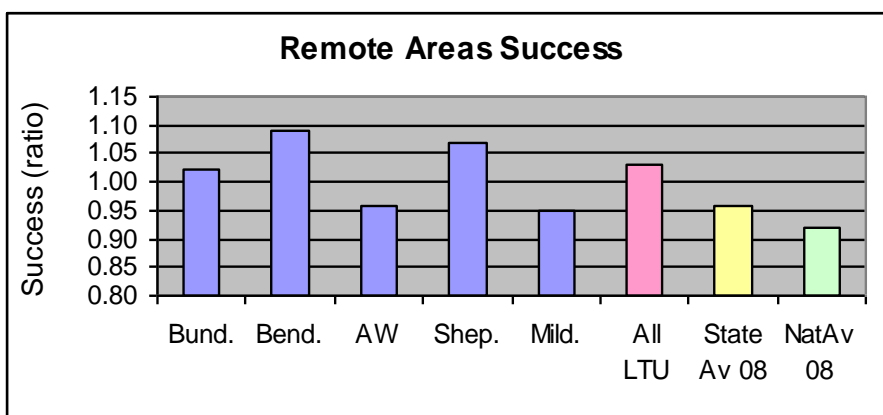
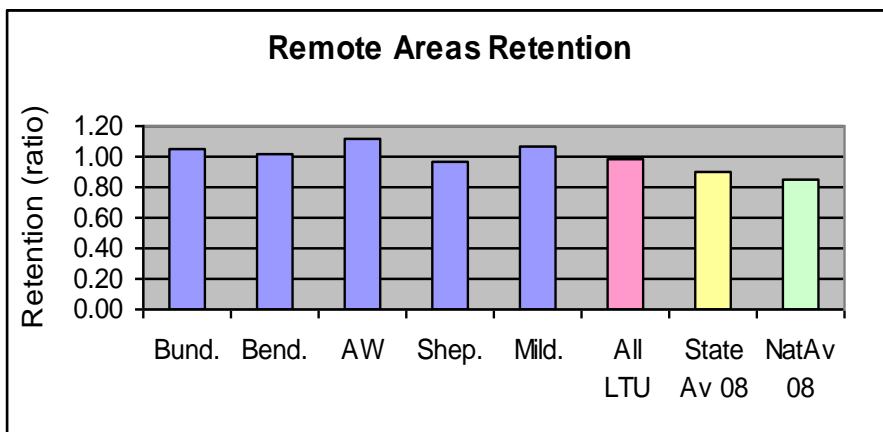
In 2008 there were 0.27% (22) of commencing students and 0.34% (77) of all students at La Trobe University from remote areas.

No students from remote areas commenced studying at Albury Wodonga or Shepparton in 2008. The percentages of commencing and all students from remote areas were very low at Bundoora campus, but above the state average at Bendigo and Mildura. The remote area student enrolment at Mildura was more than twice the national average.

The retention ratio indicates that students from remote areas were more likely to persevere in their studies than other students at all campuses except Shepparton and Bundoora, however retention levels were still well above the sector averages.

The success ratio indicates that students from remote areas studying at Bundoora, Bendigo and Shepparton were more likely to succeed in their studies than other students. At Albury Wodonga and Mildura these students were less likely to succeed than other students, however success levels were around or above sector averages.





	Bund.	Bend.	AW	Shep.	Mild.	All LTU	State Av 08	Nat. Av 08
Access (%)	0.1	0.4	0	0	3.7	0.3	0.34	1.28
Participation (%)	0.1	0.5	0.4	0	2.7	0.3	0.30	1.08
Retention (ratio)	0.93	1.22	1.28	N/A**	1.20	0.99	0.90*	0.85*
Success (ratio)	1.02	1.09	0.96	N/A**	0.95	1.03	0.96	0.92

Remote student no's

Access	7	6	0	0	5	22
Participation	22	19	4	0	9	77

* 2007 retention data for state and national average. 2008 retention data unavailable.

** Not applicable as no enrolments.

Gender and Field of Education 2008

The table below shows commencing and total enrolments by fields of education where one gender has less than 25% enrolments.

Women are under-represented in the field of Information Technology at La Trobe and nationally. The national participation rate of women in 2008 was 19.3%, indicating La Trobe (15.4%) is well below the national rate for female enrolments in this field.

Women are also under-represented in the field of Engineering at La Trobe and nationally. The national participation rate of women in 2008 was 15.8%, indicating La Trobe (8.5%) is only attracting women to this field at around half the national rate. The Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering has attempted to address these low rates of enrolment through outreach programs and collaborations with high schools.

Men are under-represented in the Health Sciences at La Trobe. The national participation rate for men in Health Sciences was 27.1% in 2008, indicating La Trobe (18.5%) is well below the national rate for men in this field.

Field of Education	Access %		Student No.	Participation %		Student No.
	Females	Males		Females	Males	
Information Technology	13.5		17	15.4		59
Engineering & related tech.	4.2		5	8.5		33
Health		19.2	415		18.5	1052

Appendix 1: Definitions of Equity Groups

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) monitors equity measures for the following groups identified as being historically disadvantaged in relation to higher education:

People from low socio-economic status backgrounds (low SES)

Higher education students from low socio-economic status backgrounds (low SES) are defined as those whose permanent home-address postcodes are within the lowest 25% of postcodes in Australia, measured according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) 2006. The use of postcode data as the sole indicator of SES status is currently under review.

People from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB)

Non-English speaking backgrounds students are defined as those domestic students who arrived in Australia within the previous ten years, and speak a language other than English at home.

People with disabilities

Higher Education students with disabilities are defined as those who answered 'yes' on student enrolment forms to the question 'Do you have a disability, impairment or long term medical condition which may affect your studies?' It is important to note that there may in fact be more students with a disability at La Trobe University than are indicated by this measure. There are students who do not wish to identify because of the negative stigma associated with disability.

People from regional areas

Higher education students from regional areas are defined according to the McEETYA postcode concordance file 2006.

People from remote areas

Higher education students from remote areas are defined according to the McEETYA postcode concordance file 2006.

Gender inequality

DEEWR requires universities to monitor and report on fields of education where there appears to be a gender inequality or imbalance. In previous years women in the non-traditional fields of information technology, and engineering, and women in higher degrees, have been monitored at La Trobe. Women in higher degrees have now surpassed 50% of enrolments and are no longer monitored. This year's report includes some details of males enrolled in Health Sciences. All areas of study will continue to be monitored for gender inequality by the Equality and Diversity Centre and any other fields of education where enrolments for one gender fall below 25% will be reported in future years.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Those who answered 'yes' to the question 'Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander' on enrolment forms. Please note that at La Trobe University this area is monitored separately by the Director of Indigenous Education, and is not included in this report.

Appendix 2: Higher Education Equity Support Grants (HEESP) 2008

Key Initiative Title	Brief description	Outcomes
Transition and student engagement at regional campuses	Bendigo, Mildura and Shepparton campuses all used HEESP funds to provide comprehensive orientation and transition programs, which included both academic skill building sessions, and programs to facilitate friendships between students and a 'sense of belonging' at university.	Campus managers advised that the pilot programs were very successful at increasing student engagement. Managers will seek to include this activity in recurrent funding in future years.
Development of a Peer Mentoring Toolkit	Mentoring programs have become a popular way of assisting student's transition to university. The toolkit was developed to provide guidelines and information to mentors and mentees.	The toolkit was developed, launched and multiple copies produced and distributed around the university. One Faculty has already used the toolkit as part of a training program for 2 nd year students mentoring 1 st year students. Evaluation will occur in 2009.
An investigation of the needs of NESB students	Two research projects were undertaken – one at the large urban campus and one at a regional campus.	The projects identified a number of similar areas of difficulty experienced by these students, regardless of the campus setting. The recommendations from the research will be considered in 2009.
Subsidised bus transport	Eighteen rural high schools received subsidies to attend activities at one urban and two regional campuses.	Campus staff reported that bus subsidies were an effective way to encourage attendance at on-campus activities. Campus managers will seek to include this activity in recurrent funding in future years, so the pilot has been successful.
Bridging Program for Mature Age students at Mildura	This program sought to provide academic skill building sessions for mature aged prospective students.	The evaluation showed a very high degree of satisfaction with the program, and resulted in 33 enrolments ie 91% of participants enrolled in a university program in 2009.
Prevention of sexual violence among university students	The development of a comprehensive training kit, based on the materials and promotion strategies developed in a previous project funded by VicHealth and run by the University Counselling Service.	This project has gained strong momentum and student commitment. A number of student groups have expressed interest in using the program and its initial implementation period has been extended. Evaluation will occur in 2009.
Improving scientific writing skills of students from a non-	The development of an integrated program of training, formative and summative assessment tasks which teach and build the skills of scientific	The student perception of knowing what was expected, receiving helpful feedback, integration across units and

Key Initiative Title	Brief description	Outcomes
English speaking background in First Year Biology.	writing throughout First Year.	usefulness of the resources all improved markedly. Students found the Communication Skills Manual particularly helpful.
Health and wellness in the context of sexuality and relationships	The program was for rural and NESB students living in on-campus accommodation, and aimed to assist their understanding of sexuality, and sexual health and safety. The program was designed on the premise that young adults in transition to an environment of personal freedom often lack the knowledge and skills to conduct themselves in an appropriate and safe manner.	The evaluation of the program indicated participants found the information on sexual matters and body image helpful, and that their communication skills and self image had improved. However the educational sessions only attracted a small number of participants, and all were women.
e-Mentoring to inspire female secondary students to proceed to study and careers in Information Technology & Engineering.	Female university students and alumni working in Information Technology and Electronic Engineering, agreed to serve as mentors for female secondary school students in years 10, 11 & 12.	This project was unsuccessful due to the extremely low level of interest from secondary schools approached by the Project Officer.