



Equity and Access

**Student Equity
at
La Trobe University
2001-2006**

Mildura Campus

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Executive Summary

Student Equity Achievements at La Trobe

Statistical analysis of student equity group data provides a positive picture overall for La Trobe University's performance over the period 2002 – 2006, relative to other universities in the sector. Particularly notable are the recruitment, retention and success levels for students from low SES backgrounds and students from rural areas. Recruitment and success levels for students with a disability are also notable.

Factors contributing to these positive trends include: a wide range of scholarships; a wide range of student outreach programs; a recycled computer scheme; a strong level of support for students with a disability; academic support via the Language and Academic Skills units; and strategies within the University's Learning and Teaching Plan that address the diversity of the La Trobe student population.

Comparative Data by Campus

A document has been compiled which compares and analyses student equity group performance at each La Trobe University campus in 2006. The campus comparative analysis has not been included in this document, however it is available upon request from the Equity and Access Unit. A brief overview of comparative data is contained at Appendix 2. Appendix 5 contains Australian Bureau of Statistics information relating to the community profiles in the regions where the regional campuses are located. Comparative data for the DEST equity groups is not available.

Comparison with other Australian Universities

A comparison of La Trobe University with the state and national averages for student equity groups at all Australian universities (Appendix 2) indicates that La Trobe University is performing exceedingly well compared to other universities in all areas except for access and participation levels for NESB students and isolated students. However La Trobe University remains above the state average for students from isolated areas.

Benchmark Targets

To assist higher education institutions to achieve measurable improvements in student equity DEST has established certain benchmarks. The achievement of these benchmarks would mean that the profile of student cohorts would resemble the representation of equity groups within the wider community. For instance in the wider community the proportion of people from rural areas is 24.3%, this is therefore the level of participation sought from this equity group at La Trobe University.

2006 Comparison with Benchmark Targets

The examination of student equity data for the whole of La Trobe University shows that in keeping with its focus on regional areas the University maintains an excellent

record in providing higher education opportunities to students from rural areas. La Trobe University's 2006 performance was well above the target for attracting commencing and re-enrolling rural students. These students also achieved higher retention and success rates than other students within the University.

The University also exceeded its targets for students with disabilities who commenced or re-enrolled in 2006. While these students achieved good levels of retention and success in 2006, they were not quite as high as that of all students enrolled at the University. This indicates the need for Faculties to consider additional study support initiatives to assist students with disabilities.

In 2006 retention levels were very strong across all groups, indicating that equity group students are just as likely, or more likely, than the general student population to persevere with their studies. The only exceptions were students with disabilities and students from isolated areas, and in both these cases the retention rate was only slightly less than the general student population.

The data for women in higher degrees is also pleasing, indicating that these students are just as likely as the general student population to complete their higher degrees.

However, although La Trobe University compares very favourably with other universities' efforts for student equity groups, the targets set in line with representation of equity group members in the wider community are still not being reached for some student cohorts.

The analysis for the following three equity groups indicate that there is a need for additional attention to improve the overall access and success of these students.

Students from Low Socio Economic Background (Low SES)

There has been a downward trend over five years in commencements and re-enrolments for this cohort of students. This indicates a need for a targeted outreach program, and the Schools Access La Trobe (SaLT) program due to commence in 2007 will address this need. The retention rate for these students has been consistently equal to, or above, that of all La Trobe students for the past five years, and their success rates have been only slightly below those for all La Trobe students.

Students from Non-English Speaking Background (NESB)

Although there has been a steady increase access and retention of students from a non-English speaking background, the University remains below both the sector averages and the benchmark target. Research is currently being undertaken to ascertain reasons why this group is under represented and the strategies required to improve participation, retention and success rates.

It must also be noted that the DEST 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 DEST definition for NESB students.

Students from Isolated Areas

The data shows that access, participation, and success rates of this group are above the Victorian Universities average. Success rates for this group have been above both the state and national average for every year of the six year period. However, retention rates remain below the state average, and access and participation levels remain below the national average.

There are a number of factors which may contribute to the lower enrolment levels. The current drought which has affected Victoria for several years is no doubt a major factor. Further, research undertaken by Mission Australia indicates that completion rates at secondary school for both female and male students are considerably lower in isolated areas than metropolitan students. This is particularly so for male students.¹ A research project investigating how to improve access to University for state secondary school equity groups in the Bendigo region is almost finalised. This report will provide the Equity and Access Unit with information about what needs to be addressed to improve not only the access of isolated students but also rural students.

Mildura Campus Summary

The analysis of Mildura Campus student equity data shows high numbers of enrolments for students from rural and isolated areas, and for students from low SES background, indicating that the local community is well served by the location of the University. The analysis also shows that student equity group performance at Mildura campus is above the state average across almost all measures. This is a commendable result for the campus.

Priority Areas for 2007

It is noted from the analysis that areas the Campus may need to address in order to achieve equitable outcomes include:

- Access and success rates for students with a disability, indicating the need to consider outreach strategies and study support initiatives for this group of students;
- Access and participation rates for students with a non-English speaking background, indicating a need to further investigate the potential NESB student population in the catchment area, and possibly consider outreach strategies;
- Success rates for students from isolated areas, indicating a need to consider additional study support initiatives for this group of students.

¹ Mission Australia (2006). Rural and Regional Australia: Change, Challenge and Capacity.

Student Equity Profile 2001-2006

Background

In its commitment to student equity, 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 something equally important: 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.

In addition, studying in an environment which represents the broader Victorian community exposes students to a more accurate view of the world, encourages the development and appreciation of diversity, and equips students to deal with their futures in an increasingly diverse world. Equity in tertiary education is thus not only a benefit to students in the defined equity groups, but to the University as a whole.

The Department of Education, Science and Training states 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.*²

To facilitate equity in higher education, DEST provides additional funding support to universities in the form of the Higher Education Equity Support Program, the Higher Education Disability Support Program, and Commonwealth Learning Scholarships. In order to continue to receive funding, each institution must provide a comprehensive annual statement to DEST which details activities undertaken to assist disadvantaged students.

It should be noted that DEST collect and analyse data for all Australian Universities, but will not make this data available until later in the year. Universities have therefore been instructed to prepare their Equity Update from statistics collected within the University. Accordingly the following report has been collated from data collected by the Management Information Unit.

Further information, including equity data for other faculties, is available by request from the Acting Manager, Equity and Access Unit. The Equity and Access Unit would welcome any feedback as to the effectiveness of the current format.

²(http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/programmes_funding/programme_categories/special_needs_disadvantage/default.htm).

Definitions of Equity Groups

DEST 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' Index of Education and Occupation.

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.

People from rural areas

Higher education students from rural backgrounds are defined according to the 1992 classification of postcodes by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy. Rural students are those whose permanent home address is not in an urban area, defined as a city of greater than 100,000 people. (For the purposes of definition Darwin and Townsville are also classified as urban.)

People from isolated areas

Isolation is also measured by the 1992 classification of postcodes by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy. It is defined according to an index of remoteness which takes into account population density and distance from the nearest provincial city (population 25,000 or more).

Non-traditional gender areas

DEST 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 architecture and engineering, and women in higher degrees, have been monitored at La Trobe. As can be seen in the charts included in this year's Profile, participation of women in architecture has improved significantly and is no longer of concern as an equity issue at La Trobe. However, all areas of study will continue to be monitored by the Equity and Access Unit and any issues of concern will be reported in future.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Those who answered 'yes' to the question 'Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander' on enrolment forms. Note that at La Trobe University this area is monitored separately by the Director of Indigenous Education, and is thus not included in this Profile. It is therefore not necessary for Faculties to report to the Equity and Access Unit on programs for this equity group.

Definitions of Equity Indicators

Rate

'Rates' are the proportion of students in the relevant cohort who belong to the named equity group, expressed as a percentage.

Ratio

Ratios in this report are rates divided by a reference value. This measure makes a comparison between the equity group and the wider student population. A ratio of 1.00 indicates an equitable performance, while ratios of less than 1.00 indicate less than equitable performance.

Target

In order to evaluate equity indicators, it is helpful to compare them against a benchmark. 'Targets' have therefore been allocated to each equity measure. These targets are the rates or ratios which would demonstrate a completely equitable performance. For indicators measured as rates (access and participation), the target is for the representation of the equity group at the University to equal the representation of that group in the general state population. For indicators measured as ratios (low SES participation, retention and success), the target is 1.00.

In line with DEST practice, the percentages used to set targets are those collected by the ABS in the 2001 Census and are the percentage of the equity group's share of the general state population aged between 15 and 64. The following table shows each equity group's presence in the general state population according to this data.

Equity Group	% of state population
Low SES	25
People with Disabilities	4.0
Non-English Speaking Background	4.8
Rural	24.3
Isolated	4.5
Women	50

Note that since low SES is defined as the lowest quartile of the population, low SES students will be 25% of the population by definition. However for this measure DEST use the lowest quartile of the nation, not the state, so the actual representation of people of low SES in Victoria may be slightly different. 25% remains a reasonable target for this group.

Access

Access is a measure of whether students from particular equity groups are able to gain entry into university study. The **access rates** reported here show the percentage of the students **commencing** study at La Trobe University who belong to the named equity group.

If access were completely equitable, students from the particular equity group would be entering study at the same rate as the rest of the population. Hence the **access target** is for the access rate to equal the percentage of people in the general population of Victoria who belong to the relevant equity group. These percentages are shown in the table above.

Participation

Participation is a measure of whether students from particular equity groups are studying at university. The **participation rate** is the percentage of the students **enrolled** at La Trobe University who belong to the named equity group. (It differs from the access rate in that it takes into account all students, not only those in the first year of their course).

If participation in study at La Trobe were completely equitable, students from each equity group would be participating in study at the same rate as the population in general. Hence, the **participation target** is for the participation rate to equal the percentage of people belonging to that group found in the general population of Victoria. These percentages are shown in the table above.

Note that in line with DEST practice, participation for low SES students is expressed not as a percentage but as a **ratio** between students from low SES backgrounds and students from high SES backgrounds. The target for this ratio is 1.00, i.e. ideally low SES and high SES students would participate equally in La Trobe University study.

Retention

Retention is a measure of whether students who commence study at La Trobe University continue their course of study. An **apparent retention rate** is calculated by comparing the number of students re-enrolling in a given year with the number of students who were enrolled in the previous year (not counting those who completed their course). It is only an apparent rate in that it does not include students who deferred their course of study or transferred to another university. A retention rate of 1.0 would mean that all the students who were enrolled the previous year, and had not completed their course, re-enrolled to continue their study.

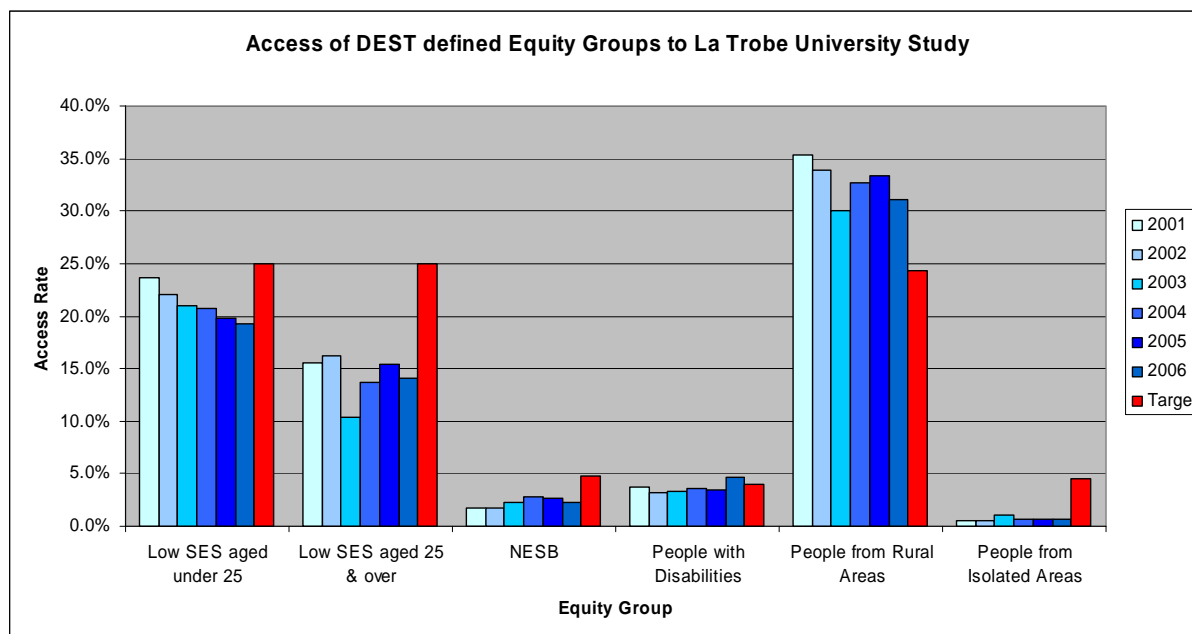
The **retention indicators** shown in the charts below are **ratios** between the retention rate of the students in that equity group, and the retention rate of all La Trobe students. The target is a retention indicator of 1.0 which implies that students in the equity group are continuing their studies at the same rate as other students.

Success

Success is a measure of whether students are passing in their course of study. A **success rate** is the proportion of units a student passed compared to the number of units undertaken. The **success indicators** shown in the charts below are **ratios** between the success rates of students in the named equity group, and all other La Trobe students. The target success indicator is 1.0, which would show that students in the equity group are passing at the same rate as other students.

La Trobe University Equity Profile

Access



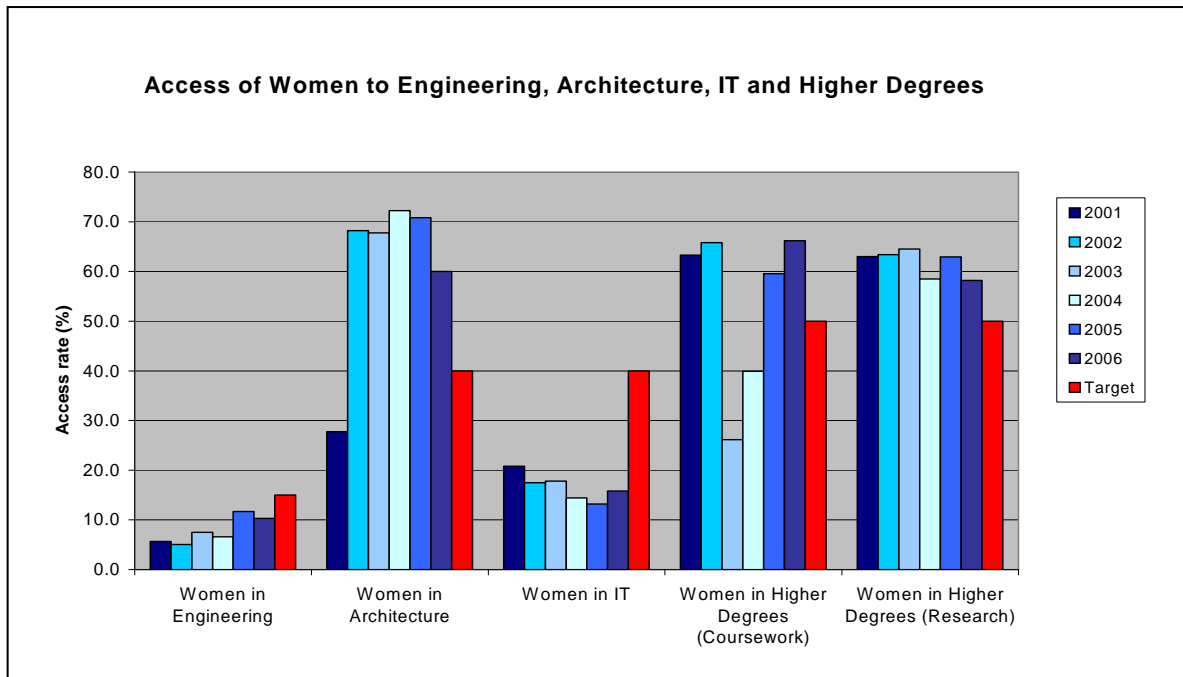
*For the data upon which these charts are based refer to the table at the end of this section.

The **access rate** is the percentage of the students **commencing** at La Trobe University who belong to the named equity group. The **access target** is for this percentage to equal the percentage of people belonging to that group found in the general population of Victoria. When this occurs it indicates that the equity group is not disadvantaged in its access to tertiary education. **In the chart, the target access rate for each equity group is shown by the red column.**

In line with its focus on regional Victoria, La Trobe University shows excellent access rates for people in rural areas, with a higher representation of commencing students from a rural background than are found in the general population. In 2006 La Trobe also exceeded for the first time the target level for students with disabilities.

Access rates for Low SES students and NESB students remain significant areas of concern. This indicates a need for university-wide outreach strategies to encourage more students from these groups to enrol at the University.

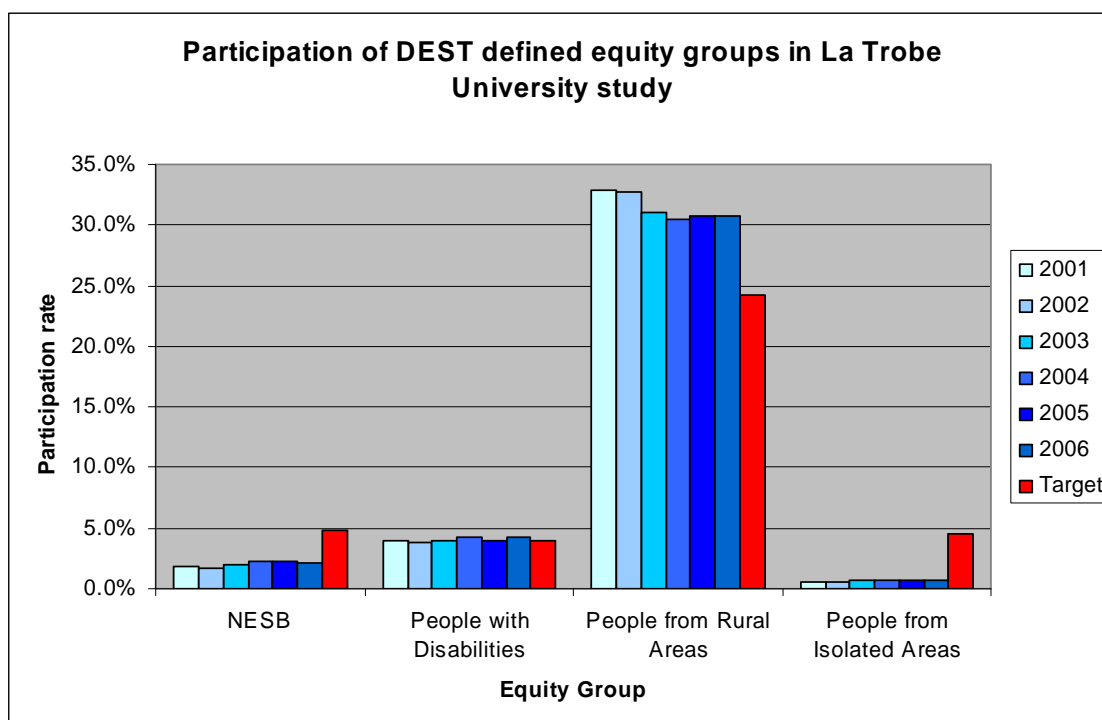
The access rate for students from isolated areas remains very low for most campuses, which have a catchment area of 'rural' rather than 'isolated' locations. However the Mildura campus access rate is well above target, reflecting the more isolated catchment area of this campus.



Access of women in Non Traditional Areas of Study

Access for women in the non-traditional areas of Engineering and Information Technology are still well below target. There has been a downturn in access for women in architecture in 2006 compared with previous years, however the level remains well above target. Access to coursework higher degrees has climbed well above target in the past two years. Access to higher degrees, while down from 2005 levels, still remains well above target. All Faculties are commended for their efforts in this respect.

Participation

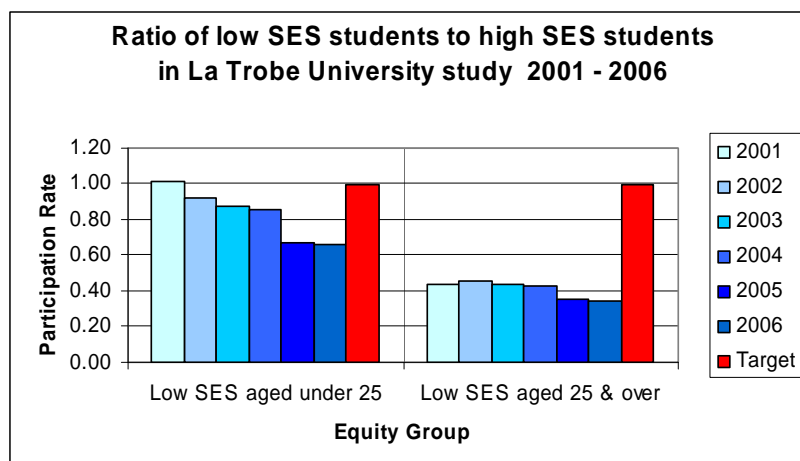


The **participation rate** is the percentage of the students **enrolled** at La Trobe University who belong to the named equity group. (It differs from the access rate in that it takes into account all students, not only those in the first year of their course). The **participation target** is for the percentage to equal the percentage of people belonging to that group found in the general population of Victoria. When this occurs it shows that the equity group is no longer under represented in their participation in tertiary education. **In the chart, the target participation rate for each equity group is shown by the red column.**

It can be seen that again, La Trobe is exceeding participation targets for rural students and students with disabilities. NESB students and students from isolated areas remain less well represented at La Trobe than they are in the general population. There have been no major changes in these trends since 2001.

However, as with access considerations for students from isolated areas, the participation level for these students at Mildura campus is well above target.

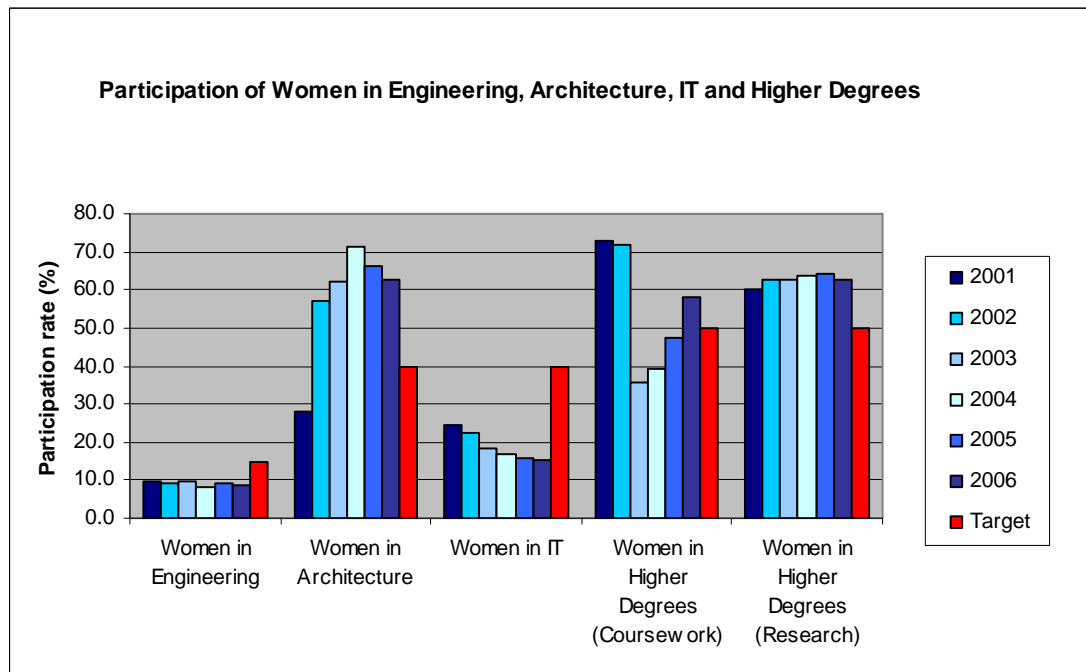
Low SES participation



In line with DEST practice, the participation rate for low SES background students is given not as a percentage but as a ratio between students from low SES backgrounds and students from high SES backgrounds. For example, for students aged under 25 the 2006 ratio of 0.66 means that there are 0.66 low SES students for every one high SES student aged under 25 enrolled at La Trobe. The target for this ratio is 1.00, i.e. students from low and high socio-economic backgrounds should participate equally at La Trobe University.

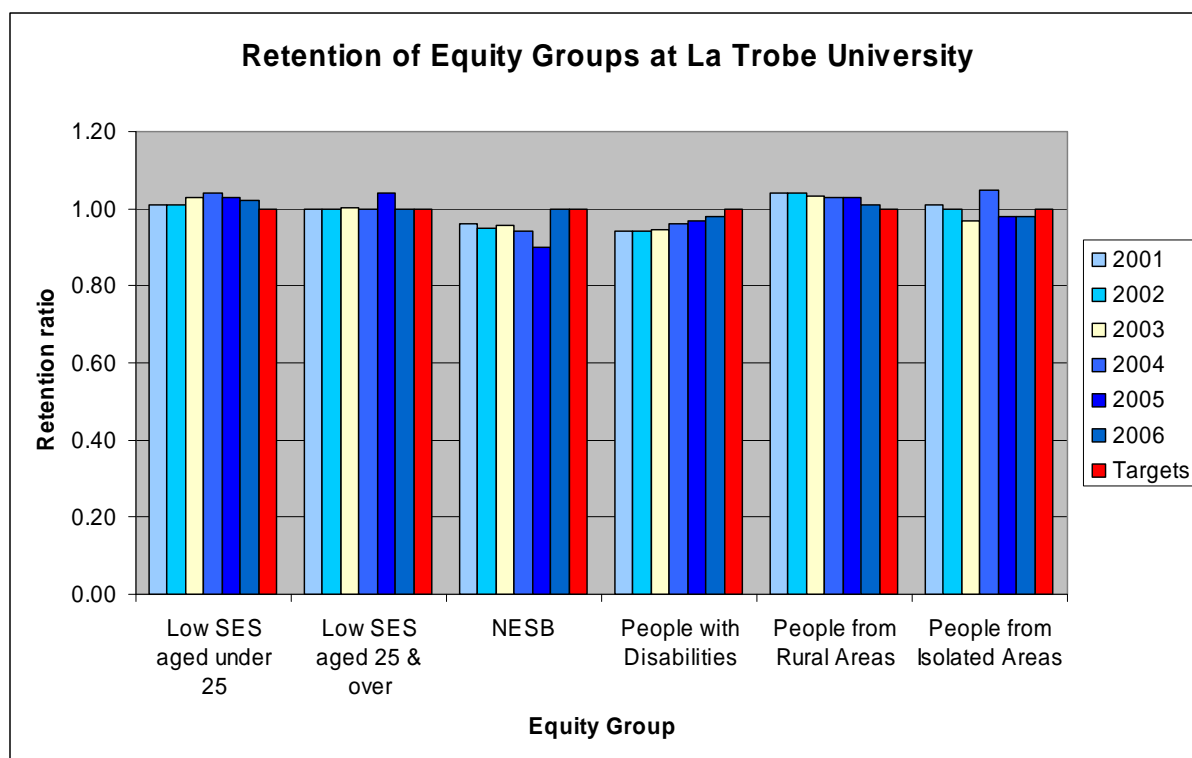
The participation of Low SES students, both under 25 years, and over 25 years, has fallen steadily since 2001. This is a troubling trend which needs urgent attention to reverse. The trend indicates a need for study support initiatives to assist these students in overcoming the challenges of University study.

Participation of women in Non Traditional Areas of Study



Participation of female students in Engineering has been relatively stable since 2001, however this level is well under the target. Participation of female students in Information Technology has decreased considerably since 2001, indicating a strong need for outreach and study support initiatives. Participation by women in architecture has remained well above target for the past five years. Participation by women in coursework higher degrees returned to above target levels in 2006. Participation by women in higher degrees has been consistently above target since 2001. All Faculties are commended for their efforts in this regard.

Retention

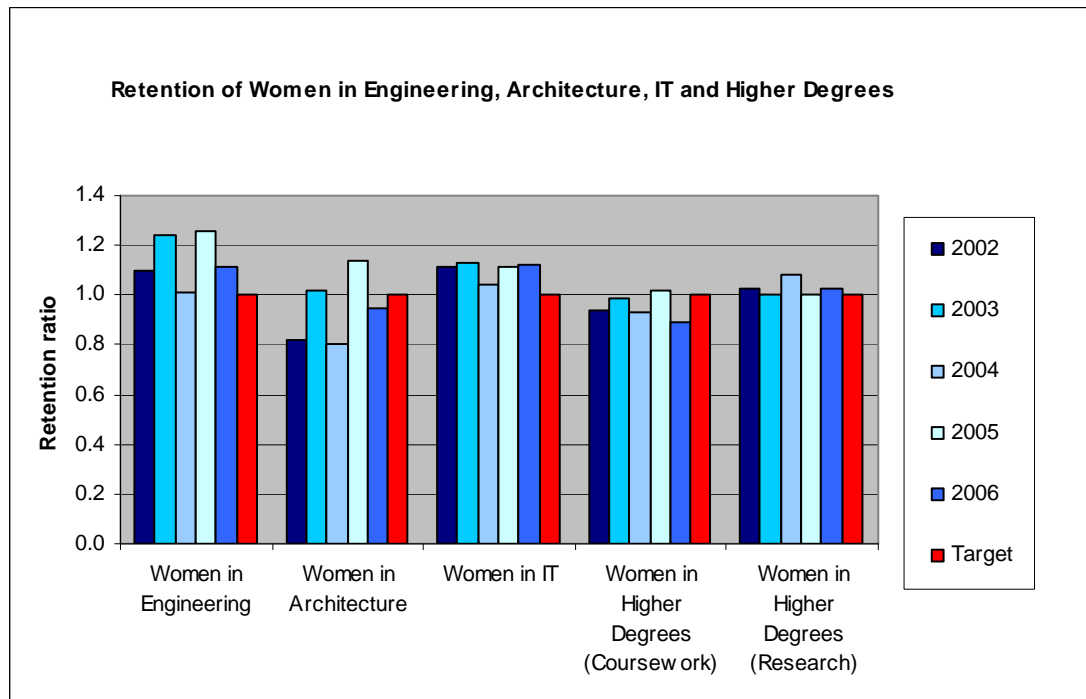


The **retention indicators** shown in the table above are **ratios** between the retention rate of the students in that equity group, and the retention rate of all La Trobe students. The target is a retention indicator of 1.00 which implies that students in the equity group are continuing their studies at the same rate as other students.

The chart indicates that students from low SES, and rural areas, are as likely, or more likely, than the general student population to stay in their study programs. Students with disabilities have gradually improved retention levels and are now only slightly less likely than the general student population to stay in their programs of study.

NESB students' retention levels improved in 2006, reversing a previous downward trend. In 2006 NESB students were as likely as any other La Trobe student to persevere with their studies. Retention levels for students from isolated areas have been relatively stable over the past 6 years, and these students remain slightly less likely than the general student population to persevere with their studies.

Retention of Women in Non Traditional Areas of Study



*Retention data 2001 not available by fields of education

Retention levels for women in engineering have been consistently above target for the past five years, indicating that these students are more likely than the general student population to persist with their studies.

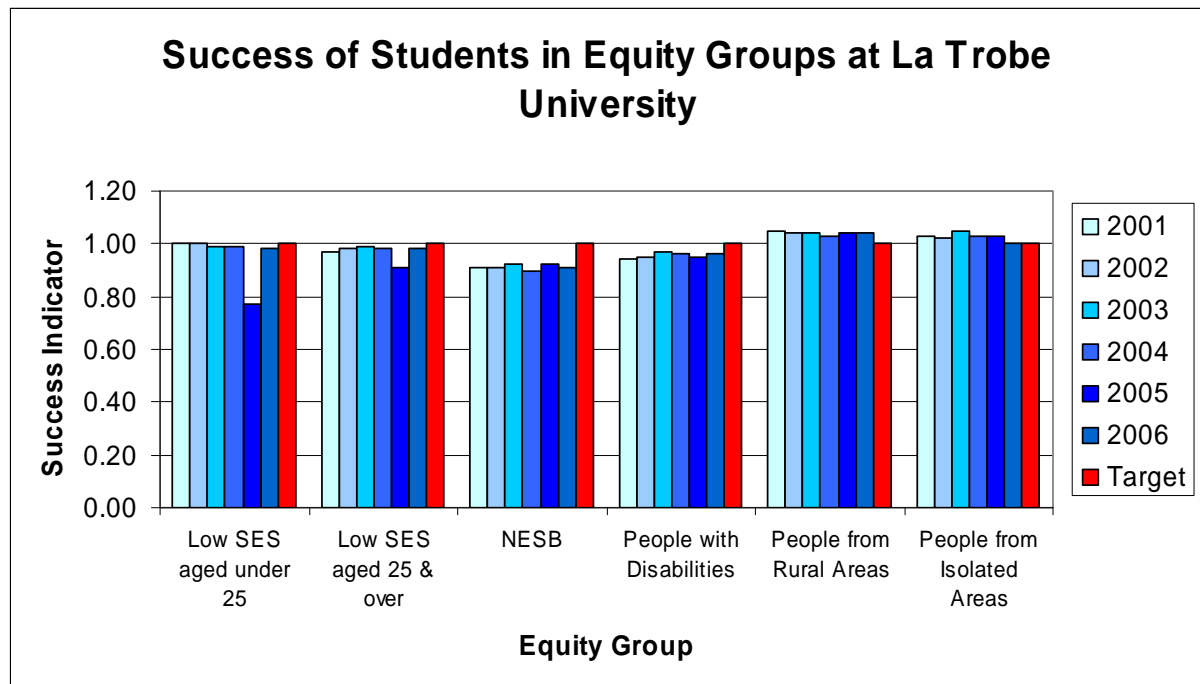
Retention levels for women in architecture declined in 2006 from above target level in 2005. In 2006 these students were slightly less likely than the general student population to persist with their studies, indicating a need to consider study support initiatives for this group of students.

Retention levels for women in Information Technology have been consistently above target for the past five years, indicating that these students are more likely than the general student population to persist with their studies.

Retention levels for women in coursework higher degrees have declined in 2006, and have been below target for four of the past five years, indicating that these students are less likely than the general student population to persist with their studies. This also indicates a need to consider additional study support initiatives for this group of students.

Retention levels for women in higher degrees by research have been consistently at or above target for the past five years, indicating that these students are just as likely, or more likely, than the general student population to persist with their studies.

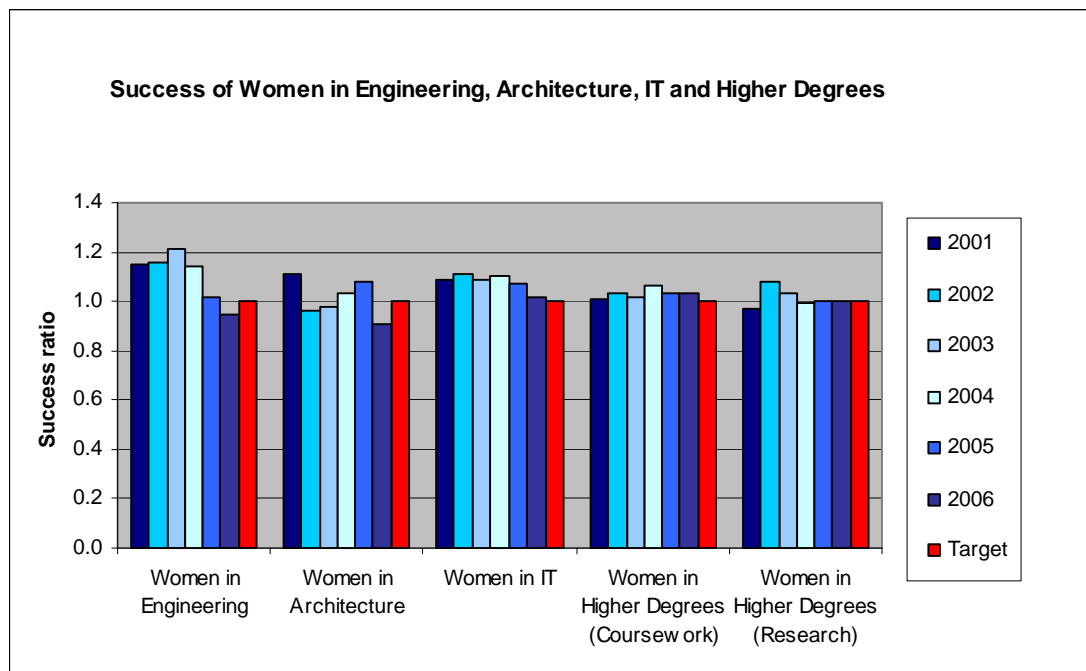
Success



Success is a measure of whether students are passing in their course of study. A **success rate** is the proportion of units a student passed compared to the number of units undertaken. The **success indicators** shown in the chart are **ratios** between the success rates of students in the named equity group, and all other La Trobe students. The target success indicator is 1.0, which would show that students in the equity group are passing at the same rate as other students.

It can be seen from the chart that students from rural areas are more successful in their studies than the general student population. The chart also indicates that students from isolated areas are just as successful as those in the general student population. In 2006 students from low SES background succeeded with their studies at almost the same rate as the general student population, after a strong downturn in success in 2005. Students with disabilities and NESB students are not succeeding as well as the general student population and may require additional study support initiatives.

Success of Women in Non Traditional Areas of Study



Success levels for women in engineering have declined over the past four years and in 2006 fell below target, indicating that these students were less likely than the general student population to persist in their studies. This result indicates a need for the Faculty to consider additional study support initiatives to assist these students in persevering with their studies.

Success levels for women in architecture have fallen below target, and are now at their lowest level since 2001. This shows that in 2006 these students were less likely than the general student population to persist with their studies, and indicates a need for the Faculty to consider additional study support initiatives to retain these students.

Success levels for women in Information Technology have declined over the past three years, however they are still on target, indicating that these students are just as likely as the general student population to persist with their studies.

Success levels for women in higher degrees, both coursework and research, have remained stable over the past few years, and indicate that these students are just as likely as the general student population to complete their program of study. Faculties are commended for their efforts in this regard.

Mildura Campus Student Equity Profile

Summary

The analysis of Mildura Campus student equity data shows high numbers of enrolments for students from rural and isolated areas, and for students from low SES background, indicating that the local community is well served by the location of the University. The analysis also shows that student equity group performance at Mildura campus is above the state average across almost all measures. This is a commendable result for the campus.

Priority Areas for 2007

It is noted from the analysis that areas the Campus may need to address in order to achieve equitable outcomes include:

- Access and success rates for students with a disability, indicating the need to consider outreach strategies and study support initiatives for this group of students;
- Access and participation rates for students with a non-English speaking background, indicating a need to further investigate the potential NESB student population in the catchment area, and possibly consider outreach strategies;
- Success rates for students from isolated areas, indicating a need to consider additional study support initiatives for this group of students.

Variations in the Data

This year the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) has requested that all equity reports use calendar years when assessing student data. Previously a March census date was used, so all statistical data from 2001 has now been recalculated using calendar year data. Therefore, the reader may notice some slight variations on data provided in previous yearly reports.

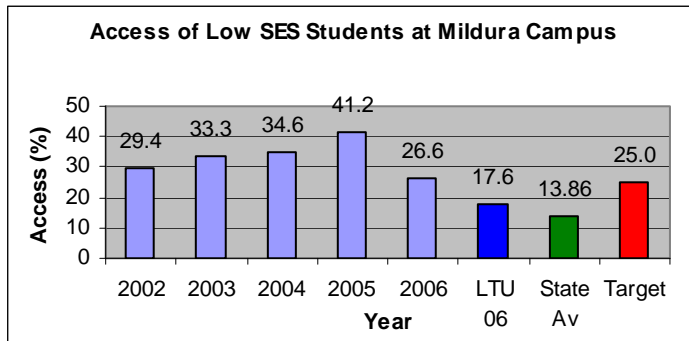
Equity Support Program Grants 2007

Attention is drawn to the fact that the Department of Education, Science and Training offers Higher Education Equity Support Program (HEESP) Grants for the development of initiatives to improve access, participation, retention and success for DEST defined equity groups. They are available for the pilot or introductory phase of programs which are not part of the normal service provision or mainstream activities of the area/department.

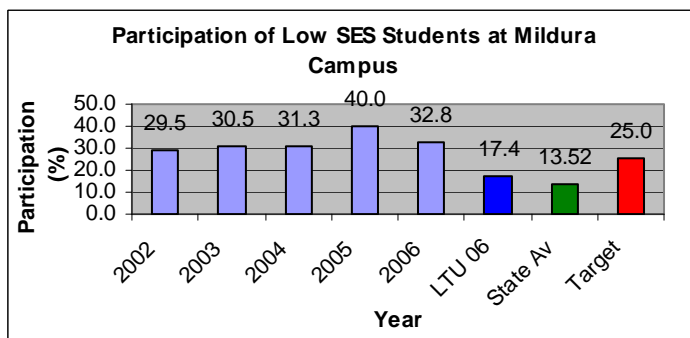
Grants are normally provided for projects that can be completed within a twelve month period, and proposals should be linked to the equity goals of the faculty or non-faculty area. These grants are administered by the Equity and Access Unit and information is usually posted on the Unit's Website and in the University News in August of each year. Further information and examples of previous grants awarded may be found at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/equity/heespfunding.htm>

Assistance can be provided by the Equity and Access Unit on developing programs which may assist in lifting the Campus performance, including programs eligible for HEESP funding. A more detailed description of the Campus performance in relation to each equity group is given below.

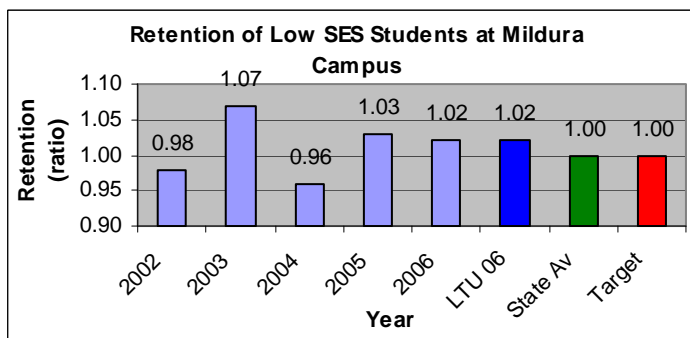
Students from Low Socio Economic Status (Low SES)



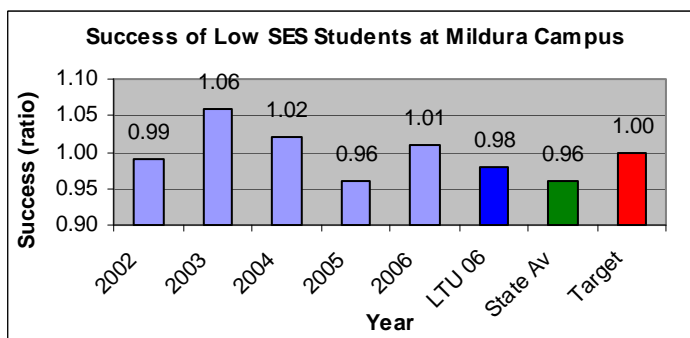
There has been a variable trend in commencing and continuing students from low SES background over the five year period. In 2006 there were 34 students from low SES background who commenced studies, and 104 students from this group enrolled across all Mildura Campus programs.



The proportion of commencing students fell sharply in 2006, but remained above the target, and well above both the state average and the commencement rate for this group across the University.



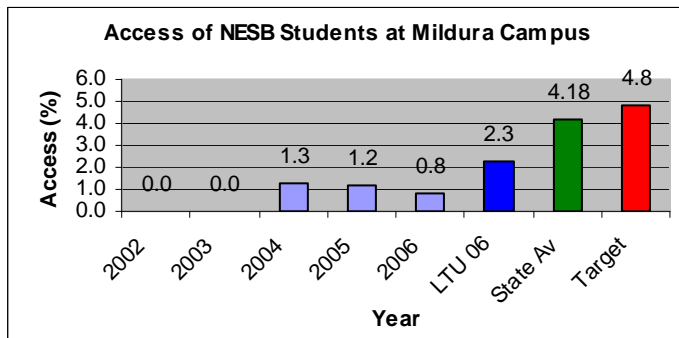
The number of low SES students across all Mildura programs also remained well above target, and well above both the state average and enrolment levels for this group across the University.



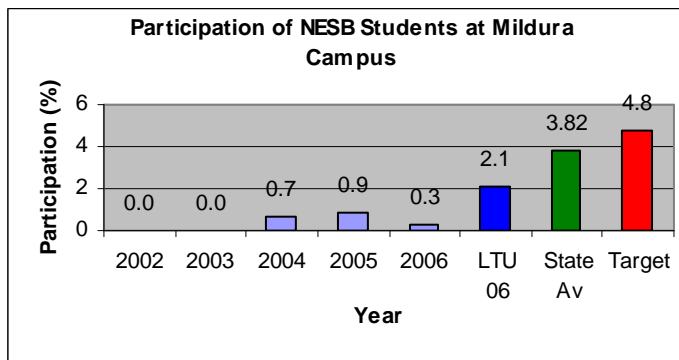
The retention rate has been above target for the past two years, indicating that low SES students were slightly more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. The retention level for low SES students matched that for the group across the University and was slightly above the state average.

Success levels have been mostly above target since 2003, indicating that these students are slightly more likely than other students to succeed in their studies. The success level was also slightly higher than for low SES students across the University, and higher than the state average.

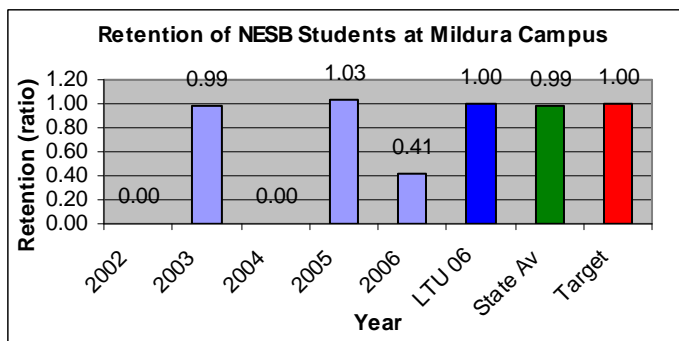
Students from a Non English Speaking (NESB) Background



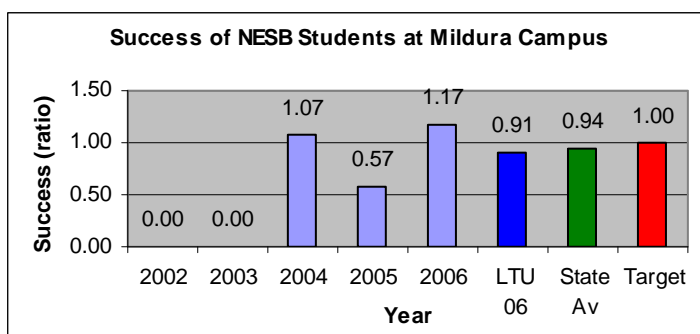
In 2006 there was only one NESB student enrolled at Mildura, and previous years' enrolments were also very low (three in 2005, two in 2004). This indicates a need to determine whether there are sufficient numbers of NESB people in the catchment area to warrant an outreach program for this group of students.



Retention levels for this small group were strong in 2005, but fell sharply in 2006, following a poor success rate in 2005. This indicates the need to consider additional study support initiatives for this group of students.

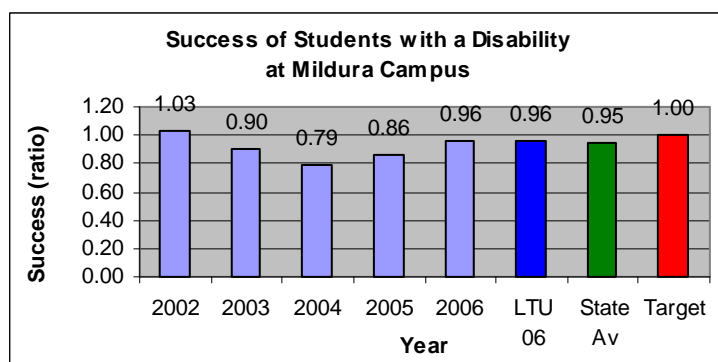
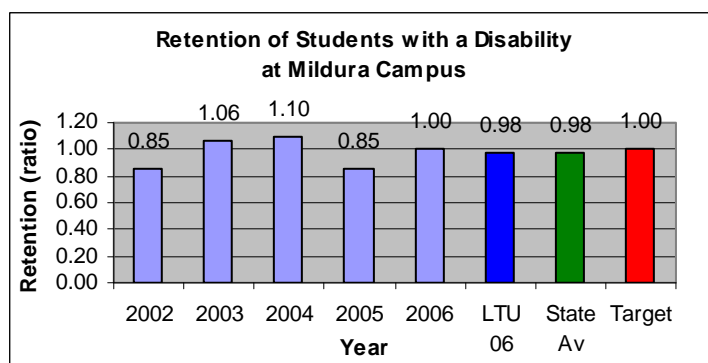
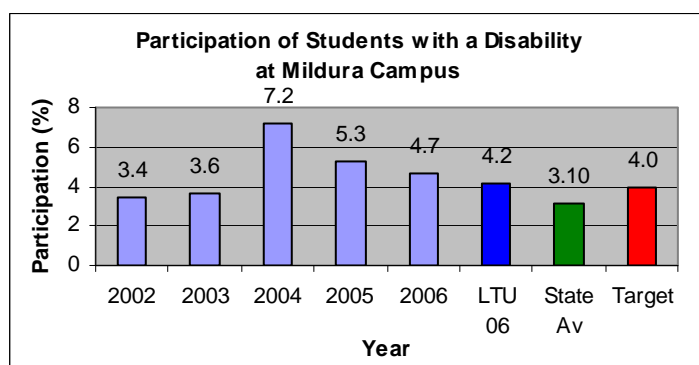
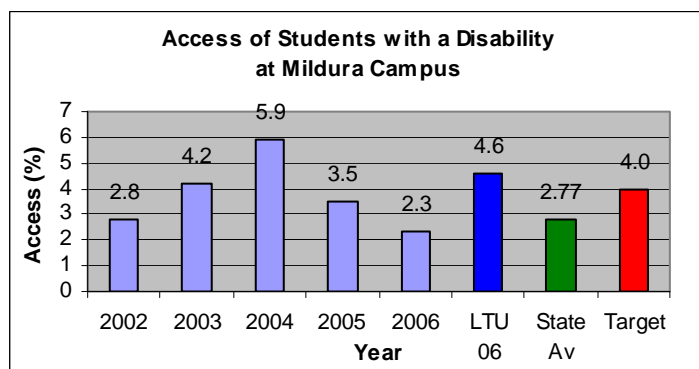


In 2006 the success levels improved and were greater than those for NESB students across the University and the state average. In 2006 these students were more likely than other students to succeed in their studies.



However the low numbers of NESB students at Mildura Campus makes any trends for this group very volatile.

Students with a Disability



There has been a variable pattern of access and participation for students with a disability. For the past two years the number of commencing students has fallen below the target and the state average. It also fell well below the level of access for students with a disability across the University.

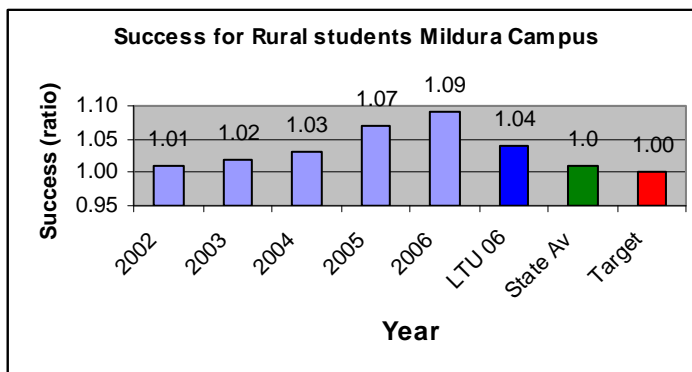
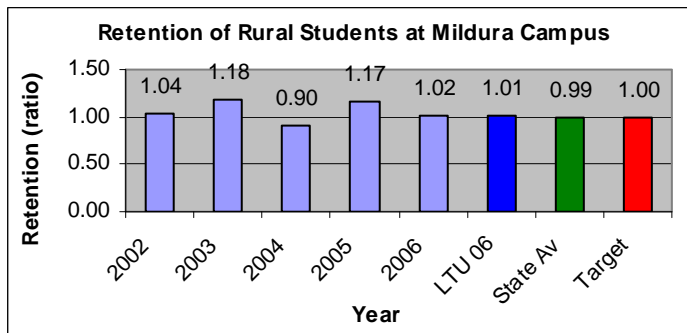
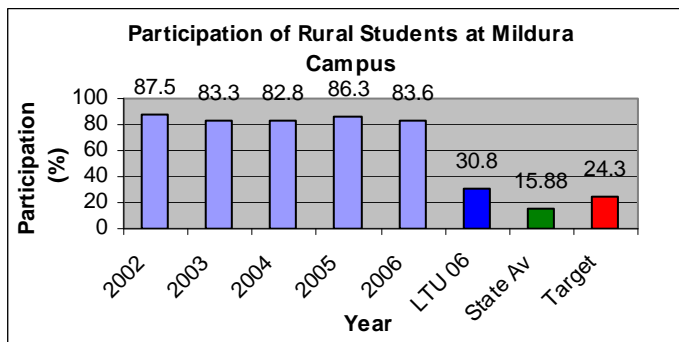
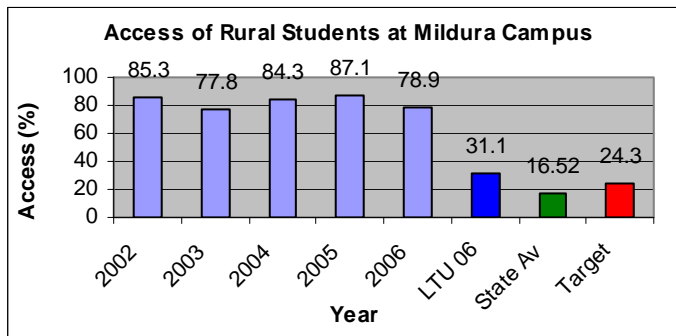
The number of students from this group remains above the target and the state average for enrolments across all Mildura campus programs. It is also just above the level for this group across the University.

In 2006 there were three students with a disability who commenced studies, and 15 students from this group enrolled across all Campus programs.

Retention levels for students with a disability have been strong for three of the past four years, indicating that (except for 2005) these students have been just as likely, or more likely, to persevere with their studies than other students. Retention levels have also been just above the state average.

There has been a varied pattern of success for these students, however in 2006 success levels were equal to the state average and to the success levels for this group across the University. Nevertheless, success levels for these students have been below those of other students since 2003, indicating a need to consider further study support initiatives for this group.

Students from Rural Areas

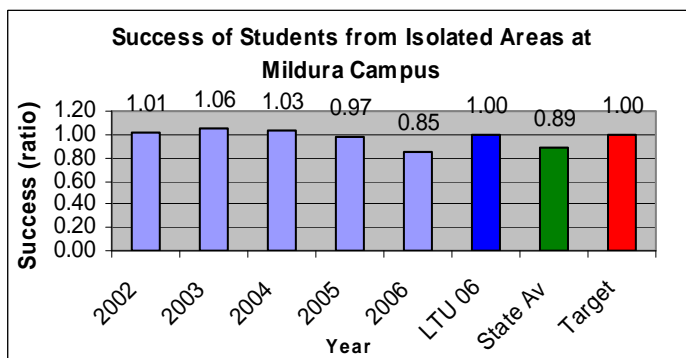
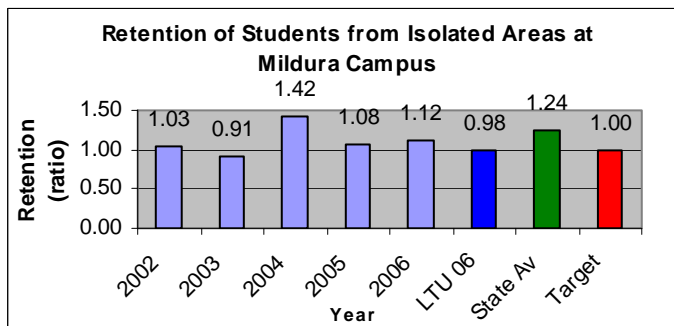
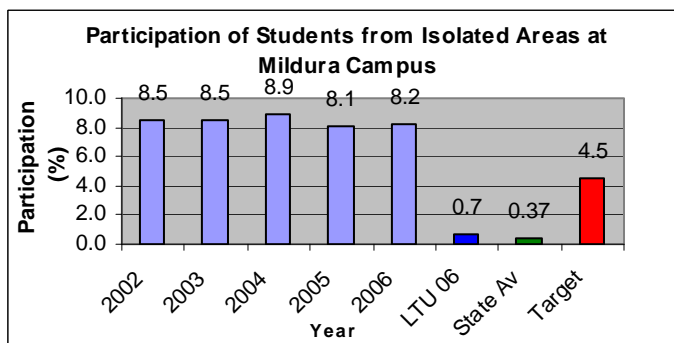
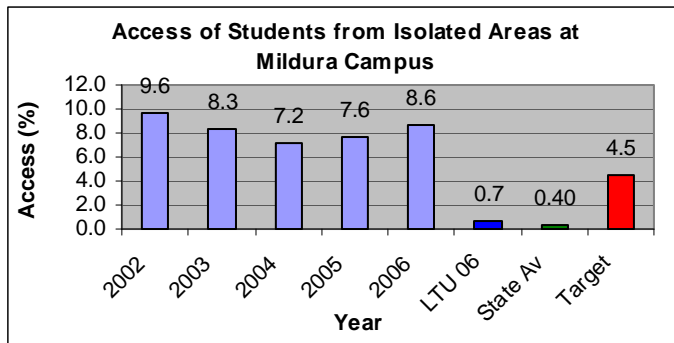


As one would expect given the regional location of Mildura campus, the number of commencing students and continuing students from rural areas is very high, and well in excess of the target and the state average. Enrolments are also much higher than for rural students across the University.

Retention levels indicate that rural students at Mildura are slightly more likely than the non-rural student population to persevere with their studies (except in 2004). They are also mostly higher than for rural students across the University and the state average.

Success levels have been consistently above target, which means that rural students have been more likely than non-rural students to be successful in their studies. Success levels have also been above those for rural students across the University and above the state average.

Students from Isolated Areas



Mildura campus attracts a greater percentage of students from isolated areas than any other La Trobe campus, indicating that the educational needs of the catchment are well served by the location of Mildura campus. The level of commencing and continuing students has been well above the target and the state average for every year of the five year period.

In 2006 there were eleven commencing students from isolated areas, and 26 students from this group enrolled across all Mildura campus programs.

The retention levels for this group have been mostly above target, indicating that students from isolated areas were slightly more likely than other students to persevere with their studies. The retention levels have also been higher than for this group across the University, however they have been well below the state average.

Success levels however, have declined below target for the past two years, and below the success level for this group across the University. This indicates a need to consider additional study support initiatives for this group of students. In 2006 success levels also fell below the state average.

APPENDIX 1: La Trobe University Equity Data Table

	ACCESS							PARTICIPATION						
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target
Low SES aged under 25	23.7%	22.1%	21.0%	20.7%	19.8%	19.3%	25.00%	1.01	0.92	0.87	0.86	0.67	0.66	1.00
Low SES aged 25 & over	15.6%	16.2%	10.3%	13.7%	15.4%	14.1%	25.00%	0.44	0.46	0.44	0.43	0.35	0.34	1.00
NESB	1.7%	1.7%	2.2%	2.8%	2.7%	2.3%	4.80%	1.8%	1.7%	2.0%	2.2%	2.2%	2.1%	4.80%
People with Disabilities	3.7%	3.2%	3.3%	3.6%	3.4%	4.6%	4.00%	3.9%	3.8%	3.9%	4.2%	3.9%	4.2%	4.00%
People from Rural Areas	35.3%	33.9%	30.0%	32.7%	33.3%	31.1%	24.30%	32.9%	32.8%	31.0%	30.4%	30.8%	30.8%	24.30%
People from Isolated Areas	0.6%	0.6%	1.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	4.50%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	4.50%
	RETENTION							SUCCESS						
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target
Low SES aged under 25	1.01	1.01	1.03	1.04	1.03	1.02	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.99	0.99	0.77	0.98	1.00
Low SES aged 25 & over	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.04	1.00	1.00	0.97	0.98	0.99	0.98	0.91	0.98	1.00
NESB	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.94	0.90	1.00	1.00	0.91	0.91	0.92	0.90	0.92	0.91	1.00
People with Disabilities	0.94	0.94	0.95	0.96	0.97	0.98	1.00	0.94	0.95	0.97	0.96	0.95	0.96	1.00
People from Rural Areas	1.04	1.04	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.01	1.00	1.05	1.04	1.04	1.03	1.04	1.04	1.00
People from Isolated Areas	1.01	1.00	0.97	1.05	0.98	0.98	1.00	1.03	1.02	1.05	1.03	1.03	1.00	1.00

*Low SES data in these tables will differ from the data shown in previous years' Equity Updates. This is because low SES is now defined as the lowest quartile of the nation, rather than the state as previously, in order to bring the definition into line with DEST practice.

APPENDIX 2: La Trobe University Equity Data Compared with State and National Average

Student Group	ACCESS (%)								PARTICIPATION (Low SES ratio, others %)							
	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	State 05	Nation 05	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	State 05	Nation 05
Low SES < 25 yrs	19.3%	19.8%	20.7%	21.0%	22.1%	23.7%	15.1%	15.67%	0.66	0.67	0.86	0.87	0.92	1.01	0.36	0.40
Low SES ≥ 25yrs	14.1%	15.4%	13.7%	10.3%	16.2%	15.6%	n/a	n/a	0.34	0.35	0.43	0.44	0.46	0.44	n/a	n/a
NESB	2.3%	2.7%	2.8%	2.2%	1.7%	1.7%	4.2%	4.15%	2.1%	2.2%	2.2%	2.0%	1.7%	1.8%	3.8%	3.79%
Disabilities	4.6%	3.4%	3.6%	3.3%	3.2%	3.7%	2.8%	3.29%	4.2%	3.9%	4.2%	3.9%	3.8%	3.9%	3.1%	3.96%
Rural Areas	31.1%	33.3%	32.7%	30.0%	33.9%	35.3%	16.5%	17.52%	30.8%	30.8%	30.4%	31.0%	32.8%	32.9%	15.9%	16.89%
Isolated Areas	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	1.0%	0.6%	0.6%	0.4%	1.40%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.4%	1.20%

Student Group	RETENTION (ratio)								SUCCESS (ratio)							
	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	State 05	Nation 05	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	State 05	Nation 05
Low SES < 25 yrs	1.02	1.03	1.04	1.03	1.01	1.01	1.05	1.04	0.98	0.97	0.99	0.99	1.00	1.00	0.96	0.98
Low SES ≥ 25yrs	1.00	1.04	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	n/a	n/a	0.98	0.91	0.98	0.99	0.98	0.97	n/a	n/a
NESB	1.00	0.90	0.94	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.99	1.02	0.91	0.92	0.90	0.92	0.91	0.91	0.94	0.96
Disabilities	0.98	0.97	0.96	0.95	0.94	0.94	0.98	0.97	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.97	0.95	0.94	0.95	0.93
Rural Areas	1.01	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.04	1.04	0.99	0.97	1.04	1.04	1.03	1.04	1.04	1.05	1.01	0.99
Isolated Areas	0.98	0.98	1.05	0.97	1.00	1.01	0.89	0.86	1.00	1.03	1.03	1.05	1.02	1.03	1.00	0.99

NB 2006 national averages will not be available from DEST until late 2007, therefore 2005 national averages have been used in this comparison

APPENDIX 3: La Trobe Data: Women in Selected Fields of Education

	ACCESS							PARTICIPATION						
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target
Women in Engineering	5.65%	5.04%	7.48%	6.62%	11.70%	10.30%	15.00%	9.90%	9.20%	9.60%	8.20%	9.37%	8.70%	15.00%
Women in Architecture	27.78%	68.20%	67.74%	72.22%	70.83%	60.00%	40.00%	27.80%	57.10%	62.10%	71.20%	66.20%	62.50%	40.00%
Women in IT	20.80%	17.50%	17.80%	14.40%	13.20%	15.80%	40.00%	24.40%	22.20%	18.20%	16.70%	15.60%	15.40%	40.00%
Women in Higher Degrees (Coursework)	63.27%	65.80%	26.15%	39.90%	59.57%	66.20%	50.00%	72.80%	71.80%	35.50%	39.00%	47.30%	58.10%	50.00%
Women in Higher Degrees (Research)	63.00%	63.40%	64.52%	58.47%	62.94%	58.20%	50.00%	60.00%	62.60%	62.80%	63.70%	64.10%	62.90%	50.00%
	RETENTION							SUCCESS						
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Target
Women in Engineering		1.10	1.24	1.01	1.26	1.11	1.00	1.15	1.16	1.21	1.14	1.02	0.95	1.00
Women in Architecture		0.82	1.02	0.80	1.14	0.95	1.00	1.11	0.96	0.98	1.03	1.08	0.91	1.00
Women in IT		1.11	1.13	1.04	1.11	1.12	1.00	1.09	1.11	1.09	1.10	1.07	1.02	1.00
Women in Higher Degrees (Coursework)		0.94	0.99	0.93	1.02	0.89	1.00	1.01	1.03	1.02	1.06	1.03	1.03	1.00
Women in Higher Degrees (Research)		1.03	1.00	1.08	1.00	1.03	1.00	0.97	1.08	1.03	0.99	1.00	1.00	1.00

*Retention data for 2001 not available in fields of education.

APPENDIX 4 Priority Areas by Faculty 2007

Equity Group	Education	Health Science	Humanities & Social Sciences	Law & Management	Science, Tech. & Engineering
Low SES Access		✓	✓	✓	✓
Low SES Participation		✓	✓	✓	✓
Low SES Retention					
Low SES Success				✓	
NESB Access	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NESB Participation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NESB Retention				✓	
NESB Success		✓	✓	✓	✓
Disabilities Access					
Disabilities Participation					
Disabilities Retention					
Disabilities Success			✓		
Rural Access					
Rural Participation					
Rural Retention				✓	
Rural Success				✓	
Isolated Access	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Isolated Participation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Isolated Retention		✓			
Isolated Success			✓	✓	

NB This chart does not include women in non-traditional areas of study, relevant only to Faculty of ST&E

APPENDIX 5: STUDENT EQUITY GROUPS BY CAMPUS IN COMPARISON WITH WIDER COMMUNITY

	Bundoora & City		Bendigo		Shepparton		Mildura		Albury/Wodonga	
	Campus	Community	Campus	Community	Campus	Community	Campus	Community	Campus	Community
Female	63.2%	51.04%	64.9%	51.73%	67.1%	50.34%	75.7%	50.58%	72%	51.23%
Indigenous	0.3%	0.36%	0.5%	0.97%	0.9%	2.65%	1.3%	2.30%	0.7%	1.48%
NESB	2.6%	5.04%	0.4%	0.42%	2.5%	1.81%	0.3%	1.00%	1.3%	0.65%
Low SES (Ratio)	0.37	N/A	3.82	N/A	29.43	N/A	20.80	N/A	2.92	N/A
Low SES (%)	14.9%	N/A	24.4%	N/A	65.2%	N/A	32.8%	N/A	23.8%	N/A
Disability	4.5%	N/A	4.5%	N/A	0.9%	N/A	4.7%	N/A	4.7%	N/A
Rural	13.7%	N/A	83.4%	N/A	89.2%	N/A	83.6%	N/A	79.9%	N/A
Isolated	0.3%	N/A	0.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.2%	N/A	0.8%	N/A

NOTES

1. Campus statistics – students enrolled at 31 December 2006
2. Community statistics – provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from Census data collected in 2001
3. Low SES Campus Statistics Ratio – this is the ratio of students with a low SES to students with a high SES