

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

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING**

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Executive Summary

Statistical analysis of student equity group data provides a pleasing picture overall for La Trobe University's performance in 2006.

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.

State 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 Benchmarks Met or Exceeded

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 develop 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.

2006 Benchmarks Not Met

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. From the statistics, it is noted that La Trobe is not meeting targets in the following areas:

Students from Low socio-economic status background (Low SES)

There has been a downward trend over six years in commencements and re-enrolments for this cohort of students. This indicates a need for targeted outreach programs. The retention rate for these students has been consistently equal to, or above, that of all La Trobe students for the past six years, and their success rates have been only slightly below those for all La Trobe students.

Students from a non-English speaking background (NESB)

The rate of commencements and re-enrolment for this cohort of students remains unacceptably low, and indicates a need to targeted outreach programs. In 2006 the retention rate for these students was equal to that of all La Trobe students, indicating that once NESB students do commence, they persevere with their studies. However, their success rates are less than that of all students, indicating the need to some additional study support initiatives for these students.

Students from Isolated Areas

The rate of commencements and re-enrolment for this cohort of students remains unacceptably low, and indicates a need to targeted outreach programs. Once these students have commenced their program of study, they demonstrate pleasing levels of retention and success.

Women in Non-Traditional Areas of Study

The number of women enrolling in undergraduate architecture, and postgraduate research and coursework degrees, is now well above target. However, retention and success levels for women in architecture have declined since 2005 and are now below target, indicating a need for study support initiatives for this group of students.

Women in Engineering and women in Information Technology programs are still well under target levels, and indicate the need for targeted outreach programs. However, retention and success rates for these two student cohorts are very good, indicating a strong level of perseverance and success for those females who do enrol in these discipline areas.

Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering

The Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering is currently meeting and exceeding equity targets for rural students and students with disabilities and these efforts are commended. There has been a downward trend in enrolments for students from Non English Speaking Background (NESB), however the Faculty's performance in this regard is still above average compared with other Faculties of the University. The Faculty is still below target for students from low SES background, however it is still attracting more of these students than other Faculties.

Priority Equity Groups for 2007

Priority areas which the Faculty needs to address in order to achieve equitable outcomes for students in other minority groups are:

- Access and participation for students from Low SES background, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Access, participation and success for students from NESB, indicating a need for outreach strategies and study support initiatives for this group of students;
- Access and participation of students from isolated areas, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Access and participation of women in engineering, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Access and participation of women in information technology, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Retention and success of women in architecture, indicating a need for additional study support initiatives for this group of students.

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.*¹

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.

The Equity and Access Unit is mandated to report annually to DEST on student equity performance across the University. Each faculty and non-faculty area is required to examine their student equity performance and to report on activities undertaken to address any areas of concern. Your responses will then be reported to DEST in the Equity Update for 2006 and incorporated into La Trobe University's Institutional Assessment Framework Portfolio.

This Profile provides an overview of equity outcomes at La Trobe University and a specific breakdown of your Faculty's performance, and highlights areas to be addressed in your response to the Equity and Access Unit.

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.

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

Reporting requirements for faculties

Faculties are asked to complete the pro forma document addressing the following:

- 1) Any specialised support programs available within the Faculty for students in the groups identified in the 2005 Profile as in need of attention.
- 2) Any outreach programs designed to enable access to study in the Faculty for students from groups identified as below target.
- 3) Any further support or outreach programs for people in the DEST defined equity groups listed below.
- 4) Any HEESP Grants awarded within the faculty in 2006, and a brief statement of progress of the project(s) funded.
- 5) Any other activities undertaken to improve equity outcomes within the Faculty.
- 6) Where available, a brief outline of the outcomes and/or level of usage of any programs listed.
- 7) Any proposed programs for 2007.

In order to comply with the reporting requirements of DEST please submit your response in writing to Ms Holly Langfield, Student Equity Outreach Officer, Equity and Access Unit, by Friday 18 May 2007. (A proforma for this purpose was emailed to each Faculty/administrative area in mid-April 2007.)

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.

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.

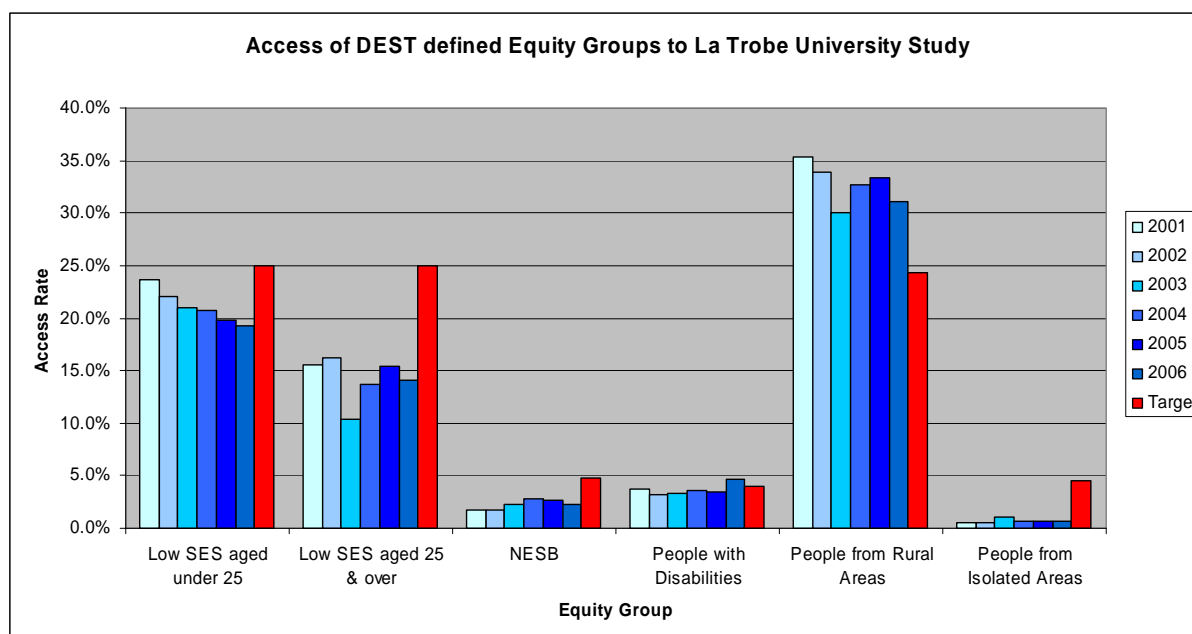
The **retention indicators** shown in the charts below are **ratios** between the retention rate of the students in that equity group, and the retention rate of all La Trobe students. The target is a retention indicator of 1.0 which implies that students in the equity group are continuing their studies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

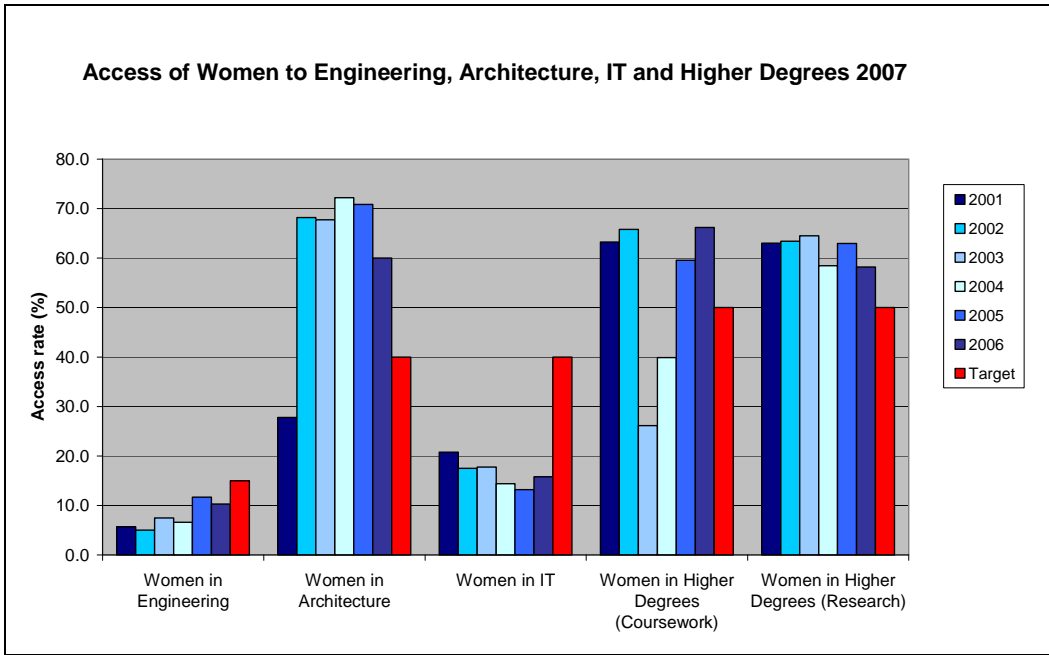


*For the data upon which these charts are based refer to the table at the end of this section.

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.

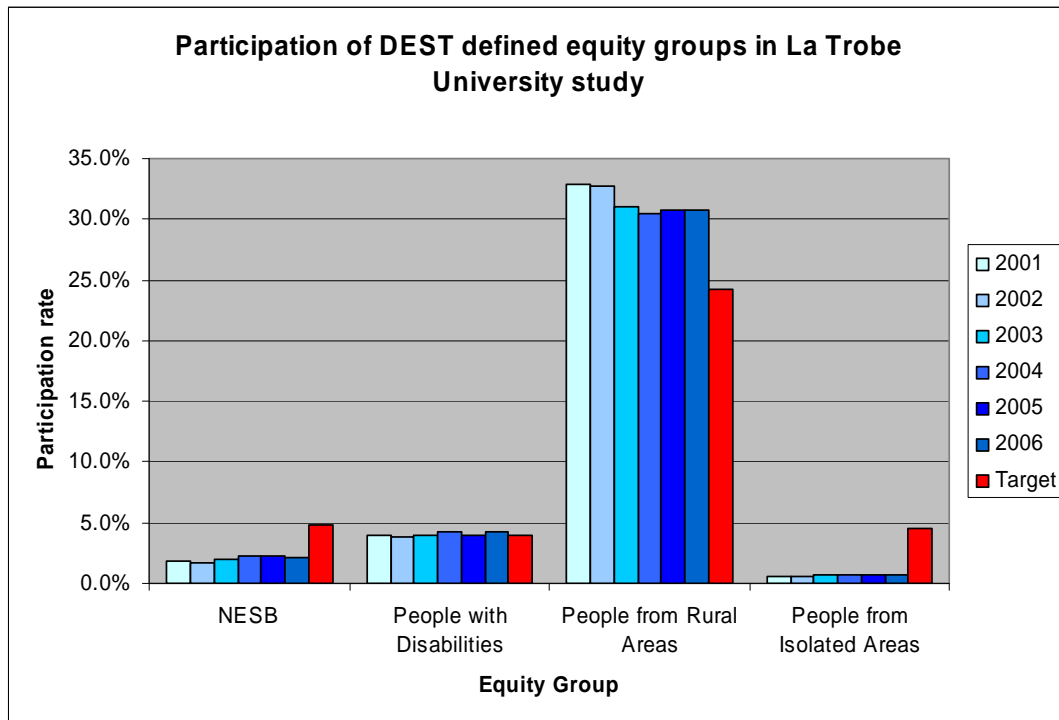
Access rates for Low SES students, NESB students, and students from isolated areas, remain significant areas of concern. This indicates a need for university-wide outreach strategies to encourage more students from these three groups to enrol at the University.



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.

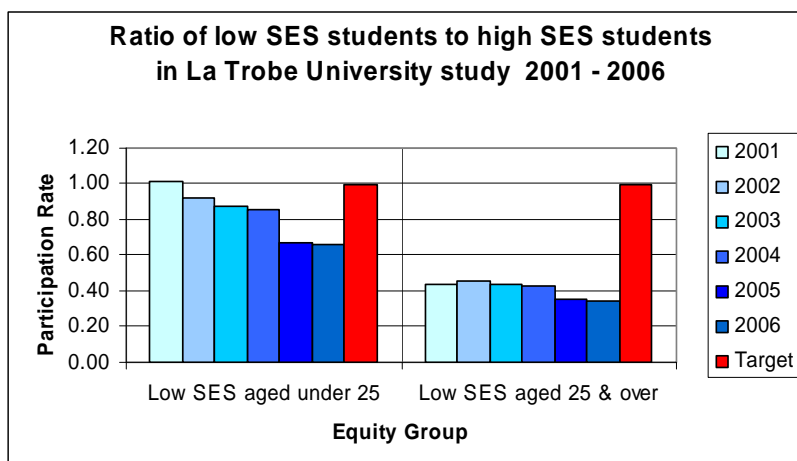
Participation



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.

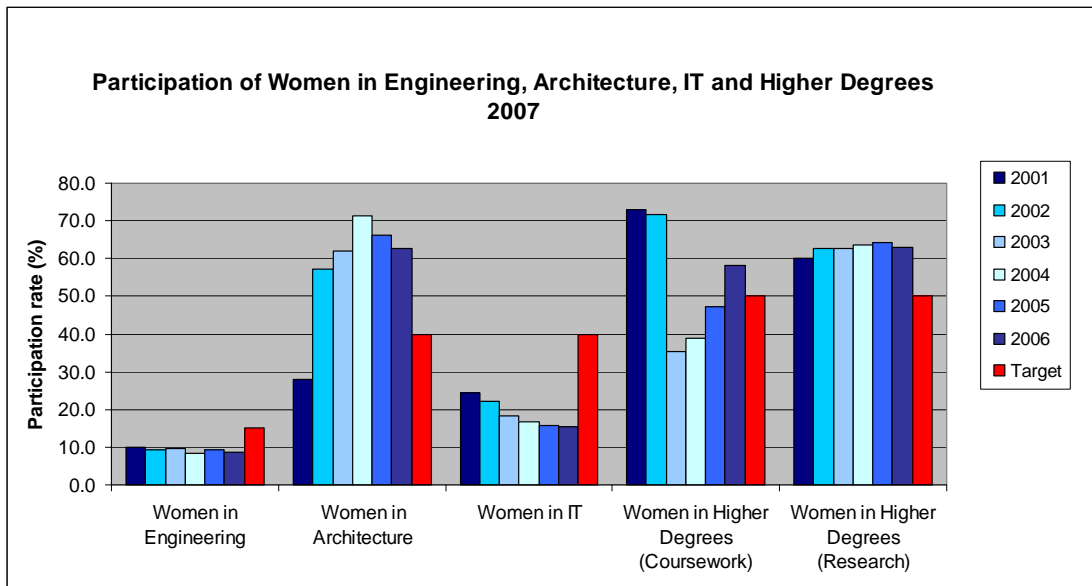
Low SES participation



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.

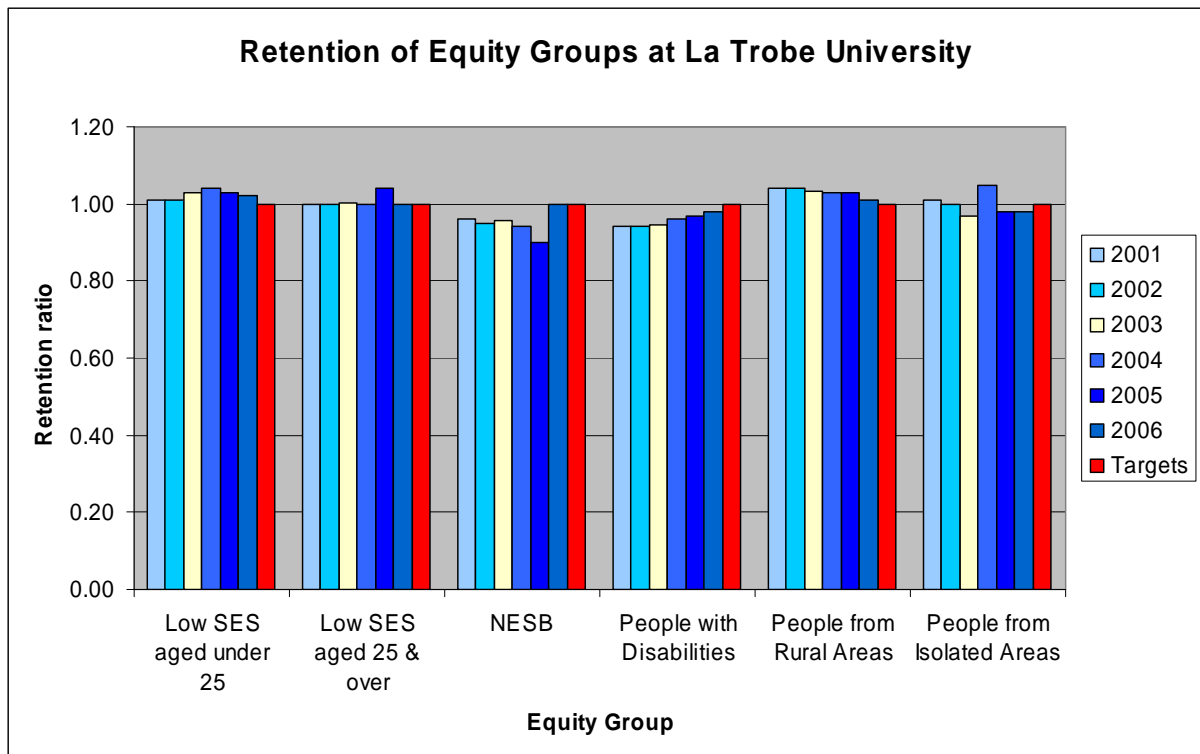
The participation of Low SES students, both under 25 years, and over 25 years, has fallen steadily since 2001. This is a troubling trend which needs urgent attention to reverse. The trend indicates a need for study support initiatives to assist these students in overcoming the challenges of University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

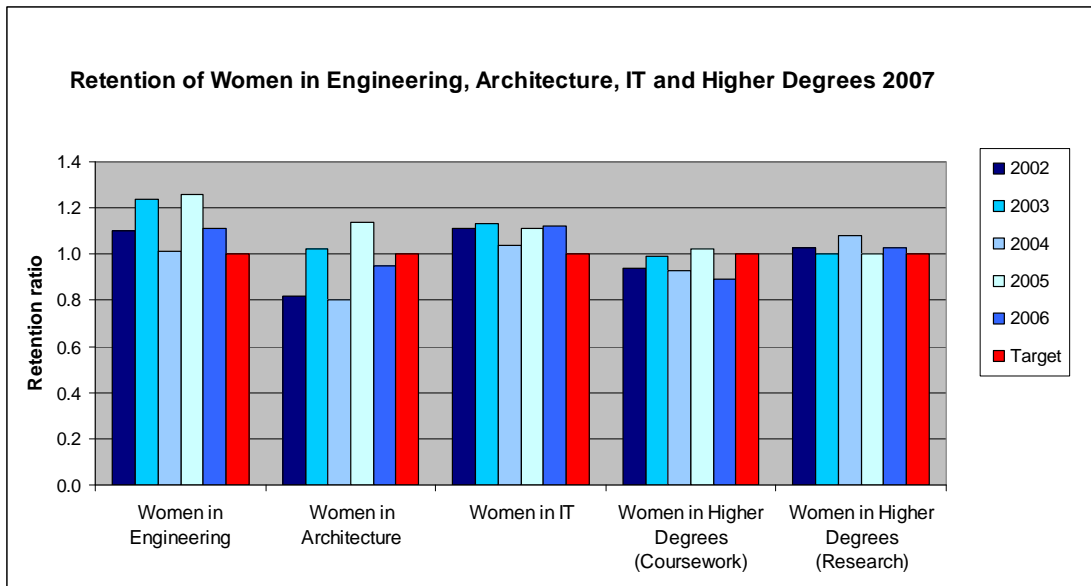


The **retention indicators** shown in the table above are **ratios** between the retention rate of the students in that equity group, and the retention rate of all La Trobe students. The target is a retention indicator of 1.00 which implies that students in the equity group are continuing their studies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

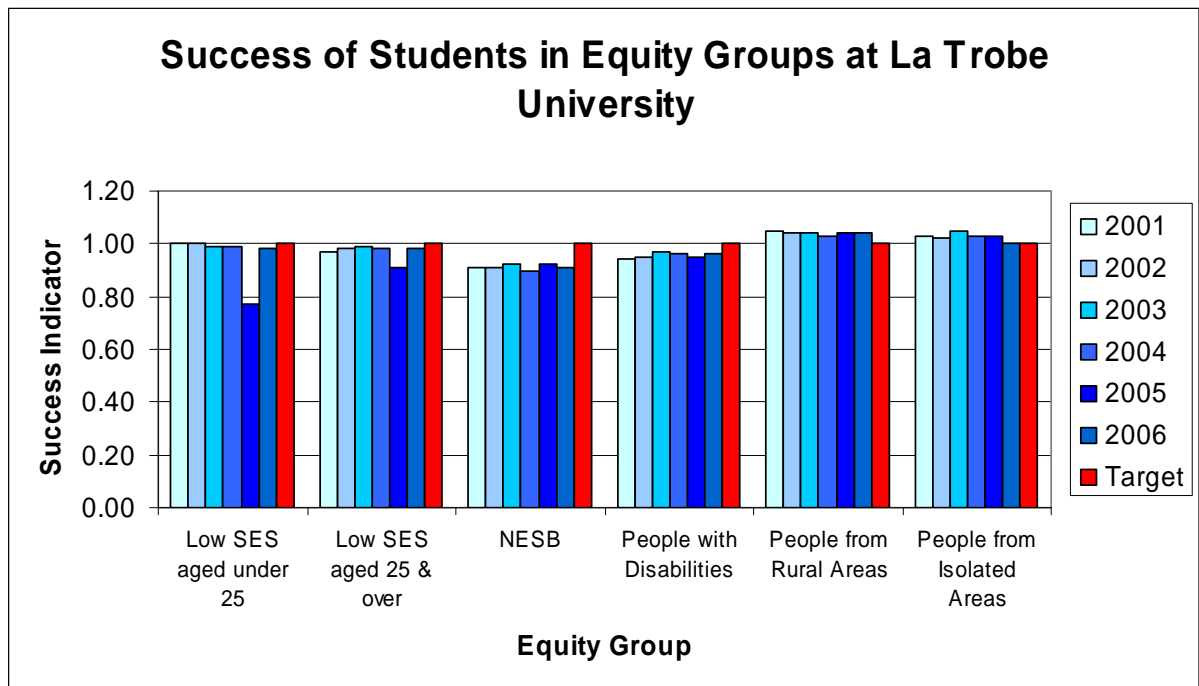
Retention levels for women in architecture declined in 2006 from above target level in 2005. In 2006 these students were slightly less likely than the general student population to persist with their studies, indicating a need to consider study support initiatives for this group of students.

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.

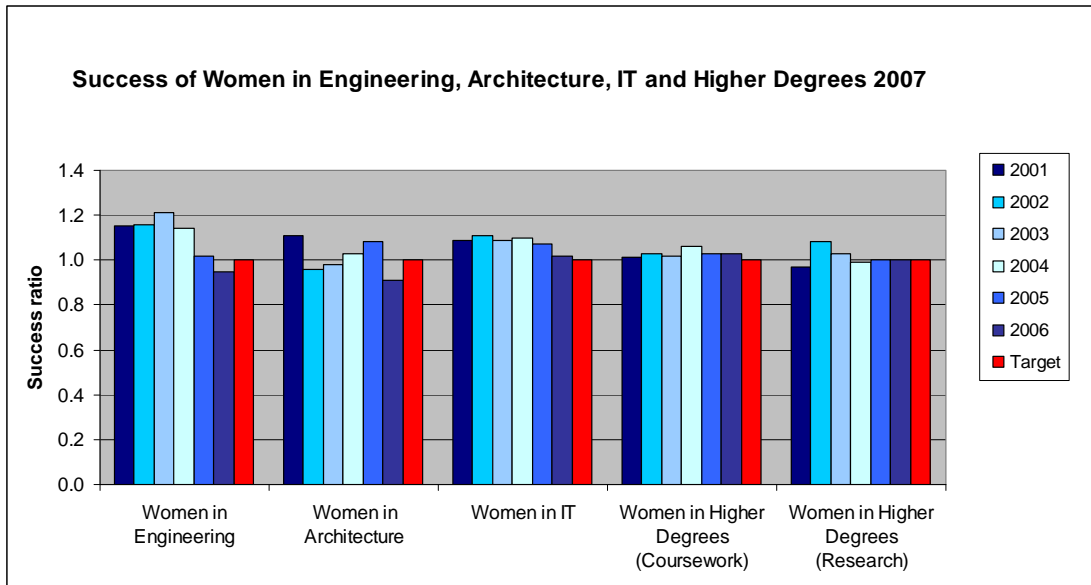
Success



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.

Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering Equity Profile

Summary

The Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering is currently meeting and exceeding equity targets for rural students and students with disabilities and these efforts are commended. There has been a downward trend in enrolments for students from Non English Speaking Background (NESB), however the Faculty's performance in this regard is still above average compared with other Faculties of the University. The Faculty is still below target for students from low SES background, however it is still attracting more of these students than other Faculties.

Priority Equity Groups for 2007

Priority areas which the Faculty needs to address in order to achieve equitable outcomes for students in other minority groups are:

- Access and participation for students from Low SES background, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Access, participation and success for students from NESB, indicating a need for outreach strategies and study support initiatives for this group of students;
- Access and participation of students from isolated areas, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Access and participation of women in engineering, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Access and participation of women in information technology, indicating a need for outreach strategies for this group of students;
- Retention and success of women in architecture, indicating a need for 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 been recalculated using calendar year data. Therefore, the reader may notice some slight variations on data provided in previous yearly reports to the Faculty.

Report on 2006 Student Equity Initiatives

The Faculty is asked to report on any existing or proposed programs to improve access for students from the above mentioned equity groups. The Faculty should also report on the possible reasons for any decline in student numbers and any proposed initiatives which may improve access, participation, retention and academic success for these students. A Report Pro forma was emailed to the Faculty Registrar in mid April, and must be returned to the Equity and Access Unit by 18 May 2007.

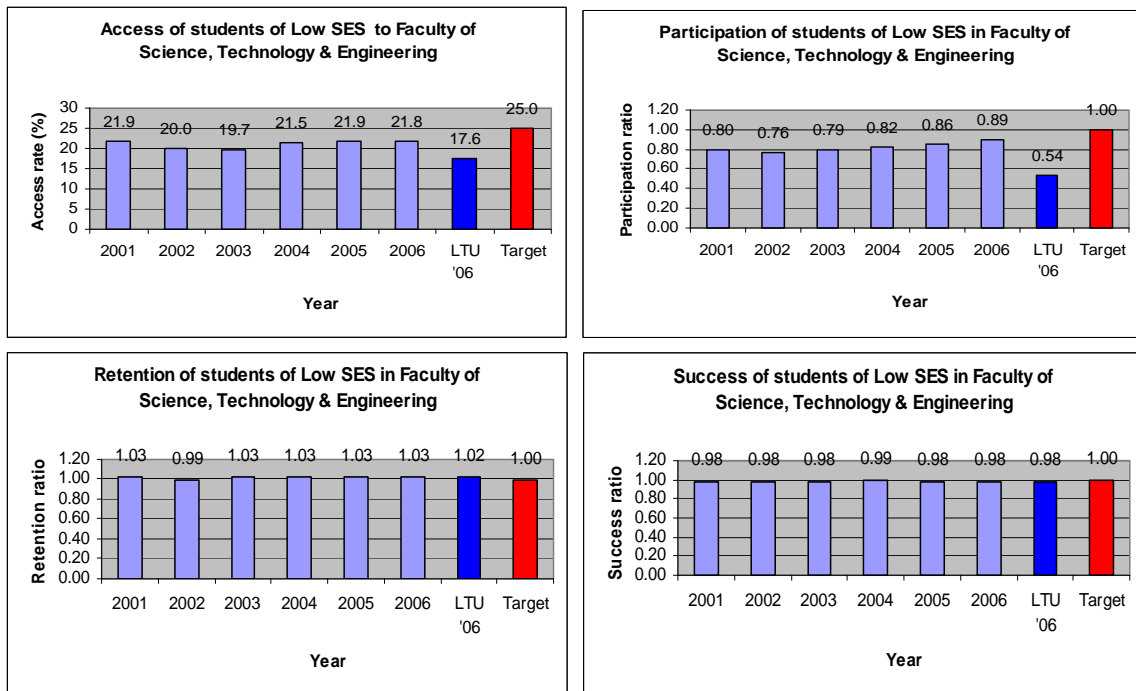
Equity Support Program Grants for 2007

To assist in the funding of student equity programs, 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 students from the 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 school/faculty. 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 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 your Faculty's performance, including programs eligible for HEESP funding.

A more detailed description of the Faculty's performance in relation to each equity group is given below.

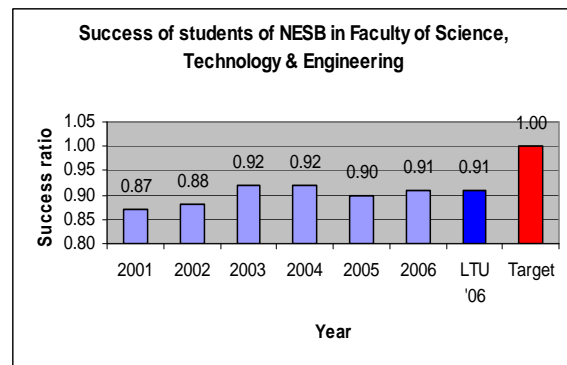
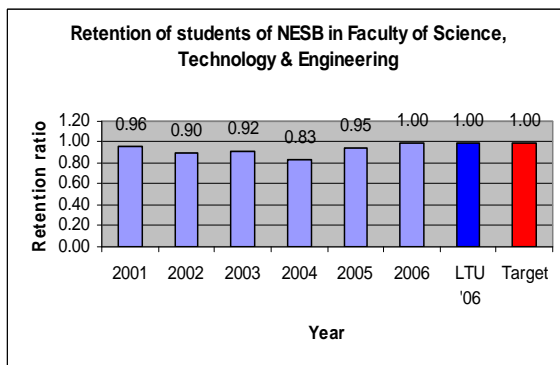
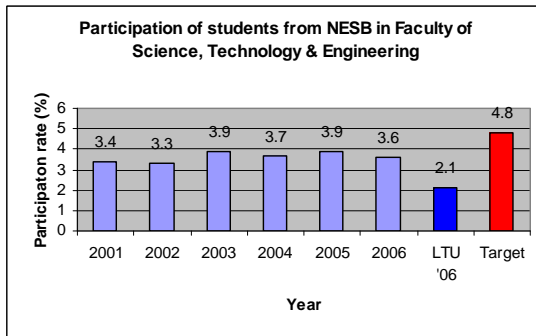
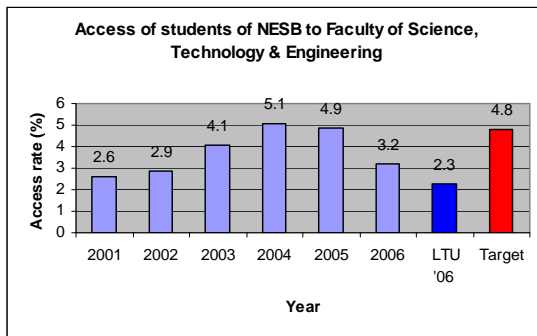
Students from a Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) background



Students from a low SES background are enrolling in first year and other years in the Faculty at a higher rate than in other Faculties at La Trobe. Although first year enrolment rates have remained stable for the past three years, students from low SES backgrounds are still underrepresented when compared to the general population. There has been a slight improvement in enrolment rates for these students in all Faculty programs, and again the Faculty is enrolling more students from low SES background when compared to other Faculties at La Trobe.

The Faculty has a very pleasing retention rate for students from low SES background, indicating that they are persevering with their studies at a slightly higher rate when compared with all La Trobe students. Students from low SES background are succeeding at the same rate as in other Faculties, and only slightly less than all La Trobe students success rate.

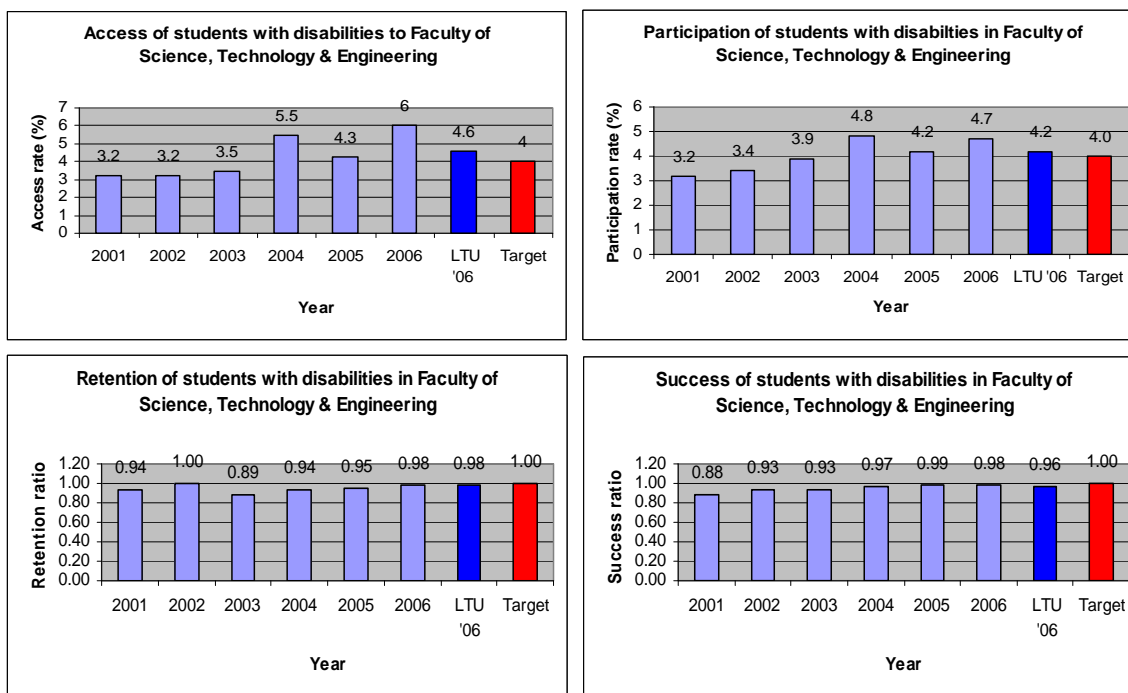
Students from a non-English speaking background



The Faculty has had a decline in first year and all year enrolment rates for students from NESB since 2004, and these rates have now fallen below the target. This indicates that these students are facing barriers to education access which need to be explored and addressed.

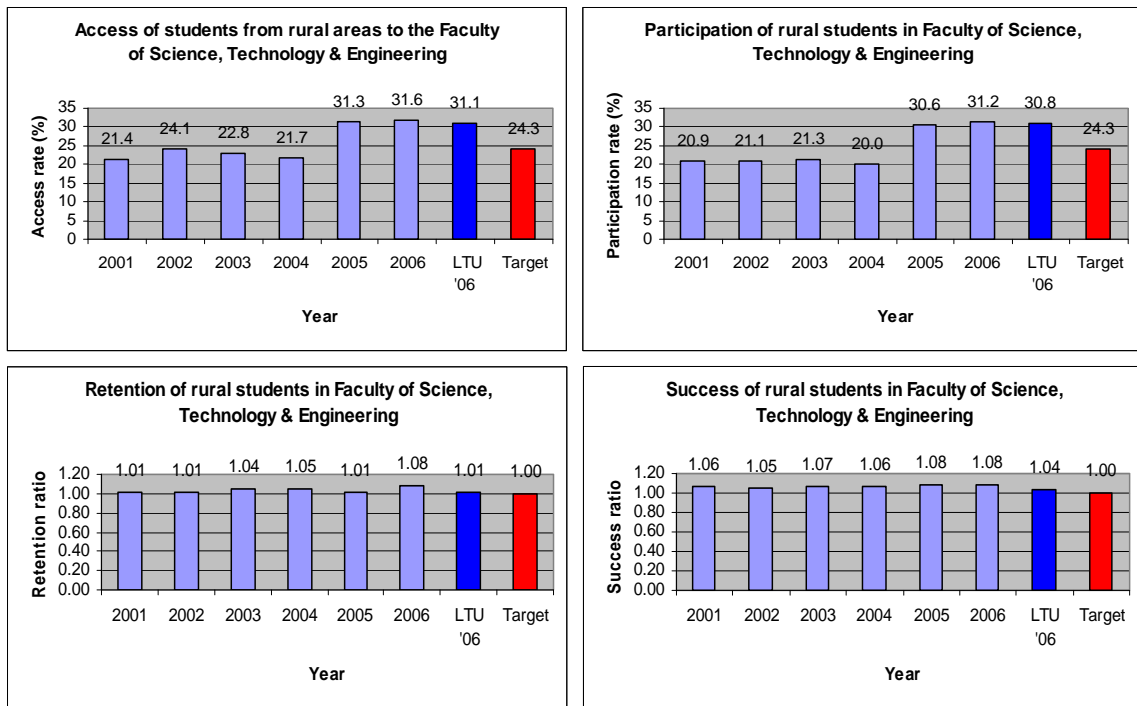
The retention rate indicates that these students are persevering with their studies at the same rate as other La Trobe students, however their rate of success is below that of other students, indicating that further study support initiatives may be required.

Students with disabilities



Enrolment rates for first year and all year students with disabilities are above target levels. Retention levels for these students are similar to those of other Faculties, and slightly less than all La Trobe students. Success rates for these students are slightly better than for students with disabilities in other Faculties, however they are still below success rates of other La Trobe students, indicating some additional study support initiatives may be required.

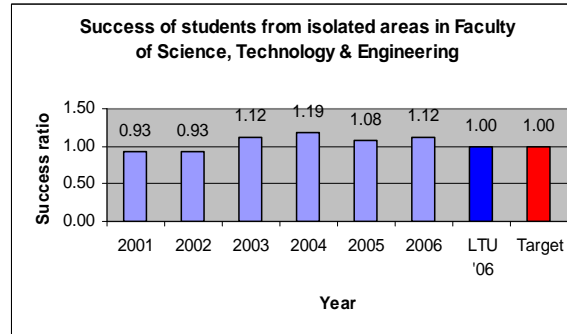
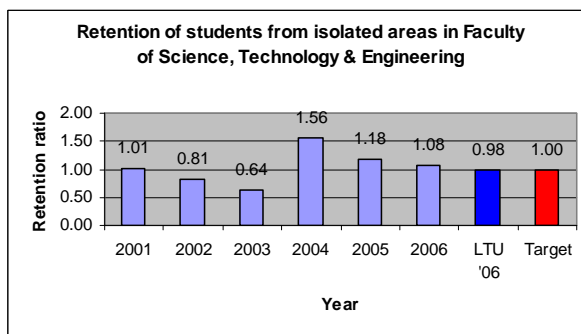
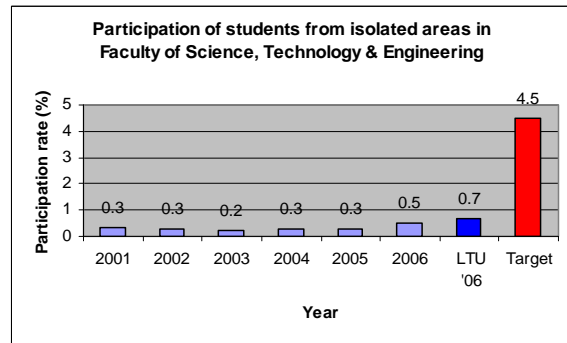
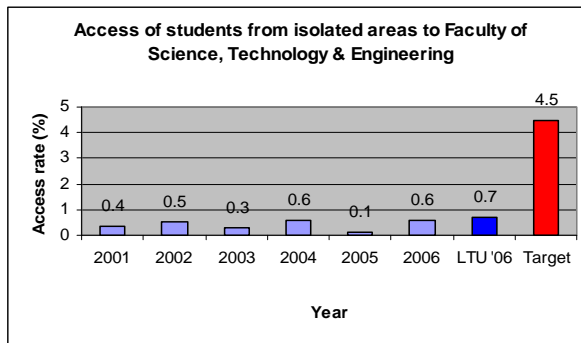
Students from rural areas



In 2005 and 2006 the Faculty has been very successful in attracting students from rural areas, and maintaining these enrolments after first year. Enrolments for students from rural areas are now well above target.

Rural students also have strong retention and success rates, indicating that these students are persevering and succeeding with their studies at a greater rate than the non-rural student population. This is a highly commendable result for the Faculty.

Students from isolated areas



Students from isolated areas remain very under-represented in the Faculty compared with their representation in the general population. However the Faculty compares favourably with other faculties at La Trobe in its ability to attract these students. Students from isolated areas are facing barriers to enrolment that need to be explored and addressed.

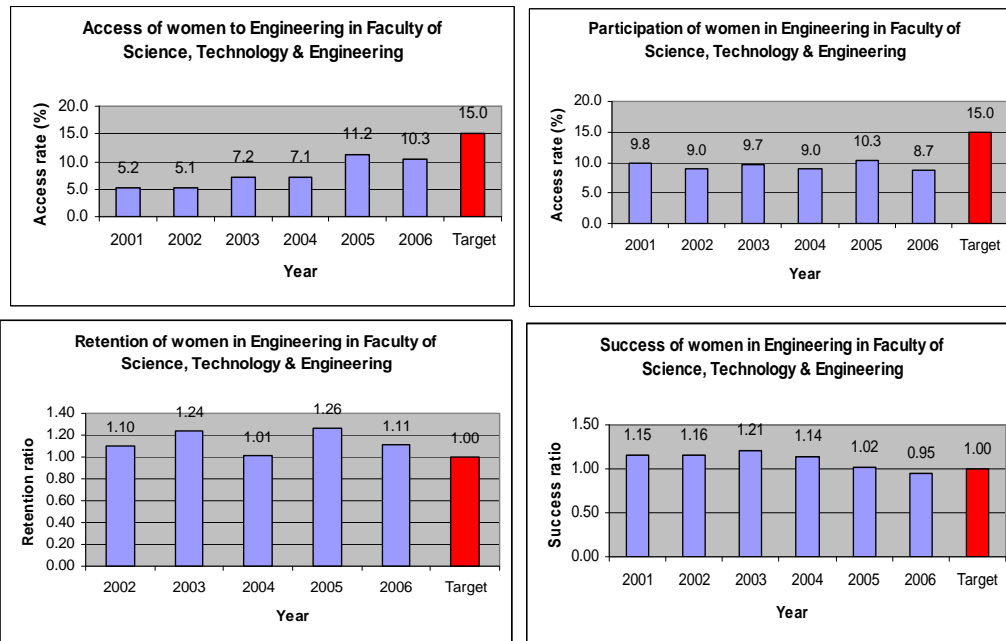
Once they are enrolled, students from isolated areas have similar retention and success patterns to all other students at La Trobe.

Gender issues

In 2006, female first year enrolments comprised 55.6% of total first year enrolments for the Faculty. Female enrolments in all Faculty programs comprised 52.4% of all enrolments, and females students are succeeding in their studies.

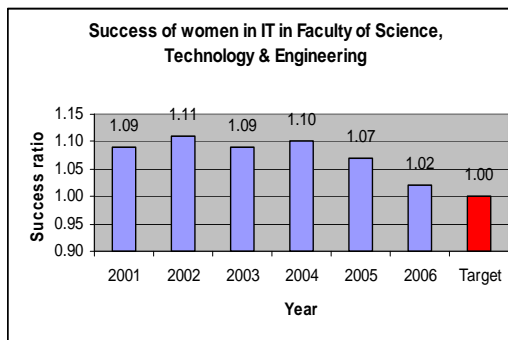
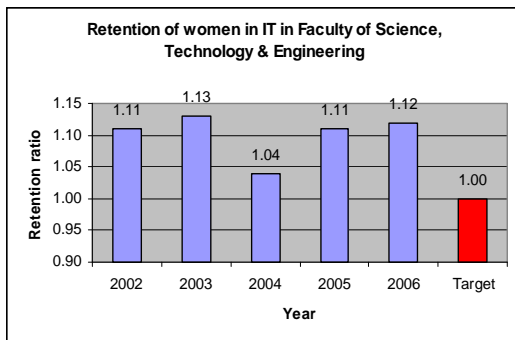
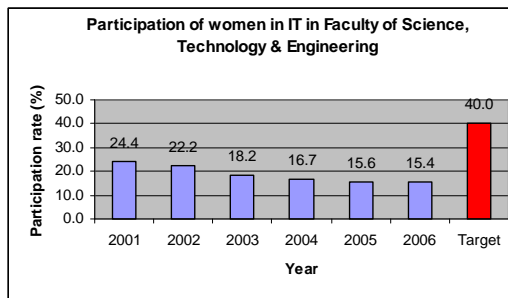
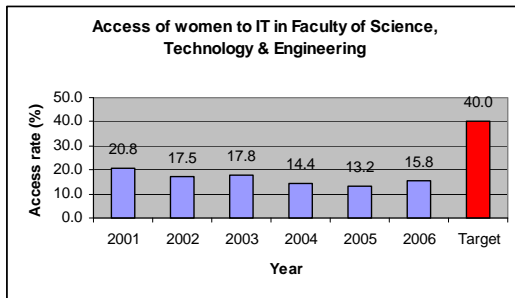
Women in Non Traditional Areas of Study

Women in Engineering



After five years of improvement, first year and all year enrolments for women in engineering have fallen in 2006. Although 2006 first year enrolments are still better than those of 2001 – 2004, they remain well below target. This indicates that barriers still exist for women in engineering which need to be explored and addressed. All year enrolments have fallen below those of 2001 levels, indicating that more support strategies are necessary to retain these students once they enrol. Those female students that remain in the program appear to be persevering at a higher level than other La Trobe students, although success rates have dropped since 2005. The Faculty should consider additional support strategies to improve the success rates of these students.

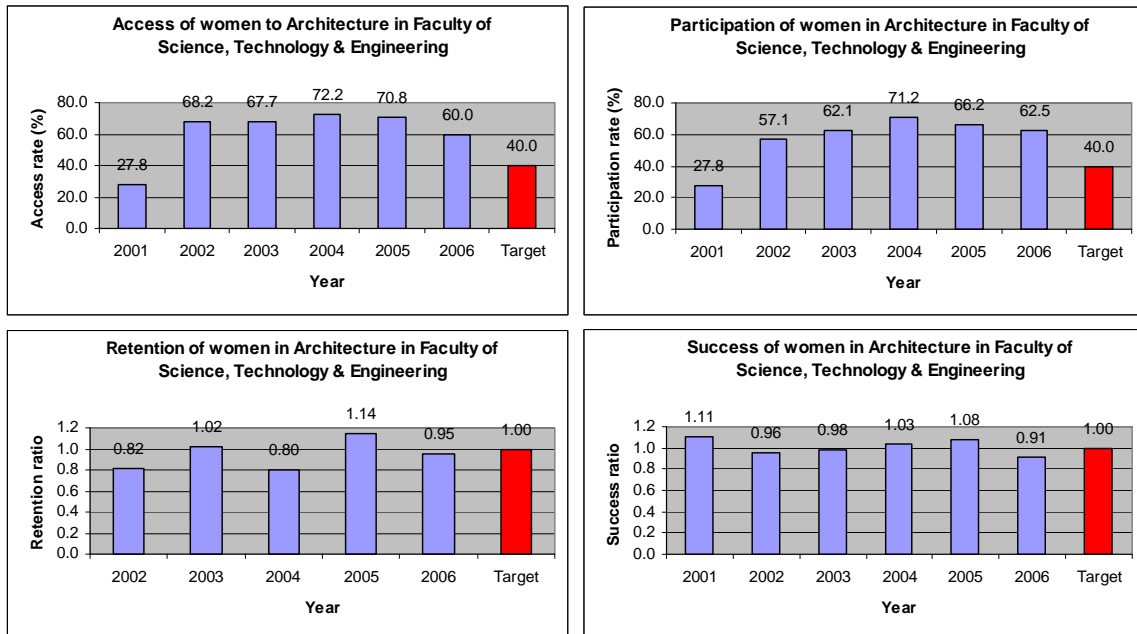
Women in Information Technology



The first year enrolment levels for women in information technology have steadily decreased since 2001, indicating the existence of barriers to women in this field of study. These barriers need to be explored and addressed through outreach programs. The levels of women in all year enrolments have similarly declined since 2001. This reflects a national trend in declining female enrolments in information technology.

Retention and success levels remain strong, indicating that, once enrolled, these students are persevering and succeeding at a higher level than other La Trobe students.

Women in Architecture



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

The first year enrolment levels for women in architecture have fallen to the lowest level since 2002, however they remain well above target. Enrolment levels for women in all years of architecture have also fallen but remain well above target.

Retention of women in architecture has fallen since 2005, and has also fallen below target, indicating that in 2006 these students were less likely to persist with their studies than the general student population. Success levels for women in architecture have also fallen, and the trend here is of greater concern. In 2006 success levels fell below target, and were also at their lowest level since 2001. This indicates a strong need for the Faculty to consider additional study support initiatives for these students.

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

APPENDIX 6: Faculty of Science Technology & Engineering Data Table

FACULTY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING																
	Access (%)								Participation (low SES ratio, others %)							
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	LTU '06	Target	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	LTU '06	Target
Low SES	21.9	20.0	19.7	21.5	21.9	21.8	17.6	25.0	0.80	0.76	0.79	0.82	0.86	0.89	0.54	1.00
NESB	2.6	2.9	4.1	5.1	4.9	3.2	2.3	4.8	3.4	3.3	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.6	2.1	4.8
Disabilities	3.2	3.2	3.5	5.5	4.3	6.0	4.6	4.0	3.2	3.4	3.9	4.8	4.2	4.7	4.2	4.0
Rural	21.4	24.1	22.8	21.7	31.3	31.6	31.1	24.3	20.9	21.1	21.3	20.0	30.6	31.2	30.8	24.3
Isolated	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.7	4.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.7	4.5
F IT	20.8	17.5	17.8	14.4	13.2	15.8	15.8	40.0	24.4	22.2	18.2	16.7	15.6	15.4	15.4	40.0
F Eng	5.2	5.1	7.2	7.1	11.2	10.3	10.3	15.0	9.8	9.0	9.7	9.0	10.3	8.7	8.7	15.0

	Retention (Ratio)								Success (Ratio)							
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	LTU '06	Target	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	LTU '06	Target
Low SES	1.03	0.99	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.02	1.00	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.98	1.00
NESB	0.96	0.90	0.92	0.83	0.95	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.87	0.88	0.92	0.92	0.90	0.91	0.91	1.00
Disabilities	0.94	1.00	0.89	0.94	0.95	0.98	0.98	1.00	0.88	0.93	0.93	0.97	0.99	0.98	0.96	1.00
Rural	1.01	1.01	1.04	1.05	1.01	1.08	1.01	1.00	1.06	1.05	1.07	1.06	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.00
Isolated	1.01	0.81	0.64	1.56	1.18	1.08	0.98	1.00	0.93	0.93	1.12	1.19	1.08	1.12	1.00	1.00
F. IT		1.11	1.13	1.04	1.11	1.12	1.12	1.00	1.09	1.11	1.09	1.10	1.07	1.02	1.02	1.00
F Eng		1.10	1.24	1.01	1.26	1.11	1.11	1.00	1.15	1.16	1.21	1.14	1.02	0.95	0.95	1.00

***Please Note: All data in the above tables may vary slightly from equity data previously supplied by EAU. This is because DEST has recently revised the yearly data period (from the March census date) to a calendar year period.