

INDIGENOUS MEDICAL STUDENT STATISTICS

Australia: Indigenous Commencements, Enrolments and Graduates

2021 saw an increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying in Australian medical schools (**Table 1**). 3.2% of domestic Australian medical students commencing in year one of medicine were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (n=112), contributing to the 412 total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled.

In 2020, 65 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors graduated from medical programs in Australia, an increase of 51.2% since 2015. It is estimated that 62 will graduate in 2021.

Table 1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students in and graduating from Australian medical schools

	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Commenced	51	1.7	79	2.4	69	2.3	75	2.5	81	2.5	65	2.0	83	2.6	77	2.4	88	2.7	115	3.4	121	3.5	112	3.2
Total enrolled	163	1.3	214	1.5	228	1.6	261	1.8	275	1.9	265	1.8	286	2.0	291	2.0	310	2.2	361	2.5	403	2.7	412	2.7
Graduated	12	0.5	15	0.6	15	0.5	28	1.0	36	1.2	43	1.4	34	1.1	49	1.6	42	1.3	44	1.4	65	2.1		

Note: Figures based on domestic student numbers, and exclude international students (international students comprise 15.1% commencements in 2021)

There has been a female bias for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Australian medical schools since 2015. In 2021, 52.7% of the commencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cohort were female, and females comprised 55.1% of enrolled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (**Table 2**). Whilst this gender bias was also present across the broader domestic student population (i.e., in 2021, 54.3% of domestic commencements were female and 53.0% of all domestic enrolments were female), aside from 2014, it has been consistently more pronounced in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort.

Table 2. Female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students across Australian medical schools

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Commenced												
Number Indigenous female students	28	40	36	47	40	36	45	45	57	73	73	59
% Indigenous students who are female	54.9%	50.6%	52.2%	62.7%	49.4%	55.4%	54.2%	58.4%	64.8%	63.5%	60.3%	52.7%
% domestic students who are female	51.8%	50.7%	48.3%	51.2%	52.4%	51.5%	52.3%	51.9%	53.3%	51.9%	51.5%	54.3%
Enrolled												
Number Indigenous female students	89	117	128	154	155	150	159	161	181	209	236	227
% Indigenous students who are female	54.6%	54.7%	56.1%	59.0%	56.4%	56.6%	55.6%	55.3%	58.4%	57.9%	58.6%	55.1%
% domestic students who are female	53.7%	53.0%	51.6%	51.2%	51.3%	51.5%	51.5%	52.1%	52.4%	52.7%	52.7%	53.0%
Graduated												
Number Indigenous female students	7	9	8	17	19	28	19	26	25	24	36	
% Indigenous students who are female	58.3%	60.0%	53.3%	60.7%	52.8%	65.1%	55.9%	53.1%	59.5%	54.5%	55.4%	
% domestic students who are female	54.1%	55.0%	53.2%	52.8%	51.4%	51.3%	49.8%	52.4%	51.2%	51.3%	53.4%	

New Zealand: Māori Commencements, Enrolments and Graduates

In 2021, New Zealand medical schools saw the largest numbers and proportions of Māori students since 2010 (**Table 1Table 3**). Of all domestic medical student commencements in 2021, nearly one in five were Māori (n=100/555), with Māori students comprising 18.0% of all enrolled New Zealand domestic students (n=491/2724).

In 2020, 65 Māori students graduated from New Zealand medical schools. It is estimated that 99 will graduate in 2021, which would be 18.1% of the graduating domestic student cohort.

Table 3. Commencement and Enrolment data of Māori Students across New Zealand medical schools

	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Commenced	39	9.0	56	12.3	78	15.8	63	12.8	73	14.3	75	13.7	86	15.6	101	18.4	106	19.4	90	16.5	112	20.7	100	18.0
Total enrolled	162	9.0	193	9.9	233	11.3	257	11.6	295	12.6	325	13.3	357	14.0	368	14.3	422	15.9	445	16.5	476	17.6	491	18.0
Graduated	22	7.2	30	9.0	33	9.9	35	9.2	34	8.6	44	10.6	77	16.5	49	10.7	70	14.4	65	12.9	78	14.6		

Note: Figures based on domestic student numbers, and exclude international students (international students comprise 7.0% NZ commencements in 2021)

Similar to the data presented about female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, female Māori students are also over-represented in comparison to male Māori students and domestic female medical students across the previous three years (**Table 4**).

Table 4. Commencement and Enrolment data of female Māori Students across New Zealand medical schools

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Commenced												
Number of Maori female students	22	31	50	37	30	45	55	68	60	63	69	57
% of Maori students who are female	56.4%	55.4%	64.1%	58.7%	41.1%	60.0%	64.0%	67.3%	56.6%	70.0%	61.6%	57.0%
% of domestic students who are female	51.0%	54.6%	52.5%	55.3%	53.9%	53.4%	58.2%	58.6%	58.4%	59.5%	59.4%	56.0%
Enrolled												
Number of Maori female students	98	109	137	156	161	188	212	224	254	280	305	310
% of Maori students who are female	60.5%	56.5%	58.8%	60.7%	54.6%	57.8%	59.4%	60.9%	60.2%	62.9%	64.1%	63.1%
% of domestic students who are female	54.1%	54.1%	53.7%	54.1%	53.2%	53.9%	54.7%	55.9%	56.9%	57.5%	58.9%	58.8%
Graduated												
Number of Maori female students	12	20	17	23	16	28	49	29	36	37	50	
% of Maori students who are female	54.5%	66.7%	51.5%	65.7%	47.1%	63.6%	63.6%	59.2%	51.4%	56.9%	64.1%	
% of domestic students who are female	51.6%	55.5%	54.5%	57.7%	51.8%	55.2%	52.1%	54.2%	55.2%	53.4%	58.4%	

Indigenous medical student numbers over time

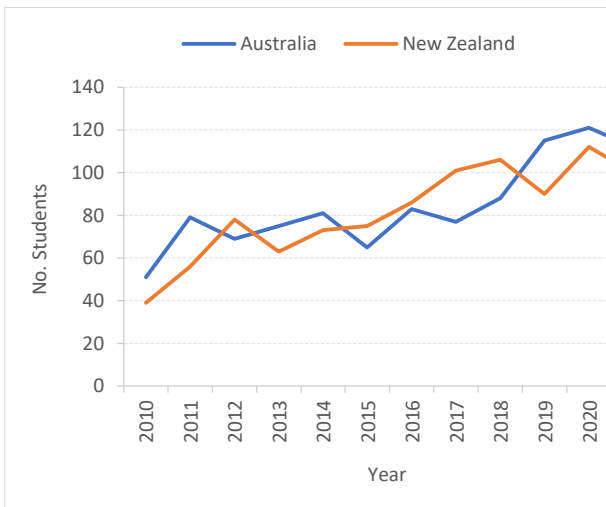


Figure 1. Indigenous Commencements in Australian and New Zealand Medical Schools – by number

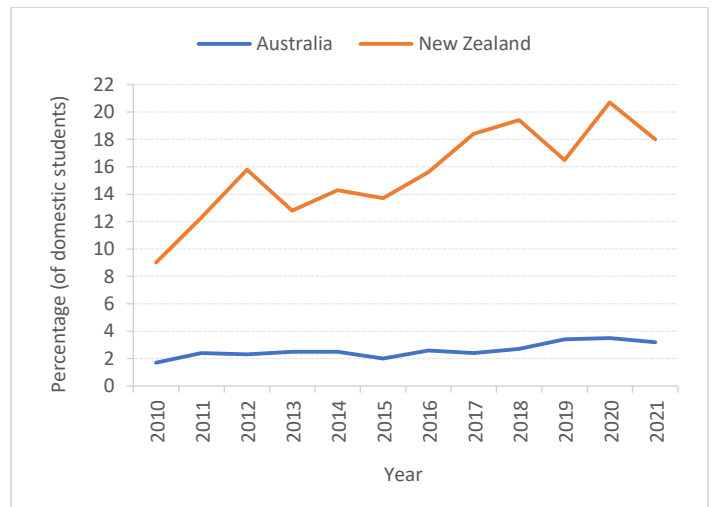


Figure 2. Indigenous Commencements in Australian and New Zealand Medical Schools – by percentage

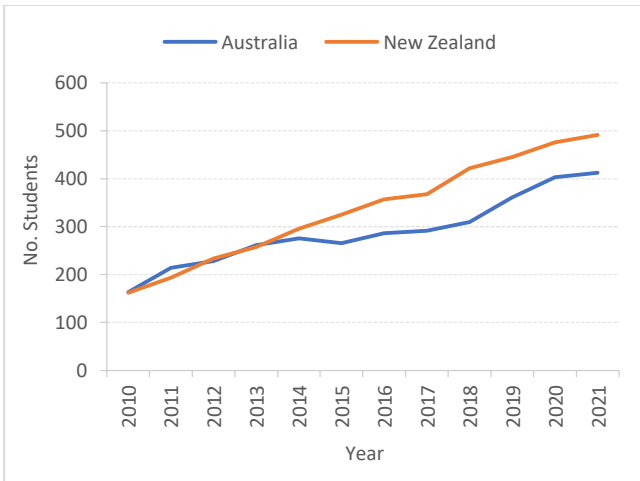


Figure 3. Indigenous Enrolments in Australian and New Zealand Medical Schools – by number

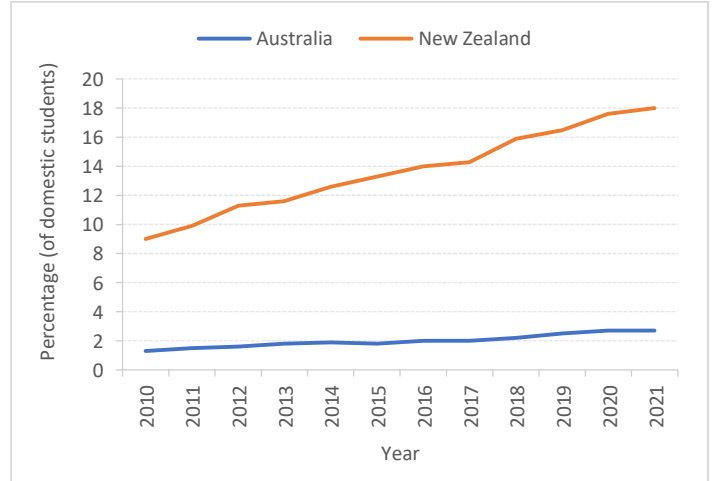


Figure 4. Indigenous Enrolments in Australian and New Zealand Medical Schools – by percentage

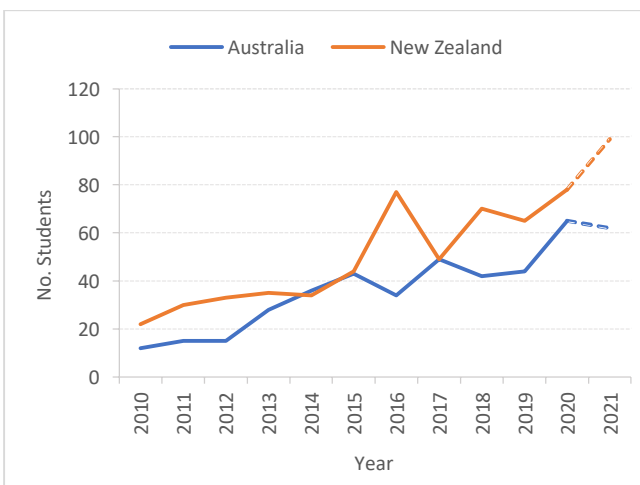


Figure 5. Indigenous Graduates from Australian and New Zealand Medical Schools (predicted for 2021) – by number

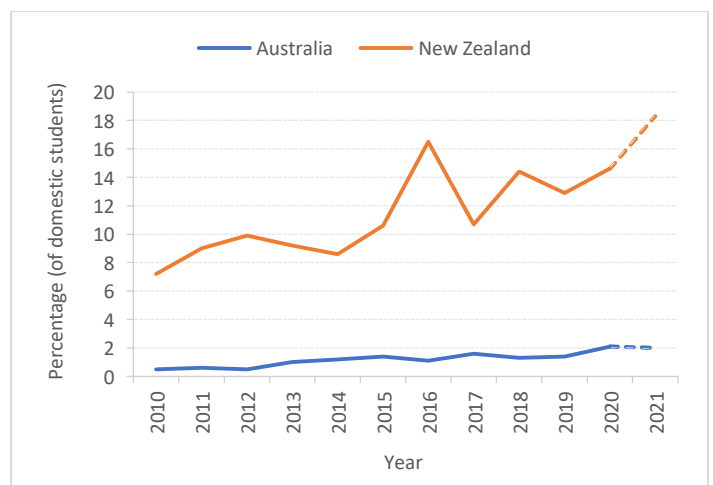


Figure 6. Indigenous Graduates from Australian and New Zealand Medical Schools (predicted for 2021) – by percentage

Medical graduate interest in Indigenous Health

From our annual survey of final year medical students at Australian medical schools, more than 49% of respondents expressed interest in Indigenous health being a part of their future medical career (**Table 5**). Note: the response rates for the 2020 survey was 46%.

The level of interest in Indigenous health amongst graduates has increased over the last 5 years; the percentage of respondents indicating interest in Indigenous health having increased by more than 10 percentage points since 2016. Similarly, those not interested has decreased over the same time period.

Table 5. Interest in Indigenous health as part of medical career

	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Interested										
Yes	874	38.8	917	43.3	963	43.7	951	46.7	853	49.2
No	583	25.9	464	21.9	500	22.7	416	20.4	295	17.0
Undecided	793	35.2	735	34.7	739	33.6	671	32.9	584	33.7
Total	2250	100.0	2116	100.0	2202	100.0	2038	100.0	1732	100.0

Data sources

[Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand: Medical Deans 2021 Student Statistics Report](#)

[Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand: Medical Schools Outcomes Database, National Data Report 2021](#)

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